



## **DEDICATIONS**

*I dedicatethisworkto:*

*My lovely parents Mouloud and Aldjia, words are not enough to thank*

*themMy greatsistersLyndaandLydia, mydear brotherLyes*

*My best friend*

*LamiaGod bless*

*youall.*

***Dhia***

*I dedicatethisworkto:*

*MybelovedparentsCid andDalila*

*My Brother Karim and my sisters Rachida and*

*MeliziaMy angels Ania,AdamandAylan.*

***Nouara***

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## **Abstract**

*The present paper under the title Myth and Symbolism in Gothic Literature: A study of Edgar Allan Poe's The Fall of the House of Usher and Stephan King's Carries strives to compare between the different elements of Gothic genre existing in the two works being studied. The Fall of the House of Usher (1839) and Carrie(1974) are written by the American famous Edgar Allan Poe and the well-known Stephan King. Our research explores the common themes in the two stories and the way the authors present the gothic features under the scope of Northrop Frye's theory Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays (1957). Moreover, this dissertation aims is to explain the demonic worlds that are coined by Frye's theory and the way they correspond to the features of gothic literature. It includes setting in castle, an atmosphere of misery and suspense, supernatural phenomenon and inexplicable events found in both novels. In addition, the sixth phase of history relocate the gothic features into parodies rather than horror.All of that contribute to the fact that old and new gothic narrations are highly important in terms of their depiction of social context issues .This investigation brought closer thesebookstotragedythatrepresenttheeightiethandtentiethcenturies'Gothicis. Actually, they are good examples to show how important literature can be,and how it represents historical,social or individual facts.*

**KeyWords:***Gothic literature, Irony, Myth, Parody.*

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## I. General Introduction

Throughout history, literature has depicted the social changes and conflicts through many genres and different types of writings serving the purpose of expressing the human conditions. During the medieval period, it is known that literature is related to religion. After this period, different changes have taken place. They give rise to many literary forms and genres portraying the Enlightenment era. Gothic fiction is among these forms and genres. It plays an important role during that period of time.

Actually, the gothic genre of writings has roots from the past. It doesn't emerge from scratch, and it does not necessarily mean literary works, as Nettellie Elizabeth says that gothic term has many meanings:

As the Goths were "barbarians, Gothic came to mean "barbarous. Formerly it signified the manners and invention so people as a race, "but its meaning degenerated into one of contempt descriptive of anything which was rude or unsophisticated. The classicists in the age of Pope, hating anything which savored of romanticism, styled all tendencies not conforming to classic laws, "gothic," which included even the old English authors.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, gothic literature has not accidentally appeared or emerged. It reintroduces itself keeping the old medieval influence as its feature. For example, the first gothic story *The Castle of Otranto* published in 1764, written by Walpole Horace is the perfect indicator of establishing a strong consistency between the eighteenth century and all what is before that time. As a result, writers are influenced by the past medieval features of writing. This point is explained more in Fred Botting's book which is titled Gothic:

Gothic narratives this ambivalence is manifested in terms of the genre's affiliations with class. Old castles, knights and male violent aristocrats seem to fit in to an enlightenment pattern identifying all things Gothic with the tyranny and barbarity of feudal times.<sup>2</sup>

Furthermore, the gothic genre hosts imagination and dark horror with an emphasis of rebellious ideas or even comic ones against authorities. It expresses sorrow and speaks about dark and miserable society or individual.

In addition, it exists in many variant forms suggesting many interpretations. In other words, it becomes as a ghost that haunts all stories or the main point that is repeated in a certain period of time. As Julian Wolfreys claims:

The gothic is to be found everywhere then but never as itself, never in the same form twice. The gothic becomes truly haunting in that it can never be pinned down as a single identity, while it returns through various apparitions and manifestations, seemingly everywhere: in comic discourse, in discourses of history and Christian belief, in the very possibility of the novel in the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup>

It is then a literature that unites the past to the Enlightenment era. That is why it is important to understand the roots of gothic genre and its patterns because its concerns and representations might differ completely from the known old gothic works.

Indeed, in the United States of America, Lloyd Smith illustrates in his book *American Gothic Fiction: An Introduction (2004)* “differences in American circumstances led American Gothicists in other directions less towards Walpole and Radcliffe and more towards Godwin and James.” (04). Therefore in the USA, the literature was flourishing about the American dream, while the gothic genre brought another reality by expressing different topics and problems. It is a reality that speaks about issues hidden in the society. Lloyd Smith continues “Substantiating the wilderness and the city for the subterranean rooms and corridors of the monastery, or the remote house for the castle, dark and dangerous woods for the bandit infested mountains of Italy, certain expressions led Americans to the gothic as an expression of their very different conditions”<sup>4</sup>.

With regard to this quote, the development in the human society shapes Gothicism into many structures to replace the old one while keeping its horror and supernatural elements in a different way. In fact, our first main source is *Carrie (1974)* written by Stephen King. It turns around the American late aspects of Gothicism. As for our second main source is *The Fall of the House of Usher (1839)* by Edgar Allan

*Poe* is more or like the preserved earlier version of Gothic Literature. It means that both of them presenting different gothic styles and times in terms of writings, characters, and themes.

### **The Review of Literature**

Edgar Allan Poe is one of the initiators of American gothic literature. He and Charles Brockden Brown were following the path of European gothic writers but at the same time distinguishing themselves from them concerning the style of writing. Furthermore, Edgar Allan Poe is the descendent from Brockden's works, as Lloyd Smith says "Even at the time of gothic first popularity, the American writers who engaged with the form, such as Charles Brockden Brown or Edgar Allan Poe, developed a version that shows differences from English or European tradition"<sup>5</sup>.

He argued that:

The American landscape seemed inherently resistant to gothic stories and settings. But Brown and Poe had already forged an American Gothic- or rather Gothics since their directions were quite different-that shows the culturally specific anxieties and tensions of the new country could determine alternative settings and plots to renew the genre.<sup>6</sup>

In effect, Edgar Allan Poe's writings are a subject of multiple critics. He explains how the gothic genre reshaped and appeared in a different way. The reason was that the ground of Gothicism in America is established in his time, as for Stephen King who belongs to a different era, has a different usage of a gothic aspect because of time and place difference.

Heidi Strengel in his book *Dissecting Stephen King from the Gothic to Literary Naturalism* (2005), claims that Poe and King have similarities in their gothic narration. It includes characters and plot that are introduced in the same way. He states that "King, like Herman Melville, Flannery O'Connor, and Edgar Allan Poe, frequently places his protagonists in situations where they face the reality of evil".<sup>7</sup>

That is to say that the characters of both stories are victims of their own thinking, at the same time, due to the loss of their innocence, their behavior changes to fit the situations where evil is controlling their fate.

Furthermore, Fred Botting considered Poe as the one who “leaves boundaries between reality, illusion and madness unresolved rather than, in the manner of his contemporaries, domesticating Gothic motifs”<sup>8</sup>. Therefore, Botting, here is categorizing Poe as a distinct writer from other gothic ones belonging to his era. While also, tackling the fictional elements existing in Poe’s narratives, providing that reality and illusion are blended together. Clearly, the gothic pattern changed from the traditional European one to the American one. Systematically, when colliding with ideologies, places and event he scientific development, as explained before, the gothic genre belongs to those changes while preserving its own structure and the sense of horror.

Moreover, Collings R Michal analyzes Stephan king’s works in his book *The Many Facets of Stephen King (1985)* and says that Carrie the main character’s super power has a scientific explanation more than an old superstition one. In other words, the fiction that exists in the story is closer to reality and it can be clarified by science, as he states that “King even provides a marginally scientific explanation for Carrie white she is victim of a genetic regressive occurrence.”<sup>9</sup>. Thus, Reality and science are tied together to form the gothic fiction, as it can be understood through the different tendencies of the era the two authors belong.

Fred Botting explains much more what Collings R Michal claims in his analysis of *Carrie*. He gives a good explanation and show how can Edgar Allan Poe and Stephan King use gothic elements according to their context tendencies by coining the different reasons for that:

Gothic narratives never escaped the concerns of their own times, despite the heavy historical trappings. In later fiction, the castle gradually gave way to the old house: as both building and family line, it became the site where fears and anxieties returned in the present. These anxieties varied according to diverse changes: political revolution, industrialisation, urbanisation, shifts in sexual and domestic organisation, and scientific discovery.<sup>10</sup>

In fact, in the introduction of the book *Gothic Horror: a Reader's Guide from Poe to King and beyond*, Clive Bloom also delivers a critical explanation and interpretation of the behavior of the main character Roderick Usher. He says that, *the Fall of the House of Usher* is:

Probably the most interpreted shorts to written, its ambiguities endless fascinating. Whatever might be said about the tale's significance it is clear that Poe combined physical horror entombment and reincarnation; a collapsing houses urrounded by a moat" with horror more closely associated with the mind "Usher' shypochondria and hysteria and Madeline's catatonia": horror has as its sources both traditional Gothic and medical conditions garnered from acontemporarypopularencyclopedia."<sup>11</sup>

### **Issues and Working Hypothesis**

After reviewing the existing literature, both writers Edgar Allan Poe and Stephan King, were famous and their works obviously received a great deal of criticism. The studies mentioned above explored the two novels in many aspects. However, less attention has been devoted to the comparison of them using mythological and archetypal approach of Northrop Frye's theory.

WewillrelyonFrye'stheorysixthphasetoanalyzeandinvestigategothiclements  
Exitingin *The Fall of the House of Usher* and *Carrie*.

The aim of our research is to explore Northrop Frye *Anatomy of Criticism* archetypes, and to explain or use some of its features that fit our scope of study in order to understand more the gothic genre.

Our second aim consists of showing the gothic element of the two novels *The Fall of the House of Usher by Edgar Allan Poe* and *Carrie by Stephan King* and analyze the way they use their context tendencies to create their gothic fiction. Our main final aim also consists of linking the two works in terms of how they represent their climax and characters, and how all of that fall under the *Anatomy of criticism* of Frye's theory.

Finally, these below hypothesis of this research will be validated or neglected

according to the findings found in the whole research. First, the characters and settings in both works are best interpreted and analyzed when linking them to the sixth phase of Northrop Frye's theory.

Second, *The Fall of the House of Usher* and *Carrie* are both gothic works that have similarities in showing their social context problems,

Third and last, the demonic world in Frye's theory is perfect in categorizing the gothic features found in *The Fall of the House of Usher* and *Carrie*.

## **Methodological Outline**

This research is a study of gothic features existing in the two stories, and the way they can be well explained under the scope of Frye's theory. To tackle down our research, the first section of our thesis is the Methods and Materials part. In the Methods part, we have introduced more than one essay of the theory *The Anatomy of Criticism* written by Frye theory in which he defines literature and gives it many forms of existence. As far as the Material part is concerned, we will provide summaries of the two main sources *The Fall of the House of Usher* and *Carrie* with biographies of their authors.

Second, in the Discussion part we have two main chapters. The first one is devoted to explain in detail the different seven demonic worlds in Frye's theory. We will present the mind illustrate the convenient plot, character or element to its world from the two main sources *The Fall of the House of Usher* and *Carrie*. In the second chapter, it is about the analysis of the two works based on the sixth phase of Frye's theory and the findings of the first chapter. In effect, the characters and the settings are the main focus to accomplish the task.

Finally, in the general conclusion, we will provide readers with the findings of the whole thesis after analyzing the two stories under the methods being followed. Further explanations and conclusions will be delivered according to our main claim which consists of the gothic element's interpretation.

## **II. Methods and Materials**

In this section, we are going to deal with the methodological approach of Northrop Frye's, *Anatomy of Criticism*. It will be the theoretical framework in studying the works of Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of The House of Usher* (1839) and Stephen King's *Carrie* (1974). They are both containing Gothic literature aspects.

### **1. Methods**

#### **1.1 *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957)**

*Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) is Northrop Frye's was written in 1957. It contains four essays in which he attempts to discuss the different principles of literary criticism. In this book, Frye offers four theories or essays in order to present or to define literature's categories or how to do literary criticism. Frye's book aims to discuss literary works without focusing on the author's biography or historical background of the literary text. It came within the prime of what has come to be called the New Criticism. Northrop Frye supports the idea behind this concept, which is about the possibility of understanding literary texts by themselves by focusing on language and not on outside information. Northrop Frye focused on the autonomy of literary study, meaning that the literature should be unique and separated from other disciplines such as philosophy and history.

Northrop Frye starts his book with a Polemical Introduction in which he claims how literary criticism should be done contrary to how others have done it instead. He focuses on the definition of the central term "criticism" which is according to him "the whole work of scholarship and taste concerned with literature."<sup>12</sup> It means that, criticism is very important to understand what literature is. He argues that it must turn around the works of literature themselves meaning that criticism studies the relations among works of literature.

As it is mentioned before, criticism has a kind of autonomy, which means that it has its own area of knowledge and having no relation to the other schools of thought. In addition, criticism seems to be like a science meaning that literature has a system and criticism is the relation between texts and that system. Furthermore, the aim of *Anatomy of Criticism* is to provide a scheme that organizes literature through four chapters that discuss four different types.

*The Anatomy of Criticism's* first essay is *Historical Criticism: Theory of Modes* (33). Firstly, Frye deals with the mode that is derived from the work of Aristotle in which he classifies different types of fiction according to the hero's position in the story comparing to his environment and other man. Therefore, Frye offers five modes of action which are the "Mythic," the "Romantic," the "high mimetic," the "Low mimetic," and finally the "Ironic" one. The first two ones are concerned with a hero who is more powerful than their environment. The second one is characterized by a hero who is more powerful than the other man, but not than his environment. The "Low mimetic," concerns the hero who is equal in power to everybody. Finally, there is "Ironic" mode in which the hero is weak and inferior. So, according to Frye and these modes, literature has moved from the stories about Gods to pitiable characters. He tries to combine them with four forms which are tragic, comic, episodic, and encyclopedic. The two first ones deal with people's stories and they are driven by plot. The two others are interested in themes. So, this first chapter mainly defines and combines the modes and forms.

The second one is entitled *Ethical Criticism: "Theory of Symbols"*. It will discuss symbols. It is about the communication and connection between societies in which Northrop Frye offers five types of symbols. The first one is the motif or the literal symbol. It concerns what is inside the text and this symbolism is "centripetal" in

which the meaning comes into itself, rather than from the outside of the text. Contrary to the sign symbol of literature which is "descriptive", it refers to element outside the text.

So, these two kinds of criticism are related to the introduction. In fact, the literal criticism deals with the new criticism or the autonomy of literature. The descriptive one is about the biographical and historical criticism since they focus on elements outside the text. Then, there is the image, which is the symbol of the formal phase. It provides interpretations of a given text in terms of its secret meaning. The fourth one is the archetype, the mythical phase's symbol that deals with the process of symbolism in different works of art. This phase of symbolism is related with "archetypal criticism" that deals with conventions, genres and traditions in literature. Finally, there is the monad symbol which refers to a spiritual or mystical interpretation. In in this essay we started to study literature from" the text by itself in the motif "through to genres of texts in archetypes and now the wholeuniverseinthemonad."<sup>12</sup>

Frye's third essay *Archetypal Criticism: Theory of Myths* unifies the categorization of literature from the first essay to the third one. It starts with the "apocalyptic imagery" meaning the beautiful imagery of human being in which Frye focuses on myths that are a part of archetypal symbols. In this part of work he categorizes literature through different mythical categories of archetypal imagery. For him, there are seven major worlds that are divided according the Great Chain of Being. They are classified as following the divine, the human, the animal, the vegetable, the mineral, the fire and the watery world.

Then we have, the "Demonic Imagery" which is "the world of the nightmare

and the scapegoat, bondage and pain and confusion. It also contains seven worlds. The Divine World that deals with the stupid powers of nature and machinery of fate, the Human World which characterizes the society of egos, the tyrant leader and so on.

After that, there is the demonic social relation that deals with "pharmakos" a human scapegoat used in certain state rituals like Carrie. Then, we have the Animal World, which focuses on beasts of prey, tiger, and so on. The Vegetable World, which consists of the sinister forests and wilderness. After that, we find the Inorganic World, cities of destruction and great ruins of pride. Finally, there is the Demonic World of Water that deals with poisoned water and death.

In these part of the essay, Frye noticed that there is a relationship between the cycle of life and myths. He says "the four seasons of the year being the type for four periods of the day(morning, noon, evening, night), four aspects of the water-cycle (rain, fountains, rivers, sea or snow), four periods of life (youth, maturity, age, death), and the like.". He associates the four mythical cycles "mythoi" (comedy, romance, tragedy, and satire) with the different seasons of the year spring, summer, autumn, and winter. In fact, all the mythical cycles have a particular mood that is related to the life cycle phase.

The final essay of *Anatomy of Criticism* is on " Rhetorical Criticism: Theory of Genres." In fact, Frye wants to provide a kind of foundation to understand genres through the period of modernity. He focuses on four main genres, which are drama, lyric, epic and finally fiction.

## **2. Materials**

### **2.1 *The Fall of the House of Usher*(1839)**

*The Fall of the House of Usher*, a supernatural horror short story written by the American writer Edgar Allan Poe in 1839. It begins with an unnamed narrator who is

Roderick's childhood friend who comes to visit him after receiving a letter in which he tells him that he is sick. Arriving at the house, the narrator described it in details, focusing on its most incredible features and gloomy atmosphere. When entering, he was shocked by the physical appearance of Roderick who suffers from a mental illness. Within a few hours, they started talking about Roderick's sickness and, then he reveals that he had a sister who also suffers from a cataleptic disease. Suddenly, the narrator sees Madeline Usher, Roderick's sister. She passes but she never noticed his presence. After few days, she died and Roderick asks his friend to help him in order to bury her in the vault beneath the house. Many days after, and in a stormy night, the bloody Madeline came back from death and throws herself at Usher who falls to the floor and dies along with his sister. The narrator flees in terror, and watches the House of Usher crack in two and collapse.

## **2.2 *Carrie*(1974)**

*Carrie*, the first published novel of the American writer Stephen King in 1974. It is about a high school girl named Carrie who experienced her first period in the shower of the school's locker room. She was ignoring what happening to her because she lives with an extremely religious mother, who had never told her about menstruation that she considers as a sin. At school, Carrie was bullied by her classmates and she was always considered as a joke and at the moment she gets her first period, all the girls in the shower pelt her with tampons and sanitary napkins. Later on, when Carrie goes at home she noticed that she possesses a supernatural power, which permits her to move things with her mind. Sue Snell, Carrie's friend feels bad of the cruel scene convinces her boyfriend Tommy to ask Carrie to go with him at the prom.

The following day, Miss Desjardin, the gym teacher decides to punish all the girls but Chris

Hargensen, the most popular girl at her school refuses the punishment. She uses her position to extract joy from her elevated status, but to inflict pain on other people. Therefore, the teacher suspends her from the prom night and then she decides to get revenge from Carrie. The prom night arrives and everything was great, but now when Tommy and Carrie were elected King and Queen and two buckets of pig's blood fall on their heads and unfortunately Tommy died. In fact, it was Chris and her boyfriend Billy plan to get revenge from Carrie and as a result, she uses her power and kills everyone in the building. Coming back home, she causes enormous fires by breaking control lines and causing gas stations to blow up. Her mother tries to kill her but Carrie kills her first by stopping her heart while her mother stabs her with a kitchen knife.

She goes back to destroy the town and finds Chris and Billy then kill them by wrecking and causing a fire to their car. Sue Snell, on the other hand was looking for Carrie and finds her in a parking lot dying. Carrie understands that Sue and Tommy had nothing to do with the trick, and she passes on calling out for her mother. So, the city becomes a ghost town prevalent with visitors who are interested by her abilities and at the end of the story there was a letter from a woman who is fascinated with her new baby's telekinetic abilities; therefore, we can understand that another Carrie is born.

## **1. Author's Biography**

### **1.1 Edgar Allan Poe**

Edgar Allan Poe, the famous American writer, poet, editor and literary critic was born on January 19, 1809 in Boston, Massachusetts. He is frequently seen as a dreary, strange figure sneaking within the shadows of moonlit cemeteries or disintegrating castles and he is broadly recognized as the creator of the modern detective story and an innovator within the science fiction genre. His name is connected with images of murderers, mad men, and mysterious women who were buried alive and came back

from death. Among his works, *The Fall of the House of Usher*, *The Tell-Tale Heart*, and *The Raven*. Poe's work as an editor, a writer, and a faultfinder had a significant effect on the American and the universal writing and his stories make him as one of the originators of both horror and analyst fiction. He was also one of the primary faultfinders to center basically on the impact of style and structure in a scholarly work such as had been seen as a pioneer, to the "art for art's sake" development. Poe died on October 7, 1849 at the age of forty, and the exact cause of Poe's death remains a mystery.

### **1.1 Stephen King**

The American novelist and short-story writer. Stephen Edwin King, was born on September 21, 1947 in Portland, Maine. He is the second son of Donald King and Nellie Ruth Pillsbury. He was fascinated by writing. "*Carrie*" was his first novel, which was published on April 1974. It is a horror story about a teenage girl who possesses a telekinetic power. Stephen King was known for his exploration of terror which take many forms, such as; "vampires, rabid dogs, deranged killers, telekinesis" and so on. After *Carrie*, Stephen King wrote many other stories and among them there is *Salem's Lot* (1975), *The Shining* (1977), *The Dead Zone* (1979), *The Running Man* (1982)... By the year 1990s, more than 100 million copies of King's books have been sold in worldwide, and he became the most popular writer with the genre of horror fiction.

### **Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup> Nettie Elizabeth Myre, *Development of the Gothic Romance* (University of Illinois, 1909), 4.

<sup>2</sup> Julian Wolfreys, *Spectrality, Gothic, the Uncanny and Literature* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 11.

<sup>3</sup> Lloyd Smith, *American gothic fiction an introduction* (London: Continuum, 2004), 26-27

<sup>4</sup>Fred Botting *Gothic*, (Taylor&Francise-library,2005), 86.

<sup>5</sup>Collings Michal R: a writer who studied gothic literature, he is fascinated by the works of Stephan King, he even called him the gothic king in his book. *The Many Facets of Stephan King*.

<sup>6</sup>FredBotting,*Gothic*(Taylor&Francise-library,2005),2.

The foundation and the source of Frye's whole theory. A matter of fact that religion, in general, specifies the evil and good into categories of traits. They serve as main features shaping all kind of characters and stories responding to the descriptions existing in the Bible. Some of the animals which are cursed by the Bible, the serpent for example, is a sign of devil.. That is to say, anything that symbolizes that animal can be extracted, interpreted and explained differently and would be portrayed in literary works as the "Demonic World".

### ***1.1 The Demonic Animal World in The Fall of The House of Usher***

Based on the Demonic Animal World classification, Usher's house is seen from the narrator as the simple landscape features of the domain— upon the bleak walls—upon the vacant eye-like windows. This description delivers a sensation that the house is a gloomy beast that scares the comers and passengers through there, just as a wolf would do that to protect his area, or a weird creature to let the others know of a sinister presence in the surroundings.

Actually, it is only a matter of lines to find that Roderick Usher's physical appearance is just fitting how the house looks like. It is illustrated in Poe's short story:

"His action was alternately vivacious and sullen. His voice varied rapidly from a tremulous indecision (when the animal spirits seemed utterly in a beyance) to that species of energetic concision—that abrupt, weighty, unhurried."<sup>23</sup>Thehouse interprets Usher's emotions and confusions. He absorbed all the negative energy through staying in the inside until he transformed to a non- human appearance as the Narrator says, "I could not, even with effort, connect its Arabesque expression with any idea of simplehumanity."<sup>24</sup> The house then can be seen as a vulture that nourishes from the dead bodies, everything around and inside the castle is dead including Roderick Usher

### III. Results

After analyzing the two works, *The Fall of the House of Usher* and *Carrie* we have reached a conclusion. First, they have both common similarities although they belong to different eras. Second, while their works are famous, no one tried to specifically analyze them as case study.

Thus, both stories have similar gothic ways of narrating their climax. The main characters share the same tragic patterns but in different times and places. In addition, although they belong to different eras, they fall under the same psychic state where all their surroundings are a perfect reflection of their inners. This, in fact, will be explained and expanded more in the Discussion section, as we will highlight more the impact of the psychological state informing the gothics sphere.

Furthermore, the characters are victims of their settings. Stephen King and Edgar Allan Poe use those settings to forge the gothic world which in itself depicts well the character mind state. Throughout the two works, one can notice that the setting plays a big crucial role in achieving the horrific tragic end. The characters are living in different but gloomy places. Roderick for example in his castle, and Carrie in her house in the middle of modernity.

Apart from other critics that did not link these gothic works in terms of their ironical aspect, our research paper analyzes the way social beliefs restrict humans and jail them into their dark worlds. In fact, this is the main foundation of the sixth phase of Northrop Frye's theory. Furthermore, this particular comparison will explain more the different reasons of using the gothic elements in the two stories while parodies are the real intent of the writers instead of horror and fear.

## **VI. Discussion**

### **Chapter One: Demonic Imagery in Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher* and Stephan King's *Carrie***

#### **Introduction**

After dealing with the section of Methods and Materials in which we have already explained the theory, we are going to deal with the first chapter of our research paper. It discusses the demonic imagery of the seven worlds that are presented by Northrop Frye in *Anatomy of Criticism*. This section of work aims at studying how *The Fall of the House of Usher* and *Carrie* reflect the demonic imagery of the seven worlds.

#### **2. The Demonic Divine World**

The demonic divine world mainly deals with those supernatural powers that dominate the characters. "The demonic divine world largely personifies the vast, menacing, stupid powers of nature as they appear to technologically undeveloped society."<sup>1</sup>

##### **2.1 *The Fall of the House of Usher***

At the beginning of the short story, the narrator comes to visit Usher's house. He feels "insufferable gloom" that continuous even while he arrives at the dark house. He claims that Roderick and his sister Madeline possess a supernatural power. He was described as "a cadaverousness of complexion ;an eye large ,liquid ,and luminous..."<sup>2</sup> It means that, he seems to be an unnatural human being and in addition to his physical appearance, he suffers from a mental illness, which he calls "a family evil."

"He suffered much from a morbid acuteness of the senses; the most insipid food was alone endurable; he could wear only garments of certain texture; the odors of the flowers were oppressive; his eyes were tortured by even a faint light; and there were but peculiar sounds, and these from instruments, which did not inspire

himwithterror."<sup>3</sup>

In other words, he claims that his senses are sharp. He cannot wear clothes of certain surfaces, eat especially flavorful foods, and he was bothered even by the weakest lights. Furthermore, Roderick possesses a kind of supernatural power which leads him to predict the future. It means that in the events of the story he claims that he will die and actually, he did. This is what we can notice in his words saying:

“In this unnerved, in this pitiable, condition I feel that the period will sooner or later arrive when I must abandon life and reason together, in some struggle with the grim phantasm, Fear.”<sup>4</sup>

Concerning Madeline, is mainly absent in that house. She suffers from the undiagnosed and incurable illness. She appears for a short time and then suddenly disappears. It can be explained as a supernatural power that allows her to come back from her death and takes her brother with her.

"While he spoke, the lady Madeline passed through a remote portion of the apartment, and, without having noticed my presence, disappeared"<sup>4</sup>

These events and characters that were described by Edgar Allan Poe may actually reflect what Northrop Frye said about the “stupid powers of nature” in his *Anatomy of Criticism*. It means that the character’s way of living and being reflect how the power of nature dominates their souls.

## **2.2 Carrie**

Carrie, a high school teenager was extremely hated by her classmates and her mother. At a given moment in the story, she gets her first period in the locker room but she never knows what happens to her, and unfortunately, the girls laughed at her. After many times of abusing her, she realizes that she possesses a kind of "telekinetic"

power. She can already move things with her mind. Stephen King illustrates this when he says:

"Carrie glared at him with sudden smoking rage. The bike wobbled on its training wheels and suddenly fell over. Tommy screamed. The bike was on top of him. Carrie smiled and walked on." <sup>5</sup>

Here one can notice that Carrie realizes that she can control her powers and using them to do whatever she wants. Another quote from the book that illustrates Carrie's super natural power is when Stephen King states that "What none of them knew, of course, was that Carrie White wastelekinetic."<sup>6</sup>

In addition, during the prom night when Carrie and Tommy were designed as the King and Queen of the spring-ball, suddenly, she was splattered with pig's blood that is an idea of Chris to get revenge over her. However, nobody knows that it is mainly the worst thing that could happen to Carrie. In fact, she realizes that everybody was laughing at her and unfortunately, Tommy was dead. So, she used her telekinetic power to destroy the school and even her town. At first, she barricades the doors so that no one can escape and then she turns on the sprinklers, drops the power cords, and watches everyone get electrocuted and catch on fire. Actually, Carrie was completely nervous and angry she could not accept to be a joke anymore, so she uses her super natural power to get revenge over them and kills everyone:

"The lobby was empty. She posed halfway up the stairs and FLEX, the doors all slammed shut under the concentrated force she directed at them, the pneumatic door-closers snapping off. She heard some of them scream and it was music, sweet soulmusic."<sup>7</sup>

Furthermore, in the *Anatomy of Criticism* Northrop Frye states that the demonic divine world is related to such supernatural power. Meaning that there is always a reason behind the characters being unnatural humans in both *Carrie* and the *Fall of the House of Usher*.

### 3. The Human Divine World

The human divine world concerns that society in which a group of people is under one leader. It means people follow a certain person or chief and they minimize an individual.

#### 3.1 *The Fall of the House of Usher*

In this short story, Edgar Allan Poe shows us that the main character Roderick Usher is influenced by the dark and the gloomy atmosphere of his house. As a result, he became a mad man and an egocentric person. This is what is mentioned in Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of*

*Criticism*. He states that "In the sinister human world one individual pole is the tyrant-leader, inscrutable, ruthless, melancholy, and with an insatiable will, who commands loyalty only if he is egocentric enough to represent the collective ego of his followers." In fact, some events of the story illustrate what Northrop Frye says:

"I could not help thinking of the wild ritual of this work, and of its probable influence upon the hypochondriac, when, one evening, having informed me abruptly that the lady Madeline was no more, he stated his intention of preserving her corpse for a fortnight (previously to its final interment), in one of the numerous vaults within the main walls of the building"<sup>8</sup>.

In this passage, Roderick asks the narrator to help him in order to bury Madeline in a vault beneath the house and he immediately accepts. In fact, keeping her with him is an unacceptable act. Here Roderick shows that he is completely insane and by doing such thing, he is considered as a selfish person who does not care about other's lives. He thinks to his own interest because he entombs his sister alive for the one reason that she is his only surviving relative. It is said before that in the demonic human world that the character is a " tyrant-leader". It means that people follow the individual leader and his instructions with fear and this is the case of the narrator who accepts to help his friend without any rejection. This is one can be noticed in this

quote:

“At the request of Usher, I personally aided him in the arrangements for the temporary entombment. The body having been unconfined, we two alone bore it to its rest.”<sup>9</sup>

In the passage cited before, we can notice that the narrator follows Roderick Usher by fear even though he knows that it is an unnatural act. Besides, Roderick's love and his passion to keep his sister close to him makes him an evil and kills her.

## 2.2 *Carrie*

The demonic human world that was described by Northrop Frye deals with a society in where a group of people is superior to the individual or a certain leader tries to manipulate others and this is the case of *Carrie*. Actually, when she gets her first period, the girls were extremely violent with her. They considered themselves knowing everything and they have the right to do terrible things to her. Stephen King illustrates that by saying:

"The girls were bombarding her with tampons and sanitary napkins."<sup>10</sup>

Here, they were laughing at her and making her as a joke, and maybe the fact that *Carrie* ignores an important phase of her life, make the girls in the position of superiority compared to her. Another point that Frye discusses is the 'Tyrant-leader'.

A term that means that people can manipulate others in terms of superiority and this is also presented in *Carrie*:

“I can't understand some of what must led up to the prom. Awful as it was, I can understand how someone like Billy Nollan could go along, For instance .Chris Hargensen led him by the nose at-least, most of the time. His friends were just easily led by Billy himself.”<sup>11</sup>

In this passage, it is obviously that both Chris and her boyfriend Billy are influencing each other by doing wild things like dumping pig's blood on *Carrie* at the prom. In

fact, they are an example of a “tyrant-leader”. They manipulate each other to get whatever they want and feel the need to be in control of the other. But, not only between them, they even want to get control over all the others and hurt Carrie. So, in such society where there is no respect for the individual, life takes another meaning. Everybody wants to be the central of the topic and manipulate the others.

#### **4. The Demonic Erotic Relation and the Demonic Parody of Marriage**

In a society where relations become as a “destructive passion”, we find that individuals become evil and try to have or to possess objects or humans but at the end, they destroy themselves and their society with that “destructive passion”. This kind of passion can be the cause of an unacceptable relationships in society. It means there are relations that are forbidden in both society and religion such as relationships outside marriage. This is what can be found in *Anatomy of criticism* in this quote:

"The demonic erotic relation becomes a fierce destructive passion that works against loyalty or frustrates the one who possesses it. It is symbolized by a harlot, witch, siren, or other tantalizing female, a physical object of desire which is sought as a possession and therefore can never be possessed."<sup>12</sup>

Here, we can see that relationships take another meaning in society. They are a dangerous passion, which push individuals to become evils. Northrop Frye discusses another important point which is the “demonic parody of marriage”. For him it is about the "union of two souls in one flesh, may take the form of hermaphroditism, incest (the most common form), or homosexuality." In our case, this kind of relationships between Roderick Usher and his sister Medline, and also between Carrie and her religious mother Margaret white.

##### ***4.1 The Fall of the House of Usher***

The events of this short story occurred in a desolate house in which the

characters way of life is related to that atmosphere of darkness. Roderick Usher is one of them. At the beginning of the story, it is clear that he is living in his own world. Disconnected from society and living only with his sister Madeline. Roderick became more an introverted person who fears everything and somehow he wanted to protect his sister because she is the only surviving person in his family. He possesses this kind of control over his twin sister because he fears of losing her. In the story, we can feel that Roderick's behavior illustrates the "destructive passion".

In fact, the way he treats his sister Madeline can say a lot about his passion. He tries to protect her but in reality he is obsessed by the fear of losing her therefore; he acts as an evil. Since she is his only surviving relative, he needed to keep her for himself. Actually, by burying her alive in his vault, he seems to be like a crazy and evil man. It is the destructive passion that pushes him to do such a terrifying thing and having control on his sister. However he can never possess her as illustrated here:

"He stated his intention of preserving her corpse for a fortnight (previously to its final interment), in one of the numerous vaults within the mainwallsofthebuilding."<sup>13</sup>

Furthermore, the "destructive passion" frustrates the person who possesses It and this is the case of Roderick. In order to keep his twin sister beside him, he buried her alive. But, at the end of the story he loses Madeline and himself ,too.

Therefore, "The demonic Erotic Relation" can be related to "The Demonic Parody of marriage. It can be illustrated through the relationship between Roderick Usher and Medline. In fact, through the title of this short story *The Fall of the House of Usher*, it can be noticed that both the house and the family collapse. So, Madeline is the only surviving relation for Roderick which seems as strange thing about the Usher family. It is written in Edgar Allan Poe's short story:

"I had learned, too, the very remarkable fact, that the stem of the Usher race,

all time-honored as it was, had put forth, at no period, any enduring branch; in other words, that the entire family lay in the direct line of descent..."<sup>14</sup>

When paying close attention to these lines, it can be noticed that the Usher family is amazingly innate and has been for eras. Yet, Poe takes the extreme care to not specify the term "incest" anywhere within the content. Instead, he passes on it through the depiction of the exceptional nature of their family. Thus, the relationship between Roderick and Madeline is forbidden. So, through what Northrop Frye says in *Anatomy of criticism* and the above illustrations, it is clear that both "The Demonic Erotic Relation" and "The Demonic Parody of Marriage" are presented in the story.

#### **4.2 Carrie**

This story can be considered as being one of the best examples of the "demonic erotic relation" and "demonic parody of marriage". At first, Carrie lives with an extreme religious mother who believes that everything is sinful. In fact, Carrie suffers a lot from that terrifying situation, she is always blamed whatever she does. Actually, the "destructive passion" of Margaret White can be illustrated through her behavior and extreme passion to religion. Thus, she has no friends and no husband. She was known for her passion for religion; therefore, she hates sin so much. She thinks that everyone who makes mistakes should pray for forgiveness. In fact, her only sin is having sex with her husband, as a punishment she gave birth to Carrie whom Margaret believes is either the Anti-Christ or Satan himself.

Furthermore, during the events of the story, it can be noticed that Margaret White is completely insane and extremely passionate by religion since she was a little girl. "[Mrs. White] told Mrs. Bicente, God rest her, that the Lord was reserving a special burning seat in hell for her because she gave the kids an outline of Mr. Darwin's beliefs on evolution."<sup>7</sup> Here, it is the story about Carrie's mother since she

was a young lady. Indeed at that point, she accepted that evolution was as in. So possibly, Carrie sometimes repeats her mother's convictions. Margaret's sin-fanaticism may be a result of her childhood. In addition, Margeret forbade everything to her daughter even taking a shower. She says:

"Momma had, of course, forbid her to shower with the other girls".<sup>15</sup>

It seems that Margeret hates taking showers even at home. She considers them as a sin and it can lead her to sex. In fact, besides that religious beliefs comes a suppression of all the things related to sex. It is found that Margaret does not educate Carrie anything almost coming of age—and certainly not almost getting her period. In fact, Margaret's sexual restraint is so extraordinary.

She denies any signs of sexuality in her girl. She appears to think that, in case, she overlooks any signs of Carrie's physical development. At that point, puberty will never happen to her. But, it is not possible and Carrie's breasts or dirty pillows as her mother name them prove Margaret wrong. So, these extremely religious beliefs makes her very different from other women. She never admitted that she had sex with her husband that was a sin for her. So, with those events that occur in the story, it can be said that the "demonic erotic relation" is illustrated through Margaret's destructive passion to religion. It makes her an evil who wanted to kill her daughter. Indeed, Margeret thinks that Carrie is a sin since she believes that everything related to sex is forbidden and it makes their relationship immoral. Therefore, the "demonic parody of marriage" that Northrop Frye discusses, is seen through Margaret and Carrie's relationship, that in fact, was considered as a forbidden relation. So, such relations put people in a position where they feel abandoned and weak.

## **5. The Demonic Social Relation**

In this section of work, Northrop Frye says that "The social relation is that of the mob, which essentially human society is looking for a pharmakos." <sup>16</sup>. It means that a group of people looks for a victim who will be the center of mockery and joke. In *Anatomy of Criticism*, it is said that the "mob is often identified with some sinister animal image" <sup>17</sup>. It means that society reflects the wild animal's behavior toward the "pharmakos" or a victim. In *the Fall of the House of Usher* and *Carrie*, we can find that both female characters are victims of the society including Carrie and Madeline Usher.

### ***5.1 The Fall of the House of Usher***

This short story about the Usher's family may reflect the role of a victim in a human society. Actually, Madeline Usher, Roderick's sister can be the best example of the demonic social relation that deals with a "pharmakos". Edgar Allan Poe describes her as a ghost and she is mainly the victim of Roderick's fear who suffers from a weakness of the senses. He claims that a part of his illness is due to Madeline's sickness that involves seizures, so when Roderick takes a look on his sister, she seems to be dead, but actually, she is not. Thus, he buried her alive. Furthermore, when Madeline comes back from death, she shows that she was tormented in the tomb because she was alive.

In fact, Roderick's isolation from society makes him an introverted person who fears everything in the world; therefore, he tries to protect his only surviving relatives, but he dominates her. With his madness and fear to lose his only sister, he actually kills her without knowing that she is still alive.

"For a moment she remained trembling and reeling on the threshold—then, with a low moaning cry, fell heavily inward upon the person of her brother, and in her violent and now final death-agonies, bore him to the floor a corpse, and a victim to the terror she had anticipated." <sup>18</sup>

Furthermore, with the horrific "low moaning cry" it seems like Madeline is a

melancholic and unhappy woman, and Roderick's madness and fear of the future cause, in a way or another, the death of his sister. As a result, Madeline is a victim of a terrible world of fear and gloom. But, if we take Roderick's madness in to consideration we can say that he something of a thoughtful character since his mental state is something for which he cannot be held capable. In fact, as readers we can notice that there is a similarity between Roderick's house façade and him, meaning that they are both broken. Upon looking at the physical characteristics of Usher itself, we can indeed see that the same kind of fissure, or break, running through Roderick. Thus, according to Northrop Frye and the above illustrations, the demonic social relation which is the victim of a given society is illustrated or seen through both Roderick and his sister Madeline. In fact, they are both characterized and seen as monsters and living far from the society in their gloomy and dark house make them victims of darkness.

## ***5.2 Carrie***

In this Gothic novel, it seems clearly that Carrie the main character is a victim of both her mother and her classmates. Actually, Carrie was described as an ugly girl with pimples on her neck and her damp hair totally without color. In fact, she hates herself because everyone at school laughs at her and at the way she behaves. Carrie has no companion, no one of her schoolmates needs to be her companion. Her classmates continuously bully her. Despite the fact that she is bullied, Carrie is never angry. She is fairly calm with her head bowed that joke. Carrie's classmates hated and they think that she is appalled, so they call her "pigpoop":

Billy Preston putting peanut butter in her hair that time she fell asleep in study hall; she pinches, the legs out stretched in school aisles to trip her up. Carrie always missing the ball, even in kickball, falling on her face in Modern Dance during their sophomore year and chipping a tooth, running into the net

during volleyball; wearing stockings that were always run, running, or about to run, always showing sweat stains under the arms of her blouses".<sup>19</sup>

It can be seen that Carrie's peers bully her very badly. They play tricks on her and they call her names. They mistreat Carrie both verbally and physically. This is another reason that puts Carrie in that situation. In fact, the abuse of her classmates helps her to develop her power and makes her an evil. "Girls stretched and writhed under the hot water, squalling, flicking water, squirting white bars of soap from hand to hand. Carrie stood among them stolidly, a frog among swans".<sup>20</sup>

From the above quote, it can be seen that the young ladies are extremely harming Carrie through physical violence. These girls should not judge Carrie by using hurtful words. Furthermore, Carrie was also a victim of her fanatical mother who makes her daughter's life a hell. Actually, Margaret never considers Carrie as her daughter, she always treats her as a disgusting object not a human being. She tries to maintain a strategic distance from Carrie so vigorously that it controls her life, and she mishandles Carrie by being so tyrannical and crazy. Carrie does not know what to think, with the blended messages of her mother's religious obsession and her actually terrible classmates.

Margaret was exceptionally a monster and abusive to her girl, Carrie. She locks her in her closet and orders her to pray for absolution when she learns about the shower occurrence. Here we can notice that Carrie was a victim of her mother's religious beliefs and her classmates, so the demonic social relation can be seen through Carrie since she is the victim of a society in which they do not care about other people's feelings. In Carrie, individuals become a mob that terrorizes and victimizes her.

## **6. The Demonic Animal World**

Bearing in mind that everything is interrelated between all the worlds, the "animal world" is very important in terms of its tight relationship to the other worlds. As It

hosts a blend of many characteristics depicted here and there as stated by Frye in *Anatomy of Criticism*,

“The animal and vegetable worlds are identified with each other, and with the divine and human worlds as well, in the Christian doctrine of transubstantiation, in which the essential human forms of the vegetable world, food and drink, the harvest and the vintage, the bread and the wine, are the body and blood of the Lamb who is also Man and God, and in whose body we exist as in a city or temple.”<sup>21</sup>

This quote highly contributes to the fact that the human character is specified by animal traits, which are indeed seen in many literary works. *Animal Farm*, as an example, a book written by George Orwell turns around all about the animal society representing real contexts, each has an important or well-known figure that has similarities with the chosen animal. In the “demonic world”, it is exactly the same depiction occurs, however, the focus is in the scariest and dangerous deformed creatures other than humans, as established by Frye in his book:

“The animal world is portrayed in terms of monsters or beasts of prey. The wolf, the traditional enemy of the sheep, the tiger, the vulture, the cold and earth-bound serpent, and the dragon are all common. In the Bible, where the demonic society is represented by Egypt and Babylon, the ruler of each are identified with monstrous beasts: Nebuchadnezzar turns into a beast in Daniel, and Pharaoh is called a river dragon by Ezekiel.”<sup>22</sup>

It is noticed in the above quote that humans might take another form or shape to become the sinister characters that are qualified to be villain. In fact, it is substantiated by the Bible as gravity of the climax, or certain areas in the story and the kind of characters, as this extract below demonstrates:

“The vegetable world is a sinister forest like the ones we meet in *Comus* or the opening of the *Inferno*, or a heath, which from Shakespeare to Hardy has been associated with tragic destiny, or a wilderness like that of Browning's *Childe Roland* or Eliot's *Waste Land*. Or it may be a sinister enchanted garden like that of *Circe* and its Renaissance descendants in Tasso and Spenser. In the Bible the waste land appears in its concrete universal form in the tree of death, the tree of forbidden knowledge in *Genesis*”.<sup>26</sup>

It is quite clear that Frye draws a big circle around the sinister forest of which the latter renders the achievement of the physical gloomy world. The latter perpetuates

more the dark evil aspect of the events or climax existing in the narrative. The contrast of life and death, evil and good, curse and bless can be evinced by a tree that shows signs of life or death. This serves as a symbol that enhances the expectations and the understanding of the deeper meaning existing in the content while also reinforces the horror found in the story.

### ***6.1 The Fall of the House of Usher***

The vicinity of the house of Usher is all filled up with a demise nature. It seems that every tree is in the autumn or winter season. Frye explains them as tragedy and irony. “the trunks of decayed trees—with an utter depression of soul”. The “decayed” trunk tells stories within stories that the surrounding of the house is not taken care of. The place looks desolate and abandoned with no sign of life or vivid environment, and it stands in sharp contrast to everything that has a relation to life.

The more the Narrator advances and gets near the house, and then inside; the more he finds out that “the decayed trees which stood around—above all, in the long undisturbed endurance of this arrangement, and in its reduplication in the still waters of the tarn”. The decayed trees demonstrate the lack of treatment from Roderick Usher, and the absence of light or sun beam that causes the growth of “green” lively leaves, as Fryer provides the evidence that “The green world charges the comedies with the symbolism of the victory of summer over winter”.

The sinister trees encircling the house of Usher engages effectively to convert the persons living there to a deceased more or like the decayed trees or trunks. In addition, they will perish away in an instant or days, as the Narrator “can compare to no earthly sensation more properly than to the after-dream of the reveller upon opium—the bitter lapse into every-day life—the hideous dropping off of the veil”. The life is absolutely absent, and those areas of nowhere are ceased or in the process of

ceasing to exist. Roderick remained just like those trees in the darkness enclosing and locking himself inside the house preventing any light, water, or any source of life to enter that area. So, the vegetation shows the fact that Roderick is in his way to embrace death.

## **6.2 *Carrie***

In this book, Stephen King narrates the history of Carrie whose source of knowledge limited to uniquely her mother. Everything comes from her is tangible and absolute with no space to argue or debate against, the world of Carrie is created from childhood to submit herself to God. Her days and nights are exhibited in this quote:

“She closed her eyes, slept, and dreamed of a huge, living stone crashing through the night, seeking out Momma, seeking out them. They were trying to run, trying to hide. But the rock would not hide them; the dead tree gave no shelter.”<sup>27</sup>

What is distinguishable here is that Carrie being a product of “Momma”, her dream or nightmare is embodied by the rock and the dead tree, which has a lot of meaning and storytelling about the inner state of Carrie.

Her sufferings and confusion that in Frye’s theory, taunted to envisage it by the demonic world. In this case, the vegetable one as the hopeless and evil tree that does not represent a scapegoat for her. Actually, the dead tree fosters the deceiving esteemed persons who are humans but provides no shelter for her; in contrast, those persons are like the dead tree that gives no fruits, no life, or the vivid good looking picture which satisfies the viewers.

## **7. The Demonic Inorganic World**

This world is the ramification of the other worlds as Frye moves into a wider and higher focus on the aftermath of calamities and disorders. The place or the setting and the plot are just like a grave or an unpleasant memory; or even a place where only a gloomy future is the inescapable fate for the characters. That is to say that all of that

is depicting and giving the context and characters a psychological process for them to live the loss and destruction. It is, in fact, the inorganic world in which it is determined by the characters' context. In cases such as those that have danger and threats, and do not offer any possibility for the characters to find an adequate response because of the constant feeling of being defenseless in a world Frye coins it as:

“The inorganic world may remain in its unworked form of deserts, rocks, and wasteland. Cities of destruction and dreadful night belong here, and the great ruins of pride, from the tower of Babel to the mighty works of Ozymandias. Images of perverted work belong here too: engines of torture, weapons of war, armor, and images of a dead mechanism which, because it does not humanize nature, is unnatural as well as inhuman. Corresponding to the temple or One Building of the apocalypse, we have the prison or dungeon, the sealed furnace of heat without light, like the City of Dis in Dante. Here too are the sinister counterparts of geometrical images.”<sup>28</sup>

The quote comes across multiple symbols of obscurity in both psychological and physical torture. The latter revolves around what is considered as the insights of the in-depth story or simply its climax. The weapons that cause harm assist the destroyed gloomy world that torture is ultimately an activity that is planned; mainly used to cause humiliation, and to destroy the person's identity, will, power, social, political or religious commitments, and finally to induce weakness. Its objective is to demolish the characters' personality and to send a message of terror to the readers.

However, this is not the only inorganic feature, it can reside in a far unpopulated land or in a disorganized area of which a mess fused with the dark or gothic atmosphere entails the fright and isolation to the characters existing in that setting. This world has a taste of loss and

Pure water coming from the storm. For Frye, the first water which is “blood” is the curse done

as explained before, and that blood creates the whole climax of the story.

### **7.1 The Demonic World of Water in *Carrie***

In *Carrie's* novel, the symbol of water tackles one of the interesting passages

of Carrie's life, as her period caused her a panic among all the students, who then were laughing at her. She was being under bullying, a girl who does not know about her period is emphasized in the story to show a symbol of ignorance. In the demonic world of water, that blood coming from her period is the cycle of life, as Frye clarified that "the Water-symbolism has also its own cycle, from rains to springs, from springs and fountains to brooks and rivers, from rivers to the sea or the winter snow, and back again". Just like the feminine cycle, which returns every month similarly to the seasons, while in the case of Carrie, it caused her anxiety and the most terrifying situation. The compelling "blood" affected her flow of the story; the sign of maturity turned out to be the darkest moment in her life, the water, blood or her period gives nothing but shame and gore:

"More droplets of blood. Carrie still blinked around at her classmates in slow bewilderment. Helen Shy returned around and made mock throwing-up gestures. "You're bleeding!" Sue yelled suddenly, furiously. "You're bleeding, you big dumb pudding!"<sup>34</sup>

Everybody was laughing at her, the blood that might cause a new life of a baby; it appears to be a curse while pointing fingers at her accusing her of having a natural water circulating to find opportunities of new breath or existence. The author here shows the blood as a demonic curse done. In the latest stage, where Carrie blinded by her anger, the water or:

"When it started to rain . . . at least, that's what I thought it was at first. There was water falling all over the place. I looked up and all the sprinklers were on, all over the gym. Water was hitting the basketball court and splashing. Josie Vreck was yelling for the guys in his band to turn off the electric amps and mikes quick, but they were all gone. He jumped down from the stage".<sup>35</sup>

The water here can be described as a curse. It will trigger the different explosions when collided with the electric power; that in itself a feature of the modern city, and it destroyed the despair. All of it forms an ambiance that carries the whole narrative suggesting violence and menace of mostly gothic style location.

## 7.2 *The Fallof Hous eof Usher*

As we have seen before, Roderick lives under harsh weird circumstances that existed from the past shown by the spirit of his inner. His setting is found a desolate unknown environment, exactly how the inorganic demonic world functions. The title in itself endorses the probability that the story is around an inorganic world *The Fall of the House of Usher*. It renders the end of the story in a mess; or the destruction of the main setting hosting the main character. From the beginning, the narrator feels just lost in reading or comprehending the “atmosphere peculiar to themselves and their immediate vicinity—an atmosphere which had no affinity with the air of heaven, but which had reeked up from the decayed trees, and the gray wall, and the silent tarn—a pestilent and mystic vapor, dull.”<sup>29</sup>

The quality of the isolated environment hinders any light or sign of hope, killing anything vivid at its glimpse sight letting no chance to any slight hope; yet the house is like a prison that has all the necessary elements to enclose Roderick from the outside world. Actually, it resembles to a medieval dark dungeon that has “a sinking, a sickening of the heart—an unredeemed dreariness of thought which no goading of the imagination could torture into aught of the sublime.”

After all, the place is in the way of disappearing from existence. Everything in there is decaying, telling much more of the near departure of all the beings and things installed there. This is, in fact, a powerful claim that Frye holds as a one of the strong principles of the demonic inorganic realm. All of the mess and weirdness fluttering around is the transition from a living world to a distorted unliving one. Furthermore, this gives rise to another stage of being, as the setting is turning into an old place, which then looks like ruins of the far past delivering, and engaging only depression of each of its segments.

### 7.3 *Carrie*

If the house of Usher clearly looks as a prison, then the house of Carrie also ensures that fact, around which it remains at the origin of Carrie's issues. In this story, she is the one overwhelmed by her "Momma" whose only aim is to forge another "little prayin Jesus". There are no other words to describe the calamities the girl went through except a good passage that resumes the whole story, where the mother of Carrie punishes her repeatedly after she commits a sin or even thinking of that sin "She turned her glittering, magnified eyes upon her daughter. "Go to your closet now. The closet is a tight breathless place to enclose her-self in, moreover, her house that is full of:

"Religious pictures, but the one Carrie liked best was on the wall above her chair. It was Jesus leading lambs on a hill that was as green and smooth as the Riverside golf course. The others were not as tranquil: Jesus turning the money changers from the temple, Moses throwing the Tablets down upon the worshipers of the golden calf, Thomas the doubter putting his hand in Christ's wounded side (oh, the horrified fascination of that one and the nightmares it had given her as a girl!), Noah's ark floating above the agonized, drowning sinners, Lot and his family fleeing the great burning of Sodom and Gomorrah".<sup>30</sup>

Every corner and detail in that house reminds her of sin and fear. The demonic world shows its claws on those pictures that can be interpreted as means of torture inside the house, which looks like a firm prison with religious borders. Carrie cannot but surrender to her affiliations and divine orders that make the situation for her worse. A matter of fact that the modern city life brings much more anxiety to her, as nothing taught and received from the house is making sense outside. As a result, she is forced to face all of that with a psychological state that harms her more than the physical one.

### **The Demonic Water World**

It is well known that water is the source of life of which everything comes to existence from just some drops of rain, establishing an obvious fact that hearing the sound of river from a far is predicting all kinds of vegetation around or near it. It is

surely and without any shadow of doubt the first major trigger of life. Frye compares it to blood in the human and animal bodies, a matter of fact that blood also gives life to every being and its absence is a total death. That is why, at least from Frye's perspective, water, and its state is an indication of life or death as he asserts saying:

“The world of water is the water of death, often identified with spilled blood, as in the Passion and in Dante's symbolic figure of history, and above all the "unplumbed, salt, estranging sea," which absorbs all rivers in this world, but disappears in the apocalyptic yse in favor of a circulation of fresh water. In the Bible the sea and the animal monster are identified in the figure of the leviathan, a sea-monster also identified with the social tyrannies of Babylon and Egypt”.<sup>31</sup>

In the demonic world, water is no more a sign of life. It is a polluted sick liquid that only evil is featuring its existence. From that, authors can cover a wide range to use its symbol and mechanism to create accurate descriptions of a certain event or character. Furthermore, it has a strong relation to form and decide which season belongs to a certain type or genre according to the use of water or blood. The demonic aspect stops the circle of the “four aspects of the water-cycle (rain, fountains, rivers, sea or snow” (160)<sup>27</sup>, issuing a malicious entity that serves to consolidate the dark atmosphere or the somber character that alter and define the quality of a given context or genre and story.

#### ***7.4 The Fall of the House of Usher***

The author provides explicitly and implicitly symbols of doom and gloom attempting to embark on showing the reasons and consequences accumulating behind such a flow. Madeline is the shadow that haunts Roderick's mind and soul, as he drowned in confusion of how to release himself from the last blood presenting his whole family past, in the last pages, he was surprised of:

“Blood upon her white robes, and the evidence of some bitter struggle upon every portion of her emaciated frame. For a moment she remained trembling and reeling to and fro upon the threshold—then, with a low moaning cry, fell heavily inward upon the person of her brother, and in her violent and now final death-agonies, bore him to the floor a corpse, and a victim to the terrors she had anticipated”.<sup>32</sup>

Therefore, the blood on Madeline’s robes presents the return of Roderick’s blood to life, as through the whole story, Roderick tries to get rid of his strain, race or family that disturbs his consciousness affording him the taste of daily anxiety. Later on, the blood became the obstacle that prevents him from the outside world because it symbolizes the reviving of his forefathers after making sure of burying them. His sister coming back from the grave who is full of blood reassuring the fact of the solid past which in no other means must be accepted or fall under its chains. The author here pays great attention to show or link the blood to Roderick’s ambiguity and then amazingly at the very end where the Narrator describes the moments the house is falling, he was amazed:

At this fissure rapidly widened—there came a fierce breath of the whirlwind—the entire orb of the satellite burst at once upon my sight—my brain reeled as I saw the mighty walls rushing asunder—there was a long tumultuous shouting sound like the voice of a thousand waters—and the deep and dank tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the “House of Usher.”<sup>33</sup>

Out of this, the equations of life are recovered due to the fall of that house.” They are coming back after a long time of stupor, as the water in the vicinity of the author introduces two forms of which the world of water possess, the first one like blood which is the representation of the ancestors of Roderick that still live in his head and castle. The second water at the end is the cause of life or the sound of life returning to the fragments of the “House of Usher.”

To conclude briefly, in this book, water of death is the blood as a curse to the main character, and the water of life attend which all the gothic setting collapsed due to that

school and the town. Anyone who touches the water blended with electricity will be burned. This affirms that water world under the demonic sphere, in this case, is used to alter the anger Carrie has, as seen in the Bible where God uses water as a “source of life”, to turn it into a curse or a punishment to many civilizations.

### **Conclusion**

After understanding the demonic worlds as shown and analyzed in this chapter, gothic spectrum seems to fit exactly how Frye defines them. In other words, Frye developed an understanding of how the characters and dark horrors can exist in different worlds, each having its own typical form. This mechanism interprets well the horrors found in *Carrie* or *The Fall of the House of Usher* and other characters; and even the plot as well. Indeed, gothic features sound more or like these worlds that have the same qualities, and the same manner of existence in any gothic novel.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (New Jersey: Princeton Universitypress,1971), 147.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid,148.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid,148.

<sup>4</sup>Stephen King, *Carrie* (NewYork:BantamDoubledayDell,1974),11.

<sup>5</sup>Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (New Jersey: Princeton Universitypress,1971), 149.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid,149.

<sup>7</sup>Stephen King, *Carrie* (NewYork:BantamDoubledayDell,1974),19.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid,149.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid,25.

<sup>10</sup>TheBible

<sup>11</sup>EdgarAllanPoe, *TheFallofftheHouseofUsher*. ElegantBooks.Ibiblio,  
<https://www.ibiblio.org/ebooks/Poe/Usher.pdf>,4.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid, 9.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid, 8.

<sup>14</sup>Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (New Jersey: Princeton Universitypress,1971),36.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid,149.

<sup>16</sup>EdgarAllanPoe, *TheFallofftheHouseofUsher*. ElegantBooks.Ibiblio,  
<https://www.ibiblio.org/ebooks/Poe/Usher.pdf>,4.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid,16.

<sup>18</sup>Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (New Jersey: Princeton Universitypress,1971),183.

<sup>19</sup>EdgarAllanPoe,*TheFallofftheHouseofUsher*. ElegantBooks.Ibiblio,  
<https://www.ibiblio.org/ebooks/Poe/Usher.pdf>.3.

<sup>20</sup>Stephen King,*Carrie* (NewYork:BantamDoubledayDell,1974),58.

<sup>21</sup>Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (New Jersey: Princeton Universitypress,1971),150.

<sup>22</sup> EdgarAllanPoe,*TheFallofftheHouseofUsher*.ElegantBooks.Ibiblio,  
<https://www.ibiblio.org/ebooks/Poe/Usher.pdf>,6.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid,3.

<sup>24</sup>Stephen King,*Carrie* (NewYork:BantamDoubledayDell,1974),45.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid,43.

<sup>26</sup> Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (New Jersey: Princeton Universitypress,1971),150.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid,160.

<sup>28</sup> EdgarAllanPoe,*TheFallofftheHouseofUsher*.ElegantBooks.Ibiblio,  
<https://www.ibiblio.org/ebooks/Poe/Usher.pdf>,25.

<sup>29</sup> Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (New Jersey: Princeton Universitypress,1971),160.

## **Chapter Two: The Mythos of Winter: Irony in *The Fall of the House of Usher* and *Carrie***

### **Introduction**

As seen in the first chapter, the demonic worlds cover the gothic elements present in the two works, while this section will deal with the characters and their settings under the sixth phase of Frye's theory. In addition, the whole major findings generated from the first section will be invested in this one to achieve our main goal in which comparing the two stories to depict irony from their gothic features.

### **1. Parodies of The characters**

#### **1.1 Parodies of Romantic Roles**

After dealing with *Carrie's* and *The Fall of the House of Usher's* themes that correspond with Frye's sixth phase of irony, we are going to shed light on the characters. Northrop Frye states; "As structure, the central principle of ironic myth is best approached as a parody of romance." Here, it means that irony will be a parody of romance through different characters.

#### **1.2 *The Fall of the House of Usher***

##### **1.2.1 Roderick Usher**

In this story, there are three characters involved: Madeline Usher, Roderick Usher and the narrator whose identity is unknown. All of them can be parodies of romance by their roles in the novels. To start with, the principal character, Roderick Usher is described as a man who is both physically and mentally unfit. His mentality is defined by gloom and terror, and his look is starkly cadaverous. He lives in a misery and madness and it is mentioned in Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism* while he was speaking about parody of romance.

Actually, if we speak about romantic period during the eighteenth century, we find that Frye explains that the heroes and heroines are considered as being ideals in their society.”

In the case of Roderick Usher is not the same thing, by his acts and physical appearance, Roderick can be considered as an anti-hero. In the novel, the writer sheds light on how the hero reflects madness:

”..and for some moments, while he spoke not, I gazed upon him with a feeling half of pity, half of awe. Surely, man had never before so terribly altered, in so brief a period, as had Roderick Usher! It was with difficulty that I could bring myself to admit the identity of the wan being before me with the companion of my early boyhood.”<sup>1</sup>

Here, it is clear that the Narrator was shocked by seeing his old friend, it seems like he did not recognize him since he was a cadaverous man with unnatural physical appearance. Therefore, this can be a parody of a romantic role because it describes a hero who is completely in sane and not virtuous character.

### **1.2.2 Madeline Usher**

Lady Madeline, the beloved sister, Roderick describes her as “a tenderly beloved sister, his sole companion for long years, his last and only relative on earth.”<sup>2</sup> She is present for only short time when the narrator “regarded her with an utter astonishment not unmingled with dread; and yet I found it impossible to account for such feelings. A sensation of stupor oppressed me as my eyes followed her retreating steps. When a door, at length, closed upon her”<sup>3</sup>. From this quote, it is evident that she suffers from physical disease and just like her brother, Madeline might have lost interest in social interest.

In fact, romantic roles or heroines are usually described as beautiful women who contain a certain characteristics of a good behavior. But, In the novel, Madeline is

suffering and living a miserable life with her brother. According to the description of the Narrator, it can be argued that she never seems to be like the ordinary heroines. At the beginning of the story, nothing mentioned about her presence until she was killed by her brother and then she returns back from death to get revenge. Actually ,it was the first appearance of her. Here, the principle character of the story may reflect a parody of romantic role and being as an anti-heroine. By discussing and showing how Roderick dominates her, we feel that Medeline takes the role of both a human being and an unnatural character.

In *Anatomy of Criticism*, the concept of parody of romantic roles relies on the way of living. It means that these characters are described as persons who might have lost interest in their social activities. As a result, Madeline, as an example, is absolutely living in a dark and gloomy atmosphere. As a principle character of the story, she could be characterized by some of romantic heroine's aspects such as beauty, good behavior, love of their heroes ... But, Frye has explained that Irony is a parody of romantic roles which means characters are anti-heroes and heroines. So, this is what we can find in *The Fall of the House of Usher* when Madeline is seen only once during the whole novel. The heroines are actually fatal women with an imposing character and beautiful faces, but Madeline is completely different. In fact, at the last pages, Madeline came back from death to get revenge of her brother and this is a kind of supernatural:

“...but then without those doors there did stand the lofty and enshrouded figure of the lady Madeline of Usher. There was blood upon her white robes, and the evidence of some bitter struggle upon every portion of her emaciated frame. For a moment she remained trembling and reeling to and fro upon the threshold—then, with a low moaning cry, fell heavily inward upon the person of her brother, and in her violent and now final death-agonies, bore him to the floor a corpse, and a victim to the terrors he had anticipated.”<sup>4</sup>

In this section, it can be noticed that Madeline herself reflects what was said by Northrop Frye when he spoke about the human figures of the sixth phase. It represents the miserable and unhappy life of the characters, and how they are depicted as a parody of romantic roles.

### ***1.3 Carrie***

In this novel, the author Stephen King focuses on the reflection of religion on both the main characters Carrie and Margaret White. The extreme religious mother who pretends to be a good example to her daughter. In the story, we find that characters mainly living in a society that takes everything as a joke.

#### **1.3.1 Carrie White**

Carrie is a 16-year-old adolescent outcast who is teased at school because of her appearance and religious views. She is also rumored to have superhuman abilities, primarily telekinesis. She uses her newfound abilities to exact vengeance on her peers. Physically, she is described as an ugly and really hates herself, she seems to think that her life would be totally different if she were more attractive. Giving herself a makeover would be an escape from her world:

“...thought her legs were actually pretty. [...] She could stop the chocolates and her pimples would go down. They always did. She could fix her hair. Buy pantyhose and blue and green tights. [...] The price of a bus ticket, a train ticket. She could be, could be, could be—Alive.”<sup>5</sup>

In this passage, Carrie does not look like as the ordinary heroines, thus most Gothic heroines or characters are not mature people. They are too virtuous and clever to be very human. Most of them have a morbid craving for frightening experiences and are never content until they have investigated all ghostly rumors and impressionable horror tales. This is what happened with Carrie when she decided to take revenge over her classmates. She

uses her frightening power and get everyone in troubles. "It was time to teach them a lesson. Time to show them a thing or two. She giggled hysterically. It was one of my momma's pet phrases."<sup>6</sup> So, again, this character is completely different from the ordinary ones. She

lives in a society where respect and tolerance do not exist, and with her power and evil role, the author makes her an anti-heroine.

### 1.3.2 Margaret White

The extreme fanatical mother of Carrie, Margaret White is one of the principle characters in this novel. In fact, all of Carrie's craziness is immediately explained when analyzing her mother; she is another monster in a human body. Actually, in the novel, Edgar Allan Poe describes her as a lonely person who has no friends and no husband. She considers everything as a sin since she was young, and tries to dominate her daughter with all the evil means necessary. This character can be a parody of a romantic role because throughout the whole novel, the feeling of living in a dark and gloomy atmosphere is present. With her way of seeing life, and her beliefs she is reflected as being a person who is completely insane. And this is what King says in *Carrie*:

“Carrie started to go buck and then she stopped and this she started again, and just before she crossed over from our lawn to theirs she looked back at me and there was a look ... oh dreadful. I can't stay it. Wanting and hating and fearing... and misery.”<sup>7</sup>

Parody is present here, the character of Margaret says a lot about the anti-heroines. She is the evil who pushes Carrie to become a supernatural character. Instead of being the good mother who loves her daughter and protects her. She completely makes her a joke and a mockery in front of her classmates. Thus, these characters live in a society where there is no pity and hope. "But on the other side of this blasted world of repulsiveness and idiocy, a world without pity and without hope, satire begins again."<sup>8</sup>

Northrop Frye's explanation of the sixth phase of irony says that the human characters and the atmosphere of living is completely dark and mad, this is the parody of romantic roles for him. The devil figures are also mentioned in the novel, and the best example to be mentioned are Margaret and Carrie themselves.

## **Conclusion**

To end up with this first chapter, one can notice that the sixth phase of Irony that was presented by Northrop Frye in his book reflects the main themes and main notes in both *The Fall of The House of Usher and Carrie*. The human figures of madness and misery are parodies of romantic roles. So, with the gloomy setting and characters of both stories we can say that the two authors used a parody which is related to romance.

## **2. The Parody of the Setting in Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher* and Stephan King's *Carrie***

### **2.1 The Parody of the Modern City and Carrie's Fairy Tale Home**

The world of Carrie contains a complex setting. It has two conflicting poles coexisting ironically together. The author pays great attention to deliberately make the readers feel the anxiety residing in the first pole; the modern city, and the weirdness found in the second one; the house of Carrie.

Therefore, the house holds the spirit of the Church, that is to say, it gathers all the religious formalities and practices. For the house has "many religious pictures, but the one Carrie liked best was on the wall above her chair. It was Jesus leading lambs on a hill that was as green and smooth as the Riverside golf course."<sup>9</sup> Nature and Jesus are the main figures Carrie liked the best, hence, this serves as one of the features of a romantic hero who lives and must prosper especially in that house.

Moreover, the issue comes to an important position here, as Carrie does not find peace even in her own shelter. It does not represent her inner in spite of the familiar religious atmosphere that she was exposed to it since her childhood. Thus, there is a focal point that must be addressed to clear out the whole confusion Carrie has, Stephan King uses such an expressive dominant setting to show the way the main

character Carrie reacts to her own world, and then, how that world which appears perfect and romantic tortures her rather than rewards her purity. Consequently, the romantic world turned out to be Gothic. Thus, the word “home” or “shelter” would not fit to embrace Carrie’s inner:

“The Jesus impaled upon it was frozen in a grotesque, musclestraining rictus of pain, mouth drawn down in a groaning curve. His crown of thorns bled scarlet streams down temples and forehead. The eyes were turned up in a medieval expression of slanted agony. Both hands were also drenched with blood and the feet were nailed to a small plaster platform. This corpus had also given Carrie endless nightmares in which the mutilated Christ chased her through dream corridors, holding a mallet and nails, begging her to take up her cross and follow Him.”<sup>10</sup>

Coming across this particular informative quote, irony is demonstrated by the relation existing between the surroundings of Carrie and herself. The house reinforces the fake idealistic environment that poses the mind of the main characters, as explained before; Carrie is stuck in a reverse of paradoxical emotions because the setting forged a gothic world that haunts her. The house stimulates a kind of terror and severe behavior of not making any sin or mistake.

The home is about laws and commitment, no comfort even in her “tiny bed room. There were many more religious pictures here, but there were more lambs and fewer scenes of frighteous wrath. A Ewen pennant was tacked over her dresser. On the dresser itself was a Bible and a plastic Jesus that glowed in the dark.”<sup>11</sup>. As seen in this quote, the setting obviously serves to indoctrinate Carrie from the birth. All of religious activities of which gore and pain, are firstly shaping a rigorous gothic sphere that Carrie got used to its darkness. On the other hand, the romantic attribute consists in this book mainly of the house having all qualities to generate a happy romantic hero. Furthermore, strict asks and reminders are present everywhere in each corner to serve an idealistic model of reaching the highest behavior. All of that creates the exact environment for Carrie to prosper, but in this case, the house is a nightmare for her.

Ironically, the outside world or the modern city does not in any form meet with the expectation Carrie has, everything she learns in her house turns out to be false in the outside. Carrie seems to be trapped in between idealization and demystification of her own morals acquired and thrown in particularly her house. In fact, the hesitation and fear of Carrie is obviously seen when exposed to malicious behaviors and buildings existing in the modern city, as this quote provides:

“She walked down Ewen Avenue and crossed over to Carlin at the stoplight on the corner. Her head was down and she was trying to think of nothing. Cramps came and went in great, gripping waves, making her slow down and speed up like a car with carburetor trouble. She stared at the sidewalk. Quartz glittering in the cement. Hopscotch grids scratched in ghostly, rain faded chalk. Wads of gum stamped flat. Pieces of tin foil and penny-candy wrappers. They all hate and they never stop. They never get tired of it. A penny lodged in a crack. She kicked it. Imagine Chris Hargensen all bloody and screaming for mercy. With rats crawling all over her face. Good. Good.”<sup>12</sup>

This quote reveals the radical environment attacking Carrie's existence as an entity shaped by extremely different one (house). Each building and being is containing an anxiety of which none of them can be convenient to Carrie. The whole of that puzzles her equation of life, and transforms her into an alien creature living in a context that is not made for her. The irony of Romanticism as it is reflected in this book through both parts of the setting enlightening us; first, to adhere more to a theory that the author used the complex setting (poles) to introduce the chaos of the modernity existed since the enlightenment era. Second, it can be argued that the theme of irony is seen in the tensions between old and new world ideologies painted on all walls and structures of the modernity.

The school plays an important role in presenting the deficits or the highlighted well-known topics circulating among the new generation of people. It is, in fact, the image of the era, as the author used this particular place to point at the conflict existing between parts of the complex setting. Among those conflicts, the sharp

attacking on the woman's existence ; specifically with the attitudes of what the mother of Carrie taught her at home. It is worth mentioning that the concern of the school is the opposite of the home, as shown in this passage from *Carrie*:

“Margaret White was before my time, for which I am profoundly grateful. She told Mrs. Bickel, God rest her, that the Lord was reserving a special burning seat in hell for her because she gave the kids an outline of Mr. Darwin's beliefs on evolution. She was suspended twice while she was here—once for beating a classmate with her purse. Legend has it that Margaret saw the classmate smoking a cigarette. Peculiar religious views, Very peculiar.”<sup>13</sup>

Clearly, the depiction of two tendencies is seen from the above passage. On the one hand, science that contradicts with the religious views, and on the other hand, the romantic hero that has no place in a naturalist world, which the school is the representative of that ideology. The behavior that dwells inside the school remains around the “survive of the fittest”, while the other behavior resides in the home as the romantic spiritual and idealistic woman. All of that giving birth to fictional characters whom the readers have drawn into distinguishing the reasons why and how the superpower came into existence. The author then sheds light ironically to the modernity flourishing on all areas of life, at the same time, he delivers the clash between past and present, purity and modernity that are shown by the confusion of Carrie,

“She had tried to fit. She had defied Momma in a hundred little ways, had tried to erase the red-plague circle that had been drawn around her from the first day she had left the controlled environment of the small house on Carlin Street and had walked up to the Barker Street Grammar School with her Bible under her arm. She could still remember that day, the stares, and the sudden, awful silence when she had gotten down on her knees before lunch in the school cafeteria—the laughter had begun on that day and had echoed up through the years.”<sup>14</sup>

As emphasized here by Stephen King, the hero breaks the chains of the outside world while ironically got her anger from the same home giving her that ability. Out of that, the causes of her destruction are in fact partially came from her own preferable shelter, as we observe and examine this quote:

“On the West End of town, just below what is commonly called Brickyard Hill, the worst disaster had taken place: the explosion of a gas main and a resulting fire that raged out of control through most of the next day. And if we look at these flash points on a municipal map (see page facing), we can pick out Carrie's route—a wandering, looping path of destruction through the town, but one with an almost certain destination: home.”<sup>15</sup>

It can be understood that the entire outside world is meant to be destroyed by her superpower, which ironically came from anger of both poles of her setting either in the house that looks like a medieval sinister church; or in the outside, which school and all the city life mood added much more pain to what she already was feeling. A matter of fact of why she destroyed many buildings “with an almost certain destination :home”. The symbols in this passage are quite a sarcastic move from the author, he mentioned the hostility of the inner character over the exterior world, and at the same time; heading home is an irony. As demonstrated before, her house is never a home for her, nor even a peaceful place to live and relax in. Yet, all of the setting is her enemy and an anxiety for her; a woman or a romantic teenage girl who has suffered from all of her context and her salvation is just an illusion.

## **2.2 The Parody of Aristocracy in the Setting of *The Fall of the House of Usher***

It can be argued that the romantic and ironic impact do bring the novel to a rough understanding of what is occurring not only in the outside or the surroundings of the main character, but also to his inner state, all of that affording a possibility to regulate the aristocracy's perception of reality.

Edgar Allen Poe began the story by an unknown isolated and gloomy setting, it is found in no-where the readers, then, do not focus on the credibility of the setting by relating it to a real one. From that, it is a fictional story that real time and place are worthless. Moreover, the imagination and fictional elements are present just like in any typical romantic novel or poem.

In fact, in the very beginning, the spirit of irony is behind coining an unknown place for such an attractive beginning filled with gore and sorrow. The narrator felt that he “was forced to fall back upon the unsatisfactory conclusion, that while, beyond doubt, there are combinations of very simple natural objects which have the power of thus affecting us”<sup>16</sup>. Everything in the house or its vicinity is upside down, the extreme contrary of what things should be is happening in the vicinity of the house of Usher. Indeed, Frye allocates these situations as the demonic vegetable world, as the latter assists the tragedy and irony present in Roderick Usher’s setting and mind.

The detailed scenes depicted with the arrival of the Narrator on the horse are quite good qualifications to get into the heart of the story. The aristocratic way of life took over the minds of the Ushers. It is as if the setting settles an idea or an understanding of an emotional and psychological state of them. Their environment is firmly isolated from the rest of the world, and this perfectly meets with this quote delivered by Frye when asserting that,

“Romanticism is a sentimental form of romance, and the fairy tale, for the most part, a sentimental form of folk tale. Also there is a general distinction between fictions in which the hero becomes isolated from his society, and fictions in which he is incorporated into it. This distinction is expressed by the words “tragic” and “comic” when they refer to aspects of plot in general and not simply to forms of drama.”<sup>17</sup>

Roderick, just like his environment, is isolated completely from everything outside his borders. He is surrounded by a weird forest or nature, providing that his society exercises hegemony over the ones with the least power, as the meaning of life for Ushers cannot but be shifted, twisted, or partially distorted, in a way to hold on to the desires of the ones who have control; or the ones living under the aristocratic badge. That is to say that, idealization of the high class lifestyle owns their minds, no matter how worse the situation would be, Roderick must practice the daily aristocratic

lifestyle.

The environment presented in this novel is more or like a world full of darkness, Frye coins that world as the inorganic world. Nothing is identical to it despite the good music heard from “amplification of the wild air of the last waltz of Von Weber.” The narrator felt it as a sound that is “painfully in mind a certain singular perversion” The irony is that all the things supposed to be good and beautiful to hear, just like the songs, but in fact only negative energy is coming from all the surroundings of Roderick including he:

“Paintings over which his elaborate fancy brooded, and which grew, touch by touch, into vagueness at which I shuddered the more thrillingly, because I shuddered knowing not why—from these paintings (vivid as their images now are before me) I would in vain endeavor to reduce more than a small portion which should lie within the compass of merely written words.”<sup>18</sup>

The paintings are part of a storyteller just like other pieces of the setting. They specifically define the effects that are causing all the darkness hovering around the castle. The first thing to notice is the melancholy spreading through it, it is like a historical museum which has stories of a family whose only their prestigious way of life matters; however, these strong objects imply darkness and gloom. A gothic world that the sense of medieval scenes are present in a form of an old castle, and the romantic side as well. Accordingly, the green nature is entire ironically different from all what the readers might expect, as:

“The conditions of the sentience had been here, he imagined, fulfilled in the method of collocation of these stones—in the order of their arrangement, as well as in that of the many fungi which overspread them, and of the decayed trees which stood around—above all, in the long undisturbed endurance of this arrangement, and in its reduplication in the still waters of the tarn.”<sup>19</sup>

The quote above shows death signs instead of life ones. All the things in the house are having the opposite smell or sound and sight, in other words, nothing sounds identical to what it represents. For example, the music is no more a peaceful sound to hear,

instead, it provokes sorrow and depression, in few words, every prestigious thing that symbolizes aristocracy. In effect, they utter from just the description of them a strong evidence of nothing but a world shaped by emotions and obsession of certain values, mainly aristocratic way of life.

The entire world is a fiction and an illusion generated from spirituality and emotions giving birth to a demonic world as coined by Frye. That world allows us to analyze the in depth feeling of how the character really exercises his daily life, and how he sees his world. He is the perfect romantic character living in a gothic flesh, where for him, prosperity occurs only when adopting his forefather's views on high class. As a result, disorder, darkness, fear and sympathy towards the past is veiling the world or the setting of him, moreover, his mind is isolated from all other parts of the world, which the setting shows that explicitly.

## **Conclusion**

Even though the two texts are totally different another in form, they are very close in content. Many affinities are shared. Moreover, the strong theme that dominated the plot is the isolation of both main characters from their worlds. The attention, here, must be paid to the exact situation the characters face because the house of Carrie replaced the gothic Church while the castle of Usher remains the typical traditional gothic version. As explained in this chapter, the sense of horror resides in the populated city, and in the school as well. They give the same gothic affiliation similar to the house of Usher and its surroundings. This confirms that the gothic presence in the two works is expressed differently because of the context and its demands, but at the same time following the same old gothic pattern where, for example, donjons and dark gloom cathedrals were haunting the plot of gothic

literature.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Frye Northrop, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays*. ( New Jersey: Princeton Universitypress,1971),223.

<sup>2</sup>EdgarAllanPoe,*TheFallofftheHouseofUsher*.ElegantBooks.Ibiblio,  
<https://www.ibiblio.org/ebooks/Poe/Usher.pdf>,10.

<sup>3</sup>StephanKing,*Carrie* (NewYork: BantamDoubledayDell,1974),32.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid,31.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid,31.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid,32.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid,32.

<sup>8</sup>“The survive of the fittest” introduced by Herbert spencer in his book *The Principles ofBiology* (1898), it explains that only the powerful being or genes will survive, this infactaffectedmanyliteraryworksto adopt Naturalismasitsmaininspiration.

<sup>9</sup>StephanKing,*Carrie* (New York: BantamDoubledayDell,1974),144.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid,144.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid,144.

<sup>12</sup>EdgarAllanPoe,*TheFallofftheHouseofUsher*.ElegantBooks.Ibiblio,  
<https://www.ibiblio.org/ebooks/Poe/Usher.pdf>,4.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid,12.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid,16

## **VI. General Conclusion**

Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of The House of Usher* (1839) and Stephen King's *Carrie* (1974) are significant stories that have adopted Myth and Symbolism strategies for different aims.

Our assumption, is that despite the fact that the two authors belonging to different context, time and space, they actually share in a very similar ways principles which are sittings, characters, themes and style of writing.

To demonstrate this, we have relied on Northrop Frye's theory *Anatomy of criticism* (1957). It deals with the four essays that shows symbolism and myth. Through our analysis of the two stories, we came to a conclusion that the two writers applied different literature and cultural strategies in order to improve the Gothic style. With the study of Northrop Frey's theoretical framework *Anatomy of Criticism*; and the different researches we tried to study the two novels from Frey's view of Myth and symbolism. Although, these two books are written in two different periods; they share many different aspects; and through this study, we tried to illustrate them by using Frey's *Anatomy of Criticism*.

With the study of Northrop Frey's theoretical framework *Anatomy of Criticism*; and the different researches we tried to study the two novels from Frey's view of Myth and symbolism. Although, these two books are written in two different periods; they share many different aspects; and through this study, we tried to illustrate them by using Frey's *Anatomy of Criticism*.

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