

The Gothic Novel – The Most Important and Influential Genre Of Literature

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Abstract: This article reports on the gothic novel and its characteristics, which move and heighten human emotions through the description of scary, fantastic, ghostly events. Aim of the planned article: The aim is to counteract the lack of clarity in the descriptions of the genre as well as in the literary terminology of the gothic novel in order to develop a more strictly differentiated concept of the genre. It is also about understanding the origins and cultural-historical significance of the horror novel as a popular border phenomenon between the Enlightenment and modernity.

Keywords: Gothic novel, genre, shape, enlightenmen, gothic fiction, ghostly events, dark fantasy, grimdark fantasy, horror.

Introduction: Gothic – stylistic period of European art: mid-12th to early 15th century in Italy. Early 16th century in the rest of Europe (after the Goth tribe). [1.]

Gothic fiction, or the gothic novel, is a literary genre of fantasy that emerged in England in the mid-18th century. It experienced its first heyday in the early 19th century. Gothic fiction, sometimes referred to as Gothic horror (primarily in the 20th century), is a literary aesthetic of fear and haunting. The name of the genre is derived from the Renaissance era use of the word "gothic", as a pejorative to mean Medieval and barbaric, which itself originated from Gothic architecture and in turn the Goths.[2.]

The first work to be labelled as Gothic was Horace Walpole's 1764 novel *The Castle of Otranto*, later subtitled *A Gothic Story*. Subsequent 18th-century contributors included Clara Reeve, Ann Radcliffe, William Thomas Beckford, and Matthew Lewis. The Gothic influence continued into the early 19th century, with Romantic works by poets, like Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Lord Byron. Novelists such as Mary Shelley, Charles Maturin, Walter Scott and E. T. A. Hoffmann frequently drew upon gothic motifs in their works as well.

MAIN PART

A horror novel is a novel that aims to move and heighten human emotions through the depiction of gruesome, fantastic, ghostly events.[3.]

At the end of the 18th century, English literature revived the supernatural and unconventional, suppressed by the rationality of the Enlightenment, in the form of the Gothic novel. Horror became a consciously created aesthetic commodity that sold well. [4.270]

Literary scholars agree that fear and the Gothic novel are inextricably linked. Trautwein describes "Horror literature as a literary form that evokes horror in the reception process, i.e., activates fear in a certain way" [5.15] and Bernsen is of the opinion that "The central concern of the horror novel is to terrify the reader"[6.103]

Carroll argues that, especially in the horror genre, a specific strategy must be applied in order to trigger emotions: "The horror genre, however, is essentially linked with a particular effect – specifically, that from which it takes its name. The genres that are named by the very affect they are designed to provoke suggest a particularly tantalizing strategy through to pursue their analysis. Like works of suspense, works of horror are designed to elicit a certain kind of affect."

Horror novel unfolds, precisely calculated, very dark,

very intricate, very well. The reader is swept along by the logic of the horror novel and prepares for a gruesome fairy tale in the style of a Gothic novel.[7.]

With "The Castle of Otranto," Horace Walpole wrote the first Gothic novel in 1764. He thereby established a new genre in literature. The genre enjoyed enormous popularity from the mid-18th century onward. The name of this new genre was derived from the subtitle of Walpole's novel, "A Gothic Story." In Walpole's novel, however, gruesome events like the giant helmet falling from the sky seemed comparatively ridiculous. [4.273.]

Accordingly, in classic English horror novels, the alien, threatening space is usually relocated to Germany or Italy. The Catholic Church appears in keeping with the Enlightenment tradition of religious criticism as a haven of oppression, superstition, or perversion. The classic design elements of the Gothic novel include the heroic fight to free a beautiful, innocent heroine who has fallen into the clutches of a malicious tormentor, the escape-chase structure of the plot, underground prisons, dungeons and tombs or vaults as well as the gruesome, terrifying experience of inexplicable events or horrific apparitions, such as black masses or threatening natural phenomena, and encounters with uncanny or supernatural figures, such as mysterious strangers, doppelgangers or those who are apparently dead.[4.273.]

Death, decay, and darkly sublime landscapes, especially in Radcliffe's work, also provide motifs and design elements for staging horror, which is increasingly shifted from the external to the internal or psychological. The linguistic expression of fear and the eeriness or horror is further developed in Gothic romance to the limits of the pathological in order to linguistically penetrate and explore the extreme emotions. This, at the same time, is the true achievement of the horror novel: the reader shares at close quarters the mental anguish of the male or female protagonist and their fears of death, rape, the unknown, or worse still their own guilt. Although the cause of the horror is often rationally explained afterward, the text's emphasis is nevertheless clear. The gothic novel is considered an outdated literary genre, but this is unjustified. In truth, this genre has never gone out of fashion. As is often the case, the style lives on in other names and genres. (dark fantasy, grimdark fantasy, horror, etc.)

The gothic novel follows an originally authentic and honest approach. The brutal reality of reality takes center stage in the narrative, with the thoughts and motives of the characters taking precedence over the actual plot. The gothic novel takes an unclouded look at

the morality of society. Science and art, philosophy and medicine are often the subject of the story, and it is not uncommon for readers inclined towards the genre to be inspired to reflect. [7.]

In most cases, it's about a beautiful, innocent heroine who either arrives at a castle or is kidnapped there. There are plenty of secret passages, underground dungeons, and secret rooms. The castle is often quite dilapidated and dilapidated, and seems rather gloomy. It's hardly a cozy place, then. The focus is not on bloodshed, but on the eerie atmosphere, the secrets lurking in the dark, which evoke a pleasant shiver in the reader. Supernatural figures, such as the undead or ghosts, often appear.

Gothic fiction is characterised by an environment of fear, the threat of supernatural events, and the intrusion of the past upon the present. The setting typically includes physical reminders of the past, especially through ruined buildings that stand as proof of a previously thriving world that is now decaying. Characteristic gothic settings in the 18th and 19th centuries include castles, and religious buildings such as monasteries, convents, and crypts. The atmosphere is typically claustrophobic, and common plot elements include vengeful persecution, imprisonment, and murder.[8] The depiction of horrifying events in Gothic fiction often serves as a metaphorical expression of psychological or social conflicts. The form of a Gothic story is usually discontinuous and convoluted, often incorporating tales within tales, changing narrators, and framing devices such as discovered manuscripts or interpolated histories.

Gothic romance, in particular, is not only a love story but also about the direct experience of fear from the perspective of the main character, and until the end, it's often unclear whether the fear is justified or not rationally graspable.

Uncomfortable truths of horror literature:

At the end of life, death awaits us. Is dying perhaps the meaning of life?

Humans are not "moral" beings. Humans must take lives to ensure their own existence.

People aren't "good" or "bad". I don't want to know how I would behave in various situations. [7.]

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

For fear to arise in the reader, it seems necessary that they identify with the characters. The representational strategy of a novel must therefore aim to involve the reader in the depicted events. The reader then finds themselves in a process of interaction with the novel. This is evident in common parlance through phrases such as 'to be captivated by a book,' 'the book has cast

its spell over me,' or, in English, 'I got wrapped up in the story,' and 'to get into a story.' Therefore, it will be necessary to examine how emotions can be evoked in the reader during this process and which representational techniques are necessary for the reader to identify with the characters. Conrad already points out that the technique of representation is particularly important for generating fear: "Es geht im Schauerroman um einen ,praktisch ununterbrochenen Zustand der Spannung, der Panik und des Schauderns'. Im Schauerroman wird der Schrecken gleichsam multipliziert, indem mehrere zentrale, nur lose miteinander verknüpfte Handlungen zugleich wirksam werden. Der Schrecken erstreckt sich bis in die Nebenhandlungen hinein." [9.13]

That horror is often narrative suggests that with much horror, the interest we have and the pleasure we take may not primarily be in the object of art-horror as such – i.e., in the monster for its own sake. Rather, the narrative may be the crucial locus of our own interest and pleasure. For what is attractive – what holds our interest and yields pleasure- in the horror genre need not be, first and foremost, the simple manifestation of the object of art horror, but the way that manifestation of the object of art-horror, but the way that manifestation or disclosure is situated as a functional element in an overall narrative structure. [10.179] It was an attempt to blend the two kinds of romance, the ancient and the modern. In the former all was imagination and improbability; in the latter, nature is always intended to be, and sometimes has been, copied with success. The author of the following pages thought it possible to reconcile the two kinds.

CONCLUSION

To date, most studies on this literature are characterized by aspects such as genre definitions, conditions of origin, sociocultural background, and the history of motifs. For example, Clery (1995), Alewyn (1965), Bernsen (1996), and Begemann (1987) examine the emergence of fear in the Gothic novel with regard to the influence of the Enlightenment. Allesch (1987) and Zelle (1987) focus on the intellectual and philosophical background of the Gothic novel's origins. Conrad (1974), Day (1985), and Trautwein (1980) analyze the Gothic novel's formulaic inventory with regard to its representational techniques. Balint (1972), Pohl (1985), and Richardson (1959) interpret the Gothic novel from a psychoanalytic perspective. To date, there are few theories that aim to explore reader reactions in a differentiated manner. Since horror novels rely heavily on the effect of the implicit reader, it is immensely important to analyze the representational strategies used to achieve this effect. I expect particular success from an interdisciplinary research approach

that incorporates psychological questions, because this study concerns mechanisms of stimulus processing.

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