

The Exploration of Vampire and Horror Films and Its Influences in the Modern viewers and Readers of the World

R. Karthick Babu

Assistant Professor, Department of English

CARE Group of Institutions

Trichy

Dr. Abdul Mohamed Ali Jinnah

Assistant Professor, Department of English

Jamal Mohamed College

Trichy

Abstract:

The present investigation reveals about the horror genre and its influence in the world of literature and cinema. In this observation I have outlined the important features and different interpretations of vampires. Through this study I have presented a brief summary about the growth of horror in the field of literature, and films in addition, where I have summarized its form in other fields of culture and art. In sequence this research reveals about the how the genre characterises the readers and viewers of horror works and their objectives towards the quest of genre. In this paper, I have examined that how horror films and vampires made interesting for the common people in the way of entertainment and also its modern development with the use of technology.

(Keywords - genre, horror, dread, short story, novel, film, writer, director)

Introduction

In literature several subjects made a great impact by the different writers with new concepts. In that, Horror played a vital role in making this genre as worldwide acceptable. According to the literary terms Horror fiction, Horror Literature and also Horror fantasy turned as an important genre of literature, which is anticipated to terrify its readers, shock or upset viewers/readers by inducing feelings of horror and terror. Further, it generates a weird and frightening atmosphere to all. The horror oriented subjects can be either supernatural or non-supernatural. From the early history to modern period the Horror becomes usual but not necessarily the main ingredient of Gothic fiction. In this presented study I investigated about that how the horror story focused on creating a feeling of fear. In addition, it acquires a big part in forming the body of folk literature. The ingredients which have been used effectively as supernatural elements and features such as ghosts, witches or vampires or they can address the realistic psychological fears.

I. The Traditional Development of Horror

The term 'horror' defines about murder, suicide, torture, fear and madness and it depicts that these stories have discussed about the ghosts, vampires, doppelgangers, succubi, incubi, poltergeists, , diabolic possession and exorcism, witchcraft, spiritualism, voodoo, lycanthropy and the macabre. in proportion to *Literary Theory* the word 'horror' derives from Latin word 'horre' 'to make the hair stand on end, tremble, and shudder'. But, the term 'horror' is not clear imaged as that horror story first came into use. A series of horror stories are serio-comic or comic-grotesque, however it is high alarming or frightening the readers.

In comparison to other genres horror takes the most interesting relationship with literature of other fictions. Constantly, horror has the most transmission heaped upon it of any form of genre fiction. In contrary to that, several of the works of literature became popular fall into the horror genre. And in fact, it is not easy to study the Romance era literature without the horror novel--*Dracula, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Frankenstein*, etc. The other period's apt to tell the same stories, as tales of terror tend to live on despite of age.

In the land of American literature, Edgar Allen Poe was lauded as one of the great writers in the world of horror literature. However a reader one who reads the works like *The Raven, The Pit and the Pendulum* or any other collections from his cosmic store of macabre will be the evidence of the best. Poe has entrenched the horror genre firmly to the readers as a best choice of reading literature. The important fact is that these tales are of pure horror dealing

with topics of the foundation and most pulp-worthy nature largely unseen. This kind of productive ignorance is not limited to the writers as outrageously horror had been driven as Poe. In literature various sacred figures have experimented in the realm of horror. In addition, the renowned authors like Faulkner, Dickens, Melville, Vonnegut and Woolf all of them contributed their prolific works in the horror at the same period of their profession.

Likewise, horror has recognized as a trendy form of fiction in various different cultures. Although the country like America and England had a great fond of popular horror stories in their market and even the stories from the other nations to discover their mode into the horror consciousness. For example, the terms like ‘**Chupacabra**’ from Central and South America and the ‘**Wendigo**’ from Canada have turned into the chronicle figures of the world of literature. And even in the contemporary works of literature restrains the noteworthy elements of horror. In general, these kinds of elements downplayed with serious treatments in the recent works. And unfortunately today, this magnanimous level of admiration is not extended to the more popular works of horror fiction.

II. Influence of Gothic in Horror Films

From the early centuries to modern age the term ‘horror’ and ‘gothic’ has clubbed with the world of films in all traditions and cultures. In further, the horror films have been strongly related with Gothic and horror literature right from the beginning. According to Kaye (2000:180), some of the premature films were imitated from the Gothic literature, and in later on these elements were extended into various film genres. In particularly, the prolific works like *Frankenstein*, *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and *Dracula* has played a major impact and encouragement in the 19th Century Gothic literature (Kaye 2000:180). And also the some of popular films from Murnau’s *Nosferatu*, *A Symphony of Terror* (1922) to Modern Edition of *Dracula II: Ascension* (2003) directed by Patrick Lussier (Delahoyde 2002) have influenced by the vampire novels. Moreover, the various *Dracula* cinematic techniques in the early period were influenced by the Broadway play which starred Bela Lugosi, the actor whose concert as the Count in Browning’s *Dracula* in 1931 was the representation for many of the subsequent versions of *Dracula*. In that, Lugosi’s Count was a stylish, seductive foreign aristocrat instead of Stoker’s abhorrent and physically as unique looking vampire. Therefore, the image and characteristics of vampires had started to transform from the early period. . During the 60’s and 70’s of the *Dracula* versions of British Hammer Studios clearly projected the sexuality where as they had got the punishment in the end and it is almost impossible to differentiate the part of the vampire films.

As the vampire film genre is strongly linked to literature, it has major influenced in the world of cinemas. Hence, in the later centuries the development of the genre has been undestructive. The great writer Hughes (2000:148) stated that the major modifications in storyline and depiction made a great impact in the analysis about the vampires in different views. However in the 19th century the vampire characters like Dracula were embodied in texts by other characters as victims, or a writer with a negative outlook, and in that many of the modern ones have acquired a voice of their own (Hughes 2000:148). In the modern writings, vampires have turned out to be the vital characters of the stories, and therefore the readers regularly treated them as more sympathetic and it gave an opportunity to access their thoughts. Among the other writers Anne Rice has grown to be one of the most prominent writers in reforming the vampire genre, whereas majority of her books were traditional folkloric and religious elements linked to vampirism are stripped away. In that, Rice's novels were depicted vampirism as an enviable position and decline the theological judgement where it has replaced it for example with sensuality with strong homoerotic feelings (Hughes 2000:149-151). Hughes pointed out that vampirism became a "fashionable" "lifestyle", also the attitudes of the victims changed; the humans enjoy, and even actively seek, their 'victimisation'. Hughes (2000:148). For example, in Rice's novels biting is mostly a mutual, erotic experience far removed from the violence of early vampires. Some elements of the change in vampire image can be seen also in Coppola's version of *Dracula*.

III. Horror Films and Its Development:

In the world of literature and cinema, horror genre has become a central subject for the writers and movie makers, yet it is somewhat marginalised. As the early classics of Universal studios horror genre is not considered as a favourite topic for the top mainstream studios. And for an instance, in spite of its huge popularity, horror was often the genre of B-grade films with low budgets, or works of independent filmmakers. The Bigger productions of the movie makers have produced the movies like *Psycho* (Hitchcock 1960), *Rosemary's Baby* (Polanski 1968), *The Shining* (Kubrick 1980) or *The Silence of the Lambs* (Demme 1991), are exceptions to this rule. In addition, they have a tendency to produce the movies to be closer to psychological thrillers than pure monster stories. But, in the case of *Coppola's Dracula*, the monster has been modified by adding a romance to the story and it is a typical Hollywood standard.

According to the historical development of an early horror films can be old-fashioned almost to the beginning of the film industry. The origin was set off in horror literature and it has been initiated in folk stories and fairy tales, magic, witchcraft, myths, fables or ghost stories. The main objective of the early gothic literature works of John Polidori, Mary Shelley

and Bram Stoker etc., were the titles for the primary movies of this genre. And its most notable pioneers were the speechless films from the era of German expressionism as *Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari* (The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari, 1920) by **Robert Wiene**, *Nosferatu* (1922) by **Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau** or *Der Golem* (The Golem, 1915) by **Paul Wegener**. In further to that, the gothic characters were replicated in the settings of the plot which were terrifying old mansions, castles and fortresses and misty dark places. Among such kind of gothic fictions the central characters were inhuman, supernatural beings such as vampires, madmen, demons, unfriendly ghosts, monsters, zombies like (Frankenstein, split personalities like Jekyll/Hyde), satanic villains, werewolves, mad scientists and freaks. At sometimes it was an undetectable immaterial evil, which filled the surroundings. After the great reformation and success in 30's of the 20th century the cinematography of horror movie got popular to the next level. The great production unit like Hollywood film productions, which did not accept the horror genre from its collections, they have accredited the genre where it make the horror genre had got great popularity and massive growth among the public. In the field of Hollywood film industry, renowned director **Tod Browning** and **Mr. Lon Chaney**, his favourite actor has to be remembered for long since they made horror films as more fashionable to the world. Their combination continued for a long as a result they have produced films like *Outside the Law* (1921), *The Unholy Three* (1925) or *West of Zanzibar* (1928). Moreover, he acted in movies like *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1923) by director **Wallace Worsley** and *The Phantom of the Opera* (1925) by **Rupert Julian**. The first film version of Stephenson's had been produced in the year 1920 which was starred by John Barrymore. According to the ages the movies like *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and *The Phantom of the Opera* were remade and modified. After eleven years later, the first version of the novel *Frankenstein* as a film was directed by **James Whale** where the leading role was performed by Boris Karloff. Later, the novel 'The legend of the werewolf' debuted on the screen in the year 1935 (The Werewolf of London). And the other noteworthy works of this period were *King Kong* (1933), *Dracula* (1931), *Freaks* (1932), *The Invisible Man* (1933), *The Mummy* (1932), *The Ghoul* (1933) and many others. Subsequently they produced the films that combined the basic myths, such as *Frankenstein and Meets the Wolfman* (1943). In addition to that, in the 20th century the horror genre has grown up to the different set up and style which made the people to be crazier and interested. Owing to the development of different subjects in horror genre which became the guideline for the creators, own fears of the experience of the era such as The Cold War. Among the collections, '*Invasion of the Body Snatchers*' (1956) by **Don Siegel** become the most notable film metaphor of the age. In the movie *The Incredible Shrinking Man* (1957) directed by **Jack Arnold** referred the

consequences about radiation. They have experimented the main characters were shrink and projected the images in characterisation according to our everyday life, such as his cat or a spider, mean fatal danger. This is the age where the film studios started experimenting with three-dimensional effects.

Through the film *House of Wax* (1953) brought Vincent Price, the actor who acted as sculptor professor Henry Jarrod, fame and he so called as “King of Horror”. During this period the new era has started by experimenting the first adaptations of Edgar Allan Poe’s (for example *The Fall of the House of Usher* (1960), *The Pit and the Pendulum* (1961) or *The Raven* (1963), in which all of this films the main character was mostly played by Vincent Price. On the other hand, it was also the age of some of the most success films like *Psycho* (1960), *Birds* (1960) and *Marnie* (1964) produced by **Alfred Hitchcock**. And then the Polish director **Roman Polański** produced a film *Rosemary’s baby* (1968). By the time the adaptation of zombie-film series of **George Romero’s**, *Night of the Living Dead* (1968) excelled as the best of the time. In 1970s were the time as called as The Age of Horror. They films and works were characterized by more and more rigorous representation of violence, blood and brutality. As a part of success in 1971 **Stanley Kubrick**, the prominent American director directed a movie *Clockwork Orange* based on the eponymous novel written by Anthony Burgess. The movie traced out the theme about violence, murders and behaviourist experiments that tried to eradicate the negative factors. Then in the year 1974 **Tobe Hooper** released his low-budget film *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, which gained the cult status. A few years later other sequels of the story about the mass murderer Ed Gain were produced. In the following year 1975 *Rocky Horror Picture Show* was shot and it combined the genres of horror, musical and comedy, and was later adapted for theatre. **Steven Spielberg’s** blockbuster about a killer white shark, *Jaws*, was released in the same year. Among the other important films of this period were, *The Exorcist* by **William Friedkin** from 1973, *Halloween* by **John Carpenter** from 1978 or *Alien* by **Ridley Scott** from 1979. The period of 80s and the 90s were dominated by so called slashers, where the main characters were usually mentally disturbed serial killers or mass murderers, who chose youngsters or women as victims. The Legends of Freddy Krueger from *A Nightmare on Elm Street* and Jason from *Friday the 13th* were born. The creators produced a series of successful sequels in 2003 which they even confronted them in the film *Freddy vs. Jason*. In 1988 Chucky, the killer doll-boy was born in the film *Child’s Play*, which was later followed by two sequels. It was thus a period of trilogies and sequels from which only few are to be mentioned: trilogy of **Sam Raimi** *Evil Dead*, eight films of *Hellraiser*, which reach the 21st century, the first film of the Hannibal Lector quatrolgy, *Silence of the Lambs*

based on the novel by **Thomas Harris** and the *Scream* trilogy by **Wes Craven**. The most famous works of the contemporary horror film, the so-called 21st century horror were *The Ring* (2002 – the American remake of the Japanese *Ringu* from 1998) and *The Ring Two* (2005); *The Grudge 1-3* (2004 – 2009, also a remake of a 2002 Japanese film *Ju-On*) or *Dark Water* (2005, remake of the Japanese *Honogurai mizu no soko kara* from 2002). From under the hands of **James Wan** came the *Saw* and its sequels, which is a horror about a jigsaw killer and can be considered as a slasher with a very detailed and interlaced plot. Other significant films are *Hills Have Eyes I – II* (2006 & 2007, remake of a 1977 film); *Creature From the Black Lagoon*, (2007, first shot in 1954) or the sequels of the successful horrors of previous periods such as several sequels and a prequel to *The Exorcist*.

IV. Types of Horror Films

According to Johnson, it is possible to differentiate between four motivational groups, which stimulate the viewer to watch horror films:

- 1.) *Gore watching* – this approach reflects the curiosity for physical violence and revenge. The viewer is interested in the way the victims are dying, he likes to see what they deserve. He likes the view of blood and gore. He is characterized by a low level of empathy, lowered levels of fear and increased desire for revenge.
- 2.) *Thrill watching* – the viewer is interested in the emotion of tension and excitement evoked by a horror film. Typical features are high level of empathy and longing for adventure.
- 3.) *Independent watching* – These are independent viewers who chose a particular role that assumes testing their own bravery and adulthood. They are described by a low level of dispositional empathy
- 4.) *Problem watching* – The viewer watches the horror because he feels abandoned, angry and he tries to avoid the problems of his mundane life. He seeks excitement in the suffering of others and often identifies himself with the victim this way revealing his own powerlessness.

Conclusion:

There are many theories about what drives us to these works, which are contradictive and unable to embrace the complete horror production but only some of the themes or subgenres, and which are related only to a particular limited category of recipients. Every horror fan has their own reasons for seeking outputs that are full of deterrent elements and motives. Some want to experience what they are not allowed in real life; some want to escape from the uncomfortable reality; some are testing their character; some increase their tolerance to fright and fear to avoid panic in dangerous real life situations. Many times they cannot even explain or describe what drives them to seek outputs of horror production, they only know they enjoy

them. However, there is always reason, but it might be hidden in the deepest corners of our soul and mind which are hard to reach.

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