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**Human Psyche and the Creation of Horror in Edgar Allan Poe - The case of *the Black Cat* and *the Mask of tphe Red Death*.**

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## Declaration

We hereby solemnly declare that the work we are going to present in this thesis entitled *Human Psyche and the Creation of Horror in Edgar Allan Poe's Selected Short Stories-the case of the Black Cat and the Mask of the Red Death...* is our own to the limits of our knowledge, has not been submitted before to any other institution or university or degree and all sources that we have used and quoted from have been indicated by means of complete references. This work is to be carried out and completed at Mohamed Boudiaf University M'sila, Algeria.

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1..... 2.....

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**Date: June 2019**

## **Dedications**

Our study is dedicated to our source of strength and inspiration, warm Hearts, and sun lights; our beloved Parents-Fathers and Mothers who have been supportive all along life, with heartfelt thanks for their countless efforts since 1994 until today. To our families, BOUCHELOUH and BEN GUESMIA, To our brothers and sisters

Bouchelouh (Noureddine, Oussama, Mohamed, wissam).

Benguesmia ( Fadila, Widad, Ahmed Amine).

To our relatives and friends (Saad Meriem, bey Souhir, Benguesmia Imane, and Aicha). To everyone who has encouraged and supported us in achieving this humble work.

**Miss Bouchelouh Amira**

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**Miss Bouchellouh Amira**

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## Abstract

The present research studies the works of Edgar Allan Poe. It discusses Edgars style of writing short stories and mainly focuses on the aspects of human psyche and creation of horror in Poe's short stories. It throws light on the ways in which Edgar has presented the different aspects of psyche and also takes into account the creation of horror in the selected short stories-*The Black Cat and the Mask of the Red Death*. Moreover, it emphasizes the manner in which Edgar Allan Poe reflects his awareness of the complex realities of human life and in using Gothic Fiction to choose the elements of horror and suspense in order to picture out the aspects of human mind and nature. The study will shed lights on two of Poe's short stories which will bring into light how Edgar successfully presents the thinking processes of the human brain, in a specific style of writing short stories of horror and suspense.

**Key words:** horror, human psyche, gothic, romantecism, disturbed, mind

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# General Introduction

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## *General Introduction*

The research is about exploring Edgar Allan Poe's description of human psyche in his short stories. It will throw light on the manner in which Poe reflects his awareness of the complex realities of human life. Edgar Allan Poe chose the elements of horror and suspense in order to present these aspects of the human mind. These elements, will for sure be beneficial for the readers and even for the common people who then will be able to solve their problems regarding human psyche. They will understand the reasons behind certain emotions and behaviors which eventually help them live a less conflicted life.

Most of Poe's short stories show his interest in the theme of death, and this is the result of his experience; thus he saw the death of many of his dear ones and it is also the outcome of the disturbed life he lived. Edgar Allan Poe is that literary figure of the century who had suffered a lot in his life. His father left his family after one year of his birth in 1810. And his mother died the next year. Not only he lost his parents but he lost his other family members as well. His brother William died young and his sister Rosalie lost her mind. Orphaned, he was then taken to the house of John and Frances Allan, of Richmond, Virginia who never properly adopted Poe. Consequently, the young writer received his middle name "Allan" from them and he lived with them till his adulthood.

Tension created when Edgar and John Allan repeatedly clashed over debts which occurred as a result of gambling. Edgar Allan Poe did join the university but after a semester he left it due to lack of money. Tensions between Poe and Allan increased day by day because of the lack of money for his education and as a result he enlisted in the army with an assumed name in 1827. During that time, he began his publishing career, with anonymous collection of poems in 1827.

The death of Frances Allan in 1829 established pleasant-sounding relations between Edgar and John Allan temporarily but later, Poe parted his ways with him. After this, he married his cousin, Virginia Clemm in 1835, who was 13-year-old but even this relation did not last long in his life and his wife died of tuberculosis and once again he was left alone and isolated and then he started taking drugs. He himself died very young just at the age of forty and the cause of his death is also unknown and it is usually attributed to drugs, tuberculosis, cholera, brain congestion, suicide, heart disease, alcohol, and other agents.

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Edgar Poe was one of the greatest but unhappiest literary figures of America who is a master of mysterious tales. So, his experience of these awful and terrible events of his life made his life a bitter and stormy one and he was alcoholic, an epileptic and a drug addict and it is because of these problems and failures in his life that he preferred to write about death, destruction, horror, mystery and about the thinking of human mind.

This dissertation deals with the two short stories of Edgar Allan Poe, The black Cat and the Masque of the Red Death. These short stories are best examples about the human psyche where horror is created by presenting the evil side of human mind and by depicting the sinful thinking of mankind. Edgar has created a new kind of horror and through these elements of horror; he tried to provide a reflection of human psyche. Therefore, this dissertation is held to study the reflection of human psyche and the creation of horror in Poe's short stories. To better discuss horror and explore the human psyche, two main objectives were thus formulated-

1. To determine the significant elements of horror in Poe's selected short stories.
2. To show how far Edgar Allan Poe explored the disturbed human psyche in his short stories.

To achieve this, two research questions were formulated-

1. What are the significant elements of horror in Poe's short stories "The Black Cat» and "The Masque of the Red Death."?
2. How far does Edgar Allan Poe explore the disturbed human Psyche in his short stories?

The themes Poe chose to present in his stories portray the disturbed unconscious of his characters so the presence of horror in his work makes it more appealing which opens many doors to understand the complex of human psyche. He himself spent a conflicted and a disturbed life, so he chose those themes in his short stories which may help people to overcome their conflicts. So, by writing short stories he has tried to overcome the grief and the depression of people by telling them indirectly about the different reasons of the complexity of human behavior.

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Carroll Dee Laverty claimed that

*"Poe tried to understand the human mind in health or disease. By observing and analyzing his own mental activities, by objective scrutiny, and by reading some of the authorities of his time, he added to his knowledge of psychology. He also had more than average understanding of those pseudoscientific offshoots of psychology, phrenology and mesmerism." (1951: Chap3, pp45-46)*

His writings show interest in formal psychology, in human character as exhibited in the dramatis personae of his stories, and in insanity and the disintegration of the mind. Edgar Allan Poe wrote short stories about the evil human nature of human mind, death, despair, destruction, suspense, mystery, and darkness. So, according to him, the death of human soul is actually the death of human mind- a complete fatal blow symbolized in terrifying horror.

Hence, horror, according to The Dictionary of Literary terms and Literary Theory, the word "horror" comes from the Latin word "horror" to make the hair stand on end trouble and shudder. According to Merriam Webster Encyclopaedia of literature horror story focuses on creating a feeling of fear via using supernatural elements and features such as: ghost, witches, or vampires that can address more realistic psychological fears. Edgar Allan Poe as a master of the horror story by including fears that are related to death, afterlife, punishment, darkness, evil, violence and destruction.

For Bylund, Edgar Allan Poe wrote horror stories with elements from a gothic literary style as well as subjects about condemned souls and madness. He is also said to be the inventor of the detective fiction. His literary career contained numerous short stories, poetry as well as editorial work on periodicals and literary criticism (2000:2). Indeed, Melissa McFarland confirmed that Edgar attempted to make his short stories seem more interesting by including darkness, death, evil, madness and mystery to serve the elements of gothic fiction and by creating a suspense at the end to make the reader's heart beat faster. (2006).

Nicole Smith added that Poe's works are associated with the themes that contain the themes of gothic fiction; the pervasive theme of death and decay. The presence of madness, insanity or other internal chaos. The character in Poe's work associated with death or being mourned for instance: In "Ligeia" (1838); the love of the narrator's life has passed away and he must try to get through his life without her. (2011)

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Although all of his short stories dealt with the aspects of dark romanticism, the most notable mysterious stories which can be horrible in true sense were *"The Fall of the House of Usher"*, *"The Pit and the Pendulum"*, *"The Murder in Rue Morgue"*, *"The Masque of the Red Death"*, and *"The Black Cat"*. In these stories the aspects of horror actually horrify the readers and it be also taken as windows to the human soul and mind. Poe tries to investigate the psychology of man, but mostly focuses on discovering facts about the negative nature of human mind.

For Merriam Webster, *"Mystery is a work of fiction in which the evidence related to a mysterious events or crime so that the reader has the opportunity to solve the problem. The elements of mystery are horror and terror, crime or any situation involving enigma"*. (1995, 793).

Poe's short stories are famous for their insight into human psyche. Every single story of his is followed by a discussion of the psychological principles. The stories are helpful in a sense that even common people seem to understand the lessons Poe wanted to teach

It is normally observed that literature holds a mirror of the true human life. It endeavors to show the human psyche in order to avail people to develop a better understanding of intricate human deportment and the reasons behind such emotions. Many literary figures have endeavored to depict human behavior through the expedient of different genres like novels, poetry, essays, short stories and drama etc. Short stories and novels are commonly regarded as work of fiction. Fiction does portray imaginary characters and fanciful stories but it genuinely portrays true aspects of life which in turn avail to examine human psyche and soul because it is ordinarily thought that a person's compartment is greatly determined by his intellect.

It is conventionally said that the human brain is the most intricate structure made by God, which is not easy to read and also very difficult to understand. The study of psychology tries to see the working of this complex structure of human body. However, some literary figures tried to throw light on different aspects of human psyche even before the field of psychology was introduced. It is important to know what is actually meant by the word 'psyche'.

In addition, Winastri, conducted a study entitled Psychoanalysis on Edgar Allan Poe's William Wilson, The Black Cat & Tell-Tale Heart. It shed light on the characterization & psychoanalysis of three main characters based on their appearances into the short stories. The main characters in these stories were impulsive, imaginative, solicitous, unmanageable, & a

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heavy drinker. These stories indicated love & hate relationship which turned into tragedy. Similarly, Adhikari (2014), conducted a study entitled Psychology in Crime & Confession: A Critical Study into Poe's Short Stories the Tell-Tale Heart & The Black Cat which was merely focused on finding these fundamental issues of psychology, crime & confession in these two stories as a critical approach to carry out.

Hence, according to Skipp, *the Black Cat* is one of Poe's masterpieces in which there is much madness and mind troubles; that is why it reflects the psychology of Edgar Allan Poe (1992). Leane R. Mille, in another version said that Poe utilized a variety of methods in his works to manipulate the public's reception of him as well as to receive personal or financial gain, among these methods the use of Daguerreotypes, Pseudonyms, Cryptograms and falsified documents (2007). Indeed, for Leanne, Poe's biography has pretty much a big influence in his works that may help the reader to interpret and appreciate his works. (2007).

Stephen Peithman sees that Edgar's short stories had a big influence on many gothic authors as: H. P Lovecraft and Ambrose Bierce. Poe's literary works are widespread in popular culture. (1986). Poe's short stories such as: "*The Tell\_Tale Heart*" (1843) and "*The Mask of The Red Death*" (1842) are frightening and containing horrifying themes, so the reader may refuse to reread it again, perhaps from a fear that the satisfying terror of the first reading (Ibid). Additionally Hitchcock claimed that Poe's short stories are shorter to make the reader remember it, and it is decorated with symbols which has been made familiar since Poe's time in order to make the story seems obvious (1960).

Furthermore, Farida (2013), conducted a study entitled Mystery & Oddity in Edgar Allan Poe's *The Tell-Tale Heart*. This dissertation studied about the gothic elements; mystery & oddity in *The Tell Tale Heart*. In this research, the researcher has applied mystery & oddity with the influence of psychoanalysis theory that has taken an important part in this story. The researcher can find these gothic elements & reach the appearance of Freud's theory

As to the methods we have chosen to analyze Edgar Poe's short stories is the psychoanalysis approach that can serve to answer the questions previously mentioned. Since the attitudes are greatly affected by the human psyche, psychoanalysis criticism helps in understanding the relation between the narrator and the two short stories, with the use of figurative language. Also, a qualitative method will be used in order to analyze the material and attain a more complete understanding of the short stories of Edgar Allan Poe. As the research is qualitative too, opinions and points of view will be drawn. The study is descriptive,

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exploratory, and analytical; hence analytical methods will be used in analyzing the content through detail descriptions of the short stories based on the personal views about the topic, and gathering relevant data from the specified documents and compiling databases.

Data collection will consist of multiple different research articles, literary opinions of literary critics and followed by a general note collection. Different secondary and primary sources are exploited in order to provide a thorough data collection and opportunities for the future researchers. Upon collecting the qualitative data derived from the above mentioned sources a complete and a careful analysis will be done.

The present study is divided into two chapters in addition to the general introduction and conclusion. The first chapter is entitled Poe's psyche and is divided into two sections. Section one deals with overviews and definition of human psyche, the meaning of psyche for Freud as a pioneer, literary figures and human psyche, Edgar Allan Poe's life and his adoption, writing about human psyche. The second section defines horror, gives an idea about it in Poe's short stories and shows the horror elements Poe uses and a brief idea about the modern horror tales.

Chapter two which is features the analysis of both the Black cat and the Mask of the Red Death-Hence for both short stories. Chapter Two fully treats the Human Psyche and the creation of Horror analysis in the Black Cat and The Mask of the Red Death. It includes the Human Psyche and the Elements of horror in *The Black Cat and and The Mask of the red Death*. The chapter ends with some literary critics.

The research will bring into light Edgar Allan Poe's depiction of human psyche and behavior which will help the readers to better adapt to their environment and to people in their lives. The research will provide the common people with a better understanding of their behavior and the psyche of other people.

The research will be limited to Poe's presentation of different human behaviors in his short stories. It will bring into light the manners in which Poe has treated the character in his short stories and will also discuss the significant elements that occurred within.



# **CHAPTER ONE:**

**Poe's Psyche and horror -**

**Definition and Psychological Views**



## **Section One:**

# **Edgar Poe and the Human psyche**

Introduction

1.1. Overview and Definition of Human Psyche

1.2. The Meaning of Psyche for Freud as a Pioneer

1.3. Psychologist's views of human psyche

1.3.1. For Carl Jung

1.3.2. For Lawrence Kohlberg (1927-1987)

1.4. Literary Figures and Human Psyche

1.5. Edgar Allan Poe's life and his adoption to writing about Human Psyche

Conclusion

# Edgar Allan Poe and the Human psyche

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## Introduction

The American Romantic Age is best represented through the writings of Edgar Allan Poe whose writings namely his poems and short stories reveal the dark side of romanticism in which the characters are selectively chosen to mirror Poe's perverse mind. Poe's stories have been described as tales of horror which are often strange, wild and highly imaginative. Many of them examine the dark side of human existence and the inner conflict in remorse. Poe's short stories communicate a world of terror that comes straight from the depths of his own troubled mind. All his writings bear and explores the psyche where Profound psychological insights glow and gradually emerge throughout the stories.

### 1.1. Overview and Definition of Human Psyche

The word psyche is the whole of the human intellect, awareness, and unconsciousness. The word holds a long history in the field of psychology and philosophy and was a fundamental concept for the understanding of people from a scientific perspective. Sometimes the meaning of the word soul is used in terms psyche. In psychoanalysis and other grades of depth psychology, the term psyche is referred to the strengths of an individual that influence his attitude, behavior, manners, thought patterns and personality. (The New Yorker, March 1, 1982 P.52).

Psyche is a complex and different process. It is a kind of mirror globe that acts as reflection of the personality of an individual. So, a globe with more mirrors is the true reflection of realities of life and a highly complex psyche is the more detailed depiction of life but on the other hand it is likely to present some distorted images.

*“In the manner of my friend I was at once struck with incoherence--an inconsistency; and I soon found this to arise from a series of feeble and futile struggles to overcome a habitual trepidancy--an excessive nervous agitation. For something of this nature I had indeed been prepared, no less by his letter, than by reminiscences of certain boyish traits, and by conclusions deduced from his peculiar physical conformation and temperament. » (The Fall Of house Of Usher P.8).*

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Mind is the controlling center of passions, thoughts and actions and it consciously or unconsciously adjusts the body's actions to societal norms. This process is defined as psyche.

*"...human being possesses another side of his personality which is perverse and wicked. It is another self which instigates him to do evils without any obvious reason or apparent motive. The narrator admits in the beginning that he had committed the murder that made no sense. "Object there was none. Passion there was none. I loved the old man. He had never wronged me. He had never given me insult. For his gold I had no desire." (Womack, 1997 as quote in Shamaila Amir.)*

It is not possible to have the experience of real world without the presence of psyche« *The necessary knowledge is that of what to observe* ». (Poe. "The Murders in the Rue Morgue", 1841). It is that important part of our life through which we experience and develop an understanding of the world around us. *"I was never really insane except upon occasions when my heart was touched"* (Poe)

### **1.1. The Meaning of Psyche for Freud as a Pioneer**

The founder of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud, used the word soul for psyche in most of his writings. Bruno Bettelheim, a clinical psychologist, in his article entitled "*Freud and the Soul*" that he wrote to The New Yorker Magazine February 21, 1982, said:

*"Reflections about the mistranslation of Freud from German into English, which writer says have led to a misinterpretation of what Freud sought to teach about the inner life of man. Although Freud often spoke of the soul, nearly all of his many references to the soul, and to matters pertaining to the soul, have been excised in the English translation.*

*In the "Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud," the 24-volume series edited by James Strachey, the word "die seele," which means "the soul," is consistently translated as "the mind." This has greatly hampered our understanding of Freud's humanistic views. By soul Freud meant*

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*the psyche, which takes in what the writer calls the It, the I, and the Above-I (commonly translated as the Ego, the Id, and the Super-Ego). By narrowly defining the soul as the intellect, we misinterpret Freud. The goal of psychoanalysis, of course, is to integrate the emotional life into the intellectual life.”(The New Yorker, March 1, 1982 P.52).*

Freud conceived that psyche is composed of three parts:

The first part has been described *as id* by Sigmund Freud which he defined as comprised of the instinctual or natural drives of an individual which mainly remains unconscious. The second part stands for the person's sense of right and wrong which is called *superego* and also means the incorporation of one's beliefs, societal norms, attitudes and moral values within oneself. The third part is defined as *ego*. It is the conscious part and this part deals with the reality. The ego develops from the id and expresses the desires of the id in an acceptable manner for the real world. According to Freud's perspective, ego is that part of personality that operates in all parts of mind including conscious, subconscious and unconscious.

In psychoanalysis, moral and social deviations are examples of a fragmented psyche caused by a malformed unconscious. This distorted counterpart of the conscious realm of human experience is the result of a crumbling or non-existent superego which, according to Sigmund Freud, represents the basis for the moral conscience of an individual. The superego is the most fundamental part of the structure of the unconscious. It over rules the ego in the same manner as the ego over powers the id (Freud, 1991b: 105-6).

### **1.3. Psychologist's views of human psyche**

#### **1.3.1. For Carl Jung**

As far as human psyche is concerned, almost every piece of literature seems to present an understanding of complex human behavior. In fact, it seems that one purpose of literature is to make people aware of each other's behaviors so that they may understand the nature and each other's problems quite well.

Carl Jung, a supporter of Freud and a famous psychologist, writes: "*By psyche I understand the totality of all psychic processes, conscious as well as unconscious*" (CW6 Para 797). Jung asserted that human psyche, much the same as human body, involves a natural and automatic procedure of development. The mind attempts to create a harmony between contradicting qualities while in the main time looking for its advancement or individuation.

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Jung considers the conscience or ego as the focal point of the field of awareness which holds our cognizant consciousness of existing and a processed feeling of individual character. It is the coordinator of our consideration and instincts, emotions, and sensations, and has an approach to memories which are not subdued. It is the holder of identity and stands at the intersection between the internal and external worlds. The conscience emerges out of the self throughout the course of right on time development. It has an official capacity; it sees importance and evaluates esteem, with the goal that it advertises survival by making life worth living. Jung contrasted the way of consciousness with the eye: just a small number of things might be held in vision at one time, and in the same way the action of awareness is particular.

*« The Self for Jung comprises the whole of the psyche, including all its potential. It is the organizing genius behind the personality, and is responsible for bringing about the best adjustment in each stage of life that circumstances can allow. Crucially, it has a teleological function: it is forward looking, seeking fulfillment. The goal of the Self is wholeness, and Jung called this search for wholeness the process of individuation, the purpose being to develop the organism's fullest potential. »* (Ann Hopwood. Jung's Model of the Psyche, p.3)

For Saul McLeod, the self, according to Jung, includes the entire of the mind, involving all its capacity. It is the arranging genius behind the person's identity, and is answerable for making the best alteration in each one phase of life that circumstances can permit. Its objective is wholeness, and Jung called this quest for wholeness the methodology of individuation, the intention being to create the creator's fullest capacity. It is recognizing characteristic of Jung's theory that the hypothesis is composed for the perspective of the self, rather than from the ego. (2017)

The self has opportunity to approach an interminably more extensive variety of experience, involving entire abundance of the social and religious domains, and the profundities of which all individuals are skilled, *« The form of the world into which [a person] is born is already inborn in him, as a virtual image »* (Jung, 1953, p. 188).

The bundling of inner self conscience's advertising individual has been called the persona, and is a fundamental part of day to day working. One may say that one's social victory relies upon having a sensibly well-working persona, one which is adaptable enough to adjust to

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distinctive circumstances, and which is a great impression of the conscience qualities while lie behind it (Ann Hopwood (Jung's Model of the Psyche, p.3)

However, the problem occurs when people find themselves unable to leave behind their work persona due to the knowledge of the apparently outside world without the vicinity of the mind. It is through psyche that people come to know about the external world. This means that human psyche plays an essential role in understanding the outside world and there exists a strong connection between man's psyche and his surroundings. So, the external world and the internal psyche are inseparable. Because of this association, literature figures of almost every genre have tried to depict different aspects of human behavior.

### **1.3.2. For Lawrence Kohlberg (1927-1987)**

Lawrence Kohlberg (1927-1987) is a famous American psychologist and a theorist. He had given a theory in which he describes different stages of moral development. His theory was influenced by the works of another well-known psychologist, Jean Piaget. There are three levels of the development of moral reasoning, pre-conventional morality, conventional morality and post conventional morality, which Kohlberg further devised into six strategies. Each level consists of two strategies (1971).

According to Kohlberg, one needs to follow these stages of moral development in order to be a morally developed individual. (Lawrence Kohlberg. Stages of Moral Development. 1971). Pre-conventional morality is the first level of moral development and it contains the stages of obedience and punishment, and individualism and exchange. At the first stage, children tend to obey the roles in order to avoid punishment because they consider them as fixed roles of society. At the second stage, children represent serve distinctive needs. (Lawrence Kohlberg. Stages of Moral Development. 1971, P1, P3).

Conventional morality is the second level of moral development and it contains the stages of interpersonal relationships, and maintaining social order at the stage of interpersonal relationships, people focus of living up the social standards and they are particularly interested in fulfilling their expected roles. At the stage of maintaining social order, the emphasis is on supporting peace by taking after the tenets, doing one's obligation and regarding power. (Lawrence Kohlberg. Stages of Moral Development. 1971, P1, P3).

Post conventional morality is the third level of moral development and it contains the stages of social contracts and individual rights, and universal principles. At the

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stage of social contracts and individual rights, individuals start to consider the varying qualities, suppositions and convictions of other individuals. Tenets of law are paramount for keeping up a social order, yet parts of the social order ought to concur upon these principles. The final stage of moral development is dependent upon universal moral standards and complex philosophical thinking. At this stage, individuals take after these internal standards of equity, regardless of the possibility that they clash with laws and tenets. (Lawrence Kohlberg. Stages of Moral Development. 1971, P1, P2, P4).

However, in spite of defining six stages of development of moral reasoning, some critics are of the view that though Kohlberg's suppositions about moral reasoning, but actually there exists a great disagreement between having the knowledge of what we ought to do and what we actually do. Critics have further indicated but according to Kohlberg, justice is the central element of moral development. This may not be true because there are certain other factors as well including care, sympathy, concern, and several other feelings which are also an important part of moral thinking.

So, psyche, thinking or reasoning is made up of all these aspects and eventually it is depicted in the person's behavior, which shows a person's psyche. So, the writers of literary text have been attempting so far to depict human behavior which in turn acts as a mirror of people's inner psyche.

### **1.4. Literary Figures and Human Psyche**

Over the centuries, many literary figures have attempted to depict different aspects of human psyche through short stories like O'Henry, a famous short story writer who depicted the elements of forfeit and sacrifice in his short stories. Oscar Wilde is another short story writer and dramatist who has discussed the problems of poverty and self-centered nature of human beings in his short stories and many more. Among these stories "*The Model Millionaire*", "*The Selfish Giant*", "*The Fishman and His Soul*"...etc, moreover his famous gothic novel "*The picture of Dorian Gray*", a philosophical fiction published in 1890.

It is between 1810 and 1830 that a collection of short stories emerged for the first time in various countries. The initial short stories in England were Gothic stories and the famous one is *The Poisoner of Montremos* by Richard Cumberland. Charles Brockdon Brown's *Somnambulism* Washington Irving's *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Twice\_Told tales*, and Herman Melville's *The Piazza Tales*, all these are examples of early

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short stories. Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville, like Edgar Allan Poe, believed that human mind is curious by nature.

The difference which those writers maintain in their writings is their beliefs in human existence. These authors make use of strong and impressive symbolism in their short stories in order to uncover the realities of life and aspects of human mind. These authors have analyzed the psychological impacts of guilt, the incompatibility between good and insidiousness, and individuals suffering from insanity. (Dark Romanticism/Gothic Literature(1800-1850)-*English Language and Composition* pp.1-2)

*The Dream of a Ridiculous Man* (1877) *The Meek one* (1876) are the two psychological and philosophical short stories written by Fyodor Dostoyevsky. The first story is about the experiences of an individual who believes that nothing of the world is valuable, so he decides to commit suicide. But a chance meeting with a young girl re-instills in him a love for the life and for his fellow beings.

*“I am a ridiculous person. Now they call me a madman. That would be a promotion if it were not that I remain as ridiculous in their eyes as before. But now I do not resent it, they are all dear to me now, even when they laugh at me — and, indeed, it is just then that they are particularly dear to me. I could join in their laughter — not exactly at myself, but through affection for them, if I did not feel so sad as I look at them. Sad because they do not know the truth and I do know it. Oh, how hard it is to be the only one who knows the truth! But they won't understand that. No, they won't understand it.”* (Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The Dream of a Ridiculous Man*).

While the latter one describes the relationship between husband and wife and the manipulation of wife by her husband. (Katya Jordan. *The Meek One and Her Icon: Hodegetria's Presence in Dostoevsky's "Krotkaia"*. Brigham Young University. P7, 8). *“wanted her to stand before [him] in ardent homage because of [his] sufferings, and [he] deserved that.”* (Dostoevsky, 689). Both the stories carry philosophical and psychological impact and meaning.

O' Henry has also tried to present the sacrificial thinking of human mind. He has tried to

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present the relatively positive side of human beings. In other words, he has focused on the positive human behavior. For example, his short stories, *The Gift of Magi*, and *the Last Leaf*, in both of these stories he has depicted the sacrificial aspect of human nature. In both stories, the characters are kind and caring towards each other. But in the latter story, he has presented the theme of disappointment as well and has shown the pessimistic thinking of people.

Oscar Wilde is another famous short story writer who has thrown light on different kinds of human behavior which in turn mirror the human psyche. He shows the selfish thinking of people in his short stories and the suffering of people, which shows the corrupt psyche of powerful people who misuse their power and invest their energies in negative activities. Wilde thought that adults were hypocrites. They were more influenced by art but better at hiding it than kids. Growing up involves lying low. "What is interesting about people in good society," he wrote, "*is the mask that each one of them wears, not the reality that lies behind the mask,*".

It is a humiliating confession, but we are all of us made out of the same stuff." *He didn't think of himself as an exception to this rule. He told the poet Violet Fane that his essay was "meant to bewilder the masses" but was "of course serious."* The daily show in which we all star, he argued, is called being polite and it requires that adults wear a mask. ( Michèle Mendelssohn. Late Victorian into Modern. How Oscar Wilde's life imitates his art. October 16, 2017)

Indeed, the novel's central image, the portrait of Dorian Gray, crucially inhabits a liminal place between art and life, and the body and the soul. It refuses a symbolic reading that is either purely aesthetic, or purely spiritual. The Picture of Dorian Gray likewise defiantly asserts that the dichotomy between aesthetic values and spiritual ethics is irreconcilable, and that the role of art is not to resolve but to embody this impossible dualism. The Picture of Dorian Gray traces Dorian's endeavor to "elaborate some new scheme of life that would have its reasoned philosophy and its ordered principles, and find in the spiritualizing of the senses its highest realization."2 (Catholicism, Decadence, and Dorian Gray. P.2).

Katherine Mansfield is a female short story writer. She presents some general realities in her short stories. She tells us about some truths of human life, some of them are sweet whereas others are bitter, and no one can deny these facts because she talks about universal aspects of human psyche. For example, in her short story "*The Fly*", she tells the readers about positive human thinking that no matter how great people's sufferings and problems are, after some time they will forget their problems. Time makes them forget all their troubles and his

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human quality is universal, they tend to forget the bad aspects of their lives after little time has passed.

In the short story "*A Doll's House*," she gives an insight of how poor people feel after being insulted by the so called upper class. It also shows the thinking of elite class who are very proud and consider themselves superior to others. This shows the general psyche of different social classes. In this way, Katherine has provided some general and universal human traits.

Mark Twain's "*A Dog's Tale* " and "*A Helpless situation*," may be considered the true representatives of human psyche in a sense that in these two stories, the writer writes exactly what's going on in one's mind and what one thinks in different situations. The titles of his stories directly tell what the stories are about but they have an underlying meaning as well. The deeper meaning is a source of providing information about the intricate human thinking patterns.

H.G. Wells apparently writes about science fiction and the language of his short stories also consists of such words related to science fiction but even his stories serve the purpose of highlighting the human psyche. His stories highlight the aspects of regret, desire, happiness, doubt etc. These aspects are clearly evident in his short stories such as "*A Moonlight Fable*," and "*A Diamond Maker*"(J .R. Hammond, An H. G. Wells Companion/The Short Stories, 1979. P62,63).

Edgar is the famous literary figure of dark Romantic Movement. He represents different traits of human psyche, particularly the abnormal behavior and insanity of people. Writers who belonged to this era showed supernatural things such as witches with wolves and doppelganger... etc, but they mainly focused on presentation of human thinking and how it becomes corrupt and evil. They were actually concerned with discussing sin and infliction. They were of the view that human nature usually has the darker side, which many come out in different circumstances.

Nathaniel Hawthorne was a great dark romantic writer, born on July 4, 1804. His famous work is "*The Spectator* ". It focuses on death and is about his pain during his severe injury. It also shows his feelings at the time of his father's death. He was a famous novelist and a short story writer, who made significant contribution in American literature.

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Hawthorne was interested in human psyche and particularly interested in the evil side of human thinking. By using symbolism in his work, he had also talked about the uncommon, unreal things. He is one of those very few dark romanticists in American literature who have presented sin, corrupt human thinking, evil, immorality, feelings of guilt and human psyche. His works show his keen observation of the people and his society and also are representatives of his deep understanding of human psychology. His stories depict the negative side of mankind. (Johnathan Steven Woelfel, *Monomaniacal Monstrosity in Hawthorne and Poe*, St. Cloud State University March, 2017. P27. 28 .29)

His works have all the characteristics of dark romanticism such as "*The Haunted Mind*", "*The Minister's Black Veil*", "*The House of the Seven Gables*", and "*Young Goodman Brown*"...etc. Symbolism, dark imagery, uncommon themes and supernatural elements are the aspects that make his writings a significant part of dark romanticism.

The second well known writer of dark Romanticism Movement is Herman Melville who was born on August 1, 1819. He also has written many short stories. In spite of being part of dark romanticism, he wrote more about romanticism by publishing his novel "*Moby Dick*". Because of his complicated use of symbolism, his writings are confusing for the readers. "*Moby Dick*" is another well recognized piece of literature that is about good and bad and about man's fight against nature. It is also about the struggle between good and bad and because of these elements; this novel is considered as a part of dark romantic writings.

### **1.5. Edgar Allan Poe's life and his adoption to writing about Human Psyche**

Edgar Allan Poe is that literary figure of the century who had suffered a lot in his life. His father left his family after one year of his birth in 1810, and his mother died the next year. Not only he lost his parents but he lost his other family members as well as his brother William who died young and his sister Rosalie who lost her mind. Thus being orphaned he was then taken to the home of John and Frances Allan, Richmond, Virginia. They never properly adapted Poe, yet he received his middle name 'Allan' from them and he lived with them till his adulthood. Tension created when Edgar and John Allan repeatedly clashed over debts which occurred as a result of gambling.

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Edgar Allan Poe did join the university but after one semester, he left the university due to lack of money. Tensions between Poe and Allan increased day by day because of the lack of money for his education and as a result he enlisted in the army with an assumed name in 1827. During that time he began his publishing career, with an anonymous collection of poems in 1827.

The death of Frances Allan 1829 established pleasant-sounding relations between Poe and John Allan temporarily but later, Poe parted his ways with him. After this, he married his cousin, Virginia Clemm in 1835, who was 13 year-old but even this relation did not last longer in his life and his wife died of tuberculosis and once again he was left alone and isolated and then he started taking drugs. He himself died very young just at the age of forty and the cause of his death is also not known and is usually attributed to drugs, tuberculosis, cholera, brain congestion, suicide, heart disease, alcohol, and other agents. He was one of the greatest but unhappiest literary figure of America who is a master of mysterious tales.

So, his experience of these awful and terrible events made his life a bitter and stormy one, as a result, he turned alcoholic, an epileptic and a drug addict. Hence, he preferred to write about death, destruction, horror, mystery and about the thinking of human mind. The themes Poe chose to present in his stories portray the disturbed unconsciousness of his characters. So, the presence of horror in his work makes it more appealing which opens up many doors to understand the complex human psyche.

Among these short story writers, Edgar Allan Poe is a renowned name in the history of American literature who tried to represent human psyche in his short stories through the elements of horror and mystery. Edgar Allan Poe short stories are the representative of the dark romantic genre which belongs to the early 19th century. In this genre, the underlying belief was that the world is full of mysteries, darkness, and horrible truths.

*"Coincidences, in general, are great stumbling blocks in the way of that class of thinkers who have been educated to know nothing of the theory of probabilities- that theory to which the most glorious objects of human research are indebted for the most glorious of illustration." (Poe. « The Murders in the Rue Morgue», 1841).*

So, Poe as product of his time presented his understanding of human psyche with the creation of horror and suspense in his short stories. He seems to be conscious of the complexities of human mentality. *"A sombre yet beautiful and peaceful gloom here pervaded*

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*all things ... the shade of the trees fell heavily upon the water, and seemed to bury itself therein, impregnating the depths of the element with darkness." (Poe. « The Island of the Fay », 1841).*

Those kinds of supernatural elements are not the characteristics patterns of Edgar Allan Poe's short stories. He has not used the typical supernatural figures in his work but he rather has created horror by presenting the evil side of human mind and by depicting the sinful thinking of mankind. Edgar has created a new kind of horror and through its elements Edgar tried to provide a reflection of human psyche.

"A novelist, for example, need have no care of his moral. It is there -- that is to say, it is somewhere -- and the moral and the critics can take care of themselves. When the proper time arrives, all that the gentleman intended, and all that he did not intend, will be brought to light, in the "Dial," or the "Down-Easter," together with all that he ought to have intended, and the rest that he clearly meant to intend: -- so that it will all come very straight in the end." (Poe. « Never Bet the Devil Your Head », September 1841).



## **Section Two:**

### **Edgar Allan Poe and Horror Tales**

Introduction

**1.6.** The Definition of Horror

**1.7.** Historical Overview about Horror

**1.8.** Horror in Edgar Poe's stories

**1.9.** Elements of horror stories

**1.10.** Modern horror tales and views of literary critics

Conclusion

# Edgar Allan Poe and Horror Tales

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## Introduction

Edgar Allan Poe, a critic from the United States, and one of the leaders of the 19<sup>th</sup> century literary Movements who has greatly influenced not only the American literature, but also the English literature as whole. Edgar Allan Poe was a poet, and writer known for his horror short stories and gothic novels within a perfect gloomy style and environment. The father of the detective story was a master of suspense, he marked the first steps of today's horror and detective novels, he wrote poetry, he wrote horror, fiction, and mystery.

In most of his works, Edgar shed light on the human nature, moreover the human mind. In a creepy way and a gloomy setting, and in combination to his unstable life some people assume that he reflects his own psyche and psychological problems, or maybe he doubled in drugs, the reason why his short stories are creepy taking a special extreme that people though he had to be a little strange himself. Not only Poe who has adopted the human mind in his horror stories, many other writers did discuss the human behaviour and psyche through the creation of horror.

## 1.6 . Definition of Horror

According to Cuddon, Horror is a genre of speculative fiction which is intended to frighten, scare, disgust, or startle its readers by inducing feelings of horror and terror. Literary historian J. A. Cuddon defined the horror story as "a piece of fiction in prose of variable length... which shocks, or even frightens the reader, or perhaps induces a feeling of repulsion or loathing"(1984)

## 1.7. Historical overview about Horror

According to Rosemary Jackson, the horror genre has ancient origins with roots in folklore and religious traditions, focusing on death, the afterlife, evil, the demonic and the principle of the thing embodied in the person) . For Raymond T. McNally et al (1972). Much horror fiction derives from the cruellest personages of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Dracula can be traced to the Prince of Wallachia Vlad III, whose alleged war crimes were published in German pamphlets. A 1499 pamphlet was published by Markus Ayrer, who is most notable for its woodcut imagery (1981). In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and according to Richard Davenport-

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Hines, a significant amount of horror fiction of this era was written by women and marketed towards a female audience, a typical scenario of the novels being a resourceful female menaced in a gloomy castle (1998)

According to Romantic Movement, man possesses good nature and he is not evil and bad, but dark romantics view about man is the opposite. Dark romantics consider the sinful nature and immorality as the darker side of man from which he cannot run away because it is instinctive and natural and it is not possible for a man to be good all the time. Their pessimistic approach influenced them to ponder upon the negative aspects of human nature. So they decided to present these psychological aspects through the horror stories. Their stories are attractive because they present the human life in an unusual manner by reflecting human psyche through horror tales.

Writers have different perspectives regarding the works of psyche and horror. For example, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow says, "*Everyone has secret sorrow which the world knows not; and often times we call a man cold when he is only sad.*" (Hyperion)

So the horror stories may contain unreal and uncommon elements, but they actually reveal the facts of life, especially the painful facts of life and many literary figures have attempted to uncover the realities of human psyche through horror in their works which are about sin, violence, punishment, and human psyche.

The writers of dark romanticism thought that human mind is usually likely to do sin and is interested in the acts of destruction. So, the super natural like vampires, devils, where wolves, ghosts act were used by the writers of dark romanticism to present their beliefs.

### 1.8. Horror in Edgar Poe's stories

A writer of complicated horror fiction is Edgar Allan Poe, born on January 19, 1809. His parents left him in his childhood and he was being raised by Allan's family who never liked him. Apart from the fact that he is the writer of some outstanding short stories, he has also written some remarkable poems and because of these works he is considered an important part of dark romanticism. His writings have a strong influence on American literature. It may not be wrong to say that his writings are the true representative of dark romanticism because they are overwhelmed with evil thinking, darker side of human nature, death and destruction. The death symbolizes the physical death as well as the spiritual and mental death.

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As Edgar Allan Poe is the representative of the dark romanticism, he preferred to use horror in his short stories. The writers of dark romanticism believed that man is basically evil and feels inclined towards sin. As a part of dark romantic genre, Poe tried to present the negative aspects of the dark side of man. He has proved in his writings that devil and sin are the integral part of human life and it is difficult to accept this bitter truth but one cannot escape from this reality. Poe has consciously chosen the evil characters in his short stories in order to provide an insight of the human nature. He is regarded as a well-known dark romantic figure because of his excellent poems and outstanding short stories.

The horror stories presented in dark romanticism are actually based on the disturbed and confused state of human mind and the writers of his genre tried to depict the sinful nature of mankind with the elements of horror.

### **1.9. Elements of horror stories**

Some important elements of horror tales take the following characteristics-

- 1.** Mostly the stories take place in ancient and creepy buildings, mansions or castles.
- 2.** Mystery and suspense are the notable elements of horror stories in which the characters try to find out the secret behind the mystery.
- 3.** Such stories often contain surprised deaths and murders.
- 4.** Bad omens and curse are the parts of the horror stories.
- 5.** Demons, witches, ghosts, vampires and other supernatural elements are the essential part of these stories.
- 6.** The horror tales usually have rich emotions and feelings, particularly sufferings and sadness.
- 7.** Characters usually suffer from insanity and extreme mental illness and the negative side of human nature is investigated.
- 8.** A gloomy and sad atmosphere is prevalent in such stories.
- 9.** The setting was considered very important in horror tales in which the dark, gloomy, historical buildings contribute to the atmosphere of the stories.

In Edgar's stories, the setting is of chief important. It clearly contributes to the themes which Poe wanted to present. The reason for this is that Poe did not want his readers to be diverted by contemporary ideas rather he created new worlds which were not known by the readers, so that his readers would focus only on the themes or atmosphere which he used to communicate different types of human psyche. Poe's stories are set either in some distant time

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in past or in an unknown place, such as in *The Fall of the House of Usher*, or else they are set during the period of the Spanish Inquisition, as in *The Pit and the Pendulum*. Thus, Poe's reader will not find the setting of some recognizable place of the present time in his short stories. Even his detective fiction is not set in America rather than it is set in France.

The elements of horror stories can be found in the middle ages of European literature as well. For example, the Jacobean and Elizabethan tragedies contain many characteristics of dark romanticism. These tragedies were also about crime, torture, murder, suicides, fear, pain, sufferings and insanity. In the 17th century, these kinds of stories disappeared. In the late 18th century, when gothic fiction started in England, these horror tales in form of dark romanticism appeared as a reaction against gothic fiction.

### 1.10. Modern horror tales and views of literary critics

The modern horror tales, developed in 19th century- a skeptical age, based on some matter of facts as "True Relation of the Apparition of the Mrs. Veal"(1706) by Defoe which is disappointing for the modern readers because of the lack of suspense and mystery. In modern fiction, the ghost seems to be more evil and energetic than in Gothic fiction. So, the mysterious and creepy characters depicted in Edgar's works seem to have some personal motives behind the evil behavior that they show and they appear to act on some instinctive feelings like jealousy, revenge which are not merely means of outside force.

Poe has presented the human psyche along with the dark and creepy atmosphere in order to terrify the reader,

*“ ... the reader [should not] be surprised if a criticism upon Poe is mostly negative, and rather suggests new doubts than resolves those already existing; for it is Poe’s merit to carry people away, and it is his besetting sin that he wants altogether such scrupulous honesty as guides and restrains the finished artist. He was, let us say it with all sorrow, not conscientious. Hunger was ever at his door, and he had too imperious a desire for what we call nowadays the sensational in literature.” (Robert Louis Stevenson, “[Review of] The Works of Edgar Allan Poe,” Academy, VII, January, 2, 1875.*

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The most famous stories of Poe are "*The Fall of The House of Usher*," "*The Tell-Tale Heart*," "*The Black Cat*," "*The Masque of The Red Death*" etc. These are the stories which deal with insanity, strange kind of madness, burial, and dark creepy mansions. Madness, strange aspects of human thinking, fear, horror, sin and destruction are the characteristic elements of Edgar's writings. Almost his every narrative is the representative of such elements.

He has used violence, mental illnesses and death in order to create horror. According to critics, Poe's horror stories suggest the dark side of the society and the thinking that was prevalent at Poe's time. As Eric W. Carlson observes that in «Colloquy of Manos and Unna" ( E.Arthur Robinson, "Current Interpretations of Poe: Existential or Transcendent," *Poe Studies*, December 1972, Vol. V, No. 2, 5:57-59). Edgar has made a psychological diagnosis of the mentally sick society of his age. Another popular critic, James B. Tipton, asserts that Edgar Allan Poe transforms the narrator of his stories into a monster. He is the first one who has portrayed his tale from the victimizer's view point instead of from the victim's view. Christopher Benfey says about "*The Black Cat*," "*The Tell-Tale Heart*" that "*Concealment is ultimately unbearable for these killers, for whom secrets are like bodies buried alive, imprisoned soul seeking freedom*"

*"While his criticisms were sometimes harsh, they were often right. He was an early supporter of Nathaniel Hawthorne and an admirer of Charles Dickens while the writers he condemned have largely been forgotten...While Poe is best remembered today for his tales of psychological terror, he was acclaimed in his own day for his satires, mysteries, science fiction, literary criticism, and lyric poetry. Europeans regarded him as America's first internationally influential author, and no less a figure than England's Poet Laureate Alfred, Lord Tennyson deemed him "America's most original creative genius." For Christopher P. today there is no writer of horror, science fiction, or mysteries who does not bear the mark of his influence." (2015)*

Some critics view that Poe's Works do not treat the society. In addition, Poe is delineated as having no association with his general surroundings. But after the turn of the century, researchers started to understand that Poe did really expound on the significant issues of the day. A large portion of these works came in articles, letters

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and critical analysis of his counterparts' works. His work is more uprooted from the present reality undertakings of his times. In any case, the impact of political and social conventions and erudite thought might be seen in a large portion of his short stories.

In spite of the fact that Poe was a result of his times as far as his ethical convictions, social thoughts and preferences were concerned, he was comparatively radical in his exercise of new styles of short story composition and new type of fiction. His impact on the literary writers of his time was restricted, yet his impact on the writing that has taken after him is huge.

In Poe's time period or in dark romanticism, immortality and evil nature of man are not considered as outside force but rather they may be seen as inner, instinctive force. According to the literary writers who focus on this aspect of human nature, an individual's sufferings are a result of his own wrong doing and whatever problems one may face in life, these are due to his own evil nature.

Adopting psychoanalysis Similarly as an interpretive model about Poe's fiction offers a genuinely momentous explanatory viewpoint on it delves under the depths of the characters' psyche Furthermore need those control with totally change the all atmosphere of the story, providing for it another crystal to narrative actuality as encountered by those protagonists from claiming Poe's stories. In view the keep tabs of psychoanalytical translation may be set on the fundamental character's observation of truth Also Poe's stories, including "The Black Cat", are narrated predominantly in the principal person, it will be basic will recognize those occasions of the story strictly through those lens of the protagonists' psyche.

Not with standing grim Furthermore extraordinary Poe's stories might appear there is continuously an incredible bargain for motivation behind encapsulated inside their plan. All that happens in the narratives is logical Furthermore will be certain toward the causal chain of occasions. To "*The Black Cat*", however, an outstanding component of the nonsensical will be available. It may be joined in the protagonist's Incorporation of the other world previously, as much observation from claiming truth. (Johnathan Steven Woelfel, Monomaniacal Monstrosity in Hawthorne and Poe, St. Cloud State University March, 2017. P66. 68 .70)

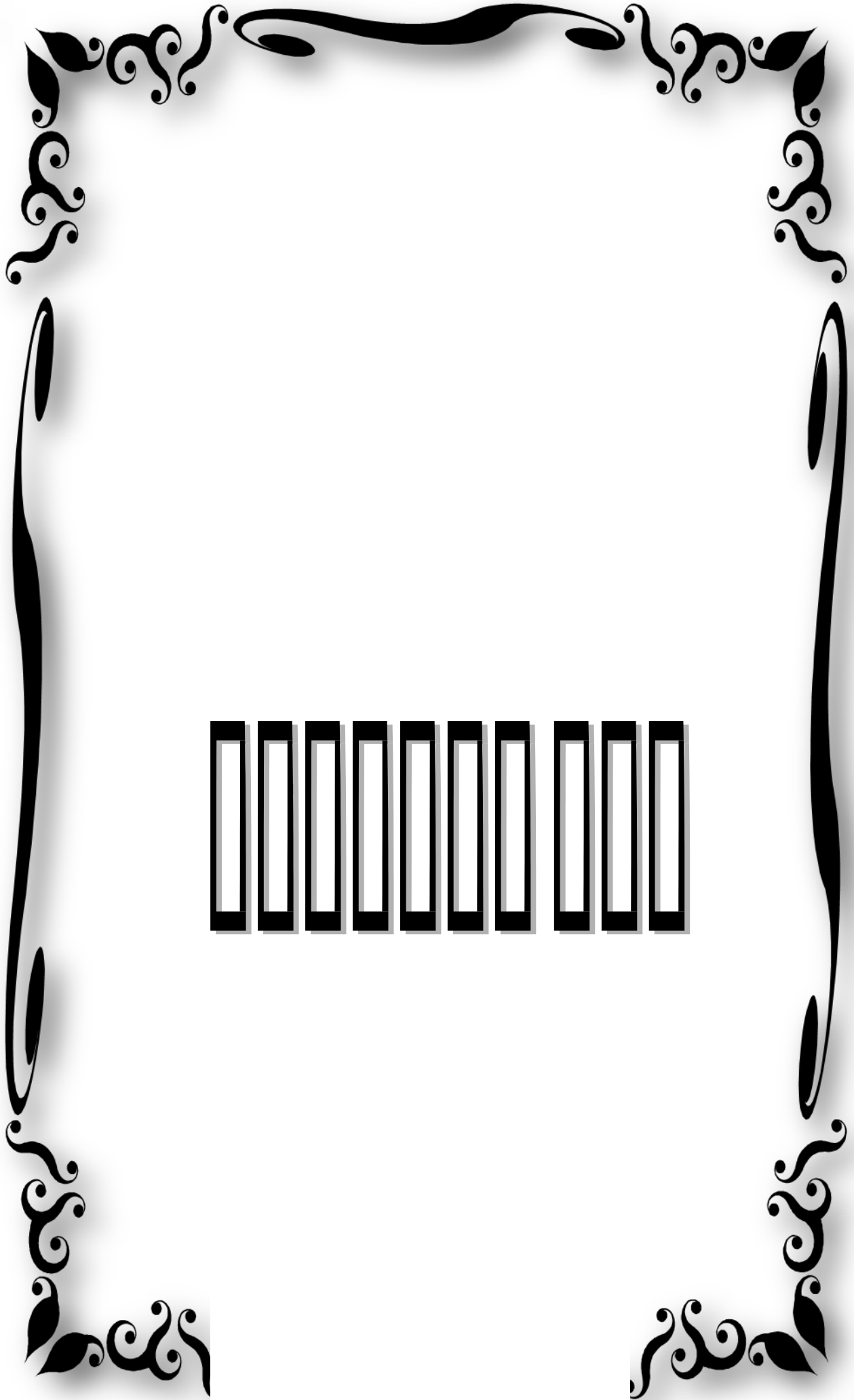
So, this is how they depicted the evil characters in their stories that often become insane at the end. So, dark romanticism used elements of horror or wrote horror stories in order to uncover the complex working of human nature and particularly to examine human psyche. Edgar Allan Poe, being a writer of dark romanticism also tried to do the same thing.

## **Edgar Allan Poe and Horror Tales**

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### **Conclusion**

Edgar Allan Poe's short stories use violence and horror to explore the paradoxes and mysteries of love, grief, guilt...etc, Darkness and supernatural elements, all to resist the simple interpretations and the clear moral messages. That is each horror story is contributed to its purpose. Through his dark, horror stories, Poe tries to drive the reader's attention to the true darkness which is the human mind, and how it could be a tool of self-distraction.





## **CHAPTER TWO:**

### ***Analysis of the contents of the *Black Death* and *the Mask of the Red Death****

2.1. Introduction

**2.1.** The Black Cat

**2.3.** The Mask of the Red Death

2.4. Content Analysis of Both the Black Cat and the Masque of the Red Death

2.4.1. Themes.

2.4.2. Characterization

2.4.3. Stylistic Approach

2.4.4. Element of Horror in the Black Cat and the Masque of the Red death

2.4.4.1. Horror in the Black Cat

2.4.4.2. Horror in the Masque of the Red Death

Conclusion

## The Analysis of the two short stories contents

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### 2.1. Introduction

Psychoanalysis literary criticism is the methodology We used to analyse “*The Black Cat*” and “*The Masque of the Red Death*” stories of Edgar Allan Poe. Psychoanalysis is the right way to understand the story since it contains a lot of elements evoking the human mind and soul complexities. We used this theory to find out the human psyche and the creation of horror in the stories. The analysis of literary works on the light of psychoanalytic criticism is aimed at understanding the writer's psychological status reflected in the stories.

### 2.2. The Black Cat

*"The Black Cat"* is a story of death, mystery and insanity. As Margaret Alterton states that “*Poe's story [ The Black Cat] is, as the medical case, a horrible record of insanity.*” (2011, p18.). The story starts with a narrator who asserts at the beginning that he is going to tell some dreadful and terrible incidents of his life, making the readers horrified and curious. The narrator is fond of keeping pets and his most favourite pet is his black cat which is also very attached to him. Later in the story the narrator suffers from alcoholism and kills the cat under the influence of the drug. His killing of the cat causes some severe trouble for him and calamity comes to him when he kills his wife unintentionally. He hides the dead body of his wife behind the wall but in spite of this caught red handed by the police.

*"The Black Cat"* and *"the Tell-Tale Heart"* are very similar to each other as the story is narrated by an unknown person and both stories are featuring the killing of innocent people without any purpose. Moreover, the scene in which police discovers the dead body can be found in both stories (Boker 2015).

The Black Cat is the most questionable aspect of supernatural in the story. It was first pointed out by the narrator's wife by telling him about the belief of black-coloured cat as witch or an evil spirit. However, the narrator seems to reject this belief and keeps the cat as his pet. In this story, one can observe violence in the act of killing of the cat and the wife. Both of the victims are loved by the narrator but the reason or purpose of the killing remains undiscovered.

## **The Analysis of the two short stories contents**

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The destruction of the family concludes the story, where both the cat and the narrator's wife are dead and narrator also gets arrested by the police.

Another important theme is of drugs and alcohol as the destruction in the story starts with the inclination towards alcoholism. It is alcohol which makes the narrator to abuse his cat and wife. Moreover, justice and judgment are also seen in the end of the story.

### **2.3. The Masque of the Red Death**

This story is about the fatal disease which is known as "red death". The plague is so much effective that it can kill its victims in an hour. The prince, whose name is Prospero, does not care about the poor people dying of the disease and try to escape the disease by shutting himself with his favourite knights and ladies in a castle. He thinks that he has successfully saved himself from this deadly disease but unfortunately he arranges a ball party in which everyone comes wearing a mask. Different coloured rooms are decorated to entertain the guests but a blood-coloured room is so much horrifying that only few people dare to go there. A guest is observed there, dressed as a corpse. Prospero attacks him and suddenly falls prey to death. It is actually the red death which has come to the party in the masque of corpse.

The themes of death and mortality are closely visible in the story as the deadly plague is responsible for the increasing deaths in the people and even of the prince. One can also observe the element of fear as it compels the prince to hide himself from the red death and confines in the castle. The arrangement of the rooms is also fearful and element of fear is also evident in the scene where people are not willing to discover the identity of the suspicious guest.

The character of prince symbolizes the selfishness and foolishness, who is concerned only with his own pleasure and with his own survival. His act of attacking the unidentified weird guest in rage in spite of his fear also shows his foolishness. On the whole, the end of the story signifies the theme of justice and punishment as the careless and selfish rulers are punished for their selfishness and this ends the story. The end of the story shows that one cannot escape death no matter how hard he tries to do so and everyone is mortal.

## The Analysis of the two short stories contents

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### 2.4. CONTENT ANALYSIS of both *the Black Cat* and *the Mask of the Red Death*

It is this time of uncertainty, anxiety and despair that the Gothic writers tap into. They all explore the "dark side" of the 19th century America. Edgar Allan Poe was one of them. He is famously called the father of horror fiction. Long before Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, mapped the 'swamps' of the human mind, Edgar Allan Poe, a writer of horror and terror, played and roamed there. Poe knew 'id' without giving it this name, and explained it at work in the mind of his characters. As the American actor Peter Lorre asserts that:

*“Poe never heard of psychoanalysis, or modern psychology, but he knew about it, just the same. The double symbolism of the „eye“ and the „heart“ in „the tell-tale heart“ anticipated Freud by many years. You can find a „scientific“ explanation of that tale in Freud, but Poe was nearer the truth, because he knew that psychoanalysis is not, as Freud said, a „nature study,“ but an expression of the deepest secrets of the heart and mind.” (Stephen 2015)*

Before investigating how far he has reflected the disturbed and tormented human psyche in his memorable short stories, let us consider some of the very basic detail and facts of Edgar Allan Poe's life which provides a fertile ground for such examination. Poe's life was filled with tragedy (Jerry). He was born in Boston on January 19, 1808, but a year later his father deserted the family. This was not less than a shock to him. His mother, Elizabeth, died of tuberculosis while acting in Richmond when he was only two years old (1990, p.42). So the subject of death was giving to him at a very tender age. His mother was a little over twenty-four when she died. This horror of sickness and death would never leave him. After his parents, he became ward of Allan, a merchant Richmond, Virginia. But he was never adopted legally (Abel 2002, p 208).

As a result, this bright and intelligent child who was also quick of brain and body suffered through-out his life. Because of his sharp and nimble brain, his teachers adored him. But Allan, who was unfaithful towards the boy, never liked or encouraged his literary endeavours, rather discouraged him through his behaviour. Eventually Poe had a quarrel with

## **The Analysis of the two short stories contents**

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Allan and left Virginia and went to Baltimore to look up his father's relatives (Mabbott 2000, p538).

Later on, he secretly married his young cousin, named Virginia Clemm. Poe was not a success during his early career. He also found it hard and difficult to hold onto any job because of his uncontrollable drinking and his erratic behaviour. Unfortunately, as he secured a nation-wide reputation, his personal life began to collapse. Already a tortured soul, the death of his wife in 1849 caused an enormous increase in his unbearable tensions and mental disturbance. Subsequently, he starts drinking heavily and uncontrollably. As a result, Poe becomes increasingly ill and intoxicated. He died on a trip to Baltimore on October 7, 1849, aged forty. The cause of his death was noted as 'congestion of the brain' (Elizabeth 2004, p 278).

After a brief examination of Poe's life, something needs to be mentioned.

### **2.4.1. Themes:**

The theme of home is also present in the story. Everything appears to be fine in the beginning. Both husband and wife seem happy with each other but gradually things start changing, especially when the narrator becomes increasingly indulged alcoholism. As it substantiates my argument that the author has extensively reflected human psyche in his short stories and this puts him among major writers of American Renaissance.

In his short stories, Poe explores the disturbed human psyche, his nation's tendency toward the blind faith as well as the complex and convoluted human consciousness. He also dealt with the mysteries of conscience, will, and after life (Albert 1969, p 54). Sometimes he focuses on the uncertainties and contradictions of the everyday flow of the human psyche. As the master of short fiction, he combines allegory with psychological investigation to challenge the optimism of his people. While doing this, he forces his readers to draw their ethical conclusions on different themes. As Ronald C. Harvey puts it, "*Poe himself, by his intensive focus upon the mental state in moments of crises, suffering, and illness, direct his reader's mind to the psyche. At time he almost seems to be presenting his narrators as patients or case studies.*" (2015, p 64/65)

Poe's studies the psyche of his characters very deeply. He achieves this by putting his characters into mystery and torment. For more effectively showing the disturbed and tortured the psyche of his characters, he sometimes creates an atmosphere of despair and fear.

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He then makes his characters encounter the very familiar and comfortable ideas of humanity, society and cosmos in this way. According to William N. Douglas:

*In particular, Poe examines extreme states of his characters' psychologies. these extremes can be categorised as the forms of behaviour that arise from the unconscious or irrational mind on the one hand, and the forms of behaviour that arise from the conscious, rational mind on the other. that is, some stories examine the ways in which fears, phobias and obsessions can cause people to do strange and terrible thing, and to experience events which they scarcely believe are possible. other stories examine the logical and rational operations of the human mind, through depicting characters who achieve remarkable outcomes of great benefit to themselves and others." (Neville 2007, p 34)*

Let us start with the world of *The Black Cat*, which is a psychological study of domestic violence. We shall research intensively into the inner workings of the dark sides of the human psyche. This story which illustrates the power of the human mind to observe its own deterioration and at the sometime comment on its own destruction; the story has a nameless and enigmatic protagonist, alcohol, mutilation, strangulation and perversity. The story shows how people's mood changes in different circumstances and how one's inner self control his behaviour. The narrator of the story has an affectionate temperament. When he starts telling his story, the audience or the readers understand that the narrator's personality has undergone a complete and radical change.

### 2.4.2. Characterization

Poe offers surprising characters. Almost all are either encountering their own worst selves, or their own uncontrollable desires and instincts. As a writer of Gothic fiction, Poe urges us to ask: what are our ideals? What power rules us? Can we be sure of anything, if yes, to what extent? Are we in control of ourselves? Do we know our true selves? In short, in his stories of tortured and obsessive characters, Edgar Allan Poe challenges his readers to question their own values and beliefs. Poe shows very exquisitely the narrator's mental reflection and complexities in dealing with the black cat. The narrator who is at the same time the character of the story calls the source of the spiritual torture "*the spirit of the Perverseness.*"

## **The Analysis of the two short stories contents**

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The other story, *The Masque of the Red Death* by Poe, plays with the concept of immorality. Poe continues to explain the sinister mind. In this story which presents the image of man and god, Poe has chosen a character who understands himself to be above the laws of punishment and retribution. He shows there deadly or original sin and the cause of divine beings and thinks that he is not punishable. Prospero plays the role of god in his universe. He is of the opinion that the only defense against death is indifference. Believing in such a self-destructive mind, he fails. Poe uses the mask in the story with its negative meaning. As a symbol, mask means cheating and covering a horrible emptiness.

The generalised theme of the story is contained in the words of the narrator: "*Darkness and decay and the red death held illimitable dominion over all*" (short story, *The Masque of the Red Death*). According to the text, the masque was bizarre, the setting was barbaric, and the western room caused great fear. Poe wanted to show that it is the place from where darkness falls. Though he is not a moralist but he means that enjoying such a masque angers fate and thus brings the inevitable end. Poe deliberately creates human interactions and situations in order to push the reader to ask himself serious moral questions.

The Prince in the story exercises the opinion that death might spare him because he is wealthy. But, eventually everyone has to die. In the story, Poe describes the reaction of the people and shows how they show their fears of death: "*while the chimes of the clock yet rang, it was observed that the giddiest grew pale, and the more aged and sedate passed their hands over their brows as if in confused reverie or meditation*" (short story, *The Masque of the Red Death*).

Fate might be death, and we can't run away from death Poe shows us through the character Prospero, who is prosperous but won't be able to protect himself and his friends from the hungry and powerful claws of death even inside the abbey. Soon the prince and his guests realise that death had crept into their sealed abbey "*like a thief in the night*".

Poe shows the friends of the prince as mere "phantasms", as the imaginary projections of the prince Prospero's psyche. Poe highlights the theme of immorality through the prince character. He wants to emphasize the concept of punishment and eternal justice, as at the end of the story the characters, who had tried to escape the death, eventually fall prey to it. The end shows that human beings are helpless creatures in front of fate and death and they cannot escape it in anyway.

## The Analysis of the two short stories contents

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### 2.4.3. Stylistic Approach

While reading Poe one feels himself in the hands of a strangest writer, perhaps the most disturbed and obsessed one. He is the only pre-Freudian writer who gives access to his own tormented consciousness with a complete openness. Scott Peeples, and J Gerald Kennedy state that: *“the influence of Poe’s dupin tales and other stories of ratiocination, the weight of his tales of terror, the power of his pre-Freudian explorations of the human psyche, ....”* (2019, Page 597/598)

Poe touches the rock bottom of madness and rage so vividly and astonishingly that his readers feel disgusted to accept the truth of them. For these obvious reasons, his first readers as well as his contemporary American fellow writers sometimes confused his mad characters with the man himself. His fellow American authors even could not make sense of him. They believed all sorts of stories about him and doubted his character as a result of legends prevalent about him in the eaves of society in his own day.

The reader also discerns that the apparently mad narrator attributes this drastic change to his abuse of alcohol. The readers also find the nameless narrator trying endlessly to show that the cause of the change may be the perverse side of his nature, which alcohol seemed to bring in. This thing maybe enhanced by Edgar Allan Poe in the story because he himself was alcohol addict and he might regret on this (Kevin 2013, chapt 10). So, through his story he may want to make his readers aware of the destructive effects that follow drugs and alcohol abuse. Then the reader also comes to know that the narrator is fully aware of his mental deterioration and recognises the terrible change that is happening within him. He tries fruitlessly to halt his falling into madness but fails completely.

He can do nothing more than objectively comment on the process of his increasing madness (Brantley 2007, p.375). Furthermore, the story tells us about the superstitious nature of human beings. Pastor S. Kyeyune indicates that:

*“There are many superstitions associated with cats, partly because that cat has lived alongside humans for thousands of years. Superstitions centring on the black cat are some of the most well-known and popular superstitions today. The black cat throughout history has been blamed for most of the wrongs of the world, from blasphemy to the plague. Even today, black cats have been regarded mysterious creatures with supernatural powers and*

## The Analysis of the two short stories contents

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*were associated with witches and even death. It was believed that witches could change into cats; in fact, it is believed they could make that change nine times. Some believe this to be the origin of the belief that cats have nine lives.” (2012, p 220/221)*

The curious and inquisitive reader discovers that the narrator is superstitious. He knows this by the narrator's recalling that his wife made "frequent allusions to the ancient popular notion.

Although the narrator declares that he is not superstitious yet with a little careful thinking and observing, the reader becomes increasingly aware of his superstitious inclinations. His superstitious belief became vivid and clear when he calls his cat Pluto.

The story, *The Black Cat*, is a clear reflection of the conflicting mind of the human beings. Poe creates horror and terror both from the human mind and depths of the soul to write this tale as unusual. In the story under discussion, Poe mixes non-rational elements with rational elements in order to show the disruptive and conflicting mind of narrator. We see the narrator is sometimes in a frenzy of violence and at others he is forgiving, loving, and caring. This happens in times of emotional upheaval. The narrator gets angry and curses and hates even those he unconditionally loves but after the departure of a few moments, he is again in his senses and feeling sorry for all that he has said and done.

Poe describes without any flaw the dark, the invisible, and the inexplicable side of the human psyche by moving between the two opposite poles of rationality and irrationality. By doing this, Poe so successfully and expertly makes the narrator "I" act in an unconscious manner, even if he knows about his mental deterioration. Hence, the beginning sentence where the narrator starts the story clearly shows this: "Yet mad am I not\_ and very surly do I not dream" (short story, *The Black Cat*).

He tells us that the Perverseness "*is one of the primitive impulses of the human heart one of the indivisible primary faculties, or sentiments, which give direction to the character of Man.*" Because of this very spirit the man commits wicked acts simply because he knows he should not. The nameless narrator further defines this spirit as the "unfathomable longing of the soul to vex itself." No one has ever been able to describe the impulse, that the psychologists call a radical imbalance of personality and the theologians, this original sin, then Poe.

## **The Analysis of the two short stories contents**

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The cats make him retrospect. They remind the narrator of what he was in better days. Therefore, he is unable to tolerate their presence. Moreover, the second cat reminds him of his wrong doing and makes him guilty. This may be the reason behind his killing of the second cat. Man cannot bear the burden of guilt and to avoid it he prefers to remove the source of his guilt.

Poe shows that a hatred of himself leads to hatred of everything around the person. He does not like to come out of his person therefore he does not stand anyone else. He refuses to end his introverted fury. He will not be sane or happy person once again. So, by presenting the conflicting mind of the protagonist himself, Poe shows us the picture of the character in total disintegration.

These two stories though different in themes, discuss the human psyche, the inner workings of the darker sides of the human beings. Poe as a writer focusses more on the destruction of self than on its perfection, in his writings i.e. short fiction. He only investigates different instances of self-destruction in various ways of representation. In these two short stories, the characteristics of Poe are revealed. The characters the stories project, are the reason for their own self destruction.

The diction used by Edgar, acts as a major contribution to his creation of horror. Instead of directly telling the readers about some evil presence, he makes use of such words which unintentionally draws the reader's attention. For example, he talks about the "instrumentality of the field", here he does not talk about some outside supernatural elements but actually he is referring to his inner evil. So, in this sense, he relates the abnormal human behaviour with horror. He uncovers the evil side of human thinking by presenting it in a horrible way. In this way, he may want to assert how dangerous and dreadful an evil mind might be for the others.

He does not talk about the typical persona of demons. He does not portray them the way people normally get afraid of them. For him demon is anger and the inner evil of mankind. As demon is concerned a destructive force, Edgar's demon is the symbol of destruction in a way that it produces a rage and fury in his characters that eventually leads to destruction. Edgar also talks about the departure of soul from the body and about demons, for example, "*my original soul seemed, at once, to take its flight from my body*", "*a demon instantly possessed me*," but his ghosts are more psychological.

## **The Analysis of the two short stories contents**

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Poe presents the themes of justice and punishment with the help of horror so that it may have more profound effect on everyone who reads it. He creates horror to propagate the moral values and justice.

Edgar, while representing horror, talks about the horrible aspects of the problems of the world and about the sufferings of the people. Edgar writes in such a unique style that gives reader an insight that some strange thing will happen in the story afterwards. He says that the abbey in which prince and his friends make a stay contains all the things of the world, except the red death. Here it is an indication that red death is surely going to come in their lives. But the reader cannot predict when and how of it and this acts as a source of horror and curiosity.

The most alarming, awful and horrific part of the story is the description of the rooms, especially the black room. Here again Poe creates horror with awful description and with his exclusive diction, otherwise, this horror part does not contain vampires, witches, demons etc.

### **2.4.4. ELEMENTS OF HORROR IN “THE BLACK CAT” and “THE MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH”**

#### **2.4.4.1. Horror in the Black Cat**

The horror which Poe created in his work is not traditional kind of horror in which the vampire or ghosts horrify the reader. Rather, he has invented a new kind of horror by unveiling the abnormal type of thinking. The psychological problems and the disturbed mental condition of the characters give a frightening effect to his work and make it a horror story. Like Ron Tamborini and James B. Weaver adds:

*“Poe led the change in the popular form for fictional horror from episodes in novels to short stories of pure terror, and from the supernatural to a focus on psychological horror. Poe’s stories laid the groundwork necessary to move the frightening fiction of early magazines to the next generation of horrid entertainment.”*  
(Tamborini and James 2013, p 8).

"The Black Cat" is a story of a person who suffers from a miserable state of confusion. He starts the story as if he is going to tell some important secret which makes the readers curious and the words like "Horror", "Phantasm", "Awe" and "terrible" make aware the reader that something terrible is going to be discussed. This is Edgar's style of writing horror, instead of

## The Analysis of the two short stories contents

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talking about some spirit, demon or vampire, he starts his horror stories in such a way that grasps the reader's attention automatically and the reader feel terrified even before he introduces any horror element.

Edgar's horror stories are different from the conventional horror works. Through the narrator's character he tries to represent a psychological kind of horror, which one does not only read but seems to feel it in an actual sense.

"The Black Cat is one of the most powerful of Poe's stories, and the horror stops short of the wavering line of disgust" (Quinn 395). □ Quinn, Arthur Hobson. *Edgar Allan Poe: A Critical Biography*. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1941.

The narrator of "*The Black Cat*" first becomes annoyed when Pluto "*inflicted a slight wound upon [the] hand with his teeth.*" After he is bitten by the cat, the narrator cuts out its eye. Poe relates "eyes" and "teeth" in their single capacity to take in or to incorporate objects. This dread of being consumed often leads the narrator to destroy who or what he fears (Silverman1991,p 207).

Shulman suggests that "*in cutting out the eye of the black demon, the narrator is also irrationally slashing and seeking to destroy his own demons*" (Shulman 256). This act, however, does not help him to overcome the "dark powers in his own nature" (ibid), neither does it prevent him from committing further atrocities. Rather it contributes more to his "alteration for the worse" (Poe 224). Shulman, Robert. "*Poe and the Powers of the Mind.*" *ELH*. 37.2 (1970): 245-62. The Johns Hopkins UP. JSTOR Masaryk U, Brno, Czech Rep. 20 Feb. 2008.

According to Shulman, the narrator is himself responsible for his own bitter end: "*The feelings of guilt and self-hatred, evident throughout the narrative, become dominant after the murder, and in the final scene the narrator thus helps to bring about his own punishment and destruction*" (Shulman 258).

*"From my infancy I was noted for the docility and humanity of my disposition. My tenderness of heart was even so conspicuous as to make me the rest of my companions. I was especially fond of animals, and was indulged by my parents with a great variety of pets. With these I spent most of my time, and never was so happy as when feeding and caressing them."* (Poe:

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1277). ...*This peculiarity of character grew with my growth, & in my manhood, I derived from it one of my principal sources of pleasure.* (Quinn, 1984)

His creation of horror is not merely a direct association between the horror and the ghosts rather it is a relationship between horror and psychological manifestation of ghosts and demons. Edgar's demons are more symbolic, at surface level he may talk about an apparition and presence of some evil, but actually he tries to throw light on the evil which lies inside human body. So, he has probably symbolized the immorality in the form of a ghost or demon.

The narrator's whole act of killing the cat frightens the reader terribly. Here it is not the involvement of such supernatural force which makes it horrible. It is the way in which narrator kills the cat that the reader finds the elements of horror. Firstly, the narrator makes the cat blind from her one eye. This gives reader a creepy feeling. The description of the eye horrifies the reader, "*the socket of the lost eye presented, it is true, a frightful appearance*" (short story, *The Black Cat*).

Narrator's killing of the cat in the story and then, hanging it on the tree seems more horrible to the readers because they relate it with the eternal justice and punishment. The narrator's house caught fire and all his possessions got burned right after the next day of his killing of the black cat. Edgar makes the description more horrible when narrator tells that the unusual thing that happens is that it leaves a mark of a cat appears to be hanging with gibbet.

Edgar further haunts the reader but not by some extraordinary or supernatural components. The narrator brings another cat into his home. The horror is created by the fact that the new cat resembles the previous cat and the only difference is that the new cat has a spray of white on his fur. This new cat seems to be mysterious especially the way it shows belongingness with the narrator and with his home. Another frightening aspect of this cat is that it is also one eye blind like Pluto. This is a point of difference between Edgar's horror and the traditional kind of horror that instead of bringing Pluto's ghost he brings another cat in the story which is mysterious but which is not an apparition of the old cat.

. His characters are tormented with mental illnesses and through this aspect, Edgar tries to create horror, as the narrator in the story has become afraid of the second cat, not because of the traditional superstitious beliefs that it is a witch in disguise but because it reminds him of his crime of killing Pluto.

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So Edgar's creation of horror is different in this sense that the characters suffer from the feeling of guilt and there is unconscious fear which remains in their mind throughout the story. When the narrator says that he suffers from the dreams of an unutterable fear, this fear is actually a reference to the constant feelings of guilt, of killing an innocent creature that had not done any harm to him. The second cat is the physical manifestation of his fear of being punished by the eternal justice.

Finally, the way he kills his wife and then, when he hides her behind the walls is the most horrible description. Though, after successfully hiding the dead body, he behaves in a confident manner, especially in front of the police. The horrible aspect in all this working is that the cat is missing and the narrator does not care about finding the cat as he wanted to get rid of it. The most terrible thing happens at the end of the story which really horrifies the readers and affects them completely.

While acting cool and confident in front of the police, he shows efficiency which results in his downfall. He knocks the wall, behind which he had hidden the dead body, in order to show the police, the well-construction of the house but unexpectedly a loud cry comes from the wall, this makes the police suspicious. The police quickly break the wall and discover what the narrator has tried to hide, the dead body of his wife and upon its head the missing cat has been sitting. The story ends with a long horrible description. The voice or cry was a horrible element for the police and then finding cat inside the wall was element of horror for the narrator and also produces horror in the hearts of the readers.

The narrator admits at the end that the wild cat from which he was escaping so long at the end attacked him as it was actually a monster which had never allowed him a peaceful life and which had never left him. Edgar creates horror stories and the title of the story itself is representative of it, as one can easily see it in case of the story "*The Black Cat*" and "*The Masque of the Red Death*." In the former story, use of the word 'black' and then 'cat' acts as an indicator that the story is not about some pleasant, sweet experience rather it is about some insidious work, some evil planning and it involves some mystery and horror.

### **2.4.4.2. Horror in the Masque of the Red Death**

"*The Masque of the Red Death*," the title of the story, depicts that the story contains the aspects of horror. The word 'death' has the horrible connotations for almost every person. He adds the elements of horror by using the word 'red' with the word 'death'. Red colour symbolizes terror, mystery, death and anger. So joining the two dreadful words, Edgar creates a

## **The Analysis of the two short stories contents**

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feeling of mystery and horror for the readers in the title of the story and reader can understand the nature of the story by only looking at the title of it. The word 'masque' also has the same kind of mysterious connotations and makes reader to think about what is hidden behind this masque.

At the very beginning of the story, Edgar uses the words like 'blood' and 'horror', which gives an insight of how Edgar views horror. He does not relate it with some supernatural force; he sees it as some evil side of human nature. The name of pestilence, 'red death,' seems so creepy and death is associated with this disease which gives a terrible feeling of fear. This is how Edgar reflects awfulness in his work. The way he describes the effects of this terrible disease are also very repulsive.

The "Black Room" is described vividly. *"The seventh apartment was closely shrouded in black velvet tapestries that hung all over the ceiling and down the walls, falling in heavy folds upon a carpet of the same material and hue. But in this chamber the windows failed to correspond with the decorations. The panes were scarlet-a deep blood in color"* (Poe, 73).

The horrible aspect of this deadly disease is that it kills its victims only in half an hour. This aspect creates a dreadful feeling among the readers.

Edgar explains that the arrangement of the rooms is very different from the traditional kind of rooms which one finds in a palace. The arrangement is very irregular, not allowing having a clear view of what lies inside the room. The description serves as an alarm for the reader and forces him to think why the arrangement is so unique and irregular and what is hidden inside these rooms. However, the six rooms are decorated in a relatively less horrible way than the seventh room. This is the room which arouses fear and horror.

The combination of black with red makes it a symbol of fear of some unknown and terrible thing and it acts as an alarm for the reader that some frightful thing is about to happen. He explains the red colour by using the word blood, "deep blood colour". Presentation of light through the corridors furthers the horrible impact of the rooms. Edgar himself admits that the arrangement of light in the creepiest room is also different from the other rooms and gives a ghastly feeling.

He makes the descriptions extremely horrible by asserting that only very few people are courageous and bold enough to stand in this room. A gigantic clock is hanging in this room and it contributes to the horrible effect of the room. It makes a loud sound after every hour which increases the feeling of terror and fear. The sound of the clock is so disturbing and

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strange that all the people in the palace are forced to stop their activities when the clock makes this sound. It is a kind of alarm for the people, and that is why they became afraid about what is going to happen. Edgar may present the horrible aspect just at the end of the story but throughout the story he creates such a creepy atmosphere that terrifies the readers.

It is towards the end of the story that Edgar introduces that character which is actually a source of terror. A strange figure is being observed by everyone in the hall, the newcomer is strange not only in the sense that he suddenly appears but also because of his mask and appearance. He definitely constitutes some element of strangeness because Edgar associates his arrival with the 'murmur of horror'. The appearance and get up of the newcomer is very bizarre, he is wearing blood-splattered gown which resembles the funeral cloak. The figure wears a mask which looks like the face of a corpse. He has a dreadful appearance which horrifies the king Prospero when he sees him for the first time.

Every one seems to be afraid of this dreadful figure and no one moves forward to catch him in spite of king Prospero's order. Actually no one is false in his fear of the unknown guest who eventually makes them prey to the red death. Thus, it is the red death that remains as a source of horror and fear of the people in the King's palace and eventually it is the one which leads them to death.

This is how Edgar contributes to the horror fiction. Edgar creates a very different kind of horror and the reason the popularity of his stories among his readers is that he combines the horror with the complex human psyche. Poe, in his stories, presents the complicated side of human mind and uncovers the various different aspects of human thinking with the help of horror. In both the stories under discussion, he has created horror and through the horrible descriptions he has tried to represent the evil thinking. We may say that the physical aspect of Edgar's horror actually symbolizes the horrible thinking of human mind and death and destruction which he highlights actually emphasize the destructive kind of thinking. So, the horror which he depicts may not be taken only in a literary sense but it seems to have symbolic connotations. Edgar reflects the complex aspects of human psyche with the creation of an unusual and unconventional kind of horror.

### **Conclusion**

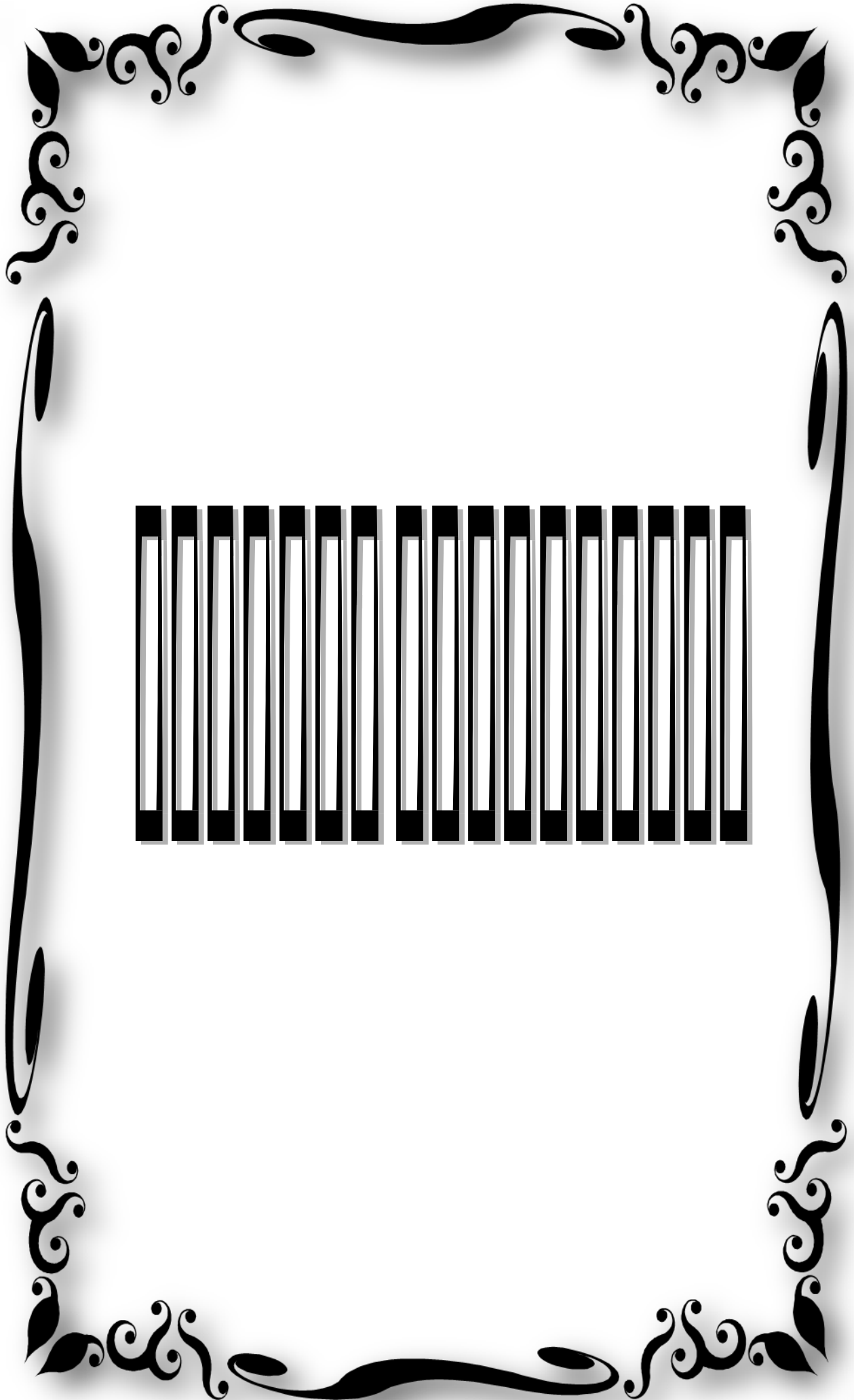
In this chapter, we have attempted to analyse Poe's life, interpreting the human psyche and the creation of horror in the selected stories. It should be stated that in these stories

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every detail is indicated on purpose. Edgar Allan Poe makes use of such horror and human psyche in the stories to express his status psyche. Poe led a tormented life. Penniless, forsaken and often ignored by the public, he sank into depression, further heightened by bouts of alcoholism. In a letter to Allan in April, 1833, Poe writes: “*Without friends, without any means, consequently, of obtaining employment, I am perishing — absolutely perishing for want of aid... For God’s sake, pity me and save me from destruction* (O’Neill 7).

He suffered from bouts of depression, during “*times of mourning over the absence of a loved one. Yet what was this loved being ever presenting his soul? It was no longer his mother, for she was forever beyond reach, but her „imago.“ His love for her had transferred itself to this image he carried in his soul or projected on the universe*” (Bonaparte 83/4).



## General Conclusion

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### General Conclusion

Horror stories have a long history. Many writers have contributed to the horror fiction throughout the course of many centuries. In fact, this fiction is source of attraction for many people since many decades. People are particularly interested in the mysterious stories and those stories which contain the elements of fear and suspense. So, gothic fiction is recognized as the horror fiction it includes. The works of many different writers. But the gothic stories of horror and mystery were different from the work which is presented by a very famous writer of horror stories in American literature, whose name is Edgar Allan Poe.

Apart from horror, another aspect of short stories is the depiction of human psyche. Almost every short story writer has contributed to the psychology by presenting human psyche is his/her short stories. The psyche which these writers try to present deals with common aspects of human thinking and how one behaves in a society. The difference between Edgar Allan Poe and other famous short story writers is that Edgar has tried to present the abnormal or the anti-social thinking of human mind. The psyche which he presents in his short stories consists of the complex mechanism of human mind and is not very easy to understand. His stories have an underlying meaning which cannot easily be interpreted. He talks about the complexities of mind which result in a form of complex human behavior and as a result affect the life of a person.

The reason why Edgar preferred to write about this aspect of human psyche is that he himself had spent a very disturbed and miserable life. From the very early age, he started facing the bitter realities of life which has greatly influenced his thinking and his disturbed thinking can easily be found in almost all his stories but more particularly in "*The Black Cat*" and "*the Masque of the Red Death*". Edgar Allan Poe, the writer of dark, horrible and complex psychological stories, lived a tragic life and the influence can be easily recognized in his works, especially these two short stories we have selected, thus, when he faced the harsh realities of life, he tried to picture them out in his writings. One might his disturbed life as a reason behind his different literary works and writing style.

This may be the reason of this kind of writing which is Poe's style. Another reason of this kind of writing is that Edgar Allan Poe was a substance abuser to a considerable extent. He was an alcoholic and opium addict. So, his disturbed life, love and drug addiction are regarded as the bitter realities of his life which

## General Conclusion

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influenced his writings to a great extent in a form of complex short stories.

Apart from these facts, there are several other factors in his life whose traces can be found in his short stories, and the death of his loved ones is the dominating factor. With the death of each one of his dear ones, he became increasingly indulged in drugs and alcohol, moreover started writing more about death and destruction. Poe has spent a fully tragic life, he himself admits that he was different from the others, his perception was different. Death is the recurring theme of his life which led him to more drug abuse, self-destruction and finally ended his life.

Edgar Allan Poe's short stories are connected to each other with the common elements of horror and disturbed human psyche. His disturbed mental condition is manifested in his horror tales. These are about the evil working of mind, fear of unknown, criminal thinking, sudden deaths, insanity...etc. The story is told in such a manner that makes it horrible for the reader. Poe has presented horror through the creepy atmosphere and through the abnormal behavior of the characters.

Edgar's stories grasp the reader's attention because of the new kind of horror introduced by him. His horror is not merely to make his readers horrified of the traditional aspects of horror which were common in gothic fiction. Edgar's creation of horror is different because he presents the horrible truths of human nature, the evilness which lies within man and which destroys the whole survival of man when it comes out of him. We may say that Edgar Allan Poe has created a psychological kind of horror. He does not simply attribute the physical characteristics of horrible figures to his characters. Edgar's horror appeals to the mind of the readers and makes them think of the evilness which exists within a man.

So, Edgar Allan Poe is that influential writer of his time who has introduced a new kind of short stories by presenting horror and then relating it to the human psyche. As he spent a disturbed life, whatever he had experienced had greatly influenced his thought processes. As a consequence, he happened to write such stories. We may assume that if Edgar had not gone through all those life sickening experiences then, his stories would be different.

*"The Black Cat"* and *"The Masque of The Red Death"* are perhaps the most horrible stories of Edgar Allan Poe which shed light on the complex human behavior and the reasons behind such behaviors. These two tales are concerned with death, sin and punishment. Edgar gives moral values a prime importance in his stories that is why he proves in his writings that the villain should get punished at the end. The punishment can be in several ways and kinds, it can be a mental suffering or physical torture or the sound of the conscience which constantly

## General Conclusion

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tortures that person who commits sins. In his stories Edgar Allan Poe deals with the conscience, feelings of guilt and morality and depicts the absence of such traits as the ghastly figures. His stories do not portray any ghosts actually but it is just a horrible picture of the disturbed human mind and of the insidious human nature. With the depiction of the human psyche, he creates such an environment which the reader finds terrifying.

In his short stories, Edgar Allan Poe discusses the theme of death quite often and through this discussion he shows his own view of death. When reading his stories, especially those portraying the death of the characters, one can figure out how Edgar views death. Edgar Allan Poe presents it as a sudden and unpredictable art of separation from the loved ones. The idea of death had always haunted the writer since his childhood. So, Edgar has depicted this theme which contains the horror as well as his disorganized conception of death. Edgar Allan Poe uncovers the facts in his short stories which are maybe unknown for the common readers, and by reading his stories they come to understand why certain people behave strangely in different difficult situations. Edgar does show that the evil characters are punished for their sins, but with this he also tries to comprehend the reasons behind their strange behavior.

The writer of gothic fiction tries to highlight why people commit sins, moreover to answer such questions like why people who were previously good suddenly become evil human beings. Edgar Allan Poe tends to explore the reason behind the evilness of people and provide the readers with some good answers. He tells about the extremes of human nature as his characters are mostly tormented with insanity.

Poe's stories attract the attention of a great deal of people because he deals with people's thinking. So people are particularly interested in finding the reasons of the abnormal behavior depicted by many people on certain occasions. This helps the people to better adapt to their lives and after understanding the problems of other people it becomes easy to develop successful relations with people in the society.

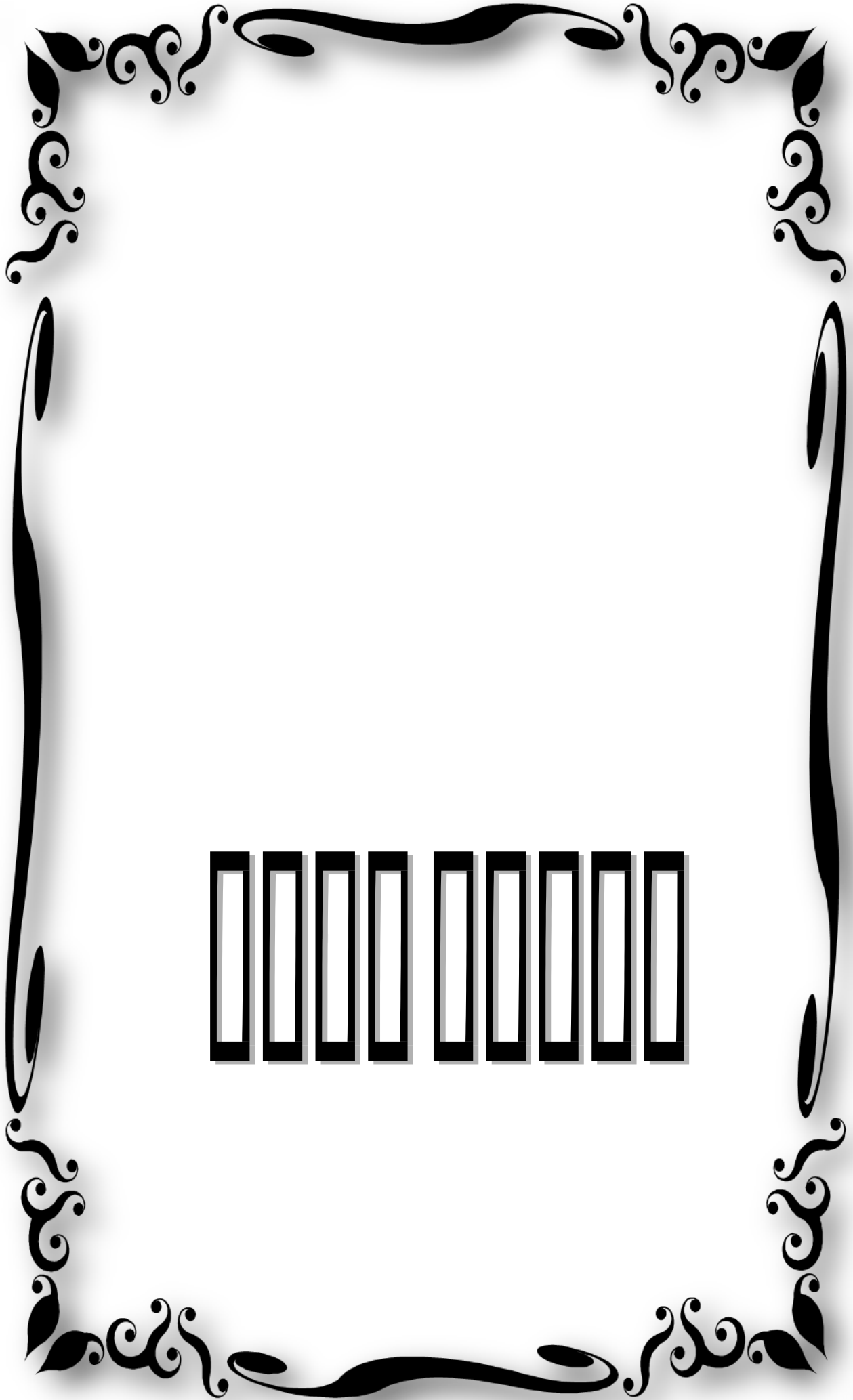
Edgar's stories also provide the readers an insight of their own complex behaviors and this helps them to resolve their problems and overcome their fears. The horrible aspect of Poe's stories makes them striking for the readers so they become curious to know the mystery which is the significant characteristic of Edgar's stories. As a result, Edgar Allan Poe's short stories are famous to a great extent of the reflection of human psyche and the different ways of creating horror.

## **General Conclusion**

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To conclude, Edgar Allan Poe is a great name in the field of short story writing. He is a well known writer of horror and psychological tales reflecting the human psyche including the creation of horror. Edgar Allan Poe is that author who has written about the two apparently different kinds of short stories, psychological and horrible, and his contributions to these two types of short stories are greater than any other writer since he has combined them in such a harmonious way that deeply appeals the readers.

No one knows exactly how Poe died. There has been speculation that he drank himself to death, and more recently, that he died of rabies because of his hydrophobic condition at the time of death. (This condition may also accompany acute alcoholism). Biographers favorable to Poe tend to downplay his alcoholism, while those critical, present an image of a raging alcoholic and drug addict. However, some have suggested that he died of a broken heart and that is where I would leave it.



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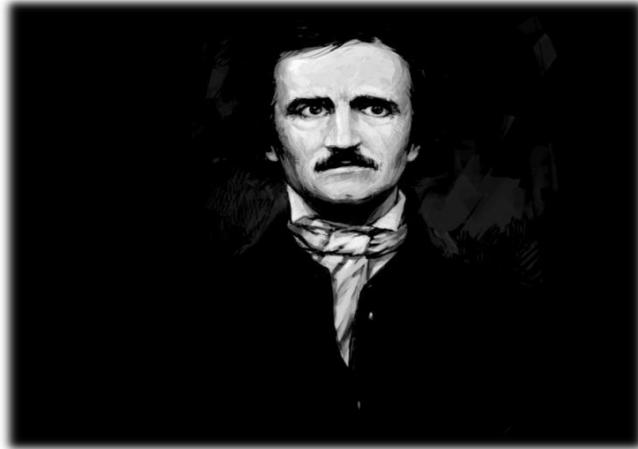
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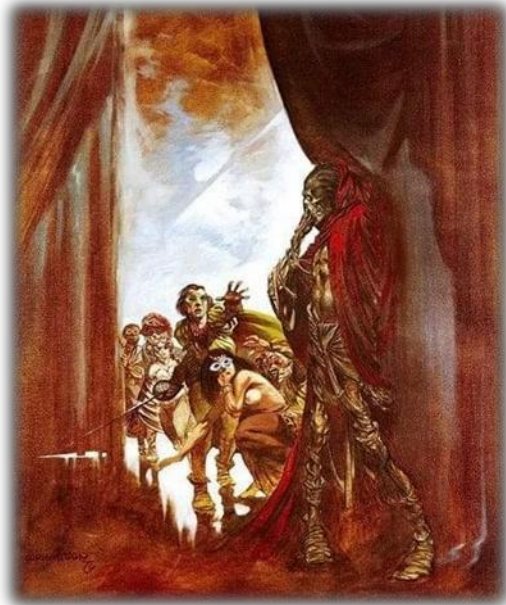
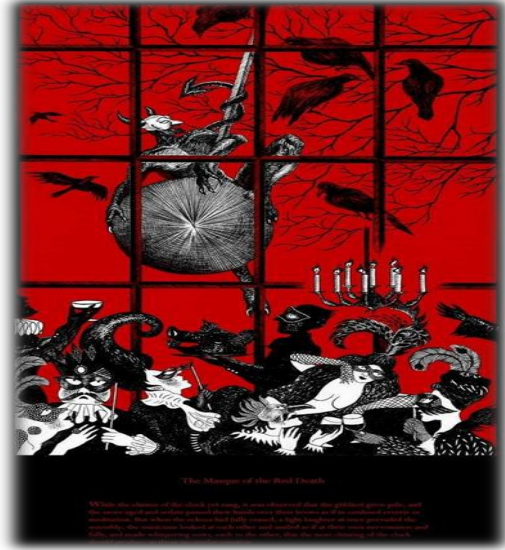
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# Appendices

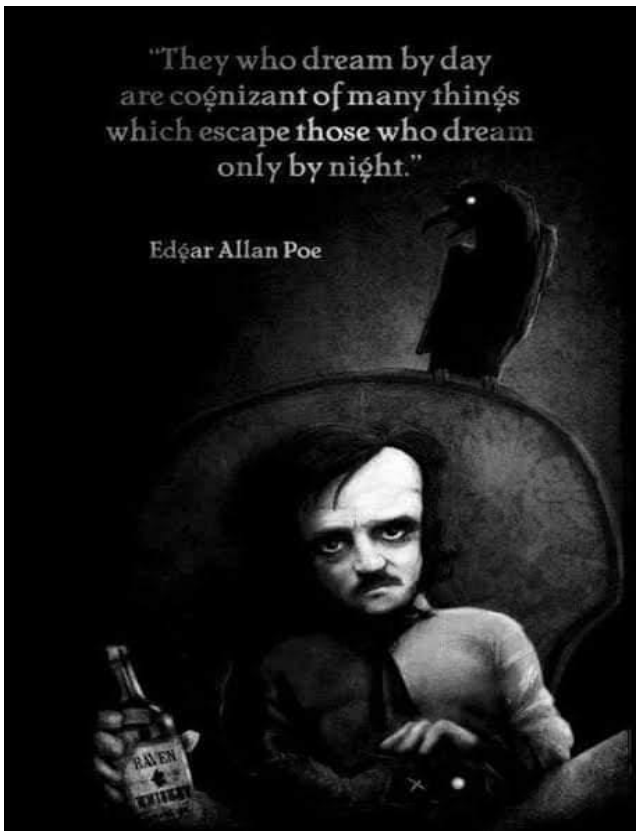
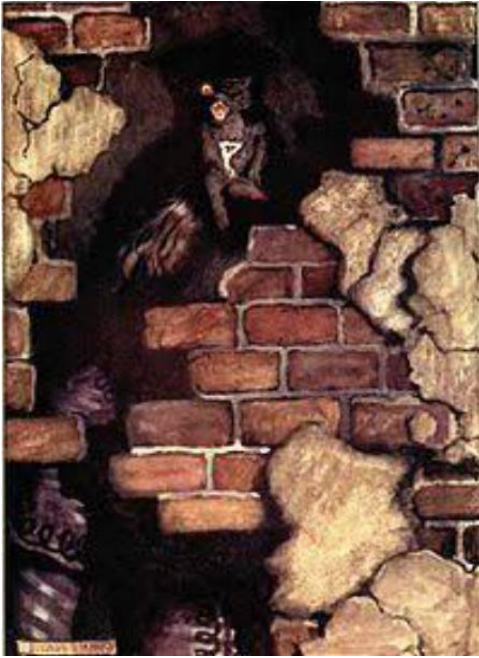
## Appendix A: Edgar Photos



## Appendix B: The Masque of The Red Death



## Appendix C : The Black Cat



## ملخص

يدرس البحث الحالي أعمال إدغار آلان بو و يناقش أسلوبية في كتابة القصص القصيرة و يركز تحديدا على الجانث النفسي للإنسان و خلق الرعب في قصصه القصيرة. كما يسلط الضوء على الطرق التي اعتمدها بو لتقديم الحالات المختلفة للجانث النفسي و يأخذ بعين الإعتبار خلق الرعب في كل من القصتين " القط الأسود" و " قناع الموت الأحمر"، علاوة على ذلك يركز على الحالة التي عكس من خلالها إدغار وعيه حول مختلف الحقائق المعقدة لحياة الإنسان باستعمال الأدب القوطي و عناصر الرعب و الإثارة لتصوير العقل البشري و طبيعته.