Religious Symbols in Gothic Literature

The Case of: Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* and Edgar Allan Poe’s *A Descent into the Maelstrom*

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Dedication

I dedicate this modest work to my dear mother and dear father for their unlimited love, faith and support, I would not achieve all of this without you.

To my beloved brothers and sisters who keep encouraging and pushing me forward with every obstacle.

To all my friends and colleagues who stand next to me in good and hard times.
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Dr. BOUSBAI Abdelaziz,

and as examiner: Mrs KEDDACHE Assia.

It is an honour to have you among the jury.

My sincere thanks also go to my teachers through these years of study,

who sacrificed their time and rest for us,

their students.
Abstract

The study is meant to analyse the use of symbolism in Gothic Literature from a religious stand. To illustrate this view, two literary works, Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (1818) and Edgar Allan Poe’s *A Descent into the Maelstrom* (1841), have been studied in order to get an overview of this specific use of symbols. Aiming at studying symbols from a religious perspective, St. Augustine of Hippo’s theory of signs is taken as a method to this analytic study. This research work is divided into three chapters. The first chapter explains the concept of symbolism and it presents the main theories that study the notion of symbolism. The second deals with the explanation of the Romanticism Movement in Britain and America, plus an overview of Gothic Literature, its main writers and characteristics. In addition, this chapter studies the state of religion during the period of Romantic Literature in the 18th and 19th centuries, and how it created an influence on the literary works of that period. Furthermore, the second chapter touches the importance of religious symbols in Romantic Literature. In the third chapter, an analysis of the symbols used in the chosen corpora was performed by basing the explanation on verses from the Bible. Finally, the third chapter also gives a reflection of the analysed symbols on the religious state in 18th and 19th centuries Britain and America. All in all, this research work offers an insight into the importance of religion in human life, and how it can have a deep effect on authors, poets and their literary products.

**Key words:** Symbol, Religious Symbolism, Romantic Movement, Gothic literature, *Frankenstein, A Descent into the Maelstrom.*
List of Abbreviations

• ADIMS : A Descent into the Maelstrom
• FB : The Freudian Broad Theory
• FN : The Freudian Narrow Theory
• Frank : Frankenstein
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General Introduction
General Introduction

Giving a clear image of any society through literature can be seen as the most important message to be expressed in the human art. Literature has passed through many tendencies and movements which has shaped its structure and made it more grasped by different readers. These tendencies emerged from the literacy works of writers, critics and specialists in different fields who established their own theories, principles and analyses of literature.

The most read English literature is the British and the American writings, due to their domination over the literary field. Since America, or the New World, was colonised by Great Britain. The similarities in their literary productions can be detected, as they share the same literary perspectives and changes. This view can be said to be right concerning the Puritan period (1500’s-1790), whose first writers were Englishmen (High, 1986), but later and with the changes in many fields of life, interest shifted to the revolutionary thought and the ‘American’ mentality developed and became independent from the British one (ibid.). Even though American ideas changed, the tendencies and movements in Britain still reflect on American thoughts (VanSpanckerne, 1994).

Romanticism is a tendency which appeared first in Europe during the 18\textsuperscript{th} century, and it reached England in 1798 with the publication of Wordsworth’s and Coleridge’s \textit{Lyrical Ballads} (Milen, 2009). In America, this movement started in 1820 following the Age of Reason and the revolutionary thoughts (Skipp, 1992). This movement brought to literature the liberation of imagination, hence writers and poets became free to express their thoughts and to use imagined scenes and events in their literary works (ibid.). It also gave an importance to the personality of the writer or the character he/she uses, thus during the Romanticism period the pronoun “I” started to be used by authors (Rajan & Wright, 2006). This aspect led many romantic authors to be isolated from the surrounding society in order to discover their inner selves and to express their own feelings in their literary productions. The feature of isolation is also considered as one of the Romantic Movement characteristics; this kind of isolation obliges the authors to discover the beauty of nature and its role in the human life (Brians, 2008). The natural aspects, for the romantics are a bridge to go beyond the real world and to reach the metaphysical and supernatural realm, where the glory of God can be seen and understood (ibid.).

However, during the Romantic period of literature, another sub-movement appeared in both countries, which is known as the Gothic literature, or Dark Romanticism from the American view (High, 1986). The Gothic literature is the dark side of the Romantic Movement, due to its interest in
the sinful side of the human being, plus the use of imagination to show the existence of God in the normal material world. In addition, the Gothic literary texts, specially the American ones, or as they are called the Anti-Transcendentalists, portray the spiritual world as not that beautiful and peaceful realm. Instead they show its evil seeds that human beings can carry inside them, and that the invisible world can be frightening and ugly (Milen, 2009).

During this movement, many writers and poets came to be known for their inner thoughts and their strong use of imagination in both lands (ibid.). In the English Gothic literature, and unlike Wordsworth who pictures the beauty of humans and nature, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (1797-1851) is one of the famous prose writers in the English literature for her ghostly narration (Snodgrass, 2005). *Frankenstein* or *The Modern Prometheus* (1818) is her major work which deals with the Gothic aspects, the changes of nature, isolation and the religious side (Milen, 2009). Shelley provides in this novel the relationship between her main two characters; the “creator” and the “creature”, she also uses their surrounding objects and the nature aspects in picturing this relation. Religion is considered as an additional issue to study in England during that time besides politics and economic changes; even though Mary’s husband, Percy Shelley, is a known poet for his interest in the political aspect of the human life (Milen, 2009). Mary Shelley, however, shows her interest in the scientific aspect as an opened window that provides an insight into the religious side of the human life (Brown, 2008).

Across the Atlantic, Gothic literature surfaced as a part of the American Romantic literature during the beginning of 19th century, Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849) comes to be the most known American writer and poet for his horror stories and harsh imagination (VanSpankanckern, 1994). In many of his short stories like *The Tell-Tale Heart* (1843), *The Fall of the House of Usher* (1839), and poems such as *The Raven* (1845), *Lenore* (1831) and *Annabel Lee* (1849), Poe uses the aspect of isolation, the evil hidden side of human beings and the feeling of guiltiness for the committed sins (ibid.). However in his short story *A Descent into the Maelstrom* (1841), Poe shows the different aspects of nature that appeal to the existence of the supernatural world without referring to it explicitly. This reference to the metaphysical hidden-world is due to a number of reformations and different conflicts that the religious side in America witnessed during the 19th century, and these spiritual struggles and changes, which the American citizens lived through can be detected in Poe’s works (Stout, 2008).

In order to reach this high level of beauty in delivering specific messages, the literary work is characterised by the use of figurative language that helps in widening the imagination, plus the use of stylistic devices which are means to give this magnificent touch to literary works. Symbolism is
one of the stylistic devices that helps writers to code their messages, and its interpretation can be related to any field in life. The way of interpretation helps the reader to be ‘involved’ in the literary work; furthermore, it gives him/her the opportunity to apply his/her own thoughts in analysing the literary text. The various perspectives that analysing symbols provides to the reader is the main reason behind choosing to study the use of symbolism in these two corpora from a religious perspective, because it aids in opening a portal and shedding the light on the real meanings of the literary work. Moreover, it gives a clear explanation to the importance of religion in the both chosen literary texts. This will help in understanding how symbolism is used in any literary work, and how the religious aspect in the British and American Romantic Movement life is taken by its people.

However, the use of figurative language in literary works differs from one writer to another. While some writers tend to use simple figurative language, others tend to complicate their delivered views by using complicated figures of speech. The use of symbolism in this kind of works makes it, as Augustine warns, a way to “cloud communication” (Clarke, 2003: 2), which means that it can blur the view of the reader and cover the real intended meaning of the literary work. Also what complicates the desired meaning of the literary text more is including an implied religious touch to it, and this confuses the reader by what the writer really wants to deliver, and whether the aspect of religion is really an implied idea to be figured out and discussed or just a surface meaningless idea that have no hidden purpose to achieve.

To imply a specific meaning or to hide a given message, symbols are used in many literary works, especially in poetry, and this use can vary according to the message that the author wants to convey. While analysing the use of symbolism, different aspects, which can be “isolated” (Frye & Bloom, 2000: 71) can be studied and interpreted as a way to ‘symbolise’ certain ideas. This can be done through using multiple aspects in the literary work as different characters and personalities, objects, events, different classification of words, or even just a morpheme. These aspects, which later will be taken as symbols aid the writer in coding his/her messages (Leech & Short, 2007).

In the case of an actual reader, the understanding of a literary work is simple and limited to the surface meaning. If the reader, however, gets to know how the writer hides other meanings and personal ideas in his literary work through using symbolism, which changes the work from “an inanimate nature into a human nature” (Ellen, 1968: 1), the way of reading that work will change. Thus, understanding the use of symbolism in the literary work helps to enjoy reading the literary text through different interpretations that the reader can provide, these interpretations also help him/her to decipher the coded messages and thoughts and to give a deeper meaning to the literary work.
This study is meant to explore the use of symbolism from a religious perspective in both works of Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* and Edgar Allan Poe’s *A Descent into the Maelstrom*. These two works are masterpieces from the Romantic period in the British and American Gothic literature, and both of them deal with the supernatural aspect in the human life. The first literary work by Mary Shelley narrates the story of a scientist, who ‘created a man’, and later he faces problems of how to control the created person and that makes the scientist ‘controlled’ by that creature’s power and actions. Through these events, the attention to religion is clear due to the idea of ‘the creator and the creature’, also by the surrounding nature and objects which are affected by the actions of the two main characters. For the second literary text, Poe tells the story of a fisherman who faces a whirl in the middle of his fishing trip, and how the anonymous character sees the changes of his surroundings during this storm. Both literary works include the glory of nature and the significance of the surrounding objects, which are controlled by a supernatural power.

The chosen corpora, *Frankenstein* and *A Descent into the Maelstrom*, deal with the religious side of life and its supernatural part. This characteristic is mainly introduced through the use of symbolism. In order to set the comparison between the British and American use of religious symbols in literature, these two works are used to make this distinction, and to analyse this special use of symbols.

The objective of this study is to show the importance of the use of symbolism in literature, and how its decoding and interpretation helps in delivering hidden messages and implied meanings. This research work, also, gives importance to the religious aspect in the literary work, and this aspect cannot be that clear but referred to by using figurative language, especially symbolism.

The Romantic Movement is known for its interest in religion as one of its main principles, but while reading any Gothic work that is a part of the Romantic Movement, the religious aspect is not that explicit to be noticed. It can be said that it is referred to in indirect way in order to deliver an implicit meaning of the expressed ideas. In order to detect the aspect of religious in the Gothic literature, specific symbols should be analysed in the chosen corpora. Thus, the research study aims at answering the following questions:

- How do Mary Shelley and Poe use religious symbols in *Frankenstein* and *A Descent into the Maelstrom*?
- Why do the two writers overuse religious symbols in their literary works?
- Does the religious aspect in the British and the American Gothic Literatures reflect the religious changes in their societies?
In order to answer the previous questions, a number of hypotheses are stated as follows:

1- Religious symbols are an implicit way to refer to the religious side of the British and the Americans during 18\textsuperscript{th} and 19\textsuperscript{th} centuries.

2- Both writers use religious symbols as means to deliver an implied religious message.

3- Expressing the interest in religion is different in the British and the American society during the Romantic period.

In this research work, the analytic method is the base of the study, and the work is divided into three main chapters. The first chapter discusses the prominent theories of symbolism, including those of Saussure and Pierce who study the use of symbols from a linguistic perspective, Langer and Freud who deal with symbols on a psychological base, Frey who discusses symbols from different critical procedures and St. Augustine who introduces the modal religious theory. The second chapter is devoted to the critical study of the British and American Romanticism, its characteristics and Gothic Literature. In addition, the second chapter deals with the condition of religion in the social life during that period, besides studying points of view towards the use of religious symbols in the Romantic period. The third chapter sheds light on analysing and decoding religious symbols in Frankenstein and A Descent into the Maelstrom based on the Bible, and then applies a comparison between them in order to show the importance of expressing religious ideas in the two literary works.

In a nutshell, the present study would hopefully facilitate understanding the use of symbolism as a rhetorical device for any EFL learner, especially from the perspective of how the religious analysis would lead deeper meanings to come to light. Also, we hope this research work would enlarge the knowledge that the students of literature should obtain about the aesthetic complexity of literary language.
Chapter One

The Concept of Symbolism and Its Prominent Theories
Chapter One

Introduction

Symbolism is a literary movement that appeared during the nineteenth century, which gave a further interest in the use of symbols in literary texts (Milen, 2009). The symbol is a literary device that is used by many writers to indirectly deliver their messages. The Symbolism Movement influenced many Romanticism writers, for it is the most used device that decorates their literary works.

In France, symbolism movement appeared as a reaction to Naturalism and Realism Movements. The use of symbolism is to show how the work of art can be hugely influenced from within the artist, such as emotions, feelings and ideas, rather than being limited to influences from the outside world (Myers, 2007). In 1886, the poet Jean Moréas (1856-1910) was the first to give a specific name to this movement in Symbolist Manifesto, where he also mentioned three main poet leaders for it, Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867), Stéphane Mallarmé (1842-1898) and Paul Valery (1871-1945) (ibid.). With the appearance of the translation of French literary works during the 1890’s, an Irish writer, George Moore (1852-1933) was the first to deliver the thoughts of the main French poets and symbolists; Mallarmé, Rimbaud, Verlaine and Jules Laforgue to English through his work Impressions and Opinions (1891) (Eylon, 2005).

Surprisingly, symbolism movement was not trusted in its beginnings in the English Literature (ibid.). The influence, however, of this movement only started to be appreciated after the works of the Irish author James Joyce (1882-1941), Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) as well as others (ibid.).

1.1 Symbolism Definition

The word symbol is derived from the Greek verb symballein (to put together), and the noun symbolon (sign) (Ellen, 1968). However, when this word entered the literary realm in the late eighteenth century, its use shifted to refer to ‘meaning’ (ibid.). In his Critique of Judgment (1790), Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) refers to symbols as “indirect representation of the concept through the medium of analogy” (Ellen, 1968: 1). Symbols from this point of view are a way to give the characteristics of the used aspect to the other described thing; for instance, “a fearsome mask with a long, beaklike nose.” (Brown, 2013: 35). The used symbol in (beaklike mask) is a medium to represent death, for those masks were used by doctors in the Middle Ages during the Plague disease or the Black Death, exactly in the 14th century.
While the symbolism movement spread through Europe, and passed to Germany, Spain and England, many definitions have been given to the notion of ‘symbol’. The German writer, Johann Wolfgang Goethe (1749-1832) was the first to set a frame to the word symbol:

*Symbolism transforms appearance into an idea, the idea into an image in such a way that the idea remains always infinitely effective and unreachable in the image and remains ineffable even if uttered in all languages.* (Quoted in Bell, 1997)

This definition gives the term ‘symbol’ a role of representing in a concrete form the ‘unrepresented’ thing and the supra-sensible meaning (ibid.), which shows how the use of symbolism in literary works can be a means of delivering higher thoughts through unlimited time.

From another side, Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834), a British poet defines symbols in *The Statesman’s Manual* (1816) by giving their characteristics as the following:

*...* by a translucence of the special in the individual, or of the general in the special, or of the universal in the general; above all of the translucence of the eternal through and in the temporal. It always partakes of the reality which it renders intelligible; and while it enunciates the whole, abides itself as a living part of the unity of which it is representative. (Quoted in Ellen, 1968: 2)

The use of symbol by Coleridge was in a synecdocheal relationship between the symbolic object and the represented idea and this makes it impossible to know which one is the symbol and which one is the ‘whole’ (Bell, 1997).

As in Europe, in the New World, symbolism movement appeared in different literary works with additional aspect (Ellen, 1968). In his book, *Symbolism and American Literature* (1965) Charles Feidelson states that there is an obliterated difference between modern symbolism and the symbols used by romantic writers such as Melville, Poe and Hawthorne. These first users of symbols are called ‘pure symbolists’, and the favour is referred to the Puritans who are described as incomplete, frustrated symbolists interested in religion (ibid.). This shows how those writers use the religious conception of God’s signs and the aesthetic use of symbols not in a very different way from their ancestors (ibid.).

The previous given definitions of the symbol which have been stated by different literary specialists, writers and poets help in illustrating the importance of symbols as a device in literary works. It also explains the different usages and views which symbols can be applied in.
1.1.1 Types of Symbolism

Giving a deep meaning to the literary work can be achieved by including and interpreting its used symbols. This interpretation can be based on three main paths, each gives one symbol different meaning, and this helps in transforming the literary work from a mere combination of written words into a full of life work.

1.1.1.1 Archetypal Symbols

The archetypal symbols are a kind of symbols which are known universally, and interpreted nearly with the same meaning (Finkelstein, 2010). The colour white for example is a symbol of purity, and this interpretation is shared by most people.

“The Clouds Burst” (Tolkien, 2002: 186) is the seventeenth chapter’s title from The Hobbit novel (1915) by J. R. R. Tolkien. From the chapter’s name, the reader can understand that during the events of this chapter problems would be solved. The clouds are a natural aspect which causes the sky to become dark, exactly as the existence of problems in a person’s life. Moreover, the saying “the clouds burst” symbolises the return of peace and the disappearance of problems. This way of analysing can be shared by most people due to the title’s universal clarity.

1.1.1.2 Conventional Symbols

The interpretation of conventional symbols depends on the culture they are used in and the way they are used with (Finkelstein, 2010). For instance, the sun for Native American Indians means deity, while for other cultures as ancient Aztecs, it represents life.

As an example of this, in Dan Brown’s Angels and Demons (2000), the word ‘cross’ is used with two different meanings. The first is referring to purifying sinners according to the Christian view by “branding them alive” (Brown, 2000: 26). On the other hand, the cross means the four elements of life (earth, fire, wind, and water) for the Illuminati organization (anti-Christian group). In addition to this, the meaning of the word (cross) can be interpreted differently according to the culture of the reader. For Muslims, a cross symbolizes Christianity, but for a reader who is interested in ancient Egyptian mythology, the cross represents the goddess mother Isis (Finkelstein, 2010).

1.1.1.3 Personal Symbols

Personal symbols are analysed according to the personality of the person who uses them: a dreamer, or an author (Finkelstein, 2010). If a person fears snakes, he would see it as a
source of danger or even death. While for another person, a snake would represent a person or a situation that cannot be trusted.

For instance, While reading Animal Farm (1945), the reader faces two interpretations for the silence of the donkey, “Old Benjamin, the donkey, seemed quite unchanged since the Rebellion” (Orwell, 1996: 13). The first interpretation is that this silence is a symbol of wisdom. However, it could also be interpreted as cowardice or weakness of the meant character.

1.2 Symbolism: Prominent Theories

Analysing the use of symbols in literature led different critics from different schools of thought to define it each according to his/her point of view. These definitions were the source of the emergence of a number of theories that dealt with symbolism from different perspectives. The view towards the term ‘symbol’ changes according to each school, and this reflects the resulted analysis of the term. Additionally, it gives a further support to the different aspects of the symbol, whether its meaning or its structure (form).

1.2.1 Ferdinand de Saussure’s Theory

Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913), a Swiss linguist born in Geneva, dealt with symbols from a linguistic perspective (Kemmer, 2009). His most famous published work is Course in General Linguistic (1916), which studies the language from different sides and it also investigates the structure of ‘the sign’ in the language. In the first part of this book, Ferdinand de Saussure uses for the first time the terms ‘signifier’ (concept) and ‘signified’ (sound-image) as a way to relate them with the object through the use of language (Saussure, 1998: 67). This relation according to Ferdinand de Saussure is an ‘arbitrary’ one: “Since I mean by a sign the whole that results from the associating of the signifier with the signified, I can simply say: the linguistic sign is arbitrary” (ibid.).

However, explaining the word ‘symbol’ has a different situation from that of the sign. Saussure states that: “One characteristic of the symbol is that it is never wholly arbitrary; it is not empty, for there is a rudiment of a natural bond between the signifier and the signified” (Saussure, 1998: 68). To illustrate this idea, Ferdinand de Saussure uses the example of ‘justice’, that it is symbolised by a pair of scales, and this idea cannot be changed in the human mind. The names (sings) of things in this world are known from the primordial, but the ‘symbolisation’ is based on certain psychology of the person that could not change. Returning to the previous example of the word ‘justice’, its symbol can never be changed into chariot (ibid.). From this point of view, symbols are surrounding the human being; thus, their meanings and interpretations are not expected to be changeable.
Criticising Ferdinand de Saussure’s point of view about the use of symbols in language, the Franco-Bulgarian Tzvetan Todorov (1939–) in his *Theories of Symbol* (1982) claims that Saussure failed to define the exact meaning of the symbol, and that most of his works do not contain any relation to “the symbolic dimensions of the language” (Todorov, 1982: 265). Neglecting the symbolism phenomenon by Ferdinand de Saussure was when he failed to study Mlle Smith’s incomprehensible linguistic production, and after that he considered symbols, in his *Nibelungen* epics’ studies, as a mistaken form in the language and as long as they are not intentional, symbols do not exist (ibid.).

*Saussure is romantic when he grants special importance to systems, or in his refusal to explain meaning through some relation to an external referent; he ceases to be romantic when he turns a deaf ear to symbolic.* (Todorov, 1982: 270)

Also, Todorov tries to criticise the contradicted perspective that Saussure held, he explains that despite the spread of the Romantic Movement in 1900’s and with its view about the existence of symbols, Ferdinand de Saussure chooses a ‘neoclassical’ view towards symbolism (ibid.).

### 1.2.2 Peirce’s Theory of Signs

Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) is an American scientist, logician and a philosopher. In his logic studies, Peirce deals with semiotics and the general theory of signs in particular. From his view, the nature of signs is divided into three branches: “The tripartite of signs produces the icon, the index, and the symbol, the last being the case where the relation between signifier and signified is arbitrary” (Petocz, 2004: 11). The first kind is introducing the object of discourse as it is, “That is to say, an icon’s significance is grounded in its own qualities, and not in any relationship to another that requires the latter to exist” (Short, 2007: 215). The second attracts the attention to what it introduces without describing it: “A genuine Index and its Object must be existent individuals (whether things or facts), and its immediate Interpretant must be the same character” (Peirce, 2011: 108). The last one is the main branch which is “the general name and description which signifies its object by means of an association of ideas or habitual connection between the name and the character signified” (Peirce, 1931: 153).

In *Collected Papers of Peirce*, Charles Peirce explains that when the mind associates the sign and the object together, the sign becomes either a *name* or a *symbol* (ibid: 155). As a result, the symbol is taken as a purely conventional sign where one object signifies one shared meaning by all people: “All words, sentences, books, and other conventional signs are Symbols” (Peirce, 2011: 65). To support this view, Peirce sets an example with the word ‘man’, whether it is written or pronounced, it would indicate the same known meaning, which refers to a *replica*, and that can
be a man or men (ibid.). Peirce claims that the word has no existence without the meaning that it is associated with:

That suggests that what the replica signifies is the symbol, and certainly replicas can be formed in order to bring the symbol to mind; perhaps every replica must do so if it is to serve its purpose. (Short, 2007: 221)

A symbol according to Peirce is a unity produced by the mind to describe an already existing idea, and that symbols can ‘grow’ and be developed more due to the experience that it is used in, and this change can also have an effect on the meaning with the passing of the time (Peirce, 2011).

1.2.3 Langer’s Theory of Symbols

The American philosopher, Susanne Katherina Langer (1895-1985) is one of the famous theorists who discussed the problem of symbolism. However, the method she used to study symbols was not common; Langer used the biological aspect of human in her theory.

In order to set her theory, Langer started studying the meaning of “logic of signs and symbols” (Innis, 2009: 1), she argues that symbols are the only things that differentiate humans from animals. Animals use ‘signs’ in order to deliver a message; like showing danger or a place of food. These signs are related to the senses, but human beings use ‘symbols’ as a mean for them to go beyond the realities (Langer, 1953).

The symbol differs from the sign that it does not call the thing itself, but it “brings this thing to mind” (ibid: 1), referring back to the example used by Saussure in the first theory, when any person hears the words ‘two- scales’, he/she will directly recall for the word ‘justice’ and that is the reflection of the symbol upon the human mind to Langer. Also, Langer posits that, especially in literary texts, symbols are mental aspects which uncover the person’s feeling: “art symbols express not ‘the world’ but the feeling of the world” (Innis, 2007: 96). Relating Langer’s theory to art, any work of art is non-discursive symbol, basing her analysis on the different ways that the meaning can be ‘symbolised’ out from the life experiences (ibid.), she distinguished two general kinds of symbols:

1.2.3.1 Logical Forms of Symbols

In order to give a symbol a logical meaning, it should has a psychological side that the symbol reacts as a vehicle for the conception of objects, and rather than signs which ‘announce’ their objects, symbols ‘conceive’ them in the users mind (Langer, 1954). In this aspect, Langer shared Peirce’s idea that the world at every level “accessed” (Innis, 2009: 2) through the interpretation of signs and symbols.
In this view, Langer keeps the symbol’s meaning close to the sign’s, where it is only used to indicate something else. The only thing which changes the sign effect into a functioning symbol is when its meaning is analysed by an intrinsic feeling by the human being (Lang, 2008). For instance, the traffic red light means ‘stop’ for the driver, but if the driver relates the colour of the light (red) to blood and danger, the sign in this case is a symbol (ibid.).

1.2.3.2 Presentational Forms

Also known as non-discursive symbol that is a non-scientific type of symbols. The presentational symbols reflect what the real aspects of human’s body feels and experiences (Innis, 2007), Langer refers to this kind as:

*The symbol-making function is one of man’s primary activities, like eating, looking or moving about. It is the fundamental process of his mind, and goes on all the time.*

*(Quoted in Petocz, 2004: 10)*

Langer claims that symbolisation is an *essential* act of thought (ibid.). When the human gains entries through his/her senses and analyses them within his mind, the feeling he/she has will be expressed later, not in a direct way, but in a symbolised one. In the case of literary works, the presentational form is meant with the meaning, which can be grasped simultaneously as a unity of expressions (Lang, 2008).

1.2.4 Sigmund Freud’s Theory of Symbolism

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), an Austrian neurologist and psychoanalyst, who introduced some concepts about symbolism. Freud’s views on symbolism, Freudian Narrow and Freudian Broad theories present different perspectives of analysing symbols whether in the real world or in the world of art.

1.2.4.1 The ‘Freudian Narrow’ Theory of Symbolism

This narrow view of symbolism started to be clearly detected around 1910/1911, when it was used in a “special technical sense” (Petocz, 2004: 26). However, these kinds of symbols are known by all people due to their universality, where they can be found in dreams, myths, and folklores. The symbol, according to Freud, is a one that shares common interpretation among people:

*A constant relation of this kind between a dream and its translation is described by us as a ‘symbolic’ one, and the dream-element itself as a ‘symbol’ for the unconscious dream-thought.* (ibid: 28)
Three main characteristics are given to the Freudian Narrow (FN) symbolism version (Petocz, 2004). The first character is ‘mute’, which means that these symbols are unable to be ‘associated’ with as long as they appear only in the unconsciousness. The second is its ‘constant meaning’; this meaning is taken as not to be individual but rather universal. Freud explains that this element is by which “we obtain constant translations for a number of dream elements – just as popular ‘dream book’ provide them for everything that appears in dreams” (ibid.). The final character is that symbols are phylogenetically inherited. Due to their universal meaning, symbols are not explained by learning, but by an unconscious ‘archaic heritage’ (ibid.). All of the previous characteristics provide FN theory’s symbolism with the feature of being conventional and universally interpreted.

For instance, the use of dragons since old myths until modern stories as a symbol of power can be considered as a representation of this kind of symbols. As in The Hobbit novel, “and in the fog the dragon came on them and destroyed most of the warriors-the usual unhappy story” (Tolkien, 2000: 22), the use of dragon in this quote fulfills the characteristics of the Freudian Narrow theory. The reader can understand from the word ‘dragon’ the existence of great power and strength, and this understanding can be reached without learning due to the universality of the dragon’s symbol.

1.2.4.2 The ‘Freudian Broad’ Theory of Symbolism

The Freudian Broad (FB) theory is not totally isolated from the general theory of psychoanalysis. This theory focuses on the non-conventional symbols rather than the conventional (universal) ones. This part of symbols is the one which occurs in dreams, myths, rituals and which needs an important analysis. These are called in literature “non-discursive” symbols, which are used mostly to “produce via replacement” rather than to communicate (Petocz, 2004: 232).

The consciousness or the normal use of symbolism can interfere in the non-conventional symbolism because of the conscious ‘substitution’, or because of the unconscious use due to the social acceptance of it. This combination of conscious and unconscious symbols is seen frequently in religious and ritual festivals, where people use, consciously, symbols that come originally from the unconscious (Petocz, 2004).

As an example, the religious ceremonies “that reflect the system and mode of the life of an ethnos, the means of life, its main critical moments and its sense of happiness” (Karabaev, 2009). These festivals and rituals are usually influenced by the surrounding natural changes, such as ceremonies in Central Asia that follows the rain, strong winds, and calling for the sun (ibid.).
In addition to these features, symbols according to Freud are unable to express a ‘higher’ truth, for they do not exist; symbols only symbolise things in “this single material world” (ibid: 235).

1.2.5 Frye’s Theory of Symbols

Northrop Frye is an American theorist who discussed the different meanings of literature in his famous four essays (Hart, 1994). In the second essay of Frye’s collection of these essays, which is known as Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays (1957), he discusses the symbols’ theory from different schools’ points of view.

Frye defines symbols as: “[...] any unit of any literary structure that can be isolated for critical attention” (Frye & Bloom, 2000: 71). This means that any aspect of language that can be studied and analysed in isolation, and which gives a clear meaning can be considered as a symbol. However, according to Frye, each school of modern criticism defines the word symbol according to its tendency. In his second essay, Northrop Frye analyses the meaning of the word ‘symbol’ through four main phases which deal with narration, characterisation and meaning (Frye & Bloom, 2000).

1.2.5.1 Literal and Descriptive Phase: Symbol as a Motif and as a Sign

In his work, Frye states that while reading any kind of written text, the reader will have to move in two main directions; centrifugal (outward) or centripetal (inward) (Frye & Bloom, 2000).

For the first dimension, the reader is going to connect what he reads to the outside world. This method is a way to link the ‘verbal signs’ in the texts, which are the written marks to what the reader’s mind already has, and in this way the symbol is defined as a ‘sign’. The sign in this case is a way not to represent, but instead to “connect” (ibid: 73) the written language to the thing in the real world. This dimension is largely found in descriptive or assertive (imaginary) writings, where the connection between the phenomena and the verbal signs is ‘truth’ due to the interest in reality-principles (Frye & Bloom, 2000).

The second, centripetal dimension is when the verbal signs or words are related to the context it exists within, and in this case they are called “motifs” (ibid: 74). This inward movement occurs in the literary or “imaginative” type of writing (ibid.), where the relationship between the verbal signs and the outside world is hypothetical and not based on a truthful one (Frye & Bloom, 2000). This way of analysing a symbol or a motif is based on the idea that literary works first expectation is to entertain through the use of imagination.
The centrifugal and centripetal dimensions are main aspects in literary works that “The literal and the descriptive phases of symbolism are, of course, present in every work of literature” (ibid: 79). This combination of the two phases can be seen in the literary works of the Romanticism Movement, for there is a “tension” between the hypothetical and the assertive element of literature. This tension is later called symbolisme (ibid: 80).

1.2.5.2 Formal Phase: Symbol as an Image

The word ‘form’ in literature refers to the complementary of the unity of structure on one hand, and the complementary of content and matter on the other hand (Frye & Bloom, 2000). Writers belonging to this phase tend to imitate nature, thus the surrounding events and thoughts are part from the work’s content:

When a formal critic comes to deal with symbols, therefore, the units he isolates are those which shows and analogy of proportion between the poem and the nature which it imitates. The symbol in this aspect is called an ‘image’. (ibid: 84)

Therefore, the used symbols which reflect nature’s appearance are taken as an image (Frye & Bloom, 2000), and this symbol can be extrinsic and lack meaning just to indicate like flags. These symbols can also be intrinsic which can be unknown mystery for all readers except for the one in that specific specialty, or intrinsic mystery that remains unknown (ibid.). The symbolic image that authors or poets introduce is a portal to the world of imagination, which allows reaching a world far greater than the human’s world (ibid.).

1.2.5.3 Mythical Phase: Symbol as Archetype

In the previous phase, poems are considered to be the imitation of nature. This imitation of nature, however, is not the only source of a new poem, but a poem can be the imitation of other poems. This imitation or “conventionalization” can be detected by the use of symbolism, which relates one poem to another (Frye & Bloom, 2000). This connecting symbol is called archetype, that is “[...] a symbol which connects one poem with another and thereby helps to unify and integrate our literary experience” (ibid: 99). For archetypal critics, the narrative aspect and the repeated ideas are a symbolic act of communication, and this makes these recurrent ideas a ritual movement (ibid.). Frye asserts that “Dream and ritual are, respectively, the significant and narrative content of literature in its archetypal aspect” (Hart, 1994: 72). This means that the different descriptions of a ‘typical image’ that the author uses in his/her literary text, whether it is a poem or prose will help in relating the literary work together and thus create a kind of communication and an archetypal symbol within it (ibid.).
The archetype symbol is a kind of symbols which is known to all people, whether it is used before in legends, old religious texts, or even has a hint in old popular stories of mythology. This kind of symbols can be detected in some works where the writers borrow heroes’ names or characteristics from old legends and folklore epics, and use them as protagonist for their own stories. For instance, the Vikings’ characters are always used as strong salesmen with red beard in the ancient legends and even in modern literature. The archetypal symbol can symbolise a different variety of ideas, objects, or even emotions (Denham, 1975).

1.2.5.4 Anagogic Phase: Symbol as Monad

In this phase, the discussion is the same mythopoeic aspect of literature, but this time from the divine or quasi-divine perspective, in order to analyse the medieval terms of anagogic or universal symbolism (Frye & Bloom, 2000).

This kind of symbols are not based or explained in a certain catalogue, but they are “[…] images of things common to all men, and therefore have a communicable power which is potentially unlimited” (ibid: 118). The image that these symbols refer to can be one of food, drink, or a known myth which all human beings are able to communicate and to understand each other while using it. In the anagogic phase, nature and the surroundings of human beings are no longer an outside container of human’s thoughts, but they are “contained” inside his/her mind (ibid: 119), and this is more expressed in the literary works, specially poems, which “imitates” human actions as in a ritual movement (ibid: 120). Furthermore, these repeated actions which shift into ritual, led the human thoughts to be unlimited (Denham, 1975).

The symbols on the anagogic phase are found more in scripture and religious documents or in poems where the hero is used with “unlimited” desires and supernatural powers (Frye & Bloom, 2000: 120). These infinite thoughts exist in religious texts more than any other literary work, and this is the ground which the anagogic criticism focuses on, for the use of symbols with a religious sense can be achieved by poets implicitly (Frye & Bloom, 2000). For instance, John Milton’s Paradise Lost (1776), which has some stories and themes from the Bible like Adam’s exile from the heaven and the pictures of the Angles and Satan. Frye is inspired by the English Romantic poet William Blake’s works which led him to discuss symbols from a religious perspective, and this shows the Romantic aesthetic view of Frye (Denham, 1975).

1.2.6 Saint Augustine’s Theory of Signs

During the Medieval period, there was an interest in the meaning of ‘signs’ by Plato, Aquinas and Augustine. The term “sign” which had been used by them, is the same one which the Romantics referred to as “symbol” later (Clarke, 2003: 2).
Augustine of Hippo, also known as Saint Augustine, is the most famous theologian in Western Christianity. He was born in North Africa, in a place called Tagaste in Numidia, which is Algeria now (Kiefer, 1999). St. Augustine was one of many who argue that any religious text uses symbolic systems and figurative language. This use helps in building “the connection between humans and ultimate reality” (Gooder, 2008: 6).

Signs according to St. Augustine are simply things that are used to signify something else (Siefert, 1999). For him, “[…] a sign is a thing which, over and above the impression it makes on the senses, causes something else to come into the mind as a consequence of itself” (ibid.). It is like when a listener or a reader comes to face a word, he/she will understand and have in his mind a meaning beyond the heard or the read word, and this will give that word a further interpretation. Also, Augustine refers to symbols as a medium to reach “the world beyond this” (Clarke: 01), for this world is created by God for people not only to enjoy life, but to understand a deeper message behind this life. This led St. Augustine to divide signs (symbols) into two kinds, those which are natural signs and those which are conventional ones (Siefert, 1999).

1.2.6.1 Natural Signs

These symbols are distinguished by St Augustine as “those which, apart from any intention or desire of using them as signs, do yet lead to the knowledge of something else” (Siefert, 1999). These kinds of symbols are used by a person to deliver a message, but they ‘sign’ for something else. An example is used by Augustine to clarify this point is the appearance of smoke, which can sign, without any intention, to fire and danger (ibid.).

1.2.6.2 Conventional Signs

This kind of signs is the one which St. Augustine focuses on (Siefert, 1999). Conventional signs are what “living beings mutually exchange for the purpose of showing, as well as they can, the feelings of their minds, or their perceptions or their thoughts” (ibid.). Conventional signs are used in the purpose of ‘conveying’ the signified action from one person’s mind to another’s.

According to St. Augustine, the conventional signs are the language and the signs that exist in the Scripture and religious texts. These signs can be distinguished on their turn into proper or figurative ones:

- **Proper Signs:** they are the literal explanation of words, and their simple meaning. Augustine uses the word “ox” to simplify this notion, which means simply an “animal” (Siefert, 1999). However, figurative signs are deeper than this.
- **Figurative Signs**: this kind of signs delivers the implicit meanings of words, which according to Augustine it causes to “cloud communication” (Clarke, 2003: 2). Using the previous example of the “ox”, in a Scripture of Christian religion, its meaning will change from “animal” into a “significance” of one of the four evangelists (Siefert, 1999). Augustine explains that the signs of God are part of conventional signs, which are delivered by a medium (man) to be understood and interpreted by others.

**Conclusion**

Through this chapter, the notion of symbolism has been defined and explained by using different views from different critics. In addition to that, the discussed aspects gave a further explanation to the various analyses which symbolism passed through, and which caused the emergence of its main theories. The symbolism theories discussed in this chapter help in setting limitations to when the word symbol is used, and how it can be used in literary works. These discussions about the notion of symbolism are manifested throughout the writings of the Romantic period.
Chapter Two

Religious Reformation and Religious Symbols in Romantic Literature
Chapter Two

Introduction

The human’s natural instinct was ruined by the creation of civilisation, “Everything is good when it leaves the hands of the Creator, everything degenerates in the hands of man” (Quoted in Phillips & Ladd, 2005: 10). By this saying the French philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), defines the norms of the ‘civilised’ human being (Phillips & Ladd, 2005). He states that the human instinctively can cooperate with the outside world, especially if he lives in natural areas. Furthermore, Rousseau sets two main principles as the base of the human innateness, equality and liberty (ibid.). This philosophical view towards the meaning of the ‘civilised person’, his intuition and surrounding nature is taken as the base of the French Revolution and as an inspiration for the romantic writers (ibid.).

2.1 The Romanticism Movement

In 1789, the French Revolution blew up and with it the Romancic Movement started to emerge basing its thoughts on the main reasons behind this awakening (Phillips & Ladd, 2005). The rights of human are one of the main features of the French Revolution and the romantic pillars, and the interest was shifted from the church and the country status to the individual (Brown, 2008). In literature, the Romantic writings are used against Naturalism and Realism Movements because all the attention was given to the mind and the reason. The literary Romantic Movement announced its presence in the collected poems of the British poets Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) and William Wordsworth (1770-1850) in Lyrical Ballads (1798), and this existence continued until the death of Wordsworth in 1850 (Milne, 2009).

Spreading all over the European continent, Germany, France, England and reaching the New World, the new ideas of the Romanticism Movement dragged many thinkers to it. Romantic stories were not as its name may sound, for they were not about love narrations and happy endings, instead they are much deeper than that (Crane, 2007). This new tendency has its own principles that changed the view to the human being and his surroundings whether they are concrete or supernatural forever (ibid.).

2.1.1 The Principles of Romanticism

With the large spread of the Romantic Movement, the focus on its thoughts differs from one place to another. However, the main principles and the basic discussed ideas through its
writings are kept. These basics deal with what the revolutionary thought struggled for, the value of
the person, his ideas, and his world.

2.1.1.1 Individuality

The first focus of the Romantic view is the individual and his/her subjective experience
(Phillips & Ladd, 2006). Giving the most attention to the emotions and feelings of the person opens
the portal of imagination to the human being, that the discovery of imagination ability from
personal experience is considered as a medium to the mysteries of the metaphysical world (ibid.). In
literature, this value of the person gave a new view at that time to the use of the pronoun “I” that
many writers started to use it to refer to their own inner thoughts, and to show the subjectivity of the
experienced events of the author or the character (Brown, 2008).

The sacredness of the individual is described in Kant’s argument: “individuals contained
within themselves an inborn spiritual knowledge” (Phillips & Ladd, 2006: 11). The value of the
person and his intuition according to the Romantic writers is important; the person is created by
God for a reason in this world, and through using his intuition, higher levels can be reached. Also
the individual can reach the metaphysical world in communion with the nature (ibid.). This belief of
human importance created an influence even with the coming writers who “shared a romantic
heritage” (Koch, 1993: 4). Writers as Johann von Herder (1749-1803), Johann von Goethe (1749-
1832) and Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805), or known as “Sturm und Drang” group (ibid.) agreed that
the individual is the basic of life and the creator of culture (ibid.).

2.1.1.2 Nature

The other aspect of romanticism is the love of nature which helps the writers to express
their feelings more deeply (Nair, 2011). Going out from the closed cities to the countryside,
mountains, rivers and forests served as a means for the writers, especially for poets to give a
concrete explanation of their abstract emotions (ibid.).

_During the Romantic period, nature in its physical appearance emerged as the
privileged material for expressing a human subject emancipated from the traditional
restrictions of religion and society and experiencing the unfathomable depth of the soul._

_(Brown, 2008: 104)_

The melting of the writer’s soul in the surrounding nature created so many pleasant
literary works as Wordsworth’s poem _The Daffodils_ (1807) or Washington Irving’s (1783-1859)
short story _Rip Van Winkle_ (1819). The two writers in the previously mentioned works use nature as
a setting for their narrated events, and also the way of describing the objects, whether the daffodils
in Wordsworth’s poem or the mountains and the river in Irving’s story, facilitates the understanding of the inner feeling of the speaker.

In addition to nature’s ability to facilitate for the Romantic authors expressing themselves, natural aspects are also considered as a medium for them to get behind the walls of the material world into the metaphysical one (Phillips & Ladd, 2006). The new gained ideas and beliefs opened the writers’ imagination to the supernatural realm, which caused them to be more interested in religion than they had been in the previous periods.

2.1.1.3 Supernaturalism

The combination of the freedom that the romantic writers found in using their imagination and the natural settings created an interest and a possibility of passing from the limited world to the metaphysical world or as it is known as ‘the supernatural’ world. The ability to reach the spiritual realm is taken by some writers, as Coleridge, as the main subject of Romanticism like in his work *Lyrical Ballads*. Coleridge tries to give an image of the supernaturalism:

*In this idea originated the plan of the ‘Lyrical Ballads’; in which it was agreed, that my endeavours should be directed to persons and characters supernatural, or at least romantic.* (Quoted in Brown, 2008: 157)

The view towards spiritual issues is seen from a psychological perspective nowadays. The supernatural aspect is related to the human ability to have supernatural activities, especially in the meditation situations or ritual activities (Brown, 2008).

The idea of supernaturalism is more acquainted with the Romantic philosophers, who believe in the existence of a higher reality and another world behind this visible world (Phillips & Ladd, 2006). Ralph Waldo Emerson expressed in his journal in October 6, 1836 that nature “is the symbol of the spirit” (ibid: 34). The curtains, which set a frontier between the real world and the metaphysical realm, have been removed through using the imagination by the romantic writers. Some of these imaginations, however, can be a source of a shock to the human mind, but in a way to create a pleasure and awe from this horror, or as the English writer Edmund Burke (1729-1797) refers to as ‘the feeling of the sublime’, which is taken as ‘a symbol of God’s infinite power’ (Phillips & Ladd, 2006). Thus, from this point of view, this new ability of reaching the higher level was a reason for the emergence of a sub-movement from the Romantic Literature, which is called the Gothic Literature.

2.1.2 Gothic Literature

From the ancient ages, the unknown was the source of fear for human beings. The Medieval Ages’ tales set a frame for the existence of this fear within abandoned castles, graveyards,
and shape—shifting aspects; all of these ideas were brought from all over the old world stories, which later became the basic for the Gothic literature (Snodgrass, 2005).

The interest of the romantic writers in nature and the metaphysical world revived the sense of investigating the unknown in their literature. The English writer and the historian Horace Walpole’s story *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) is considered to be the first Gothic novel, in which its characters are trapped in the mysterious, eerie passages (Balk, 2011), this new sub-movement reached English-speaking areas by the work of William Thomas Beckford’s *Vathek* (1786), and the works of Samuel Coleridge, Lord Byron, and Mary Shelley whom used the fiction in this kind of literature (Snodgrass, 2005) and as William Blake states “Gothic is Living Form” (Brown, 2008: 67). The Horror stories of the gothic period are regarded as a way to bring the past back:

*Even if they rarely describe themselves as such, many of the late eighteenth-and early nineteenth-century literary works now classified as Gothic can be also be seen to offer ways of understanding the past, and the relations between past and present.* (Watt, 2006: 119)

The most of the used settings and events in this kind of literary works are the architecture of the past periods, where the uninhabited castles and empty streets are taken as a place for its events. The use of such settings is described as ‘a reminder’ and a symbolic presentation of the ancestors and their life, in addition to how they were able to keep their style of life alive to be a base for authors centuries later (Watt, 2006).

From a historical perspective, the eighteenth century held the events that shaped the new Gothic literature. The Northern Europe, or more specifically the Protestant nations as England, German and Scandinavian areas formed its own kind of literature as a way to be separated from the French one (Brown, 2008). Before the French Revolution in 1789, the French writings were noticed to have a strong liking for reason, wit and politeness, where the other nations’ literature was too much related to the Gothic culture (ibid.). This division of literature in Europe came into an end by the end of the Waterloo battle in 1815, for the ‘freedom’ was spread all over Europe, especially France (ibid.). With this battle, the Napoleon reign came to an end, and with it the French literature joined the European one, and for literature field, it was “the victory of the Gothic civilization” (Brown, 2008: 67).

### 2.1.2.1 Gothic Feminine Literature

The idea of writing about the past in the Gothic literature is the main reason for the appearance of female writers. Most of the writers of this period were women, who tried to show the cruel treatment that women suffered from in the old ages. This appears in their writings where their most used protagonists are females (Watt, 2006). *The Recess or A Tale of Other Times* (1785), by
the English novelist Sophia Lee (1750-1824), is seen as the first work to deal with female protagonists, which narrates the story of the two daughters of the Queen of Scots, Mary, and how they joined the political intrigues (Botting, 1996).

The female writers created their own setting for their gothic stories; they used an intricate architecture and set the events in confusing lands (Snodgrass, 2005). For the themes, the Gothic female writers tried to show the weakness and the powerless of the hero (female) in male-dominated societies as Charlotte Dacre’s novels *Zafloya* (1806) and *The Libertine* (1807), the aspect of male domination considered to be an important motif for the women writers (ibid.). The cruelty of the events and the threat that their characters face, was showed as unaffected on their pure and kind personality, also these writers used names reflect the goodness of the female character, and that can be considered a renewing of the fairy tales and folklore stories; as in *Snow White*, or *The Beauty and the Beast* (ibid.).

Despite all of the new ideas that the Gothic female writers discussed in their literary works, some critics claims their disapproval for these ideas. The Reverend Francis Edward Paget (1806-1882) showed his dislike of women writing about “wilfulness” and the uncontrolled behaviours (ibid.). In the other side, there existed some ‘open-minded’ male writers during the Gothic period who wrote about the suffering of women, for instance the American novelists Charles Brockden Brown (1771-1810), Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864) and the Irish writer Sheridan La Fanu (1814-1873) (ibid.).

The Romantic Movement, and with its spread all over the world, its frame limits change from one country to another (Curran, 1993). These changes led to the variation of its points of view and thoughts, which caused the unbalance between the Romantic view of this country and the Romantic view of another. The main Romantic ideas discussed in literary criticism are the British and the American due to their domination from a cultural perspective.

### 2.2 British Romanticism

“The Age of Revolutions” as many historians referred to it, the Romantic Movement’s emergence was met by many revolutions in social and political states in Britain (Carter & McRae, 1997). After the Classical age and the consequences of giving importance to reason and order, which led to the Industrial Revolution, the emergence of new class in the British society, and the neglect of nature, the Romantic Movement shifted the interest to the feelings and intuitions (ibid.).

To express those changes and narrate how those events took place, English romantic writers headed to poetry as a means to do that (Rahn, 2011). Romanticism in Britain is detected back to the *Lyrical Ballads*’ publication in 1798, by William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who set nature as the main theme of this collection of the poems (ibid.). Discussing the
nature by the two poets used to lead the focus on the main principles of the Romantic Movement, Wordsworth and Coleridge used nature as a means to get to the inner feelings of the individual and as a way to open the closed doors in front of the imagination that the human being can use (ibid.).

2.2.1 British Gothic Literature

With the interesting turn that the Romantic writers took toward nature, they became able to see the beauty of the world around them, and as Burke referred to the word ‘sublime’ as a “Productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling” (Carter & McRae, 1997: 208). Barrowing the classical Greek word from the French writings of Nicolas Boileau (1636-1711), and giving it an explanation in his Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful (1757-59), Burke gave a stable norm for the horrors that are used in literature. This ‘strongest emotion’ that the sublime aids the human being to produce can change the comfort of a beautiful scene to terror, and happiness into melancholy, and this was the base for the Gothic writings (ibid.).

The relation between the sublime and the creation of terror can be seen in the overused imagination in Gothic novels (ibid.). This sub-movement first appeared in Horace Walpole’s story The Castle of Otranto (1764), and then this kind of novels became popular due to the writings of other British novelists such as Ann Radcliff (1764-1823) and William Godwin (1756-1836) (ibid.). The gothic writing in the 19th century did not keep the same discussed issues in the 18th century’s works, the dark vaults and abandoned castles features changed to care more about the psychology of the person, as in Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein (1818) (Hogle, 2002).

Due to the new shifts in the British life and the Industrial Revolution consequences, the events of the Gothic stories took place inside the cities which are full with ghosts to create terror (Botting, 1996). The mainly used settings are the Tudors’ castles and abbeys as a representation of the British nation roots (Chandler, 2009). This nostalgia to the origin was a result of the economic and political changes and the crowded cities (ibid.).

2.3 American Romanticism

With the complete spread of the Romanticism Movement all over Europe, America had its share of it (Phillips and Ladd, 2006). In 1820, twenty years after its appearance in England, the romantic thoughts came to the New World (VanSpanckeren, 1994). The freedom that this new movement applied to the human beings and their literature view came as a support to the American thought of that time, which was looking for its ‘individual indentity’ and the American voice (Phillips & Ladd, 2006).
The Romantic view in Europe was used to search for a new start in every field of life, but in America everything was new. Americans were looking for their true independent personality (ibid.). Their ‘landscape’ was enormous, and from the Puritan period America is considered to be the land of freedom (ibid.). The individuality concept which came with the Romantic thinking found the new Englishmen eager for this idea; the effect of this principle can be seen in the literary works of the American writers as Washington Irving, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Edgar Allan Poe, and many others who expressed the isolation and individuality through their characters, where a whole literary work is based on one main character (VanSpanckeren, 1994). The New World’s land was that magnificent, the different climates and sights created a deep love in the Americans to nature, this aspect took a deep effect on the writing of the American novelists, as James Fenimore Copper (1789-1851) who used the American continent as a setting for his stories (ibid.). In the nineteenth-century and with this deep relation to the nature, Americans considered their land as Eden, but “America as Eden was not a new idea” (Phillips and Ladd, 2006: 20), because since the arriving of the Puritans to the New World looking for religious freedom, they considered this land as Eden (ibid.).

2.3.1 American Gothic Literature

The influence by the English and other European writers did not limit the creativity of the American writers. The American Gothic writings created its own method in this kind of literary texts, specially with the use of ‘personification’, which enables “the dead to rise, the ghostly voice to materialize out of nowhere, and objects to assume a menacing pseudo-life” (Hogle, 2002: 196). This creativity and the new innovation in the American Gothic literary works is the base of creating a relationship between the past events and the present life from different sides, individual or social. Also while trying to create this relation, it can be said that the Americans were looking for their origins, and they were trying to figure the truth about the American being (ibid.). The use of Gothicism in the literary works should be limited to a specific frame as David Moge, Scott P. Sanders, and Joanne B. Karpinski claim that: “gothicism must abide on a frontier-whether physical or psychical” (Quoted in Martin & Savoy, 1998: 7), and these two aspects are used in the American Gothic writings.

Charles Brockden Brown is the first American writer to start writing about Gothic subjects, that he was inspired by English writers like Ann Radcliff and William Godwin (VanSpanckeren, 1994). His most known literary work Wieland or The Transformation (1798), which discusses religious beliefs, madness and murder (Boswell & Rollyson, 2008). Furthermore, Brown’s stories gives a darker sinful picture for the individual that has been inherited from the past life of the ancestors (Hogle, 2002). The real use of America as a nation rather than a colony is seen in
Nathaniel Hawthorne’s novels, *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), and *The House of Seven Gables* (1851) where he used the Puritan plot implicitly as the source of the present faults (ibid.). American Gothic writers started to write stories with ‘pure’ American settings, characters, and events, first of all because the European scenes like castles and abbies were not suitable for their New World. Second, because this new land contained undiscovered mysterious and secrets of the past, that helped in providing a strong ground for the Gothic story (Botting, 1996).

In addition to the struggle between the past and the present, the Gothic American writers introduced the struggle within the individual, the main figure who analysed this phenomenon was Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849), “His subjects are varied, exploring particularly individual cases of delusion and more general anxieties about death” (ibid: 78). Poe introduces the struggle between consciousness and unconsciousness, or what is called ‘doubling’, as in the story of *William Wilson* (1839). The protagonist in this narration is having a conflict with another person, ‘otherness’, with the same name and behaviours, which appears at the end and after a duel, that he is in front of a big mirror. The ‘double’ character in Poe’s story introduces the inner of the real character, and the goodness that the real William lacks. This kind of struggle which leads to madness is used also in *The Tell-Tale Heart* (1843), *The Fall of the House of Usher* (1834) and many other literary works by Poe, which shows the inner of the human being and the dark seeds that can be resulted from the uncertain conditions that the person can face (ibid.).

2.4 Religion in Romanticism Literature

The religious aspect is considered to be an important feature in the human life and a supporter for the social relations. In the literary movements, religion takes its own value through the different ideas and points of view that the writers and thinkers expose. The relation between religion and literature can be seen as a result of the used imagination in literary texts, religious books, stories and even superstitions which are used as a source of creativity in literature (Brown, 2008).

Since the Enlightenment age (1700-1800), religion was the source of many conflicts and the emergence of different thoughts about how to deal with it (ibid.). Most of the struggles were whether to consider the religious books as a result of old myths and oral poetry by specific people, or as a reason which led to the development and civilisation of the human race (ibid.). This conflict continued until the idea of religious stories gained some positivity, and in *Critique of Judgment* (1790) the German philosopher, Kant claims that the human mind is able to give a description to non-existing objects: “At the same time, because the objects they described were not objects in physical nature, they provided ‘free play’ to human faculties.” (ibid: 152). By this claim, the Romantic Movement opened the door in order to reach the spiritual realm and the religious experience through the use of imagination (ibid.).
The freedom of imagination that the Romantic Movement provided to its authors, plus the love of nature and the value of its beauties unlocked the door to the spiritual truths, with its good and bad combinations (Doniger, 2006). In addition to these, the discovery of the individual and his/her recognised experiences helped in giving the value to the human being, “Thus, self-consciousness in this deep religious sense becomes God-consciousness” (ibid: 999). Myths and superstitions were more developed in the Romantic literary writings, for “Romantics regarded myths as repositories of experience far more vital than those obtainable from the art and poetry of contemporary Europe” (ibid: 999). In works such as Emily Montague (1769) by Frances Brooke (1724-1789), the writer related the sensibility’s psychology of the protagonist to the ethics in order to reach religion and high virtues (Ferber, 2005) or as John Milton’s poem On the Morning of Christ’s Nativity (1629) which mix religious subjects to literary themes. As long as the spread of the Romanticism Movement was wide, and due to the encouragement of imagination and supernaturalism that this movement appealed to, the religious aspect in literature followed this spreading under the cover of the Romanticism Movement.

2.4.1 Religion in Gothic Literature

The use of supernatural topics and explaining their sources raised a question within the specialists, whether the ghostly stories and demonic subjects are able to solve old religious mysteries (Hogle, 2002). While reading a Gothic work, the reader would be attracted firstly by the setting of the story, which contains old buildings and surrounding nature that gives a hint about the Catholic way of life (Lake, 2008). The early Gothic writing had a special relation to Catholicism, even though “the representation of Catholicism in the Gothic novel was oftentimes depicted from a Protestant perspective” (Dodworth, 2013: 33). This blend of religious bases is meant to create complication in the literary text, while other writers tend by this mixture to create more anxiety and fear in their literary works (Botting, 1969). The most known example of this religious complication is Walpole’s The Castle of Otranto, for the writer used an old castle as a setting for his story’s events, and by this setting he referred to religion (Catholicism) in an indirect way (Smith, 2007). From another angle, the first discussion about including religious perspective in Gothic English literature was by criticising Mathew Gregory Lewis’ novel The Monk (1796), when Coleridge criticised the literary work in his February 1797 Critical by stating that:

_Tales of enchantment and witchcraft can never be useful: our author has contrived to make them pernicious, by blending, with an irreverent negligence, all that is most awfully true in religion with all that is most ridiculously absurd in superstition._ (Quoted in Gamer, 2004: 77)
The view which discussed the relation between Gothic writings and religion was more supported in the nineteenth century, for the different stages that religion passed through during the romantic period shed its lights, especially, on the literary writings. One of the most known effects was the creation of a relationship between science and religion, this can be clearly seen in *Frankenstein* novel that it author, Mary Shelley, pictures the creation of a human-like being as a scientific project (Watt, 2004). As a result, the combination of science and religion is expressed as “Scientifically, the gothic explores boundaries set by religion and superstition.” (Balk, 2011: 11). This combination of the two spheres created a meeting area of spiritual thinking in order to reach the metaphysical level (Botting, 1996).

### 2.4.2 Religion during the British Romanticism Period

From the first romantic literary work in Britain, *Lyrical Ballads* (1798), imagination and supernaturalism is considered as the main theme for this collection of poems (Brown, 2008). In order to relate the British Romanticism with religious thought, the used nature in the previous famous collection of poems can be seen as a link between romanticism and higher powers, “Nature, the general order of things in the universe (the term “nature” bore a great variety of meanings in the eighteenth century), was good, designed by a benevolent First Cause” (Daiches, 1960: 768). This belief is shared by many philosophers such as the English philosopher Anthony Asheley-Cooper (1671-1713), who considers nature as a source of religion for reasonable modern men (ibid.).

Despite this clear importance of religion, its state in Britain was not stable. By the emergence of the Industrial Revolution in 18th century, Britain witnessed another kind of revolution, a religious one, which was considered to be a result of the economic changes (MacDowall, 2006). Due to the neglect that the small towns suffered from the Anglican Church side, they started to form their own religious groups (ibid.). Starting from 1738, and after he had a special spiritual experience:

> I felt my heart strangely warmed, I felt that I did trust Christ, Christ alone for my salvation; and an assurance was given that he had taken my sins, even mine and saved me from sin and death. (ibid: 123-124)

John Wesley (1703-1791) was an Anglican cleric, who used his religious teachings to start his Methodism, which was a more personal and emotional aspect of religion, and unlike the Church of England, he was able to give the new emerging working class the feeling of purpose in their life, and after 53 years of preaching alone, a lot of people joined his missionary (ibid.). Even though the Anglican Church denied this movement by stating cruel rules on its followers, but the Methodism, who were numerous in number and powerful, did not complain due to their teachings to accept any kind of suffer, and this can be considered as a main result which helped Britain to
avoid a social revolution (ibid.). This situation encouraged the appearance of many other religious organisations such as the Quakers, who based their religious teachings on social issues, and as a result ‘the evangelical revival’ spread all over Britain and its people were brought back to the simple teachings of Christianity and the Bible (ibid.).

In the first half of the 19th century, the reaction of the previous century’s changes continued to exist (ibid.). The annoyance of the Anglican Church and the continuous involvement of the parliament in religious issues led many Christian practitioners to reform their own religious movement, specially the Oxford movement or Tractarianism that came to public in 1830 and which was led by John Henry Newman (1801-1890) (Mortenson, 2011). This reformation was based on the idea that the government should not interfere in the work of God (Landow, 1998) and this led many followers of the Church of England to return to the Catholic Roman Church beliefs (Mortenson, 2011). From another perspective and due to the industrial development, the religious state was related to the scientific development, where religion was related to the Bible and science to nature, and this relation was used to prove God’s existence (Fyfe, 2012).

2.4.3 Religion during the American Romanticism Period

From the very beginning of the European immigration to the New World, New England became a land of ‘religious freedom’ (O’Callaghan, 2004). Thus, as the Puritans came to settle in the New World, they brought with them their religion, Protestantism, which was the reason behind leaving their original land (McDowall, 2006). This new land has a tight relation to religious thinking, where in many occasions it was referred to as ‘New Eden’ or ‘New Canaan’ (Bron, 2005). With the passing of the time, the new citizens started to set their own ideas which led to the emergence of the Protestant Reformation that took place in Europe during the 16th century, and then became known as ‘Calvinism’ by the French theologian John Calvin (1509-1564) (Skipp, 1992). This new religious view held strict and harsh religious rules, like the idea that all the human beings are deprived because of Adam’s fall and the elect people, only, will be saved (ibid.). This religious stand changed with the coming of the Romantic thought and like the English romantics, Americans saw nature as a source of supernaturalism and spiritual renewal, which helped them to discover the innocence of human being (Brown, 2008).

The 19th century’s American religious events witnessed the same changes as in Britain that the evangelical innovation and the reformation in religion went along with the economic and political changes (Stein, 2000). These changes helped in appealing the new ideas and methods in religious subjects as in Britain, “The 19th century celebrated individualism, the pioneering spirit, and the notion of a free democratic society” (ibid: 19). The religious changes, also, led to the emerging of new religious groups, or as they are called ‘communities’, plus it created a
development in the religious sense among the people (ibid.). The most known and more joined communities were Methodist, Baptist, Congregationalists, and Mormons (Porterfield, 2002). This shaking of the religious base in the United States, which is called the Second Great Awakening after the first reformation during the 18th century (Wacker, 2000), caused a breaking up in the relation between religion and politics (Hutson, 2008). This separation, however, did not influence the social life, on contrary; religion became the very core of people’s life that churches tried to persuade them by using any possible method (Rable, 2010). The methods that were used to call for the people to be back to the authentic instructions of the Bible varied from conversions to stages as Charles Grandison Finney’s preaches, camp meetings and Sunday services (Corrigan & Neal, 2010). The results of this Protestant revival took a much deeper effect on the American’s life, for the preached Protestants started to take an anti-Catholic perspective (Queen & Prethero, 2009), and started to see the Catholics, specially the immigrant Catholics, as a threat to their peace and democracy due to the thought that “The argument was made that Protestantism was the source of the values of democracy and civilization.” (ibid: 31). The conflict between Protestants and Catholics led to the emergence of the Bible War, which witnessed unstable bases, such as Alexis De Tocqueville (1805-1895) and others who shifted in the argument about which religious view was the suitable for democratic America (Lacorne, 2011). All of these conflicts, struggles and the absence of established religion, besides the wide open space of the American nation and the spread of democracy led to the ability to change and create new forms of religion practices (Queen & Prethero, 2009).

The idea of relating religion and nature led to the creation of Transcendentalism movement by Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) and group of his friends who converted from Protestantism, and who believed that the Catholic Church will be the reason of flourishing the American nation (Porterfield, 2002). The Transcendentalism group’s main thought was “[…] the context of religious experience from the Bible to nature, arguing that nature was the living expression of God’s work and that to know God, one had to go to nature.” (ibid: 30), even though they considered the Protestant revival as the opening inspiration for the Americans, Transcendentalist looked at the Bible as not the only source of divinity, but the individual also can experience that spiritual feeling within himself (ibid.). The emergence of this new view and many others made America a land of religious conflicts and battles which that lacked a clear stand (Queen & Prothero, 2009), as a result many historians descried the American’s nineteenth century as a ‘hothouse’ of religious and spiritual activities (Stein, 2000).

2.5 Religious Symbols and Romanticism Literature

The different conflicts and shifts that the religious views had witnessed during the 18th and 19th centuries created an influence on the Romantic literary works, especially the ideas of
spiritual and metaphysical aspects are discussed in mysterious ways. Adapting the concept ‘symbol’ is mostly used to show the image of the things that their description is difficult to be expressed in clear terms, Adrian Snodgrass claims that “[…] the idea of ‘symbol’ refers to a ‘sensible entity that directs the understanding from the physical towards the supra-physical levels of reality’” (Quoted in Scott, 2000: 1). As a known figure in Romanticism literature, Samuel Taylor Coleridge is considered famous for his theory of relating the use of symbolism in literary works to religious narrations, in his work *The Statement’s Manual* (1816) Coleridge states that “with each miracle worked there was a truth revealed, which thence forward was to act as its substitution” (Quoted in Brath, 2001: 120). The use of the word ‘miracle’ in Coleridge’s saying can be placed by the expression ‘symbol’, from the perspective that they share the same characteristic of not revealing their secrets and truth (ibid.). The religious texts that represented by the Bible are considered to be a work of imagination, which creates a relationship between the whole and the parts and between the individuals and the sacred history (ibid.). As Coleridge claims also, the relation between the individual and the Bible is like being to the very sources of the imaginative powers, for “[…] that most glorious birth of the God-like within us, which even as a Light, its material symbol, reflects itself from a thousand surfaces” (Quoted in ibid: 129).

As long as the Bible is considered to be a work of imagination due to the various meaning it can interpreted to (Ricœur, 1995), its contents can be delivered by any other work of imagination, as literary texts for instance. For the Romantic works, the imagination has been freed and the human experiences started to be expressed in a narrative way. Describing life events through the use of literary productions can be delivered by the use of symbolism, which is a way to ‘open the world’ and to reveal the hidden personal experiences to the readers “In application to objects and actions, symbolism renders them ‘open’, symbolic thinking ‘breaks open’ the immediate reality without any minimizing or undervaluing of it” (Eliade, 1991: 178). The symbolic imagination, as Coleridge refers to it, is considered a shortcut to reach faith and reason through describing the unknown things, however, this kind of description is only fulfilled by using symbols:

*The symbolic imagination is necessary to convey those truths – including the articles of faith – that we can never fully comprehend, yet symbols are meaningful in a way that both stimulates and elude understanding. (Harter, 2011: 108)*

As expressed by Coleridge, the use of symbolism is a medium to deliver the deep truth, it is also a way to express what could not be expressed literary only through symbols (Berlin, 1999). Religious aspects and experiences as Gothic Cathedrals and ritual dances are considered religious symbols because their effects cannot be described literary (ibid.), besides to this and as in his work *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, Ernest Cassirer (1874-1945) used the aspect of symbolism as a mean to the deepest emotions of the human being:
Rather, the intention of the symbolic method is to throw light on some of the deepest levels of man’s conscious and unconscious experience in his attempt to grapple with the problems of Christian revelation. (Musurillo, 1957: 357)

One of the main experiences that leads the human mind to its unconsciousness situation, and which is considered as a representative of the deep relation that the human being can have with his/her creator is the ritual activities, as Snodgrass states that “[…] myth, which is symbol expressed in a verbal or narrative form; ritual, which expresses the symbolic concepts by gestures and words.” (Quoted in Scott, 2000: 9). This kind of relation which held through the ritual experience is mostly done as an imitation to nature, as a result people would follow a certain steps, for example the sun’s rising motion, the moon’s movement, the wind’s travelling or any other natural aspect (ibid.) “In the traditional view, virgin Nature is recognized as a symbol of the supernatural.” (ibid: 11).

The importance of the symbolic imagination and natural aspects for the Romantic writers is used as a bridge to reach for the supernatural understanding, these writers and poets use their writings to pass to that unknown world. Due to the reformation that religion passed through during the 19th century, whether in Britain or America, religion became an important background to the different literary specialists, and it was considered to be as a main pillar in the human life (Ryan, 2004). Most of the Romantic poets share the same belief with Coleridge’s description of this importance “Religion, true or false, is and ever has been the centre of gravity in a realm, to which all other things must and will accommodate themselves” (Quoted in ibid: 4). Thus the strong relation that held the three main aspects tightly together; religion, language and symbol is a result of the symbol’s role as a glue that sticks the idea of reaching the higher levels of life and its metaphysical world through the use language, specially through the works of imagination which the Romanticism Movement provides, the symbol in this case “is exact, having none of the arbitrariness of a sign. The symbol is essential and effective. […] It is the language that connects the Divine and the human” (Scott, 2000: 14).

Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with the Romantic Movement and its main principles in the British and American lands. In addition, it has discussed the emerged sub-movement, Gothic literature, and its characteristics and main figures. Also, the chapter went through the religious state in the 18th and 19th centuries in both lands and the influence that the religious changes had on the works of literature. Furthermore, this chapter has studied the progressing importance of symbols in the Romantic writings as a way to achieve supernaturalism through wild imagination.
Chapter Three

Analysing Religious Symbols
in Shelley’s *Frankenstein* and Poe’s *A Descent into the Maelstrom*
Chapter Three

Introduction

The effect of religion on the literature can be detected in many works, as in Hawthorne’s *The Scarlet Letter*, and Coleridge’s and Wordsworth’s *Lyrical Ballads*. The aspect of religion in these literary products is expressed through the use of saints, churches, supernatural aspects and so on. However, in other literary texts, the religious touch is felt, but not expressed explicitly. Both literary works which would be analysed using verses from the Bible emerged during a period of religious conflicts and reformation, and thus the effect of these changes can be trucked down and figured out through the use of symbols and analysing their meanings from a religious perspective.

While reading Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* and Edgar Allan Poe’s *A Descent into the Maelstrom*, the reader would face two key expressions that can be taken as the base of this analysis. The first expression in *Frankenstein* is “The hidden laws of nature” (Frank, 2003: 33) and the second in Poe’s work, *A Descent into the Maelstrom* “The ways of God in nature” (ADIMS, line: 1). Through these two expressions, one can notice the different points of view that the writers have towards the supernatural and spiritual events. For the first expression, it is as if Shelley related supernatural changes to some hidden laws, that from her story, it will be taken as these changes are a reason for scientific works. For the second expression, Poe clearly states that the metaphysical changes are related to higher powers, which only can be done according to God’s laws.

3.1 Religious Symbols in *Frankenstein*

The religious reformation that the British nation passed through in the late 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century let its traces in the literary world, and it led many authors of that time to shift their interest from the normal social problems to supernatural interests. Mary Shelley (1797-1851) is one of those writers, who moved the themes of literary works into religious and scientific fields, specially in her work *Frankenstein* (1818) (Watt, 2004).

Even though *Frankenstein* is considered as a story of scientific experiment, the religious sense in it can be easily detected. The main idea that Mary Shelley provides in this story is the relationship between the creature and the creator, which is represented in Victor Frankenstein’s character and the monster’s character. Also the works cited within the story have religious themes, like John Milton’s *Paradise Lost* (1667), when the created-monster compared himself with the Satan from Milton’s poem, “Many times I considered Satan as the fitter emblem of my condition, for often, like him, when I viewed the bliss of my protectors, the bitter gall of envy rose within me” (Frank, 2003: 178). The writer, also, in her work relates natural phenomena to unknown sources:
“Curiosity, earnest research to learn the hidden laws of nature” (Frank, 2003: 33), and throughout the story different objects and natural aspects are used with hidden religious ideas to deliver.

3.1.1 Objects as Religious Symbols

The various settings that the novel events took place in contain many objects that can be interpreted for having implicit meanings. The simple explicit meaning that these objects have can make the reading process easy going; however with taking a double check, these material and non-material aspects can have more than one meaning. Having a deeper analysis of the different objects used through Frankenstein’s story and what they may represent may lead into a much deeper understanding and open the reader’s eyes on hidden meanings behind their usage by the author.

3.1.1.1 The Dark

Mary Shelley’s novel begins by the letters that the sailor Wilton sends to his sister narrating his journey through the Northern Sea. In his first letter, Wilton pictures for his sister the surrounding darkness, which is coming towards them in a form of big cubes of ice “We, however, lay to until the morning, fearing to encounter in the dark those large loose masses which float about after the breaking up of the ice.” (Frank, 2003:15). The fear that is expressed of the coming dark-shapes that the author uses as a coming danger is a representation of darkness that was brought by the Industrial Revolution, and which was a reason for the people during the early 18th century to lose their values and turn their interest to the material life rather than the spiritual one. From the religious perspective, darkness symbolises the sins that the human being can commit and live under its shadows, “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” (John, 1: 5).

3.1.1.2 Fifty Years of Age

In his way to learn about the hidden secrets of nature, Victor Frankenstein met two professors that they were supposed to help him through his studies: the first is M. Krempe, whom he did not like so much, and the second is M. Waldman whom Frankenstein considers the reason for him to go for his invention idea. The second professor that the main character describes as “He appeared about fifty years of age, but with an aspect expressive of the greatest benevolence […]” (Frank, 2003: 50) can be taken as the source of the power and confidence that Frankenstein felt after attending his lecture about modern chemistry. Even in the Bible, the number fifty in age is related to power and celebration, and it is a representative to the ability to have the liberty:

Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you; each of you is to return to your family property
3.1.1.3 The Rocks

Among the many settings that the events of the story existed in, the mountains and rocks are the most used ones. Shelley, along with the confusion of the characters, has set the events in places where the stability of rocks is mentioned: “[…] for another flash discovered him to me hanging among the rocks of the nearly perpendicular ascent of Mont Saleve, a hill that bound Plainpalais on the south” (Frank, 2003: 95). The rocks, even in the Bible, take the symbol of stability and confidence of the truth; “He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.” (Psalms, 40: 2).

3.1.1.4 The Island

Having a view of the surrounding sublime, Frankenstein’s friend, Henry Clerval, describes the sights and he reaches with his sight the far island: “Look at that castle which overhangs yon precipice; and that also on the island, almost concealed amongst the foliage of those lovely trees.” (Frank, 2003: 219). The isolation of the island from the other main land is like the separation of a human being from his originals. This isolation in the Christianity is described as the human insignificance before knowing God: “According to what they have done, so will he repay wrath to his enemies and retribution to his foes; he will repay the islands their due.” (Isaiah, 59:18).

3.1.1.5 The Vessel

As the story starts in ‘a vessel’, it finishes in ‘a vessel’. The writer, at the beginning uses the big ship as a means to reach the deepest secrets of the North Sea, but at the end it is used as the last place that the main characters are going to meet in: “I am surrounded by mountains of ice which admit of no escape and threaten of every moment to crash my vessel” (Shelley, 2003: 307). The role that Walton’s ship is set for in Frankenstein’s story is like a carrier of sinful people, as the way he treated his sailors, in addition to the events that Frankenstein narrated on him where he was trying to create a man-like thing. In the Bible, the vessel is taken as a symbol for humility and mortality:

 [...] for every lofty tower and every fortified wall, for every trading ship and every stately vessel. The arrogance of all people will be brought low and human pride humbled; the Lord alone will be exalted in that day, and the idols will totally disappear. (Isaiah, 2: 15-18)
3.1.2 Aspects of Nature as religious Symbols

While reading *Frankenstein*, the reader can notice how the writer relates the natural changes in parallel with the changes of the character’s mood, where it is seen how the anger and distress in the characters is accompanied with changes in the weather like storms, rain, and howling winds. “I remained motionless. The thunder ceased; but the rain still continued, and the scene was enveloped in an impenetrable darkness.” (Frank, 2003: 95), this scene is used to show the sudden shock that Victor Frankenstein had when he saw the monster where his brother was murdered, and how like the thunder burst, the shadow of the creature appeared and disappeared in front of him in a second, but the shock remained as the rain falling upon him. With the different changes and shifts in the story, the author makes it associated with changes and shifts in the surrounding atmosphere as to deliver far deeper thoughts.

3.1.2.1 The Sea

At the very beginning of the story, Walton, the sailor states in his first letter to his sister that he has a mission in the North Sea: “I accompanied the whale-fishers on several expeditions to the North Sea; I voluntarily endured cold, famine, thirst, and want of sleep.” (Frank, 2003: 4). Because of this trip, the story of Frankenstein is revealed, and as it is described by the Bible, the sea is the source of deep secrets: “He will again have compassion on us; he will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.” (Micah, 7:19).

3.1.2.2 The Thunder

Mary Shelley relates the interest of Victor Frankenstein in science after witnessing a hitting thunderstorm “It advanced from behind the mountains of Jura, and the thunder burst at once with frightful loudness from various quarters of the heavens.” (Frank, 2003: 40). The fascination that is created in the protagonist’s reaction by this event is like a calling to search for the secrets of higher powers, and it is a turning point in Frankenstein’s life. The burst of the thunder can be taken as a religious symbol for what Frankenstein is looking for, that it is a representative for the God’s majesty and the higher supernatural powers: “Sing to God, you kingdom of the earth, sing praise to the Lord, to him who rides the ancient skies above, who thunders with mighty voice.” (Psalms, 68:33).

3.1.2.3 The Rain

The first sparkle of life in the creature that Frankenstein has created in an early cloudy morning: “It was already on in the morning; the rain pattered dismally against the panes.” (Frank, 2003: 64). The coincidence that relates the beginning of the rain with the wretch coming into life is
as how the Bible relates the rain with God's anger: “See, the Lord has one who is powerful and strong. Like a hailstorm and a destructive wind, like a driving rain and flooding downpour, he will throw it forcefully to the ground.” (Isaiah, 28:2). Shelley pictures that the idea of creating a person-like thing is a way to bring God’s anger on the person who passes the limited lines of the supernatural secrets and the mysteries of creation.

3.1.2.4 The Moon

The new invention that Victor Frankenstein brought to life was not as he expected to be, it was a nightmare that he deadly feared. Running away from the creature was calmed down by the darkness that the main character can be in, but with the moon light, the fear is brought back again as the form of the creature came to sight:

[…] and every limb became convulsed; when, by the dim and yellow light of the moon, as it forced its way through the window shatters, I beheld the wretch --the miserable monster whom I had created. (Frank, 2003: 66)

The moon is used as a lightening of a source of continuous fear, as the character is taken away from his rest by the appearance of the person-like creature under the moon light. As in the Christianity, the moon is used as a symbol for permanence and continuity:

Once for all, I have sworn by my holiness –and I will to lie to David – that his line will continue forever and his throne endure before me like the sun; it will be established forever like the moon, the faithful witness in the sky. (Psalms, 89: 35, 37)

3.1.2.5 The Water

The unpleasant events that Frankenstein passed through caused a feeling of fear to grow inside him most of the time. As the author acquainted the character’s feelings with the surrounding nature, the quiet surrounding setting is set as a calming-down treatment:

“I contemplated the lake: the waters were placid; all around was calm; and the snowy mountains, 'the palace of nature', were not changed. By degrees the calm and heavenly scene restored me, and I continued my journey towards Geneva.” (Frank, 2003: 92)

Relating the view of the water to the feeling of comfort is seen from a religious perspective as a way to refer to safety. From a Christian stand, the water is used to describe the peace that comes with the Holy Spirit; “Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has aid, rivers of living water will flow from within them. By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive” (John, 7: 38- 39).
3.1.2.6 The Storm

Since the creation of the monster, Mary Shelley pictures the life of the scientific inventor as a troubled one, each time he thinks that he is free from under the monster’s hold, the monster appears in the same place where the protagonist is. The calming down, that the main character imagines he has from the surrounding quiet nature, soon changes, and the weather is upside down after a pleasant atmosphere: “The storm appeared to approach rapidly, and, on landing, I ascended a low hill, that I might observe its distance” (Frank, 2003: 93). The storm that shakes Frankenstein’s comfort every time, if it is analysed as a symbol from a Biblical angle, it represents life storms’ and troubles: “you snatch me up and drive me before the wind; you toss me about in the storm.” (Job, 30: 22).

3.1.2.7 The Mist

The sudden change in the main character’s state was due to his astonishment to see a man-shape, but larger in size, during his journey in Geneva’s high mountains, for that shape was the one of the monster: “I was troubled; a mist came over my eyes, and I felt a faintness seize me, but I was quickly restored by the cold gale of the mountains.” (Frank, 2003: 130). The meeting between the two opponents this time was not as before; this time the monster narrated to Frankenstein his journey, and it was a chance for Frankenstein to hear how his creature spent his days after he had created him, and by this story Victor Frankenstein’s feelings toward the monster moved slightly in sympathy for him. The sad events that the creature narrated was like a misty cover over Frankenstein’s mind, for his attitudes towards him changed to good ones. The mist as it is used in the Bible is a symbol for blindness and as a barrier to effective vision:

’Now the hand of the Lord is against you. You are going to be blind for a time, not even able to see the light of the sun.’ Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he groper about, seeking someone to lead him by the hand. (Acts, 13:11)

3.1.2.8 The Wind

Mary Shelley’s novel ends with a sad event that the creator, Victor Frankenstein, passes away, and the creature vanishes from sight. The tragic end which the author draws is predicted by the unpleasant weather change that led the protagonist to his final setting, on Walton’s ship: “The wind arose; the sea roared; and, as with the mighty shock of an earthquake, it split and cracked with a tremendous and overwhelming sound.” (Frank, 2003: 300). Even from a religious view, the wind is taken as a symbol for the destruction, and as it is expressed in the Bible: “As for mortals, their days are like grass, they flourish like a flower of the field; the wind blows over it and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more” (Psalms, 103: 15-16).
3.2 Religious Symbols in *A Descent Into the Maelstrom*

The religious conflicts that America witnessed during the nineteenth century raised the interest in religious aspects among its inhabitants, this interest led the religious and spiritual works to be important for people as it was during the Puritans period. In his work, *A Descent into the Maelstrom*, Edgar Allan Poe gives an over view of how the American life changed after the change of religion and its state. The analysis of religious symbols in this work would shed the light on three main parts that can be considered a summary of the American religious life during the reformation and the religious awakening in the Romanticism period.

*A Descent into the Maelstrom* narrates the story of an old sailorman who was trapped in the middle of the sea by a strong storm while he was fishing with his two brothers, and he alone survived to tell the events to the anonymous narrator. Poe starts his short story with a quote of the British philosopher and clergyman Joseph Glanvill (1636-1680) that begins with “The ways of God in nature.” to show the magnificent power and spiritual abilities of God. To support this view, an analysis is applied on the objects and aspects of nature that are used as symbols in this corpus in order to give a picture of the effecting religious belief.

3.2.1 Objects as Religious Symbols

Through this short story, Poe uses a lot of objects in the story’s setting in order to give it a more vivid view. These objects, however, can have two different meanings: one is the simple meaning of the material, the second one is the hidden meaning that can only be understood through analysing it from a religious angle.

3.2.1.1 Six Hours

At the beginning of the story, the old man tells the narrator how he had spent “[…] the six hours of deadly terror” (ADIMS, line: 10), these six hours are what the sailor took to pass through the horrible experience of being in the very center the storm. During this short time, many surrounding aspects changed and many thoughts came to the old man’s mind, thoughts that varied from extreme fear to great awe. The number six, from a religious stand, is accompanied with the time of creating the world, where through this limited time many aspects created and caused a big change in the universe, “For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day” (Exodus, 20: 11).

3.2.1.2 Black Rock

Narrating the details of the events that the old sailor has faced during the storm, the previously mentioned time and changes that occurred can be applied to the religious changes that
took place in America during the beginning of 19th century. The first described object is a black rock: “--this ‘little cliff’ arose, a sheer unobstructed precipice of black shinning rock” (ADIMS, line: 18). The black shinning rock is taken as a setting where the old man starts telling his story to the unknown narrator. The use of the word ‘rock’ which refers to stability and trust in God: “The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.” (Psalms, 18: 2) can be effected by the word ‘black’ before it, which means the darkness of morals and sins: “Therefore the earth will mourn and the heavens above grow dark, because I have spoken and will not relent, I have decided and will not turn back.” (Jeremiah, 4: 28).

The use of the black rock or the stability on the wrong morals and sinful actions can be seen as a picture of how the Americans were living away from religion. The blackness of their life was only lifted with the Second Great Awakening and the religious reformation that appeared in the 19th century.

3.2.1.3 Island

The other aspect that Poe uses in his work is symbolising the insignificance and the feeling of being lost that the people were living in is the ‘island’ expression: “[...] there was visible a small, bleak-looking island; or, more properly, its position was discernible through the wilderness of surge in which was enveloped” (ADIMS, line: 43-44). In the Bible, the expression island is related to isolation and to nations without any belief:

Surely the nations are like a drop in a bucket; they are regarded as dust on the scales; he weighs the islands as though they were fine dust. [...] Before him all the nations are as nothing; they are regarded by him as worthless and less than nothing. (Isaiah, 40: 15-17)

3.2.1.4 Fish

The whole trip that the sailor and his two brothers are taking is for catching fish: “There fish can be got at all hours, without much risk, and therefore these places are preferred.” (ADIMS, line: 166). Looking for this hunt is like looking for the source of life that their families are relaying on. The importance of the word ‘fish’ in the Christian religion is related to the Christ as being the saviour:

As Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter and Andrew his brother. They were casting a net into the lake. ‘Come, follow me,’
Jesus said, ‘and I will send you out to fish for people’. At once they left their nets and followed him. (Matthew, 4:18-20)

3.2.1.5 The Tenth of July

Stating the exact day of the event that the old man is narrating gives the short story a more accurate sense: “It was the tenth of July 18--, a day which the people of this part of the world will never forget.” (ADIMS, Line: 199). The reason, however, behind choosing the number ‘ten’ as a date for the event is that this number is a significance for the perfection from a Christian view: “At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food.” (Daniel, 1: 15).

3.2.1.6 Wall

Through his short story, A Descent into the Maelstrom, Edgar Allan Poe tends to give the angry waves, which were risen by the stormy winds, the characteristics of ‘walls’:

[...] from that circular rift amid the clouds which I have already described, steamed in a flood of golden glory along the black walls, and far away down into the inmost recesses of the abyss. (ADIMS, line: 351-352)

The way how the sailors’ ship hangs in the middle of the standing waves was like a protection means in order not to go inside the whirl. The idea of using the walls as a symbol of protection is an old existing thought in religion, where God provided his followers with the protection of walls from waters, as a way to separate the believers from the unbelievers: “He divided the sea and led them through; he made the water stand up like a wall.” (Psalms, 78: 13).

3.2.2 Nature Aspects as Religious Symbols

A Descent into the Maelstrom’s main theme is the natural phenomenon and the supernatural aspects of it. Through the narration of the old sailor, Poe draws a picture of the different changes that occurred during the storm, where the Norwegian old man states the exact motions of the weather from the beginning of his trip until the end of it in order to make the narrator believe his story. By reading the story, the very details of this natural event can be interpreted of being a secret key to the supernatural realm and an open portal to the higher powers.

3.2.2.1 The Wind

The first change that the old man noticed before the storm is the rising of the wind speed, as a hidden power: “[…] still there was nothing like a regular swell, but only a short, quick, angry cross dashing of water in every direction --as well in the teeth of the wind as otherwise” (ADIMS,
line: 51- 52). This strange timing of the wind, which was not expected by the sailor brothers, is taken like a coming of a sudden visitor, or as defined by the Bible that the wind is a symbol for the Holy Spirit: “The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the spirit.” (John, 3: 8). By the state of religion during the 19th century in America, these blowing winds were the reformation winds which spread back the traditions of Christianity among the Americans.

3.2.2.2 The Whirl

The storm that the old man describes to the narrator turned to be worst with the appearance of the huge whirl near their boat: “The edge of the whirl was presented by a broad belt of gleaning spray.” (ADIMS, line: 81). The sudden appearance of the whirl created a deep feeling of fear and awe in the sailors, which represents the same feeling that the people of New World had when the religious changes took place in their churches. In the Bible, the whirl is related to the magnificent events that the earth can witness: “Your thunder was heard in the whirl wind, your lightening lit up the world; the earth trembled and quaked.” (Psalms, 77: 18). And as in Poe’s story, the sudden explosion of the whirl is a sudden change in the feeling that the nearby persons have.

3.2.2.3 The Water

The natural changes that the old sailor has described to the narrator are pictured in a way to give them a further meaning than the surface one. Edgar Allan Poe, and through the old man’s narration, uses the water as a standing wall in front of the sailors’ small boat; “[…] as far as the eye could fathom it, was a smooth, shinning, and jet-black wall of water, inclined into the horizon at an angle of some forty-five degree” (ADIMS, line: 84). The rising wall of the water was not as that danger that the three brothers thought it will be, but it was a rescuing way to lift their boat away from the center of the whirl, even from a Christian perspective, the water is a representative the Holy Spirit that is a saving spirit for the believers; “Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has aid, rivers of living water will flow from within them. By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive” (John, 7: 38- 39).

3.2.2.4 The Thunder

With the awe that the different natural aspects caused within the witnesses, the explosion voice that the thunder created a surprising shock and awakening: “[…] --for, however conclusive on paper, it becomes altogether unintelligible, and even absurd, amid the thunder of abyss.” (ADIMS, line: 155). For the unaware people, the thunder, even in the Bible is used as a symbol for the
presence of a higher supernatural power, the presence of God: “The voice of the Lord is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the Lord thunders over the mighty waters.” (Psalm, 29: 3).

3.2.2.5 The Strom

Even though the storm was a terrible event for the three brothers, the teller of the incident has seen it for a slight moment as a reflection of the glory of God’s powers: “In less than two minutes the storm was upon us --in less than two the sky was entirely overcast.” (ADIMS, line: 219). The sudden blow up of the storm symbolises the God’s ability to control the metaphysical aspects that the human mind admires but cannot grasp: “Then the Lord sent a great wind on the sea, and such a violent storm arose that the ship threatened to break up.” (Jonah, 1: 4). The understanding of the supernatural factors and the way it is controlled can be related to the sudden awakening movement in the religious state that the different American areas witnessed during the 19th century.

3.2.2.6 The Full Moon

Amid the bad events of this storm, the glitter of the shining light in the middle of the cloudy dark sky has made it worst, where the new coming light was a reason for the surrounding setting came to be seen clearly, and the storm appeared not to be over yet:

 [...]--and of a deep bright blue--and through it there blazed forth the full moon with a luster that I never knew before her to wear. She lit up every thing about us with the greatest distinctness –but, oh God, what a scene it was lit up! (ADIMS, Line: 263-264)

The moon sheds its shinning light on the situation that the sailors have thought it would end soon. In fact, the moon described in the Bible too as a symbol of continuity: “It will be established forever like the moon, the faithful witness in the sky.” (Psalms, 89: 37).

3.2.2.7 The Mist

Despite the moon lightening that helps to clear the view of the surroundings, there exists a curtain of mist covered the sight in front of the old man: “[…] but still I could make out nothing distinctly, on account of a thick mist in which everything there was enveloped.” (ADIMS, line: 364). The fury of the storm has been calmed, as Poe pictures it, and by that a resting feeling is set in the sailor’s soul. From a religious perspective, the mist is a way to have the forgiveness by the sinners, and as to reflect this to the way that American people were before the religious awakening, for they lived through the same situation of being surrounded by mist that can be removed: “I have
swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you.” (Isaiah, 44: 22).

3.2.2.8 The Rainbow

After the surprising rising of the storm and its scary shifts from stability to unbelievable horror scenes, Poe draws a view of a rainbow to show that the weather is cleared and becomes peaceful: “By degrees, the froth and the rainbow disappeared, and the bottom of the gulf seemed slowly to uprise.” (ADIMS, line: 441- 442). The rainbow is a symbol of God’s covenant and agreement on the current situation:

\[
\text{And God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth.} \\
\text{(Genesis, 9: 12-13)}
\]

3.3 Religious Symbols in the Religious State in *Frankenstein* and *A Descent into the Maelstrom*

By analysing the used symbols from a religious perspective, using verses from the Bible, in *Frankenstein* and *A Descent into the Maelstrom*, some similarities and some differences can be detected. The explained meanings are considered to reflect the religious state in the British and the American life during 18\textsuperscript{th} and 19\textsuperscript{th} centuries, for this reflection shed its lights on their literary works.

Both works’ first symbols indicate the human insignificance, moral darkness, and fear before the religious reformation that Britain and America witnessed through the 18\textsuperscript{th} and the beginning of 19\textsuperscript{th} centuries. This darkness in the human life is expressed by using symbols as the dark, the whirl and the sea. The analysis, also, represents how both writers picture the religious awakening by confirming God’s presence and His power in supernatural actions as storms and thunder. The given attention to the existence of God is mainly raised during the religious reformation in both lands, which its people started to base their life on religion and to pay more attention to the higher powers which controls the supernatural aspects of life (Botting, 2006). This attention, however, led the two stories to end differently depending on how people accepted the presence of spiritual powers (Balk, 2011).

The tragic end of *Frankenstein* is be taken as a symbol of the fate that the British can expect by using science in order to understand higher powers and to proof the existence of God. Death, distraction and humiliation that the main characters of the story faced, which Mary Shelley
had expressed by using symbols like the vessel and the rising winds can be considered to be the result of the interfering in God’s supernatural activities and His creation. On the other hand, *A Decent into the Maelstrom*’s end can be considered happy compared to *Frankenstein*’s, even though the two brothers drowned, the old sailor survived to tell the events of his trip. The forgiveness, peace and protection that Edgar Allan Poe expresses at the end of the story helps in showing how the religious reformation affected on the Americans’ life, and as a result of this religious awakening, the interest in religion made America a land of spiritual activities (Stein, 2000).

Through analysing the corpora’s symbols from a religious stand, the Christian changes and struggles are mirrored in the two works. The three main shifts that the British and American religious witnessed through the 18th and 19th century, before, during and after the religious reformation are expressed implicitly in the chosen works of Mary Shelley and Edgar Allan Poe. Consequently, the value of religion in those two societies, with all its difficulties, is considered to be important and has its own share to be expressed in literary works.

**Conclusion**

Through this chapter, the main symbols in *Frankenstein* and *A Descent into the Maelstrom* have been analysed from a religious angle. The studied objects and natural aspects as symbols in the corpora are taken as words used in purpose to deliver a desired message and to reflect a specific religious situation in the 18th and 19th centuries. Even though the Christian stand has not been expressed clearly, the analysis has not given contradicted expressed meanings with the main themes and events of both works.
General Conclusion
General Conclusion

Overall, it should be stated that literary works are set in a place in which to be in a close affect by the different changes of the society. Even though some of the affection is not mirrored explicitly, the authors would use some literary devices, such as symbolism, to deliver their message indirectly.

The presented study aimed to analyse the use of symbolism in the two chosen Gothic works. The concept of symbol is given to characters, objects, or even emotions that serve as a carrier of deeper ideas. The message that the symbol delivers is often implicit and not that clear in the speaker’s or the writer’s expressed ideas.

This study pointed toward the importance of having an insight to the real meaning of symbolism and the way of analysing it for EFL students. It also aims at helping in enlarging the knowledge of interpreting the symbols’ meanings.

From another side, this study attempted to deal with the aspect of Romanticism Movement and its sub-movement, the Gothic literature. Besides this, passing through the religious field, the study tried to give an overview of the religious situation in the British and the American nations, and how the Romantic literature was affected by all that.

Even though the studied works, *Frankenstein* and *A Descent into the Maelstrom*, are literary productions written from different writers, lands, and are based on different points of view, the religious touch can be detected in both works. Mary Shelley’s novel, *Frankenstein*, is analysed by many specialists as a work with a scientific perspective, but from understanding the religious stand that was taken during the 18th and 19th centuries in Britain, it will be clear that the relation between science and religion is tight, and that both of them are a bridge to pass to the world of impossibilities, superstitions, and super powers. In the other side, Poe’s narrated events are considered as giving an overview of a supernatural phenomenon. In addition, as long as Edgar Allan Poe is from the Southern part of USA, the religious sense that was spreading during the 19th century in that area had a strong tie to the spiritual powers of God. Thus, both of the literary works are, directly or indirectly, referring to the higher powers that come from the spiritual realm.

For analysing symbols in the two corpora, St Augustine’s theory of signs is taken as the method that was followed in this study, which it meant to study the symbols as a means to reach the spiritual world and a medium between the human and his creator. By this analytic examination, it
appeared how both writers use different objects and surrounding natural aspects as symbols to express and mirror the different changes that occur in their societies, specially the religious reformation and its consequences on the human life.

The study of symbolism was done through considering symbols as literary device that decorates literary work, and also as a means to use an indirect reference. Symbolism can be considered to be the most literary device that helps writers in creating an aesthetic, full with mysteries literary text.
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**Webography**


الملخص:

تعنى هذه الدراسة بتحليل استعمال الرمزية في الأدب القوطي من وجهة نظر دينية. لشرح هذه الخاصية، عملان أدبيان تمت دراستهما كمثالين من أجل الحصول على نظرة عامة حول استعمال الرمزية الدينية في كل من فرانكشتاين لماري شيلي والإعصار لإدغار ألان بو. و من أجل تعزيز نظرية كيفية دراسة الرموز من ناحية دينية، تم اعتماد نظرية الإشارات لسانت أوغسطين كمنهج تحليلي لهذه الدراسة. تم تقسيم هذا البحث إلى ثلاثة فصول، حيث تم تخصص الفصل الأول لدراسة النظريات التي تعنى بمفهوم الرمزية. في حين أن الفصل الثاني يطرق لشرح المذهب الرومانسي في كل من آمريكا والمملكة المتحدة. وكذلك الأدب القوطي، أشهر كتابه وخصائصه. هذا الفصل أيضا يتناول وضعية الدينية خلال فترة الأدب الرومانسي، اي خلال القرن 18 و 19 للميلاد. و كافية تأثيرها على الكتابة الأدبية في تلك الفترة، بالإضافة إلى ذلك يتم من خلال هذا الفصل شرح أهمية الرموز الدينية في الأدب الرومانسي. و في الفصل الثالث و الأخير يتم تحليل الرموز المستخدمة في الأعمال الأدبية المختارة من طريق استعمال الإنجيل كمرجع. أيضا يتم في هذا الفصل القيام بعملية مقارنة بين الرموز الدينية و درجة عكسهم للواقع الديني خلال القرنين 18 و 19 في كل من المملكة المتحدة و آمريكا. كحالة، يهدف هذا البحث لتسهيل فهم أهمية الدين في المجتمع، و كيفية احتكالية خلقه تأثير عميق على مختلف الكتاب و الشعراء و أعمالهم الأدبية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الرمزية الدينية، المذهب الرومانسي، الأدب القوطي، فرانكشتاين، الإعصار.

Résumé:

Ce travail sert à étudier l'utilisation du symbolisme d'un point de vue religieux dans la littérature. Pour expliquer cela, en se basant sur deux ouvrage le premier est de l'auteur Mary Shelley son titre est Frankenstein, le deuxième est pour l'auteur Edgar Allan Poe son titre est Une Descente dans le Maelstrom. Pour réaliser cette étude, on applique une méthode analytique en suivant la théorie de symboles de Sait Augustine. Il se compose de trois chapitres : Dans le premier chapitre on fait étudier les théories qui s’enterrassent par la notion du symbolisme. Dans le deuxième chapitre on parle de la littérature romantique a la Grande-Bretagne et l’Amérique, aussi, on aborde la littérature gothique ses caractéristiques et ses célèbres écrivains. De plus, ce chapitre parle de l’état de la religion pendant la période de la littérature romantique, 18 et 19 siècle, et son influence sur les écritures littéraires à cette époque. D’un autre part, on met l’accent sur l’importance de symboles littéraires dans la littérature romantique. Le troisième chapitre est considérer comme une partie pratique ou on fait analyser les symboles utilisés dans le corpus choisis en se référent à vues La Bible. Enfin, le troisième chapitre donne également un reflet des symboles analysés sur l’état religieux en 18e et 19e siècles Bretagne et en Amérique. Finalement, l’objectif final de ce travail est de faciliter la compréhension de l’importance de la religion à la société et son influence sur les écrivains, les littératures et leurs productions littéraires.

Les Mots Clés : Le symbolisme, religieuse, la littérature romantique, Frankenstein, Descente dans le Maelstrom

المصطلح: