

POSTMODERNISM IN ANGELA CARTER'S NOVELS: THE BLOODY CHAMBER (1979) AND NIGHTS AT THE CIRCUS (1984)

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ABSTRACT--- *Angela Carter's are invitations to understand the meanings of postmodernism and Post-feminism. The latter presents portrayals of interpretations of different ways of oppressing women, and realizing the specific style of expressing such topics. Carter uses the fairy tale genre and violence to present her critical points against patriarchy. She concentrates on self-awareness of women as new samples novels of their self-consciousness state against the traditional portrayal of women's submissive role through these gothic elements. This paper argues how The Bloody Chamber and Nights at the Circus are feminist texts due to the narrative procedure and certain strategies followed by Carter to clarify characterization and women's subjectivity through their body against the male gaze. The aim is to show women's struggle for achieving their female identity and their knowledge and curiosity urge them to be seen in a developing way. Magic realism is also another technique she uses when Fevvers' body is shown while she presents her performances as an aerialist for people in the circus. BC is an abbreviate form of The Bloody Chamber and NC is an abbreviated form of Nights at the Circus.*

Keywords--- *Angela Carter, postmodernism, Post-feminism, men's gaze, violence, BC, NC.*

I INTRODUCTION

Angela Carter (1940-1992) grows up to work as a journalist like her father, and later studies English literature. Her work as a writer places her as a fabulist and a magical realist. Carter is one of the authors who use fairy tale genre to present a critical point of patriarchal and harmful practices. Mikalsen states that Carter's characters are seldom passive. (1, p.1) They are as mentioned in NC, searching, yearning, expanding out of themselves, and sometimes even larger than life. (2)

Matters of the flesh are upfront, and graphic, but her gaze focuses on the female body as subject, not object, thus empowering and vocalizing women who dare to take up space in more than the literal sense. For example, At the very beginning of the story of the Bloody Chamber, the bride states "his wedding gift, clasped round my throat. A choker of rubies, two inches wide, like an extraordinary precious slit throat". (3)

Carter's early death at 51 was tragic, but her passing attracted more critical attention to her work, and thus she became established as one of England's most influential writers. She weaves landscapes of magic and horror, interlacing the Gothic with the satirical, and the exotic with the mundane. Her female characters are active and assertive beings who refuse to be intimidated by aggressive, male sexuality. Koshy claims that the imagery in her tales is instrumental to her agenda, to "[make] the mystery sexually explicit". (4, p.82).

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In BC and NC, Carter questions the culturally determined roles that patriarchal ideology has “palmed off” on women as ‘the real thing’, and she scrutinizes the relation between the sexes that have resulted from them. (5, p.38)
Carter says

But we live in very confused, confusing and dangerous times, and fiction, which is a kind of log of these times, changes its nature and expands and sucks in material from all manner of places and from all manner of styles and genres to be able to adequately describe ourselves to ourselves at all kinds of levels. (6, p.36)

Buchel claims that, Carter in these novels writes about the demythologizing approach in her fairy tales, BC and NC. (7, p.5) Carter discusses in her feminist manifesto *The Sadeian Woman (SW): An Exercise in cultural History*, which she describes as ‘a late twentieth-century interpretation of some of the problems [de Sade] raises about the culturally determined nature of women and the relations between men and women that result from it. (8, p.1)

It is about the patriarchal culture that is imposed on women. She explodes the reductionist boundaries imposed upon women by a repressive essentialism. She takes an axe to the cultural construct ‘femininity’ and ‘masculinity’, which have been naturalized. According to Haffenden, Carter refutes the immutability of universal experience in the same way that she refuses to enclose her texts with a single meaning:

In my work, I keep on saying, in what I think is the nicest way, that women are people too, and that everything is relative... You see the world differently from different places. You cannot make any statements which are universally true Everything is determined by different circumstances, and the circumstances of women are different from these of men. (9, p. 94)

It is necessary for the reader to know the view of Carter who had an interview with Mary Harron of *The Guardian* in Day 1998, pp10,11:

I am very old-fashioned kind of feminist, she says, and her preoccupations are with social justice: ‘abortion law, access to further education, equal rights, the position of black women’. The current feminist preoccupation with mysticism and mother goddess is smartly slapped down. ‘I am a socialist, damn it’. How can you expect me to be interested in fairies?

This explains the reasons why Carter is not with myth and fairy tales, because they do not reflect human being’s authentic experiences and she makes use of myth and fairy tales as an instrument to attack a wrong view or unfair situation against women. Buchel clarifies that Carter reveals myth’s hidden political agenda. (7, p.8) Carter seeks to expose myths for what she believes them to be ‘extraordinary lies designed to make people unfree’. (5, p. 38). The following part is about the use of horror, myth and violence in Carter’s both texts.

1.1 *The story of The Bloody Chamber and Nights at the Circu*

The first title story of this collection, is Carter’s tale about Perrault’s Bluebeard. In Perrault’s tale, Bluebeard is a rich villain who marries a series of young women who all disappear mysteriously. He marries again and leaves the keys to his castle in the care of his young bride when he departs on business. She has access to all the rooms except for one, which is strictly forbidden. But prohibitions are made to be broken, and when the young woman transgresses, she discovers a chamber of horrors, the final resting place of her husband’s dead wives. This room is the bloody chamber. Then, the Bluebeard returns to find a bloody key that is evidence of his wife’s curiosity, and prepares to execute her for her disobedience. Fortunately, her mother arrives just in time to rescue her.

Krifa claims that, *Nights at the Circus* is the novel that anticipates women's freedom at the dawn of a new century, when women had to be economically active, similarly to males and hence should enjoy the same rights as men. *Fevvers* is presented to us as a female hungry for money. (10)

Carter advances a significant characteristic of the twentieth century woman which is economic involvement. "You'd never think she dreamed, at nights, of bank accounts, or that, to her, the music of the spheres was the jingling of cash registers" (NC, p. 12). By comparing *Fevvers*' love for money to the patriarchal materialist pursuit, the writer strives to equate both of them at all levels.

Nights at the Circus focuses on the life and exploits of Sophie *Fevvers*, a woman who is, a cockney virgin, hatched from an egg laid by unknown parents and ready to develop wings. *Fevvers* becomes an aerialist and she captivates the young journalist Jack *Walser*, who runs away with the circus. when the family falls on hard times *Fevvers* accepts an invitation from the fearsome *Madame Schreck*. This lady puts *Fevvers* on display in her exclusive combination of freak show and brothel, along with several other women with unique appearances. After some time, *Madame Schreck* sells *Fevvers* to a customer, "Christian *Rosencreutz*", who wishes to sacrifice *Fevvers* in order to procure his own immortality. *Fevvers* narrowly escapes and returns to *Lizzie's* sister's home. Soon after their reunion, she joins *Colonel Kearney's* circus as an aerialist and achieves enormous fame.

London section concludes with *Walser* telling his chief at London office that he is going to follow *Fevvers*, joining the circus on its grand imperial tour. The second stage takes place in *Petersburg*, *Walser* is going to be a clown in the circus, from a journalist and a viewer, *Walser* is going to be a member in the circus. He is introduced to other members, like *Mignon* a young woman with sweet singing voice. *Mignon* is going to be abandoned by her husband and *Walser* takes her to the hotel, to *Fevver's* room, *Fevvers* feels jealous. Then *Fevvers* goes to *Grand Duke's* mansion, during the night performances, they try to kill *Walser*, *Mignon* and *Fevvers*. But they escape and run away.

The last stage is in *Siberia*, where the circus crosses the continent to *Asia*. The train is attacked by a band of outlaws. *Walser* escapes to the woods. *Fevvers* and the rest of the members are captivated by the convicts. *Fevvers* tells the leader convict that she cannot help them because whatever they heard from her is a lie. Everybody leaves *Fevvers* except *Lizzie* when they know that the case of a winged bird is no more than a big lie to cheat people. Finally, both *Fevvers* and *Lizzie* try to find *Walser*, when they find him *Fevvers* cries "to think I really fooled you". These words reveals the role of a new active, clever woman.

I.II Postmodernism, Post- Feminism in Carter's novels.

Eagleton (2003) defines Postmodernism, as a style of culture which reflects something of this epochal change, in a depthless, decentred, ungrounded, self-reflexive, playful, derivative, eclectic, pluralistic art which blurs the boundaries between 'high' and 'popular' culture, as well as between art and everyday experience. (11, p. viii)

Eagleton claims that postmodernism may spring from-'post-industrial ' society, the final discrediting of modernity, the recrudescence of the avant-garde, the commodification of culture, the emergence of vital new political forces, the collapse of certain classical ideologies of society and the subject .It is also the upshot of a political failure which it has either thrust into oblivion or with which it has never ceased to shadow-box. (11, p.21)

Eagleton continues in his clarification and evaluation of the meaning of postmodernism , saying that "we find ourselves confronted with the mildly farcical situation of a cultural left which maintains an indifferent or

embarrassed silence about that power which is the invisible colour of daily life itself, which determines our existence -sometimes literally so in almost every quarter, which decides in large measure the destiny of nations and the internecine conflicts between them. (11, p.22)

Nights at the Circus can be categorized as a postmodern novel for its complexity of language and the inclusion of magical elements. The story itself is as intricate as the structure of the novel. The mystery surrounding Fevvers and the reality or otherwise of her wings drives the story and is reminiscent of many ambiguous postmodern pieces. The novel's turn-of-the century setting is fitting, as modernism is generally acknowledged as encompassing the literature, music, arts and movements that occurred before 1914. As the characters make the transition into a new century, they begin to embrace new ideas and ways of life. This transition towards the new is reflected in every aspect of the novel, as the story itself is a new and unique concept. Walser's initial skepticism regarding Fevvers' wings is reflective of postmodern thought. The women in the novel embody postmodern thought in their questioning of patriarchal social norms. Carroll (2000) quotes Carter, set at 'the cusp of modern age, the hinge of the nineteenth century, (NC, p.265) that Angela Carter's fin de Sicle fantasy anticipates the new century as an era of radical transformation and change. However, it is also a text fascinated with modernist myths of origin: from the threshold of the twentieth century it returns to the 'prehistory' of the modern, as constructed by modernism, represented by such motifs as animals, folk and peasant culture, childhood, the wilderness of Siberia, and the colonial 'others' of empire. (12, p.187)

Vattimo (1988) argues that Modernity is 'dominated by the idea that the history of thought is a progressive "enlightenment" which develops through an ever more complete appropriation and re appropriation of its own foundations': These [foundations] are often also understood to be 'origins', so that the theoretical and practical revolutions of Western history are presented and legitimated for the most part as recoveries, rebirths, or returns.(13, p.2) A return to origin could be read, then, as evidence of a complicity with the forgetting and repressing of origins; a forgetting and repressing which functions as a condition of subsequent recovery, rebirth or return. Such a reading, however, would seem difficult to reconcile with the fact that in terms of aesthetic style, Nights at the Circus is an exemplary postmodern text: the textuality of history is self-consciously evoked by the historical and literary pastiche in which it revels. Indeed, if Carter's interrogation of history did not extend beyond the playful provocations of pastiche, her writing would be vulnerable to the charge commonly, and even justifiably, made against postmodern fiction: that it reduces history to travesty of parodic gestures and costumes and that it evades a more complex and ethical encounter with the otherness of the past. Carroll (188) wishes to suggest that Carter's text could be read as most interesting, and most postmodern, rendering of time. Postmodern, that is, in the sense that Vattimo gives. (12, p.188).Vattimo argues that the project of modernity is a process of return and overcoming, whereas postmodern thought is characterized by a critique of Western thought and of the very notion of foundation: it is a critique without overcoming, a taking leave of the logic of modernity. It is in this sense that the postmodern marks the 'end of history' in that it relinquishes as understanding of history as a linear sequence of radical breaks or ruptures. Vattimo traces this postmodern critique to Nietzsche and Heidegger, a gesture which is only anachronistic if the postmodern is defined as a historical break from the modern.

Carroll believes that in its attempt to give a materialistic and symbolic rewriting of modernity, the narrative alternates between a materialist's analysis of oppression by gender, race, and class, as given by Lizzie, and the

fairy tales, family romances, and uncanny encounters associated with Fevvers. *Nights at the Circus* suggests the implication of the unconscious in history, and of history in the unconscious. (12, P.188)

As discourses of modernity, Marxism and psychoanalysis share a fascination with origins: the origins of identity and the origins of history. Carter's text makes possible an understanding of these discourses as making a return without overcoming. For both Marxism and psychoanalysis, the present is constituted by the unresolved conflicts of the past.

As for Post-feminism, Brooks (2003) claims that Post-feminism, as an expression of a stage in the constant evolutionary movement of feminism, has gained greater currency in recent years. Once seen, somewhat crudely, as 'anti-feminist', the term is now understood as a useful conceptual frame of reference encompassing the intersection of feminism with a number of other anti-foundationalist movements including postmodernism, post-structuralism and post-colonialism. (14, p.1)

Post-feminism represents, as Yeatman (1994) claims, feminism's 'coming of age', its maturity into a confident body of theory and politics, representing pluralism and difference and reflecting on its position in relation to other philosophical and political movements similarly demanding change. (15, p.49)

Concerning Feminism and ethnicity, Eagleton (2003) claims that these are popular today because they are markers in the mind of some of the most vital political struggles we confront in reality. They are also popular because they are not necessarily anti-capitalist and so fit well enough with a post-radical age. Eagleton adds in the same page that postmodernism can be quite as exclusive and censorious as the orthodoxies it opposes. One may, by and large, speak of human culture but not human nature, gender but not class, the body but not biology, jouissance but not justice, post-colonialism but not bourgeoisie. Postmodernism has demystified the most stubbornly naturalized of institutions by laying bare the conventions which govern them, and so has sometimes run head long into a brand of neo-sophism for which, since all conventions are arbitrary anyway, one might as well conform to those of the free world. (11, pp25, 26).

To conclude with Eagleton's views, it is just the negative truth of modernity, an unmasking of its mythical pretensions, and so was presumably just as true in 1786 as it is today. What postmodernism refuses is not history but History. (11, p.29) The next section introduces the different applications of shades of postmodernism and post-feminism on Carter's novels.

II PATRIARCHAL NARRATIVES AND MALE GAZE IN CARTER'S NOVELS

Many critics have applied issues of feminism, postmodernism on Angela Carter's novels and among them Patricia Waugh (2006), who states that "the body does matter, at least to what has been the dominant perspective within British female fiction". (16, p.196)

Carter's female characters struggle against the dominant patriarchal system imposed on them. Palmer (1987), writes that the 'gaze' is a practical means for man to impose control on women, as well as a symbol of sexual domination. (17, p.185)

In Carter's *The Bloody Chamber*, the atmosphere is gothic, Carter does not give a name to her heroine, who is a young pianist, she is seventeen years old, her suitor is much older than her but very rich. In this point matter

is important for the girl not the age. She recognizes promise of sexual domination in the assessing eyes of her suitor, but she responds to it. His gaze affects her:

I felt giddy as if I were on the edge of a precipice; I was afraid, not so much of him... No. I was not afraid of him; but of myself. I seemed reborn in his unreflective eyes, reborn in unfamiliar shapes. I hardly recognized myself from his descriptions of me and yet, and yet-might there not be a grain of beastly truth in them? And, in the red firelight I blushed again, unnoticed, to think he might have chosen me because, In my innocence, he sensed a rare talent for corruption. (BC, 20)

There is a kind of transformation in her life, she is afraid of herself because it seems that she is responding to her sexual desire. Buchel comments that the young bride leaves her mother's apartment (BC,7), she symbolically leaves a haven of female autonomy. Unlike her mother, she marries into tremendous wealth, but at the cost of her subjectivity. (7, pp.30,31)

For this marriage is not a union of minds and hearts, but rather an economic transaction, because there is no doubt that the young virgin is seduced by the power and riches of her much older suitor:

This ring, the bloody bandage of rubies, the wardrobe of clothes from Poirot and worth, his scent of Russian leather- all had conspired to Seduce me so utterly, that I could not say I felt one twinge of regretFor the world of tartines and Maman that now receded from me....(BC, p.12)

She does not know exactly that this world of tartines and Maman, protected as it may have been is a place where femininity is active and independent. But this new world of Marquis is definitely patriarchal.

Another incident that let her to feel that she is no more than an object for him is when he takes her to the opera on the eve of her wedding and she has a glimpse of herself from his perspective:

I saw him watching me in the gilded mirrors with the assessing eye of a connoisseur inspecting horseflesh, or even of a housewife in the market, inspecting cuts on the slab... When I saw him look at me with lust, I dropped my eyes but, in glancing away from him, I caught sight of myself in the mirror. And I saw myself, suddenly, as he saw me, my pale face, the way the muscles in my neck stuck out like thin wire. I saw how much that cruel necklace became me. And for the first time in my innocent and confined life, I sensed in myself a potentiality for corruption that took my breath away. (BC, p.11)

The bride feels of her corruption, she is no longer innocent, there is a sexual awakening, but it is initiated within an oppressive dichotomy, on terms other than her own. Her marriage to the Marquis is, as Aidan Day states, 'an assimilation to the world of the masculine'. This process of assimilation is a sign of her loss of her female autonomy and she is obliged to accept the system of patriarchy. She has chosen money and she has been trapped and lost her individuality. (18, p.152)

It seems at the beginning of her marriage that she is happy. For example in page 12 of the story she says when they arrive in Brittany: 'I was cold; I drew my furs about me ,a wrap of white and black , broad stripes of ermine and stable, with a collar from which my head rose like the calyx of a wildflower .(I swear to you, I had never been vain until I met him) (BC, p.12).

This sudden consciousness of the importance of her appearance is another level of entrapment within the male gaze.

Carter reveals the male gaze in the patriarchal society in her second novel, *Nights at the Circus*. Milosavljevic (2016) claims that Carter's text *Nights at the Circus* is widely held as a postfeminist. She explores women's

embodied potentialities of agency, their construction of subjectivity through body. It may be argued that Carter's novel is invested in traditional second-wave feminist politics to the extent that it shows that a woman's body is an indispensable medium of being in the world with material consequences that bear on the formation of her subjectivity and possibility of agency, and through which she acts out her relationships to others and is acted upon. (19, p.39)

Milosavljevic believes that, in Carter's text (NC), the gendered, feminized nature of poverty is central to the narrative's feminist political bent, as female characters keep appearing as body-objects of exploitative sexual labour or marital violence, while male characters are summoned as perverse aristocrats, middle-class Machiavellians or brutish lower-class alphas. The heroine, Fevvers' undergoes miserable life, starting as an adolescent in a brothel, followed by being a slave in the Museum of Women Monsters as Angel of Death, and ending in her rise to stardom as a circus performer then her fantastical flights from violent men, with betrayal, oppression, and maltreatment. The post-modernism of Carter's novel, evidenced in its pastiche temporality, parodic historiography, and carnivalesque exuberance, as well as in its conception of the body as performance. (19, p.40)

Milosavljevic clarifies different ways of torturing and threatening Fevvers, with bodily harm. The first scene is her flight from the deranged Rosencreutz who buys her in order to brutally sacrifice her through proxy rape with a phallic dagger, while later Fevvers magically slips through the hands of another aristocrat, the Russian Grand Duke who wishes to turn her curious body into an artifact in his morbid toy collection, symbolizing the ultimate objectification of the female body. (19, p.42)

Among the dissertations that discuss the subject of male gaze is written by Suzan Hall (1991), who claims that, the novel links writing and self-control metaphorically. (20, p.46)

The following very long sentence for example, describes Walser's reaction to Fevvers's trapeze act: Her wings throbbed, pulsed, then whirred, buzzed and at last began to beat steadily on the air they disturbed so much that the pages of Walser's notebook ruffled over and he temporarily lost his place, had to scramble to find it again, almost displaced his composure but managed to grab tight hold of his skepticism just as it was about to blow over the ledge of the press box. (NC, 16)

what the reader gets from this scene is physical attraction to Fevvers which is again related to Walser. Hall believes that "if we trace the metaphor linking Walser's writing and his self-control further through the novel, his gradual loss of command over the former reveals a gradual dissolution of the latter. For instance, towards the end of the first section, Walser's writing fails to keep a distance between himself and his object of study. (20, p.47)

Faced by Fevvers's seductive attack Walser almost loses his notes cease to reflect his own interpretation of events:

Walser wilted in the blast of her full attention ...[he felt] himself at the point of prostration. The hand that followed their dictations across the page obediently as a little dog no longer felt as if it belonged to him. It flapped at the hinge of the wrist. (NC, 78)

Walser is supposed to be careful and continue his report as a journalist, what happens here is that at the time of gazing at Fevvere while performing her show, Walser is attracted to Fevvers and she controls him. Walser is not composing his text, Fevvers and Lizzie are dictating. This loss of control is also shown as a physical, if only temporary loss of the writing implements when Fevvers grasps both pen and notebook:" you must know this

gentleman's name! "insisted, Fevvers and, seizing his notebook, wrote it down" (NC,78). In doing so, she grasps the symbols of both his narrative and sexual dominance; she therefore takes away any pretense to control that Walser may have been harbouring. Walser retrieves the book and struggles to retain his now rather fragile skepticism against further attack. However, Fevvers repeats this symbolic action few pages later, when she replaces her foot on Walser's knee and dislodges the notebook, as if to prove to him that she can take control at any point (NC,83).

Hall believes that it is her voice, which represents both Fevvers's body and her narrative, which has lured Walser toward her and held him spell bound. (20, p.60)

Her voice, it was as if Walser had become a prisoner of her voice, her cavernous, somber voice, a voice made for shouting about the tempest, her voice of a celestial fishwife....Her dark, rusty, dipping, swooping voice, imperious as a siren. (NC, 43).

In *Nights at the Circus*, in spite of the opposite situation that Fevvers is stronger not Walser, the male in this scene is completely seduced by her. Walser finds even her silence fascinating when Fevvers stops talking. Walser is hooked, both narratively and sexually, and he is therefore left deeply unsatisfied when their meeting ends, Carter reveals more writing in (p.89):

Walser was intrigued by such silence after such loquacity. It was as though she had taken him as far as she could go on the brazen trajectory of her voice yarned him in knots, and then—stopped short. Dropped him. (NC, 89)

Hall believes that the characters who interest Carter most, whose stories she loves to tell and retell, all share this unfledged quality—even Lizzie Borden....[from *Black Venus*] In the course of their stories, real experience rips them open, empties them out, often with appalling violence and always with ravishing sexiness. Both heroines, the bride and Fevvers learn from life and miseries, become experienced and powerful, do not accept to be looked at and become passive.(20, p.60)

Fevvers' paradoxically seductive and monstrous form is primarily an allegory of the male dread of the womb and of the fear of the abject maternal body diagnosed in psychoanalysis, as noticed by numerous feminist critics, but it also addresses the issue of the woman's place in the economic circuit, as an instrument of labour. Fevvers' uneasily won agency in the novel consists first and foremost in her learning to seize control of the uses of her body and use to her own advantage the matrix of patriarchal economy that anchors the exploitation of women. Writing on the resolving of the long-running tension between the widely criticized a politicism of postmodernism and the politically engaged Marxist feminism in the novel, Michael remarks that "in order to both analyze the status of women and of existing relationships between women and men within Western culture and, more radically, propose possible avenues for change, carter pits a Marxist feminist realism against postmodern forms of tall tales or autobiographies, inverted norms, Carnivalization and fantasy". (21, p.493)

Michel observes that the complexity of the novel's feminist arguments is constructed by bringing into dialogue the materialist analysis of the woman's position in the British class spaces with a subversive (postmodern) utopian feminism. Milosavljevic confirms that the uses of the female body, as an instrument of labour for these women and the commodity to be bought and sold on the market, takes place under the twofold regime of power: the patriarchal gaze and the class gaze. (19, p.46) The following part discusses fairy tale genre in *The Bloody Chamber* and seeks a justification towards its popularity in feminists works.

II.I Carter's use of Fairy tale narrative genre In *The Bloody Chamber*:

Many critics ask questions about the reason behind manipulating fairy tales genre by feminist writers. And why such genre is so popular among feminist writers? Mikalsen answers that primarily because fairy tales are ubiquitous not just in the literary sense but also across media platforms. The genre emerged because of feminist and psychoanalytic discourse, which makes sense if one was to read motifs like windswept castles, dungeons and dark rooms as metaphors of suppressed erotic and neurotic emotions. (1, pp.3,11)

In addition to this, giving voice to the narratives of the oppressed and suppressed is very much a feminist endeavor. Other motifs of the gothic fairy tale include dark forests, murderous maniacs, rape, incest, insanity, torture, demons, ghouls, vampires and werewolves. (4, p.132)

Ellen Moers comments in Koshy's book : "in Gothic writing, fantasy predominates over reality, the strange, the commonplace, and the supernatural over the natural, all with one intent" ,namely to frighten its readers.(4, p.134)

In Kuykendall and Sturm's view, Carter's *The Bloody Chamber* employs several of the above-mentioned motifs, and more. Carter in her novel , uses weak women with passive gender and powerful men as the active, virile gender , another feature of Carter's narrative mode, is that any female character that defies this binary construction is either characterized as ugly and monstrous or evil, the exception being the fairy godmother or the wise woman . (22, p.39) Another feature related to Carter's narrative key points is that female identity and sexuality exists only as a receptacle for aggressive, male sexual desires. Finally, the cultural valuing of youth leads to dissolution and disruption of female cooperation; older, sexually experienced women feel threatened by and pose a threat to the innocence of younger, sexually inexperienced girls. Carter tries in her novels to present the real image of women away from patriarchal myth. Carter refuses women victimization and they are able to assert their identities in a new scheme of parables . Another important asset to a deconstructive rewriting- process is the parody, a typically postmodern strategy that both mocks and makes use of the traditions of the form. Despite its negative connotations, the parody effectively ridicules and contest's patriarchal authority and convention. It is the perfect instrument for unravelling falsehood, criticizing marginalization, and revealing "linguistic information". There is female curiosity in the story of *The Bloody Chamber*. Carter reveals the fairy elements from the very beginning of the story, when the young Bride trying to tell her story while the Marquis manufactures takes her to the castle:

I remember how, that night, I lay awake in the wagon-lit in a tender, delicious ecstasy of excitement, my burning cheek pressed against the impeccable linen of the pillow and the pounding of my heart mimicking that of the great pistons ceaselessly thrusting the train that bore me through the night, away from Paris, away from girlhood, away from the white, enclosed quietude of my mother's apartment, into the unguessable country of marriage. (BC,1)

This is the very beginning of the story, through stream of consciousness, the bride is on her way to her new home. She has left her mother's home and, in the train, at night a very strange thought busies her mind. The bride vocalizes the beginning of her transformation into a piece of art through the eyes of her husband; "I felt a pang of loss as if ...I had, in some way, ceased to be her daughter in becoming his wife" (BC, 1). Her mother was very brave. She has a victorious history against pirates and shot tigers who would happily beggar herself for love, finds

that her daughter would happily marry without it to secure their financial future. The bride feels that her life is going to be like fairy tale. There are mysterious incidents about her husband's previous wives' deaths. The bride starts to be more sensitive and curious about her husband. Being very rich, Marquis, buys her many valuable costly clothes and jewels. Carter believes that transformation in the bride's identity takes place when she starts to accept all these gifts. In the world of feminism, such transformation is not accepted in women's world for, she is going to lose her identity and will be no more than an object like other objects, jewels and clothes. It happens that he takes her to opera and she wears her husband's gift, a necklace, Carter writes "his wedding gift, clasped around [her] throat" (BC,6). Mikalsen claims that the image of a pale child with a slit throat is disconcertingly ominous. (1, p.54)

It becomes apparent that Marquis is slowly grooming his new bride to become part of his collection; a collection where the subject is killed into art. He gives her a ruby choker, like "an extraordinary precious slit throat" (BC,6), and buy precious furs, petticoats, and flashy rings to make her property attired as his wife. Both he and his gifts seduce the bride; her romantic notion of love is charged by emotions invoked by passionate artistic expressions; "my heart swelled and ached so during the Liebestod that I thought I must truly love him. Yes. I did. Upon his arm, all eyes were upon me" (BC,5). The bride here has been corrupted and lost her identity and transformation is over. Another means Carter uses to create suspense and achieve the aspects of fairy tale is the use of mirror. Carter uses mirrors and looking glasses in her novel, to emphasize the degree to which society, and men in particular, objectify women. When the bride enters her room and sees all these mirrors, where "[a] dozen husbands impaled a dozen brides" (BC,14), in page 6 Carter writes: "I saw him watching me in the gilded mirrors with the assessing eye of a connoisseur inspecting horseflesh...I'd never seen...the sheer carnal avarice [of his gaze]; and it was strangely magnified by the monocle lodged in his left eye". (BC,6)

In every aspect of the story, Carter describes in a strange way using words that belong to the world of fairy tale And, ah! his castle. The faery solitude of the place; with its turrets of misty blue, its courtyard, its spiked gate, his castle that lay on the very bosom of the sea with seabirds mewing about its attics, the casements opening on to the green and purple, evanescent departures of the ocean, cut off by the tide from land for half a day ... that castle, at home neither on the land nor on the water, a mysterious, amphibious place, contravening the materiality of both earth and the waves, with the melancholy of a mermaid who perches on her rock and waits, endlessly, for a lover who had drowned far away, long ago. That lovely, sad, sea-siren of a place! (BC ,8-9) Carter mixes elements of nature to describe the beauty of such attractive place, adding a kind of sadness as if there is something sad will take place, it is full of curiosity. Carter uses another factor to let her story to be like a fairy tale, full of suspense, which is the case of the forbidden room which should never be opened by the bride in his absence.

one of the symbols that Carter uses for further creation of fairy tale is a matter of forbidden key. In the story, Marquis warns the bride not to open only one room in the castle, and she has full freedom to open all the other doors. The bride did not bear her curiosity and though she thought not to open that door but she could not. That mysterious key had provided the bride with questions and answers about Marquis's love, sex and other secrets of his life. In fairy tales sometimes the evil power is going to be changed to a virtuous one. But in the Bloody Chamber, the bridegroom is steeped in evil power . Here Carter's message is better to subvert the system than accepting it with all such consequences of evil. The bride's mother rushes to the castle and saves her daughter by shooting Marquis. In conclusion to this section, Carter encourages subversion that will oppose the patriarchal system. Out

of these elements and symbols of fairy tales, Carter sends her message which is for women, she urges them to be clever and stop being passive.

III CONCLUSION

Carter is among women authors who aimed at raising women's state in the society. Her stories though presented with traditional fairy tale genre and gothic atmosphere but they are mixed with new mode of thinking on women's behalf. Carter refused to show her female heroines in a submissive way, she focused on an important issue that curiosity is necessary for women to develop their mental state. Male gaze creates a problem for women. Carter amalgamates magic realism, gothic atmosphere, fairy tale elements for seducing her characters in the novel. Carter was against the culturally determined nature of women. She was fond of reviewing her purposes and refused to view her texts depending on one enclosed view. As a socialist author, used myth and fairy tale only to create suspense and mix it with new phases of modernity to show how women characters possess curiosity and knowledge which prove their cleverness. Many issues arise while mentioning postmodernism like industry, politics, and cultural aspect. The sarcastic situation of Fevvers is a sign of Postmodernism. After being tortured by the patriarchal system, she becomes tough and cheats everybody by letting spectators believe her as a bird or a human being with wings. It is normal to find issues of human culture, gender, and body which is all dominant in Carter's texts but it is not acceptable to tackle topics related to human nature, class and biological issues.

The approach of demythologizing of Carter is clear from Fevver's treatment with her spectators in the circus. Finally, she gets rid of her mask and the myth of her wings is no more than a lie, cruelty of men, culture and materialistic era obliged her to wear the mask by pretending that she is a bird in human shape with wings. Carter through using parody and mirror criticizes and ridicules the system in the society. In *The Bloody Chamber*, the mirror reflects the loss of identity of the bride in her bedroom and the superiority of the bridegroom, when he looks at her in the mirror and she sees the necklace, she feels her weakness and passivity because she becomes an object possessed by her husband. The sexual awakening is portrayed in the novel as a sign of assimilation and loss because of men. Violence has been practiced against the bride and Fevvers, their curiosity and knowledge had helped them to use their minds. Which was a sign of a new era of their development.

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