Chapter – I

Genre Fiction: A Theoretical Framework

Over the years genre fiction has acquired a significant place in English literature. Outpourings of many crime, detective, adventure, and mystery novels have denoted enormous growth of genre fiction or popular fiction. It is true that genre fiction compared to mainstream fiction remained somewhat neglected as per as research is concerned. But the situation seems to be changing. The popular fiction, which has its roots in the remote past, has nowadays arrested attention of scholars, critics, and students. The ongoing research in this genre resulted in outpouring of many critical books. The recent books Genreflecting A Guide to Popular Reading Interests (2006) edited by Wayne. A. Wiegand and Icons of Horror and the Supernatural: An Encyclopedia of Our Worst Nightmares (2007) edited by S. T. Joshi illustrate the criticism flourished in the field of genre fiction. Moreover, a long- run debate over the position of mainstream fiction and popular or genre fiction among scholars and critics has kept genre fiction always in the limelight. Although genre fiction is considered as a secondary form of literature, it has widely been read as there are countless fans of the fiction. H. Thomas Milhorn points out the nature of the genre fiction:

Genre fiction is the fiction of emotions. Its primary function is to evoke feelings. The writer’s goal is to entertain the reader. Any consideration of self expression, if one exists, is usually secondary. Genre fiction is typically characterized by a great deal of dialogue, characters that readers can easily identify with, and plots are fast paced (Milhorn 02).
1. Popular fiction or Genre fiction:

Traditionally, mainstream fiction and popular or genre fiction are distinguished from each other on some basic points. Firstly, the term ‘popular’ focuses on the difference that lies between mainstream fiction and genre fiction. Secondly, genre fiction is considered as a plot-driven whereas mainstream fiction is considered as a character-driven. Thirdly, mainstream fiction appeals and attracts a smaller but more intellectual audience and genre fiction attracts a broad audience. Fourthly, mainstream fiction is presumed to have a greater artistic merits and higher cultural values. In this view, by comparison with mainstream fiction, genre fiction is thought to be formulaic, commercial, sensational and sentimental. Lastly, mainstream fiction is considered as a fiction of ideas and genre fiction is considered as a fiction of emotions. The term genre fiction has been used for fictional works—novels and short stories—specifically produced with some intentions thereby fitting itself into a specific literary genre. These works share similarities of character, theme, and setting and appeal to readers and fans already familiar to the genre. Adventure fiction, fantasy fiction, historical fiction, mystery fiction, romance fiction, science fiction, thriller fiction, and horror fiction et al are encompassed in the genre fiction.

Adventure fiction usually focuses on action or mission—set in exotic or forbidding locals—of a hero who overcomes obstacles to achieve his mission. Though a hero is placed in life-and death situation, the story generally ends happily showing triumph of a hero over the situation. Fantasy fiction like science and horror fiction also introduces ‘unknown’ or ‘other’ but magic plays a crucial role in this fiction. The story line, which is based on myth or legend, has mythical creatures as
well as common animals as characters. Moving around historical event, time or period, the historical fiction presents real or fictional characters. They are portrayed skillfully that they become part of the times. The historical fiction tends to give accurate historical details relating to settings as well as to characters and events. Historical novels raise social and moral issues through their plots. The most popular and attractive mystery fiction, in which mystery plays a vital role, usually begins with a crime or murder. Mystery fiction always employs an investigator or a team of investigators to discover who-dun-it. There are clues left for the investigators to trace the mystery. The story generally ends happily. Romance fiction presents a love story with a happy ending. The story is based on either a misunderstanding between a hero and a heroine or outside circumstances that force them apart. The story ends with the reunion of lovers. This fiction introduces type characters; men are handsome, smart, and dangerous whereas women are strong, independent, and often beautiful. Science fiction, which is usually set in future, introduces ‘unknown’ or ‘other’. The story line is packed with technical and scientific details and characters are secondary to topics and atmosphere. In short, fantasy, horror, and science fiction depict intrusion of ‘unknown’ into a life of a common man. This notion is also presented by suspense fiction. Though settings are present day, the story line presents a dark, menacing atmosphere. The action usually takes place within a narrow time frame—in only a few days. Though there is a confrontation between a hero and a villain, the hero survives. With the help of extensive details and technical language, thriller fiction centers on violence or threat of violence. Protagonists are always presented as strong and sympathetic who operate under their own personal codes. The story line is woven around national or international politics.
Though different characteristics offer these branches of genre fiction their own identity, these branches share some elements which link them to each other. But these elements appear with their generic touch. Fantasy and horror are drawn on everyday fears and tend to produce realm of creatures that are bigger than life. Both these fictions create nightmarish situations. However, fantasy fiction is more affirming and offers a protagonist a chance to win whereas in horror fiction a protagonist has to struggle to survive. In fantasy fiction evil is defeated but in horror fiction evil always survives. Horror and fantasy fiction have a sensitive approach while science fiction has a rational approach. Science, fantasy, and horror fiction employ a challenging ‘other’ or ‘unknown’ but in science fiction the ‘other’ is controlled by scientific knowledge and technology. In fantasy fiction the ‘other’ is subject to magic while in horror fiction the ‘other’ is beyond the control of a human power. Suspense plays a key role in thriller, mystery, romance, suspense, horror, and adventure fiction. Yet, in each of these fictions except in suspense fiction the central focus is on something other than suspense. Both in suspense and mystery fiction there is puzzle. In mystery fiction protagonist’s aim is to get into puzzle to find out its working in order to solve it but in suspense fiction a protagonist tries to get out of puzzle. Mystery fiction begins with something happened whereas in suspense fiction something is going to happen. The pattern of suspense novels is similar to horror novels. Both the novels show a danger entering the sphere of human being’s normal life. In suspense fiction, however, the danger is human. In horror fiction a danger can be both a supernatural element and a human being.

Among these fictions horror fiction has largely attracted critics, scholars, and even movie makers. It is true that horror novels have
contributed to enrich Hollywood film industry as the best Hollywood movies are based on horror novels. Horror fiction, which includes many themes, is one of the simple genres to define and understand on a very basic level. This fiction prefers to evoke fear in the minds of readers. At one point in the history of horror genre it preferred to have monsters of some type or supernatural elements as important horrific elements. Thus, the horror fiction which came up with stories of ghosts, ghouls, monsters, and vampires have been ruling human mind right from gothic period to the present day. But with the emergence of new horror fiction writers in this field, serial killers, murders, diseased and disturbed persons entered the realm of horror fiction as icons of horror. Despite this drastic change, the fiction continues to dominate human mind as it more powerfully depicts nightmares coming to human life. Thus, horror fiction of the contemporary period has become a fine amalgamation of old and new icons of horror. Framing their weird woks within the characteristics of the genre, many writers including Ramsey Campbell have tried to offer a new face to horror fiction.

To sum up branches of genre fiction are generally understood in terms of content; the romance fiction focuses on the matters of heart. The mystery fiction usually focuses on the causes and consequences of crime. Horror fiction, however, seeks to evoke fear in readers. This is a unique feature of horror fiction and this fiction is always studied in view of what it does than what it is. Although horror fiction is not treated as mainstream fiction, it has established its separate identity alluring masses. Outpours of horror novels have proved this fact. Noel Carroll rightly points out it:
The onslaught of horror novels and anthologies, at present at least, is as unstoppable and as inescapable as the monsters they portray (Carroll 01).

1.2. Horror in General:

Horror fiction, as distinguished from literary fiction, has drawn attention of scholars, critics, and readers. This genre, with the passage of time, has established and imprinted its separate identity on the rich and mosaic floor of English Literature. Horror, which was supposed to be an abode of myths and folks, has oozed out in music, in painting, in films, in theatres, in literature, and on television. Michael Jackson’s ‘Thriller’ cassette has set sales records in every possible category. The Phantom of the Opera has already seen success in London. Horror paintings have proved as a startling success. Horror paintings of Matt Cail and Eric Swartz which are in high demand send shivers in our hearts. Popular movies The Omen, and The Exorcist achieved box office success at theaters and set a chain of production of horror movies. Television has also launched a number of horror or horror-related series such as Freedy’s Nightmares. This American Television serial became popular in the world. New versions of horror classics like Edward Gorey’s variations on Dracula have been preformed in drama theatres. Horror writers Stephen King and Peter Straub have become household names in America. Ramsey Campbell and Clive Barker have acquired special space in book houses in England. The popularity of the horror genre has not remained confined to the masses alone but has reached the academicians too. The recent philosophical and theoretical works of Gina Wisker, Dani Cavallaro, and Noel Carroll have made this genre worthy by explaining philosophy of horror. The horror Journals The Irish Journal
of Gothic and Horror Studies and Studies in Modern Horror devote to introduce the established as well as budding horror writers and their literature to the whole world. In short, like an amorphous creature horror oozes out everywhere because horror is and has been a part of human conscious. Horror embodies the fear for the ‘unknown’. The area of the ‘unknown’ has been the reservoir of mystery. The ‘unknown’ is traditionally represented by monsters, vampires, and other supernatural elements. These representatives from the ‘unknown’ are sources of fewer boons and more dangers. They belong, as Lovecraft points out: “to spheres of existence whereof we know nothing and wherein we have no part” (Lovecraft 1). The dreaming of human beings help to build up the notion of an unreal or spiritual world, moreover, a kind of an unknown world, a world of peril and evil possibilities. This world is a part of human conscious because a pain lives longer in our heart than pleasure. Curiosity, interest and fear of the ‘unknown’ have invited, like a common man, attention of writers. This attention resulted in emergence of horror fiction that has been dominating human mind. The interesting fact about horror fiction is that it has been revolving around the ‘other’, the ‘unknown’, the ‘numinous’. The ‘other’ stands opposite to rational and reason. About this Manuel Aguirre writes:

In Das Heilige (1917), Rudolph Otto coined the word ‘numinous’ to signify that which transcends the rational, that which by human definition lies beyond our conceptions of morality and reason: the awesome, the awful, the wholly other (Aguirre 3).

The ‘other’ has undergone changes as horror fiction journeyed from gothic period to the contemporary period. It has travelled from gothic castle to the human world and it has been significantly presented in
horror fiction. Gothic horror novelists locked up the ‘other’ in a remote castle, time and country. Furthermore, the horror novelists presented the ‘other’ as a mobile force wandering and spreading like a plague. It became a house, a city, a mental landscape. The ‘other’ turned into a cosmic haunter, seeking entrance to human space. In the modern period the ‘other’ has been allowed free entry and human world is being invaded, taken over and reshaped from within.

To sum up, horror fiction today is a mixture of supernatural element and human psyche. As Ramsey Campbell points out:

Horror fiction can be many things. The field includes the ghost stories of Sheridan Le Fanu and M. R. James….It ranges from the psychological terrors of John Franklin Bardin to the philosophical terrors of Samuel Beckett’s *The Unnamable and Not I* … Horror fiction can work as humour, as metaphor, as political allegory, as the imagination’s reveille (Campbell 1).

Horror fiction aims to evoke horror in its readers and naturally this tends to ask what horror is. So herein the term ‘horror’ will be discussed.

1.3. **Concept of Horror:**

There have been many definitions of horror. The Oxford English Dictionary gives the definition of horror as: “a painful emotion compounded of loathing and fear; a shuddering with terror and repugnance; strong aversion mingled with dread; the feeling excited by something shocking or frightful” (Oxford English Dictionary 397). Taylor defines horror as an emotion blending with disgust. It is something that makes one unmoved. He writes: ‘Horror is a strongly aversive emotion that denies ‘all strategy, all option’. It is ‘a peculiar blend of fear and disgust’, an affront and a threat which people may share, though
among survivors and viewers it may remain private, becoming something that cannot be communicated” (Taylor 1). These two definitions of horror strongly point out that horror is an emotion loaded with fear and disgust. In short, horror may be defined as a disliked emotion which makes one very frightened, frozen and one becomes static like a statue.

The very etymology of horror directs to the physical dimension, for the Latin ‘horrere’ actually means ‘to Shiver or Bristle’ and the old French ‘orror’ means ‘to bristle or shudder’. James B. Twitchell states:

In fact, the shiver we associate with horror is the result of the constriction of the skin that firms up the subcutaneous hair follicles and thus accounts for the rippling sensation, almost as if a tremor were fluttering down our back, from this comes the most appropriate trope for horror creeping flesh or, more simply, the ‘creeps’ (Twitchell 10).

He further states: “The word ‘horripilation’ for instance, is still used in zoology to describe the condition commonly known as gooseflesh” (Ibid 11).

Noel Carroll clarifies the nature and the definition of horror in relation to literature. He makes the difference between the natural ‘horror’ and the ‘art-horror’. Natural horror deals with the events occurring in the world for example, deeds of Nazi’s. ‘According to Carroll ‘Art-horror’ is: “Horror as it serves to name a cross-art, cross media genre whose existence is already recognized in ordinary language’’ (Carroll 12). Carroll further points out: “Art-horror is an emotion; furthermore it is ‘an occurrent emotional state’” (Ibid 14).

According to Victor Sage: “The word ‘horror’ is tricky, because it belongs to a class of apparently descriptive psychological terms which are often used to convey by writers to arouse the very emotion they purport
to describe” (Sage XX). Sage connects horror with human psychology and associates horror with a ‘trigger’. A trigger is an event that causes something to happen and it involves process. Sage also talks of the double function of the term ‘horror’: “which purports to describe what we seem to perceive, and also suggests the emotion we are to have when confronted with this type of experience” (Ibid XXI).

Though sometimes the words terror and horror are used as synonyms, there is an acute difference between these two words. Terror denotes trembling whereas horror is: “a stark transfixed staring” (Punter 236). Terror is associated with trembling-shaking uncontrollably from fear, whereas horror transfixes and makes one motionless with fear. The Latin root of ‘terror’ is ‘terrere’. It means to shake up. Thus, horror makes people to shiver whereas terror makes people to shake up. Fred Botting sharply and significantly distinguishes opposition between terror and horror:

Horror is of a quite different order of emotions: it describes a range of subjective states and objects distinct from those that surround and evoke terror. Bound up with feelings of revulsion, disgust and loathing, horror includes states of shuddering or paralysis, the loss of one’s faculties, particularly consciousness and speech, or a general physical powerlessness and mental confusion. Where terror is often connected to an immediate threat, the cause of horror is far less discernible in that it involves the subject to a greater and more disturbing extent, confounding inner and outer worlds in all pervasive disorientation (Botting 124).

Twitchell also stresses on the opposition between terror and horror:
Terror is external and short-lived; horror is more internal and long-lasting. Terror will pass, as in the Reign of terror or acts of terrorism, but horror will never disappear, no matter how rational we become about it...Horror has no end, no closure, no conclusion; terror always has an end (Twitchell 16).

Terror’s object is certain whereas horror’s object remains uncertain. Terror offers escaping whereas horror creates a state of confusion and chaos and there is no escape from it. The roots of horror are always in dreams, in imagination and the basis of terror is in actuality. Horror is associated with psychology and terror is associated with context. In his book, Dani Cavallaro, quotes the quotation of Devendra P. Varma to mark a difference between terror and horror:

The difference between Terror and Horror is the difference between awful apprehension and sickening realization: between the smell of death and stumbling against a corpse (Cavallaro 3).

The ‘uncanny’ is a Freudian notion that explores horror. It throws lights on its operations and stresses the difference between terror and horror. The notion is connected with defamiliarization, ghostliness, disturbance and disease. The uncanny effects cause when familiar circumstances unexpectedly turn into unfamiliar. And this turning is unanswerable, unquestionable as how or why this has happened. The circumstances are beyond our explanation. This inexplicability is the very nature of horror. Monsters are the prime carriers of horror and they are from the unknown. They are the images of horror not because they are dreadful but they are beyond our control. Thus, they are uncanny, unable to be controlled and kenned. In this regard terror is always real and
controllable whereas horror blurs the boundaries between real and imagination. Twitchell points out:

However, terror is always ‘real’; it is always objectifiable. We know where it came from, what it is going to do to us. … Usually we even know how to destroy it … that it is organic, just like ourselves. If we see a female victim on film being stalked by an ax-murderer…our sensation will be terror; but let that murderer be a zombie, a vampire, a werewolf, or anything akin, and our response is horror (Twitchell 21).

Horror has an inexplicable nature. It leads to an uncontrollable situation and a lack of information. It is associated with marvelous and the occult. In short, horror may be defined as a disgusting and everlasting emotion that arouses out of uncanny objects, creates uncontrollable situations, drives into abnormal state and puts limitations on reason and rationality. These uncanny objects reflect in horror fiction, representing what we suppress in our consciousness. In the words of Gina Wisker:

Horror is in everyday reality, but it is also a genre, a construction, and a representation of what terrifies and disgusts, what we fear and secretly desire (Wisker 5).

Horror fiction reflects cosmic horror, psychological horror, body horror and domestic horror etc. Cosmic horror builds around the notions of absence of Divine Presence such as God, and the insignificance of human-beings in the largest cosmos. H. P. Lovecraft (1890-1937) in his fiction reflects the notions stressing on insignificance of human-beings in vast cosmos. Earlier horror fiction writers such as M. R. James (1862-1936), Arthur Machen(1863-1947), depicted cosmic horror in their literature. The modern horror fiction writer Brain Lumley (b. 1937)
prefers to depict cosmic horror in his fictional works. Thus, cosmic horror has a long tradition and it fascinates many readers today.

Psychological horror comes from within as it exposes an evil that hides behind normality, portraying a dark atmosphere in which character’s own thoughts, fears, beliefs, guilt, and emotional instability take over their physical world. American writer E. A. Poe (1809-1849) employed psychological horror in his short stories for example *The Tell-Tale Heart* (1843). In British horror fiction we find this type of horror in Robert Stevenson’s, novel Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (1886).

Invasion of the human body is at the centre in Body horror. The supernatural elements including objects from nature invade a human body and reshape it accordingly. Body horror flourished in horror fiction at the hands of reputed American novelists like Stephen King (b 1947) and J. W. Campbell (1910-1971). British horror writers Daphne du Maurier (1907 – 1989), Walter de la Mare (1873-1956) skillfully handled body horror in their few fictional works.

The domestic space is a choice for domestic horror exposing family, home, attic, kitchen, bedroom, toilet, garden, and neighborhood as danger zones. Domestic horror also suggests invasion of the family spaces. American writers E. A. Poe, Stephen King, Angela Carter (1940-1992) concentrated on domestic horror exposing the contradictions and unpleasantness of domestic settings and relationships.

Science fiction, fantasy fiction, and ghost stories apart from horror fiction accommodate and manifest horror. The brief survey of these genres discussed further may focus on the nature and the mechanism of horror employed in the said genres.
1.4. Horror depicted in Gothic, Science, Fantasy Fiction and Ghost Stories:

The earlier gothic novelists from Walpole to Ann Radcliffe projected horror by portraying supernatural elements housing them in remote castles. The gloomy, haunted castles, with supernatural elements and strange events evoked horror. But this phase of gothic novel repeated supernatural elements and confined horror to the remote castles. The latter gothic novelists including William Godwin and Mary Shelley avoided exotic settings of earlier novelists and produced devils, monsters, artificial human beings to arouse horror. Extension of life is the main theme of this phase of the gothic novel. It can be observed that gothic novels produced horror in a stereotype manner.

Gothic novelists exhumed ghosts, vampires, haunted houses or castles as elements of horror. Moreover, haunted houses or castles that frequently lodged supernatural entities – especially ghosts – played a vital role in evoking horror. It is said that the real protagonist of gothic novel is a castle. England witnessed the growth of horror fiction during the post gothic period. The novelists employed traditional gothic elements but made them movable in a large space. Bram Stocker’s Dracula is one of the fine examples of the post gothic period.

There have been great controversial opinions about relationship of science fiction and horror fiction. The boundaries between science and horror fiction appear to be blurred with horror landmarks Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein, Hodgson’s The House on the Borderland, and The Night Land. They are also referred as science fiction.
Science fiction writers H. G. Wells (1866-1946) and John Wyndham (1903-1969) manifested horror in their some fictional works. Wells created horror with the help of scientific experiments. In *The Time Machine* (1895) the time traveller uses the machine and travels both in the past and future exposing Eloi and Morlock’s terror and the survival of last living things of the dying Earth. *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1896) is a story of Dr. Moreau who conducts the research on the unnamed island. He has been vivisecting human beings. Prendick finds the doctor’s research horrible when he happens to see a humanoid form lying in bandages in doctor’s experimental room. The novel creates horror when readers also come to know that Dr. Moreau has been trying to make a complete transformation of animal into human being. Wells’s *The War of the Worlds* (1899), dealing with strange monsters, Martians who feed on human beings and attack on civilization with their strange devices, creates horror.

John Wyndham’s *The Day of the Triffids* (1951), *The Kraken Wakes* (1953), *The Midwich Cuckoos* (1957) centre on monsters. *The Day of the Triffids* shows Triffids, the aggressive and poisonous plants that attack on human world. *The Midwich Cuckoo* manifests horror by showing the Midwitch village getting affected by a radius and a strange silver object which makes women of childbearing age pregnant. These children use their inhuman abilities of controlling others parts, organs, and bodies that manifest horror. *The Kraken Wakes* presents the alien, Meteors who threatens London and other parts that cause widespread social and political collapse. Wells and Wyndham mostly depicted cosmic horror.
Like science fiction, fantasy fiction also employs supernatural elements and their partial violations of normal rules of casualty and expectation. The famous fantasy novelists J. R. R. Tolkein (1892-1973) and Peter Soyer Beagle (b. 1939) manifest horror in their novels. Tolkein’s *The Lord of the Rings* (1954-55) presents a journey of the ring and battle fought for it. The spirit of Sauron is involved in the chasing and the battle. The efforts to destroy the ring, perishing of Sauron and his fearsome servants create horror.

Beagle’s *The Last Unicorn* (1968) depicts a battle between the forest owner Unicorn and the Red Bull. Sensing a danger for other unicorns, the forest owner Unicorn leaves the forest and undertakes a journey in search of the Bull. She is made a captive by the witch Mummy. A young magician, Schemendric rescues her. The journey continues and ends after driving the Bull into the sea.

Both horror fiction and fantasy fiction revolve around the ‘unknown’. Spirits, monsters, demons, and mythical elements do wander in a realm of fantasy fiction as challenging unknowns. But these elements are subject to magic or individual’s power. This point is illustrated in *Survey of Modern Fantasy Literature* explaining opinion of David Ketterer:

... That each confronts a very different type of unknown. Fantasy presents a challenging unknown that can be known and conquered by the individual through intuitive, magic, and personal forces. Horror’s unknown, in opposition, promises fear and destruction, not fulfillment, and often its advent is chilling and fear-evoking rather than challenging (Magill and Keith 2261).
Ghost stories, whatever their purpose may be, revolve around the projection of ghosts. Ghosts, with their inhuman abilities, represent the power of dead by confronting the living, unsettling and reshaping their victim. These are prime carriers of horror moreover they are inexplicable and their inexplicability arouses horror. In this way ghosts and horror are interconnected and interrelated. A ghost, a product of folklore and myth emerged in the fiction in the late nineteenth century. British writers, M. R. James (1862-1936), Oliver Onions (1873-1961), and Robert Aickman (1914-1981) have enriched and popularized ghost stories. In some of the most tantalizing ghost stories a ghost is hell bent on drawing its enemy to death. In Ambrose Bierce’s *The Way of Ghosts* (1909) for example, a preternatural creature returns seven years after his assassination to compel his murderer to hang himself on the very spot where his bones were buried. In ‘The Way of Ghosts: An Arrest’ (1909) a criminal on the run is noiselessly and effortlessly led back to prison and he is killed by the spirit of the Jailor whom the criminal had killed in order to escape.

Undoubtedly, ghost stories and horror are interconnected and interrelated but horror depicted in ghost stories is one dimensional. Actually horror is multi-dimensional, multi-sourced, and varied. The horror depicted in ghost stories is mainly confined to a confrontation between a ghost and its erstwhile oppressor.

1.5. Characteristics of Horror Fiction:

Horror fiction has its characteristics and horror fiction—supernatural or non-supernatural—is woven around these characteristics.

1. Horror fiction aims at evoking fear in readers.
2. The atmosphere in horror fiction creates a sense of danger thereby evoking emotional responses from readers.
3. The story is typified by a dark tone and a sense of foreboding.
4. The story consists of dangerous supernatural entities—monsters, ghosts, ghouls, and spirits or human antagonists—serial killers, murderers et al.
5. The story line also comprises explicit violence and sex and strong language. There are unexpected events and incidents employed to shock readers.
6. The story line does not flow in logical order.
7. Ends of horror fiction are commonly unresolved focusing on the consistency of horror. Even if the horror may be defeated or driven away, it remains.
8. Protagonists are haunted, obsessed or victimized by supernatural entities or human antagonists. Antagonists are always cruel, crude and mentally disturbed.

The present thesis comprises five chapters. The eleven novels of Campbell have been selected for discussion. The novels are not selected chronologically but they are selected according to the types and icons of horror utilized by Ramsey Campbell. The first chapter entitled as Genre Fiction: A Theoretical Framework discusses genre fiction, horror fiction, concept of horror, horror utilized in genre fiction and characteristics of horror fiction. Prior to it, the Introduction of the thesis focuses on Life-sketch of Ramsey Campbell, history of British and American horror fiction and Campbell’s icons/mechanism of horror. The second chapter discusses Campbell’s four novels under the heading of Gothic and Cosmic Horror. They are: To Wake the Dead (1980), Nazareth Hill (1997), The Hungry Moon (1987) and Midnight Sun (1990). The third chapter entitled as Mundane Horror deals with four novels of Campbell—The Face That Must Die (1979), The Count of Eleven (1992), Secret Story
The present study will focus on the mechanisms and themes of horror developed by Ramsey Campbell. It will be noted whether Campbell moves from external ‘other’ to internal ‘other’ or his novels are combinations of both external and internal ‘other’. The researcher will focus on the philosophy of Campbell’s horror and how it differs from his mentor H. P. Lovecraft, gothic, Post gothic and contemporary horror writers. In short, an attempt will be made to place Campbell’s position in the history of horror fiction.