



## Female Gothic, Modernity and the Aesthetics of Change: Demythologising the South in Eudora Welty

**Shabbir Ahmad**

Department of English | University of Sahiwal  
shabbirahmad@uosahiwal.edu.pk

**Khadija Khalid**

Department of English | University of Sahiwal  
2019-ENG-3393@uosahiwal.edu.pk

**Azra Khanam**

Department of English | University of Sahiwal  
azrakhanam@uosahiwal.edu.pk

### ABSTRACT

Eudora Welty, an American fiction writer, brings forth women's issues and promotes feminist ethics in her writings: novels and short stories. Her stories reveal her concern with the extended subordination of women under machismo in Southern America. More significantly, her work highlights the growth of women's liberal thinking during the development of modernity in the southern parts of America. She looks at the change in time and thought under modernity to examine the local culture and literature with a critical eye on the strict gender order in the South. Her fiction explores varied forms of oppression in marriage, kinship, and community structure of the changing South through female Gothicism. In depicting her female characters as fleeing spatial confinement for freedom and self-transformation, Welty develops an aesthetic of mobility that threatens the mythologized constructions of Southern culture. This eventually leads to a reactionary modernism that calls for the redefinition of identity and culture in the history of Southern America. For centuries, the South has been considered the most segregated, white-centric patriarchal society due to its particular culture, geography and history. The change in thought and culture caused by modernity becomes a threat to the customary plantation business as well as to the conservative male hierarchical order as it engenders a revision of women's identity. This study may help in further research on Gothic literary studies in combination with discourses on culture and women's identity in literary works.

**Keywords:** Female Gothic, mythologized culture, modernity, Southern America, women's identity

This work is licensed under [Creative Commons — Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/)  
— CC BY-NC 4.0



## Introduction

Eudora Welty, a well-known American fiction writer, looks at social and cultural changes during the twentieth century to examine the changes in local culture and literature of the American South. One of the noticeable changes in the twentieth century is the growth of women's liberal thinking; that is why her stories project this development in the South. For centuries, the South has been considered the most segregated, white-centric patriarchal society due to its particular culture, geography and history. The myth of the glorified Southern culture is threatened by the change in thought and culture caused by modernity. This change, in turn, becomes a threat to the customary social practices as well as to the conservative male hierarchical order which is accompanied by a call for the revision of women's identity under traditional gender roles. Thus, Welty develops an aesthetic of change that threatens the mythologized concept of a pure Southern culture, and calls for the redefinition of Southern cultural values.

Welty's works mostly focus on the representation of the local life in a small town in Mississippi, resembling her own birthplace. She is known for the representation of the local dialect, customs, and folklore and is categorized as one of the best short-story writers in America. Her compiled works of short stories include *A Curtain of Green*, *The Golden Apples* and *The Collected Stories of Eudora Welty*, and her famous novels include *Delta Wedding* and *The Optimist's Daughter*. She has been labelled as a "regionalist" author, but she renounces such a label as it restricts the scope of her work, as she mentions in her collection of essays *The Eye of the Story* that art is "simply writing about life" (132). In writing about life, her works paint the landscapes, folkways, and societal changes of the small-town Jackson, Mississippi, where she has foregrounded the Southern oral traditions, such as dialogue and dialect, as is reflected in the plot development and characterization in her short stories and novels. However, it is unjust to confine Welty to only the list of regional writers as is emphasised by Danièle Pitavy-Souques who situates her work outside the myths and mysteries of the South and within a global perspective of humanity. Thus, Welty's concerns in her literary works are not only local depictions of the American South but extend to broader audiences because constraining gender roles are a universal issue for women. However, undeniably, her focus seems to be on viewing Southern culture from the perspective of the change in the world culture under modernity. She emphasises the necessity of change in social and cultural norms as per the need of changing times and accepting such changes with an open mind.

Noel Polk flags how Welty viewed the change in social and cultural values of

the South “not as a loss but as an opportunity,” for “new verities, new configurations of social organisation could give new and vital meaning to . . . life” (21). She supports change not merely for fictional reasons, but also for breaking down the myth of a natural and peaceful South. Polk is of the view that Welty, like William Faulkner, seems subversive of the myth of a natural and peaceful South. The ability to deal with change involves a forceful moral struggle for people who trust “the values of the past, those ‘old’ verities” (Polk 1). Polk’s examination of the ethical struggle and scepticism among the Southern people is genuine as well as bold, but still moderate if compared with Barbara Ladd, who comments that Southerners “do not always cherish these connections, which have often been more oppressive than sustaining. Attention to place, family, and memory in the work of Southern writers often focuses on change and loss” (5). Ladd’s criticism highlights the oppression presented in Welty’s short stories specifically the oppression undergone by a woman in marriage; the female characters are imprisoned in the house, and alienated from the world outside. A close examination of such female characters in the confined space in Welty’s short stories gives us insight into the larger world of reality (Muttaleb 166). Welty’s literary works are grounded in her “commitments to things as they appear in real life” (Adoranto 1), and confirm that a text is an embodiment of the traditions, standards and beliefs of a particular society (Mahmood et al. 871). While her works are set in the Southern American context, they also emphasise a redefinition of the American tradition in the changing times under modernity (Ahmad et al. 849).

We argue that Welty works on the elements of modernity and change with a commitment to feminist ideals of liberty and freedom in the context of social and cultural changes in the American South. Such an endeavour serves to strengthen the identity of the Southern people while highlighting their departure from a static culture. Instead, it positions them as the followers of a dynamic culture that changes with time, to empower their everyday life. As Welty herself underscores, this ever-changing culture does not “imprison the present” (“The House of Willa Cather” 45). This is an acknowledgement that some form of imprisonment does exist which the South tends to fall into, namely, that of gender, race, and class hierarchies which she mentions in her short story “Lily Daw and the Three Ladies” included in *A Curtain of Green* and other similar short stories. This imprisonment of the South generates a space for studying her work under the Gothic narrative tradition along with feminism and social changes in changing times. Therefore, our current study analyses Welty’s short story “Clytie” within the framework of modernity, women’s freedom and Female Gothicism. It explores the historical

developments and the relevant changes that might propose the disintegration of the old traditions and the rise of new women. For this purpose, Welty uses Gothic literary techniques to highlight varied forms of oppression in marriage and familial bonding in the old Southern social order and depicts her female characters as nurturing an urge to flee all forms of spatial confinement to attain freedom and self-transformation.

### **Entrapment and Escape in a Modern Female Gothic: A Theoretical Overview**

The Female Gothic, as conceptualised by Ellen Moer, “presents women’s domestic roles through the supernatural to express the horrors of their docility” (Dolorit 17) and is considered reflective of a woman’s journey toward liberation. The concept of the Female Gothic has gained more significance in recent years. Although it is not free from controversy, scholars, however, agree upon its defining characteristics in comparison with the Male Gothic whose distinctive attributes are: the haunting sense of the uncanny, violence, and death. Conversely, the Female Gothic frequently features women as “disempowered, imprisoned, buried alive, and as ‘ghosts’” (Wallace 26-27). Here, the terms “buried alive” and “ghosts” should not be understood only metaphorically but literally too. This signifies that the women had been kept under a strict regulatory framework (Butler 33) in the past in most of the cultures and this kind of living can be equated with being “buried alive.” Simone de Beauvoir gives a detailed analysis of women’s oppression in *The Second Sex*. In the chapter “Woman: Myth and Reality” of this book, she argues that men had made women the “Other” in society by putting a false aura of “mystery” around them. Men used this as an excuse not to understand women or their problems, stereotype women and to organize society into a patriarchy. Another trait of the Female Gothic is its focus on the house with the heroine in it, underscoring her attempts to “escape from a confining interior” (Punter and Byron 278). Furthermore, the Female Gothic can also be taken as a politically subversive narrative that underscores women’s fears, fantasies, and “dissatisfactions with patriarchal structures” and their “entrapment within the domestic and the female body” (Wallace 2).

We argue here that Welty’s work as Female Gothic flags Southern modernity as its major concern revealing the manipulation of the ideology of the agrarian tradition and Southern heritage. It invites a critical examination of the myth of the inflexible Southern traditions and links it with change in socio-cultural values under modernity. Her Female Gothic, as a “Modernist Gothic,” centres upon

“literary and cultural dynamics that challenge many entrenched cultural attitudes” (Riquelme 20), and is “really about the profoundly conflicted core of modernity itself” (Hogle 7). Thus, this study investigates Welty’s work as a modern Female Gothic while foregrounding the conflict between freedom and entrapment, change and stasis as well as desire and containment that impact all the female protagonists. This paper explores how Welty’s stories project those female protagonists who wander as if lost—but ultimately try to find their own way.

While “Lily Daw and the Three Ladies” included in Welty’s first collection of short stories *A Curtain of Green*, offers a critique of the oppressive racial and gender hierarchies in the South, stories like “Clytie” bring into prominence diverse forms of oppression in marriage, kinship, and community through Female Gothicism. We specifically explore the manner and context, in which entrapment and escape are presented in the Modern Female Gothic story “Clytie”. We also investigate how Welty’s short stories trace the development of women’s liberal thinking in the context of modernity and change in Southern America. Our voice joins the corpus of existing critical works on Eudora Welty which cover a wide range of topics such as history, politics, race, gender, class, psychoanalysis, space, surrealism, comparative literature, weird literature and Gothicism. Some famous critical works include Harriet Pollack’s book titled *New Essays on Eudora Welty, Class, and Race*, Pearl McHaney’s essay “Eudora Welty: Sensing the Particular, Revealing the Universal in Her Southern World,” Don James McLaughlin’s article “Finding (M) Other’s Face: A Psychoanalytic Approach to Eudora Welty’s ‘Clytie,’” Stephanie Rountree’s work “Visible, Unfamiliar, Remarkable: Private Bodies and Public Policy in Eudora Welty’s *Losing Battles*,” Dorothy Griffin’s article “The House as Container: Architecture and Myth in Eudora Welty’s *Delta Wedding*,” Abu Jweid’s “Regional commitment in Eudora Welty’s ‘Petrified Man’” and many other works.

Welty’s works bring into the limelight the Southern modernity (social and cultural changes in Southern America in the twentieth century) through her characters and particular settings in space. The next section focuses on the intersections between the Female Gothic and the oppressive gender dynamics in the American South vis-à-vis “Clytie” as our site of analysis.

### **Female Gothic in Welty’s “Clytie”: A Journey of Women from Imprisonment to Freedom**

Like other literary genres, the Female Gothic has distinguishable requisites, such as a troubled heroine, an oppressive male antagonist, a mysterious mansion, and, according to author Greg Johnson, “familiar Gothic themes of confinement

and rebellion, forbidden desire, and 'irrational' fear," (3). Welty's "Clytie" is a pertinent piece of literature to be discussed under Female Gothic as it exhibits many features of the Female Gothic. It also displays features similar to Faulkner's celebrated Gothic tale "A Rose for Emily" in which Emily Grierson's father keeps her from seeing suitors and strictly controls her social life. Her struggle with loneliness drives her to kill her suitor Homer Barron in order to keep him with her permanently. She treats him as her living husband even after his death, which is shown by her keeping his clothes and engraved wedding items beside his corpse; she even sleeps beside him.

Like the fallen Southern aristocratic family of Emily Grierson, the Farris family in "Clytie" has lost its old privileged social status in the town of Farr's Gin, presumably established by their ancestors. Here, the patriarchal father is no more than the living dead, "paralyzed, blind" in bed with "wasted cheeks" and "eyes ... half closed" (Welty, *The Collected Stories of Eudora Welty* 84). He is "as bad off as ... a corpse" (Welty, *Collected Stories* 89). As is common with the Female Gothic, the house is suppressive and entrapping since it is "very dark and bare" with "every window ... closed," (Welty, *Collected Stories* 82). Like the dead space that confines Livvie, another female character in another short story of Welty, the Farris' house seeks to wall itself off from the changing outside world. The members "trap themselves and control each other" (Cohoon 47) in such a gothic space. Clytie does not have any identity but is manipulated by her sister Octavia to resist and defy the world. When a neighbour shows Clytie some new blooming rosebushes to enjoy the beauty of nature, "It's nice" is her response. However, after a short time, she cries because she thinks of Octavia who says "you take the rosebush up and move it away from our fence! If you don't, I'll kill you!" (Welty, *Collected Stories* 86). Indeed, Welty casts Clytie as a voiceless victim who "appears devoid of any coherent sense of self or agency" (McLaughlin 54). In this Female Gothic narrative, it is family and kinship and not marriage that imprisons the tragic Clytie. Thus, Clytie's occasional wandering, and eventual drowning in a rain barrel all attest to her yearning to escape and break free.

The story begins on a "later afternoon" when "big round drops fell, still in the sunlight" (Welty, *Collected Stories* 81). As everyone hurries to find shelter, Clytie stands "still in the road, peering ahead" (Welty, *Collected Stories* 81). The road leads to the future, but Clytie seems to have lost her bearing as she cannot see clearly the future ahead, either because of her dwindling wits or her overbearing sister Octavia. Likewise, the Farr family refuses to catch up with the world by cementing themselves in their "old big house" (Welty, *Collected Stories* 81). This

dormancy is only punctured by Clytie, for “[s]he usually came out of the old big house” (Welty, *Collected Stories* 81). This movement lays bare her inner longing for communication with the world at large, away from the distorted, grotesque family which turns her into a dumb figure and this confinement compels her to search for an exit out of this suffocation. Whenever “anyone spoke to her, she fled with a ridiculous, rushing speed” (Welty, *Collected Stories* 87). The suppressive domestic environment forces Clytie to transgress, manifesting in her “window attachment” (Welty, *Collected Stories* 87). She is found staring outside the window at the trains passing by; opening windows a little without being caught by her sister who insists every window be closed, every shade drawn, and every door locked.

Doors and windows are noteworthy things in Welty’s writings. She herself once discusses the function of the window, in a novel’s setting, in the essay “Reality in Chekhov’s Stories,” and declares the window as signalling a reality that “is no single, pure ray, no beacon against the dark” (63). Reality for Welty is not something entirely independent or isolated from individuals concerned. Rather, it “always has its origin: it comes to us through the living human being (Welty, “Reality in Chekhov’s Stories” 61). Thus, reality cannot be looked at as a separate thing from the real people related to a story. Furthermore, “What’s real, like them, carries, as they do, the seed of change” (Welty, “Reality in Chekhov’s Stories” 64).

Hence, for the writer, a window maintains a balance between separation and communication in people’s perception of reality. Clytie’s viewing and perceiving through the window, according to Dorothy Griffin, becomes an “‘act of recognition’ of the changes of the world,” and the window serves as “a dual conductor which provides for individual perceptions of exterior reality as well as an ultimate reality which can move inward” (521-35), or, as Louis Rubin suggests, “‘peep in,’ either to promise or to threaten” (526). The window becomes an instrument for Clytie to recognize the external reality where there are changes under modernity. The reality here contains two-fold meanings; first as the literal sense of the current outside world of reality, while the “ultimate reality” acts as a metaphor for the perpetual world of changes. Thus viewed, the heroine’s constant staring out of the window gestures at her desire to change her current situation and leave the dead space of her house for a life with full personal control and freedom. Equally crucial here is to note the marginality of the window. Unlike the door in the centre which is controlled and monitored by her sister Octavia, the window as a minor and marginal site symbolizes Clytie’s subjugated and marginalized condition in the family which she wishes to change.

Clytie repeatedly escapes by stealth into the town and this reflects her

desperate yearning to break out of the imprisonment to embrace the outside reality, which, however, does not prove to be of any use. Eventually, she plunges her head into a water barrel, slicing “through its glittering surface into the kind, featureless depth” with her “poor ladylike black-stockinged legs up-ended” (Welty, *Collected Stories* 90). This scene, comic as it might seem, appears deeply dark, desperate and gothic. Her black, split legs call people’s attention to the way she cannot take root and break through the enclosing entrapment in a stagnated family locked in its rich history and traditions. The “featureless depth” (Welty, *Collected Stories* 90) of the water barrel occupies Clytie’s imagination, because, from start of her life, she has been trying relentlessly to search for some appearance to satisfy her deep imagination since her childhood, whether in the streets, in the rain, among the Negroes, or in the house. It was for “a vision that she examined the secret, mysterious, unrepeated faces she met in the street of Farr’s Gin” (Welty, *Collected Stories* 86) and in the end, the vision appears in the depth of the water in a water barrel.

The symbolism of this face is an enticing mystery that has elicited highly contested views from critics. McLaughlin sees this face as of Clytie’s absent mother, and thus her descent into the water turns into a symbolic act of returning to the womb. Ruth D. Weston conjectures the face to be the heroine’s (lost) lover’s, thus her death might result from her isolation in “sexual frustration” (qtd. in McLaughlin 61). To be fair, these speculations are more or less convincing in their own ways, however, we contend that the face that haunts Clytie alludes to the mythical Clytie whose face was imprisoned by Apollo, the sun god. Clytie is a water nymph from Greek mythology who fell in love with Apollo and never took her eyes off him as he flew across the sky. Eventually, she became a sunflower, forever turning its face with the course of the sun. All that Welty hopes to achieve with Clytie’s face-obsession is to evoke Clytie’s entrapment and pining for release in line with the classical myth. Thus seen, the heroine’s eventual voluntary death becomes an act of self-liberation that not only brings the Female Gothic to its apex, but deepens the theme of the story as an allegory.

Welty obviously stands aware of the allegorical moral of the falling South against the industrialized North as presented in Faulkner’s “A Rose for Emily” with which “Clytie” displays significant affinities. Harold Bloom also combines Welty’s Gothic works with Faulkner’s “A Rose for Emily” and Flannery O’Connor’s “A Good Man is Hard to Find” and calls them all as the Southern Gothic, referring to works based on the past culture and history of the South. However, in contrast, Welty endeavours to present a gamut of conflicting responses to Southern modernity



in her series of stories, dramatizing them, specifically in the story of the falling aristocratic family portrayed in “Clytie.” Except for Clytie herself, the whole family is adamant on shutting themselves out from the outside world. Such conservatism represents the fears and vehement reaction against modernity prevalent among a faction of Southerners like the plantation owners and the Agrarians. Modernity in the South propels the mass migration of African Americans up North and into cities. Their mass migration leads to a rapid decline of the plantation economy, a situation that gets exacerbated with agricultural modernization. It is apparently out of deep economic interests that these cliques strive to preserve the status quo and stop the invasion of modernity. Their animus, as Susan V. Donaldson argues, has “much to do with resisting rapid social-economic change and their own sense of shifting status and identity” (xi).

This radical change in status and identity renders the Farr family traumatized to the extent that they chose to remain confined in an isolated house which becomes a haunting place for insiders as well as outsiders of this house. Their self-imprisonment exemplifies how some Southerners cling nostalgically to their past, refusing stubbornly to face changes and modernity as reality. Though having experienced a drastic decline in social status, this family tries to maintain its dignity and decency as epitomised in their encounters with Bobo the barber. Mr. Bobo is ordered by the family to serve Clytie’s dying father, James Farr, not via personal invitation but by a letter “written a thousand years ago and never delivered” (Welty, *Collected Stories* 88-89). Instead of any respectful greeting, the letter starts with an imperious command, “Come to this residence at nine o’clock each Friday morning until further notice, where you will shave Mr. James Farr” (Welty, *Collected Stories* 89). The age-old letter and their patronizing way of dealing with people implies the Farris’ obsession with their past in the middle of a wretched economic situation, as is testified to by the fact they offer no remuneration to Mr. Bobo. The only thing that lures the barber into their service is to personally witness the faded glory of the falling aristocracy, for “it was something to be the only person in Farr’s Gin allowed inside the house” (Welty, *Collected Stories* 89).

Apart from the altered status and identity, some other profound reasons lie behind their radical opposition to modernity as are represented by the Farr family. For centuries, the South had remained the most segregated, white-centred patriarchal society in the U.S. due to its unique culture, history, and geography. The transformations induced by modernity posed a threat not only to the traditional plantation business but also to the conservative and stable male hierarchy. The mass migration of the African Americans, compounded with the rise of the New

Woman with liberal ideas and a will to control her life on her own, as well as massive changes that prised open the closed society, and engendered a crisis of white masculinity and identity. This is particularly true of the Agrarians and the Fugitive Poets. What belies their mournful attack on modernity, according to Donaldson, is a pellucid portrait of white Southern men besieged by the forces of modernity, whether in the form of a dehumanizing market economy or by the prospect of regional memory and history (xiv). Donaldson's judicious observation on the forces of change sheds light on some key issues at stake in "Clytie." In the story, Mr. Bobo is obliged to serve the Farr family because of their previous prestige and privilege. His service is infinitely prolonged as he keeps wondering, "why the old man did not die" (Welty, *Collected Stories* 89). Here, the striking image of the failing father makes an apt metaphor of white patriarchy besieged and threatened by the transformations outside.

Their fear and frustration are heightened through an encounter with the free African Americans in the story. When Clytie stares out of "the secretly opened window," she sees "a freight train" and "some Negroes filing down the road going fishing, and Mr. Tom Bate's Boy, turned and looked at her through the window" (Welty, *Collected Stories* 87). The covertly opened window signals Clytie's recognition of the changing outside world. Moreover, the moving train and sunlight strike a meaningful contrast to the dark, stagnant space that imprisons Clytie's family. This contrast is deepened between the free, moving Negroes and the entrapped, expiring white patriarch. The apparent power reversal herein gains further weight in the momentous encounter of their gazes. Clytie catches the African American boy looking at her, tempting her to break through and confront the realities of both the outside and inside worlds. This encounter between Clytie and the black boy—the white woman and the African American once defined as subordinates to the white patriarchal order—evinces Welty's affinity towards embracing the transformations in modernity and her critique of the bigoted conservatism of white patriarchy in the South.

The artistic representation of this besieged white masculinity in the story also invests Clytie's death with more profound meanings. McLaughlin ascribes the heroine's suicide to her "failure to establish herself within the symbolic order" (54); she is unable to fit into the rigid, conservative Southern patriarchy. What McLaughlin fails to see is Clytie's agency in choosing death, that is, she attempts to subvert the suppressing patriarchy with her death. Her descent into death reveals "an expression of the eternal struggle against suffering and repression" (Marcuse 29). In this sense, Clytie does not fail to fit into the order; rather she displays

fortitude to recognize and defy its suppressive nature. Her volition appears more thought-provoking when juxtaposed with the choices made by Livvie and Ruby in the other stories by Welty. Where Ruby struggles for reconciliation and Livvie acts for change, Clytie embraces change in death.

Critics have associated “Clytie” with Greek mythology. A Greek mythological figure, the Oceanid Clytie who is in love with Helios (the Sun). When Helios falls in love with the Eastern princess Leucothoe, the daughter of the Persian king Orchamus, he seduces her (as many gods do in classical myth) by disguising himself as Leucothoe’s mother. Out of jealousy, Clytie reports the affair to king Orchamus who buries Leucothoe. Enraged, Helios turns Clytie into a sunflower, which “forever turns its face toward the Sun” (Morford and Lenardon 608). Whether out of love or not, the mythical Clytie becomes perpetually entrapped in her relationship with the Sun. This entrapment also characterizes the heroine’s status in the Farr family in Welty’s “Clytie”. What is more, the mythical Clytie’s movement could also be deemed “a plea for release, rather than as an affectionate gaze” (Cohon 50). Thereby, Welty works this myth’s paradox into her fictional heroine Clytie to illustrate her desire for change and escape.

Though not bed-bound like her father, Clytie’s sister Octavia never leaves the house and dislikes associating with society. She “would never have forgiven Clytie for an open window” because “rain and sun signified ruin” (Welty, *Collected Stories* 83). She also orders Clytie to “not forget to try all the doors and windows to make sure that everything was locked” (Welty, *Collected Stories* 87). The open window, as well as the rain and sun, express desires for hope and change which obviously repulse Octavia. Welty’s minimizing of Octavia’s movements to the lowest level heightens the theme of (self-)imprisonment in the story. Her rigidity and immobility are evidenced at the opening of the tale, where, finding her way into “dark and bare” house, Clytie “took a match and advanced to the stair post, where the bronze cast of Hermes was holding up a gas fixture” (Welty, *Collected Stories* 82). Octavia is truly an immovable relic, for she imprisons herself in the house and disconnects herself from the world, wallowing in the historical past. More pivotal, however, is the comparison of Octavia and the mythic Hermes, who is “associated with both fertility and rigidity” (Cohon 48). Octavia does not move and becomes as rigid as the mythological Hermes, and this notion is only reinforced as the story progresses. Contrastingly, Clytie is quite different from Octavia as she exhibits a strong desire for freedom and liberty, thus, befitting of the feminist ideal of the New Women that grew under modernity.

## Conclusion

The short story “Clytie” is a viable site to explore how Welty’s modern Female Gothic highlights women’s physical as well as spiritual imprisonment both at home via marriage and outside in terms of the prevalent culture. In this story, the house, as a place of confinement, replaces the classical gothic castle, constituting a rigid space which makes it almost impossible for women to transgress. The Female Gothic is an interesting way to interpret Welty’s idea of women’s confinement and escape in the short story “Clytie.” The analysis of this short story through the Female Gothic tradition has revealed Welty’s concern with the age-old subordination of women in the Southern social system. The revolutionary modern descriptions and images highlighted through Female Gothicism by Welty point towards the vision of an altered status and identity of women. Such works by Welty show that she is influenced by feminism and advocates feminist ideals in her writings. However, being a Southern writer, she brings to the fore the status of women in the context of Southern modernity. She emphasizes on the changed attitudes of women not only to critically examine the South in terms of other social issues such as provincialism, but more significantly, as a pathway of change with the dissection of the rigid gender and racial hierarchies in the South. Thus, she punctures the cultural myths of a *unique, organic* South and calls for the literary construction of a demythologised culture of Southern America.

## Works Cited

- Adoranto, Rachel. *Revealing the Gothic Narrative Tradition in Eudora Welty's Delta Wedding and Jane Austen's Northanger Abbey: A Study of the Transatlantic Novel*. 2020. Georgia State University, Masters dissertation.
- Ahmad, Shabbir, et al. "Redefining Americanism and American Literary Tradition: Hospitality, Ethics and a Transcendent Humanism in Cormac McCarthy's Fiction." *Pakistan Social Sciences Review*, vol. 4, no. 1, 2020, pp. 849-61.
- Beauvoir, Simone de. *The Second Sex*. Vintage Classics, 2015.
- Bloom, Harold. Introduction. *Eudora Welty*, edited by Bloom, updated ed., Chelsea House, 2007, pp. 1-10.
- Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge, 1990.
- Cohoon, Lorinda B. "'Unmoveable Relics': The Farr Family and Revisions of Position, Direction, and Movement in Eudora Welty's 'Clytie.'" *Eudora Welty Review*, vol. 1, 2009, pp. 47-52.
- Dolorit, Ana. "A Novel Look at the Female Gothic." *The Owl—Florida State University's Undergraduate Research Journal*, vol. 11, no. 2, 2021, pp. 17-25
- Donaldson, Susan V. "Introduction: The Southern Agrarians and Their Cultural Wars." *I'll Take My Stand: The South and the Agrarian Tradition*, by Twelve Southerners, Louisiana State UP, 2006, pp. ix-xi.
- Faulkner, William. "A Rose for Emily." Merrill, 1970.
- Griffin, Dorothy. "The House as Container: Architecture and Myth in Eudora Welty's *Delta Wedding*." *Mississippi Quarterly*, 1986, pp. 521-35.
- Hogle, Jerrold. "Introduction: Modernity and the Proliferation of the Gothic." *The Cambridge Companion to The Modern Gothic*, edited by Hogle, Cambridge UP, 2014, pp. 3-19.
- Johnson, Greg. "Gilman's Gothic Allegory: Rage and Redemption in 'The Yellow Wallpaper.'" Kennesaw State University Faculty Publications, 1989, digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/facpub.
- Ladd, Barbara. *Resisting History: Gender, Modernity, and Authorship in William Faulkner, Zora Neale Hurston, and Eudora Welty*. Louisiana State UP, 2012.
- Mahmood, Muhammad Ilyas, et al. "Cross-Cultural Politeness Perspective of Bapsi Sidhwa's Novel *An American Brat*." *Pakistan Social Sciences Review*, vol. 4, no. 3, 2020, pp. 871-81.
- Marcuse, Herbert. *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*. Beacon Press, 1969.
- McLaughlin, Don James. "Finding (M)other's Face: A Psychoanalytic Approach to Eudora Welty's 'Clytie.'" *Eudora Welty Review*, vol. 1, 2009, pp. 53-62.
- Morford, Mark P. O., and Robert J. Lenardon. *Classical Mythology*. 7th ed. Oxford UP,

2003.

Muttaleb, Fuad Abdul. "The Characters of Children in Alice Walker's 'Everyday Use' and Eudora Welty's 'A Worn Path': A Comparative Study." *International Journal of Language and Literary Studies*, vol. 3, no. 2, 2021, pp. 166-74.

Pitavy-Souques, Danièle. *The Eye That is Language: A Transatlantic View of Eudora Welty*, edited by Pearl Amelia McHaney, University Press of Mississippi, 2022.

Polk, Noel. *Faulkner and Welty and the Southern Literary Tradition*. UP of Mississippi, 2008.

Punter, David, and Glennis Byron. *The Gothic*. Oxford, Blackwell, 2004.

Riquelme, John Paul. "Modernist Gothic." In *The Cambridge Companion to The Modern Gothic*, edited by Jerrold Hogle, Cambridge UP, 2014, pp. 20-36.

Rubin, Louis D., Jr. *Writers of the Modern South: The Faraway Country*. University of Washington Press, 1963.

Wallace, Diana. "'The Haunting Idea': Female Gothic Metaphors and Feminist Theory." *The Female Gothic: New Directions*, edited by Diana Wallace and Andrew Smith, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, pp. 26-41.

Welty, Eudora. *The Collected Stories of Eudora Welty*. Harcourt Brace, 1980.

---. *A Curtain of Green and Other Stories*. Houghton-Mifflin, 1979.

---. *The Eye of the Story: Selected Essays and Reviews*. Random House, 1978.

---. "The House of Willa Cather." *The Eye of the Story: Selected Essays and Reviews*, Random House, 1978, pp. 41-60.

---. "Reality in Chekhov's Stories." *The Eye of the Story: Selected Essays and Reviews*, Random House, 1978, pp. 61-81.