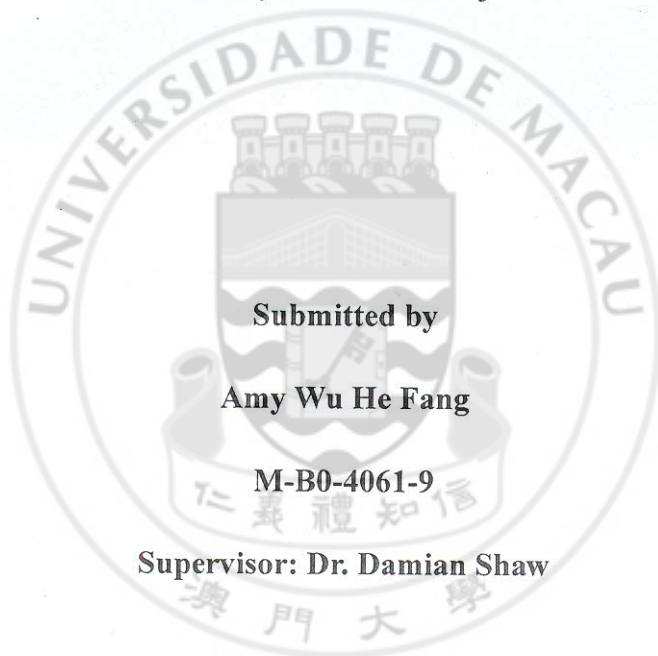




Fear and Pity in *The Castle of Otranto*



**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of the Master
of Arts at the University of Macau**

June 2012

Table of Contents

Declaration	ii
Table of Contents.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Abstract of the Thesis	v
Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1 Fear, Pity, and Catharsis.....	2
Chapter 2 Agents of Fear.....	12
2.1 The Supernatural.....	12
2.2 Manfred.....	18
Chapter 3 Pity and Catharsis in <i>Otranto</i>	25
3.1 Isabella.....	25
3.2 Hippolita.....	28
3.3 Matilda.....	30
3.4 Catharsis.....	34
Conclusion	37
Works Cited	38

Abstract of the Thesis

In this thesis, I mainly examine the elements of fear and pity in *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) in order to ascertain how and why Horace Walpole uses them. I trace this back to Aristotle's account of tragic emotions in order to judge whether or not his accounts apply to the novel.

This thesis is divided into three chapters. The first chapter mainly concerns Aristotle's definitions of fear, pity, and catharsis. The second chapter deals with particular agents of fear in *Otranto*. The third chapter focuses on readers' pity towards female victims, and the catharsis in the novel.

My general findings are as follows: (1) Walpole's usage of the supernatural and Manfred as agents of fear is largely similar to Aristotle's account of fear, though he often undercuts this effect through exaggeration. (2) Walpole's usage of women victims to ignite readers' pity is also largely similar to Aristotle's theory. (3) Walpole's purpose for using fear and pity in *Otranto* is possibly to remind readers that justice has not been served, and will never be served until the castle, which symbolises patriarchy, is entirely destroyed. Thus, the catharsis, which Aristotle considers as the chief goal of tragedy, is undercut by the ambivalent ending of *Otranto*.

Key Words: Walpole, *Otranto*, Fear, Pity, Aristotle