

Tribhuvan University

**Gothic Sublime and Its Significance in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, *Frankenstein*,
and *The Castle of Otranto***

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Central Department of English in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Philosophy in
English**

By

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August 2012

Approval Letter

This dissertation entitled "Gothic Sublime and Its Significance in "*The Mysteries of Udolpho, Frankenstein, and The Castle of Otranto*" submitted by Akhanda Khanal to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy in English has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Acknowledgements

I would like to express thanks and sincere gratitude to Dr. Beerendra Pandey, Associate Professor, Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University for his scholarly guidance and feedback, which facilitated me enough to mould this thesis to this shape. He instilled in me a sense of confidence from the beginning. I could not have carried out this research work without the intensive support of my respected guide.

Similarly, I wish to extend profound gratitude to my colleague Mr. Shuvaraj Ranabhat, lecturer of the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University for giving me valuable suggestion to carry out this research. I would also like to record passionate gratitude to Dr. Anirudra Thapa, M. Phil. Coordinator, who guided with painstaking attention to my dissertation—reading word by word, repairing every fractured or awkward sentence, replacing inappropriate word or expression with right diction from his reservoir of vocabulary and deleting and adding things wherever necessary.

I am extremely grateful to Ramesh Limbu for his astute comments and suggestions. I am also grateful to my all family members and friends who always make me to realize my potencies.

Akhanda Khanal

August, 2012

Abstract

This research explores mainly four texts- Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*, Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, Mary Shelly's *Frankenstien* and S.T. Coleridge's *The Rime of Ancient Mariner* in the light of sublime theory developed by Edmund Burke particularly his notion of beautiful and sublime elaborated in his influential book *Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the sublime and beautiful*. Burke, in this book, specifically draws a distinction between sublime objects and beautiful objects-sublime being vast in dimension, whereas beautiful comparatively small and comprehensible. However, in this research, I limit my study to the analysis of his notion of sublime, and use it methodological tool to examine the primary texts. Burke's contention is that sublimity can be achieved through the means of obscurity, infinity, power, vastness, and terror.

Generally pain and terror are described as having negative connotations leading one to frustration, depression, or even death. As opposed to this general concept, this research contends that pain and terror lead onlooker and reader to the state of sublimity. This is the state in which all its motions are suspended with some degree of horror and mind is so entirely filled with its object that it cannot entertain any other. In addition to the sublime, the thesis dwells on the implication of the Gothic in opening the possibility, which subverts the traditional concept of hero/villain.

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