
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Reading Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* from the Perspective of Freudian psychoanalysis

Abdullah Wisam Othman AL-HURMUZI¹ ✉ and Lina Taysir Alzouabi²

¹PhD. Candidate in English Literature, Department of English Language and Literature, University of Karabuk, Turkey. Lecturer, University of Kirkuk, Iraq

²PhD. Candidate in English Literature, Department of English Language and Literature, University of Karabuk, Turkey

Corresponding Author: Abdullah Wisam Othman AL-HURMUZI, **E-mail:** abdullahwisam@uokirkuk.edu.iq

ABSTRACT

Literature has always been linked to psychoanalysis by literary critics and literary theorists in the academic field of literary criticism or theory. The Freudian psychoanalytic approach focuses primarily on exploring and analyzing an individual's inner world. This study examines Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* from the viewpoint of the psychoanalysis theory founded on Freud's interpretations of the behaviours of human beings and discusses the novel from that perspective. These behaviours result from the subconscious part of humans and in which they are connected to internal and external conflicts. Freud believes the unconscious mind is the root of all strange behaviours and mental illnesses and points out that the social context is a significant factor in these afflictions. The study aims to apply psychoanalytic theory to analyze in-depth the self-conflict, repetition of language, and taboos that appear in *The Castle of Otranto* to present examples of internal or external conflicts that are held in the subconscious as being part of human beings' essence, and eventually as the primary source of disturbance of human behaviour.

KEYWORDS

Psychoanalysis theory, personality structure, conflict, behaviours.

ARTICLE INFORMATION

ACCEPTED: 01 March 2024

PUBLISHED: 21 March 2024

DOI: 10.32996/ijllt.2024.7.3.15

1. Introduction

Horace Walpole, an English writer and politician, wrote several books on Gothic architecture, a subject that captivated him, in addition to publishing one novel, *The Castle of Otranto*. Presumably, he wrote the novel because of his fascination with Gothic architecture, and remodelling his home (Strawberry Hill) in Gothic style was his goal. He might not have felt confident enough in his skills to excel at a writing task he had never done before. Walpole was, therefore, trying to shield himself from an embarrassing failure at the time. When the novel was first published in 1764, it was claimed that it was a translation of an old Italian manuscript. Publishing the novel in two editions, Walpole used a pseudonym in the first edition's preface to try to pass it off as a real medieval romance while attempting to define an original style of writing in the second edition's preface (Smith, 2013). He re-released the novel, which was an outstanding achievement, with the subtitle a "Gothic Story". In addition to being the first Gothic Romance, *The Castle of Otranto* garners the most interest because it offers the most accurate representation of Gothic fiction work (Osborn, 2012).

The novel explores the concept of aristocratic inheritance by focusing on Manfred, Prince of Otranto's efforts to establish his family's allegation to the province by arranging for his fifteen-year-old son, Conrad, to marry Isabella. Manfred set up this union because he needed legitimate heirs to whom he could finally transfer the principality. Conrad is his sole child and is said to be in poor health, resulting in some necessity for Conrad and Isabella's union to result in the birth of another male successor. Conrad is

smashed beneath a massive helmet and perishes before the wedding. Manfred tries to literally impose himself on Isabella because he is desperate for a male heir and thinks his wife, Hippolita, will not be able to give birth to another son. Various events happen that end by killing Matilda, his daughter, unintentionally. Following his complete confession, Manfred and Hippolita each join a monastery order.

Gothic literature, as is well known, makes use of a wide range of elements, including horror, adultery, signs, fraud, transgressive subjects, and much more. The context of psychoanalytic theory should be utilized to interpret Gothic literature. The psychodynamic perspective of such works is vital to understanding the intrinsic meaning of Gothic norms, stereotypical characters, imagery, and the familiar undertones of sexual orientation, incest, and corruption among these narratives. *The Castle of Otranto* is not an exception to the rule of psychoanalytical explanation, where in all conflicts, nature plays the central element. According to Cameron (2014), the novel is the only Gothic story to contain all the devices and materials that kept the style alive for the following 60 years. These conflicts mirror the individual's true feelings, emotions, and thoughts, which Sigmund Freud focused on in his "conscious and unconscious" studies (1989). The psychologist Sigmund Freud discovered the critical fact that an essential part of our mental life is the unconscious. This unconscious part of our mental life greatly influences our talks, behaviours, and feelings in our regular lives. In Freud's psychoanalytic theory, the personality structure is broken down into three distinct parts: The primitive and distinct portion of the mind, known as the id, is made up of memories and suppressed urges for sexual and violent behaviour. Second, the ego portion representing a person's realistic self serves as a bridge between the id and super-ego. Third, the ego section is known as the super-ego, which represents one's moral conscience. This study examines *The Castle of Otranto's* narrative complexities and subtlety that is related to internal and external conflicts according to Freud's psychoanalytic theory. This research paper focuses on the psychoanalysis of self-conflict, repetition within the text, and other taboo aspirations.

2. Literature Review

In "Narrative and Psychology in Gothic Fiction", David Punter (1989) provides a considerable understanding of the implications of psychoanalytic studies in Gothic fiction. Punter emphasizes that although many people read Gothic works of fiction for direct interest, there seems to be something to be delivered for enjoyment based on reading them. Sigmund Freud (1989) proposed the primary division of the human psyche between the conscious and unconscious. He augmented his hypothesis with the second topographical (ego, id, and super-ego) and established the theory of two principles: pleasure and reality. Freud concentrated on the idea of the "unconscious mind" as the main cause of human behaviour as a result of his thorough examination of the structural system of the human mind (Rennison, 2001).

A large portion of Freud's theories is based on his understanding of the subconscious and how it communicates through dreams. "The Shark Behind the Sofa: The Psychoanalytic Theory of Dreams" by Susan Budd (1999) is a study that illustrates Freudian ideas of psychoanalysis corresponding to dreams, as well as the importance of artistic depictions of dreams. The restoration of thoughts that appear on both sides of the distinct Pebbles in Salvador Dali's painting 'The Accommodations of Desire' demonstrates Freud's theory of overdetermination in desires or dreams, as noted by Budd. The image depicts the horror of an ant-infested woman's genital region or the gaping maw of a lion. Based on Freud's theory that wild animals in dreams stand for taboo emotions, the lion, for example, symbolizes repressed sexual desire. These illustrative representations of recurrence in dreams and emotions, besides the unconscious stage, can be linked to the written depictions of relatively similar ideas in Gothic literature, specifically in *The Castle of Otranto*. Michelle A.

Massé (1990) points out in her article that in the Gothic, repetition serves the same purpose as it does for other traumas: the recurrence of trauma is an effort to acknowledge, rather than to take delight, the unbelievable and indescribable that nonetheless occurred. Stern (1970) concludes that the individual's traumatic frustration does not lead to any development; however, the experience of the traumatic situation itself leads to the development necessary to the innate side program of human beings to generate anticipation. As a result of trauma, our innate selves have developed mechanisms to protect us from being shattered by traumatic experiences. The target of these defenses serves as a "signal mechanism" in the form of agitated behaviour. It is an instance of a Gothic novel that reveals how violence and sublimity are central to the Gothic traditions in *The Castle of Otranto*.

In "Gothic Sublimity", David Morris (1985) used lots of Freudian-based psychoanalysis to analyze incestuous wishes. According to Morris, incestuous desire is the new, frequently unsaid fear at the core of Gothic sublimity and the effects of restrained desires and risks associated with an uncontrolled discharge from restraint (p.305-306). In his analysis of Gothic literature as a whole and *The Castle of Otranto* in particular, Morris argues the importance of a psychoanalytic application. He places the text in its historical context, emphasizing the sublime besides the fear through the eighteenth century in particular. He contends that while there was always a sense of danger in the sublime of the eighteenth century, it was contained. The Gothic sublimity intensifies the risks associated with an uncontrolled release away from restraint, which releases into fantasy novel images and desires that have been long suppressed, intensely hidden, and kept silent. Because of these risks, suppression and fainting were two of the most prevalent social responses to Gothic literature. Being confronted by "what we prefer to keep hidden or covered by denial" (p.310), Morris

asserts that we should read *The Castle of Otranto* from a psychoanalytic perspective. He emphasizes the significance of the supernatural's impact on the mind. Besides, Massé (1990) claims that the "all-encompassing power of the antagonists" is an "extension of social ideology and real-world experience" in her analysis of archetypal Gothic characters and Gothic conventions based on Freudian psychoanalytic theory (p.688).

Accordingly, critics like Clery, Miles, and Norton have pointed out that Walpole is basically claiming that his imaginative figures must now be interpreted as symbols of actual psychological circumstances and political situations (Smith, 2013). Freud believes that individuals would experience a conflict between their ego and their super-ego when socially isolated. This conflict would take place in the individual's mind as he emphasized that the need for punishment emerges from the disagreement between the strict super-ego and the ego that is subject to it. In other words, like a garrison in a conquered city, civilization can subdue the dangerous desire for aggression in the individual. Guilt is a symptom of social anxiety and a fear of being alone. Freud also posited that all human behaviour results from inner and outer struggles related to the Id, ego, and super-ego. These conflicts or struggles are buried deep within the human subconscious and consciousness, and in which they affect an individual's psyche and behaviour.

3. Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research methodology to examine Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*, applying literary analysis influenced by Freudian psychoanalytic theory. Using close reading techniques, the text is carefully examined to identify distinct elements related to internal and external conflicts, self-conflict, and repetition. Through an examination of the text's character dynamics, symbols, and narrative complexities, this study seeks to reveal psychological themes and motifs that are in line with Freudian psychoanalytic principles. The study aims to shed light on how elements like internal and external conflict and patterns of repetition enhance Walpole's groundbreaking work's deep thematic examination through the use of this qualitative lens. By using the framework of Freudian theory, this analytical approach sheds light on the text's deeper meanings and implications and allows for an in-depth understanding of its psychological underpinnings.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Self-Conflict

Three distinct components of the mind, the id, ego, and Superego, are all developed at different times in our lives based on Freud's psychoanalytic theory (1989). The ego of Manfred's character, which acts as a bridge between the id and the Superego, is involved in resolving conflicts with oneself. The desire for an heir is the primary source of internal conflict. In fact, having an heir is a survival instinct. Because Manfred desires an heir to the throne, his mental state is incoherent. This mental disorder draws attention to the Self-conflict of continuity that was manifested in his intention to marry Isabella and divorce his wife. "Abreaction" is the term used to describe the emotional release brought on by remembering past trauma in the analytic term "lancing the boil". Manfred was traumatized by the memories of his son's death, which were painful. As a result of the loss of his son Conrad, Manfred struggled to come up with a strategy that would guarantee the security of the kingdom. His internal conflict between his Id, ego, and super-ego prevented him from deciding what was wrong; social expectations and the demands of survival clashed with his desire to ascend to the throne. Manfred's Id, or the urge to survive, can be seen in two ways. First, in the repetition of Manfred's insistence that he must succeed the throne despite having no rightful claim to it and second, Manfred decided to get married to Isabella in an incestuous union because of his intense desire to live. Manfred's self-conflict, which can be seen in the struggle between his Id and super-ego (morality), made it impossible for him to control his emotions. As a result, he chooses to follow his son's bride, Isabella and makes an effort to wed her, disregarding morality or Superego.

Additionally, one of the key components of Manfred's characters' internal conflicts is the Freudian expression "die Wiederkehr des verdrangten", which translates to "the return of what has been displaced [usurped] and repressed" (Tatar, 1981, p.172). The restoration of long-suppressed truths and an unjustly usurped throne in *The Castle of Otranto* are revealed by Theodore's return. The fear of history repeating itself and the ghost of Alfonso haunts Manfred. "The Survival of the Fittest", by Darwin (1964), appears to be the theme of this conflict, and the primary source of Manfred's inner turmoil is the tension between his roles as a husband, father, and king. It is revealed by the death of King Conrad and the crime of his baby girl, Matilda. Manfred is split between his devotion to the throne and his love for his family. It appears that Manfred's internal struggle between his id and super-ego appears to have left him indecisive, as he was unsure whether to kill Theodore or leave him because he knew he would lose in both scenarios. The internal conflict that Manfred experiences and expresses in his desire to maintain the throne destroys him, his family, and the throne itself. Manfred is torn inside because he is aware that he is "the usurper" of the throne. He thinks back to the prophecy about the return of the crown to the legitimate owner. At the end of the novel, it is clear that the Superego and ego clash, leading to Manfred's isolation as a form of self-punishment oriented by his Super-ego. In other words, the conflict between Manfred's Superego and ego causes social anxiety. The dominant of Manfred's Superego punishes him for reducing anxiety, which can be a poor functioning of the internal structure of the human psyche in Freudian psychoanalysis.

Moreover, Social and cultural factors can be examined in Freudian psychoanalysis to understand psychiatric symptoms or an individual's repressed thoughts. According to Parker, internal mental states and social relations are cultural representations (2014).

Manfred and Father Jerome, Theodore's father, have a falling out, representing the tension and conflict between Manfred and the Catholic Church, in which Manfred's Id and super-ego clash once more. The conflict lies between Manfred's id, his desire to survive, and his super-ego, or the Catholic church's rules that prevent him from marrying Isabella, the pride of his dead son. Some analysts argued that Manfred's desire for an heir is an instinct borne out of a need to survive under social and cultural pressures he had no control over. Manfred's tension with Jerome is revealed by his ongoing defense of Isabella and his efforts to save his son Theodore's life. Another conflict can also be noticed in the Castle labyrinths. According to Spector (1971), The Castle labyrinths are one of the Gothic elements that can be used for different purposes and can also exemplify internal and external conflicts between the id, ego, and super-ego.

4. 2. The Importance of Repetition

Repetition compulsion is a critical concept in psychoanalytic theory that helps us better understand human nature or the Id. Repetition compulsion is a psychological concept that has been studied for millennia. According to Freud, it is a psychological condition in which a person repeats a traumatic experience or circumstance in real life or their dreams (1958). Throughout Walpole's *Otranto*, ideas and images are repeated in various ways because of the possession of unconscious thoughts, feelings, desires, and memories. It is common for Walpole characters to use repetition, especially when expressing themselves overly emotionally as a reaction to a traumatic event. For instance, "A volley of voices replied, Oh, my lord!" when Conrad is dead at the beginning of the novel, "the prince! the prince! the helmet! the helmet!" (Walpole, 1966, p.19). Regardless of whether or not one believes what happened, the sudden death of Conrad caused a conflict between the conscious and unconscious mind, resulting in a traumatic experience for everyone. As a result of his death, there was a deep-seated fear of the giant returning again. In the psychoanalytic theory (1985), Freud contends that the conflicts between a person's conscious and unconscious minds are frequently the source of emotional and psychological problems such as depression and anxiety. Walpole uses repetition again in the concluding section, once Bianca "burst into the room, with a wildness in her look, and gestures that spoke the utmost terror. Oh! My lord, my lord! Cried she; we are all undone! It is come again! It is come again!.... Oh! The hand! the giant! the hand!" (p.102).

The use of phrases and interjections repeatedly in the dialogue of these characters is not only an expression of excessive fear and emotion but also an uncanny method of repetition, which Walpole employs this technique throughout the novel. According to Deleuze (1994), psychoanalysis is a therapeutic process and an investigation into the interrelationships between the id, ego, and superego, which have to deal with either the activity or passivity issues regarding repetition to be meaningful. Aside from the characters' dialogue, numerous events that occur in *The Castle of Otranto's* plot are tweaked or repeated several times in Walpole's novel. Even after Isabella indicates that she has no attention to getting married to Manfred and attempting to flee the castle grounds, Manfred continues to pursue her. Stern claims that the immature ego cannot deal with trauma without halting its development. Evidently, Manfred's id, translated as a want to survive, gave birth to an immature ego, which can be interpreted as a desire to marry the bride of his dead son. Due to two reasons, this desire has grown stronger and won't go away. The first is the severity of the shock when Conrad suddenly died. Second, Manfred refuses to embrace the reality or the trauma of his son's passing. When things did not go as he had anticipated, Manfred's dreams of securing the throne and keeping it forever were dashed. Everyone was shocked when his son Conrad unexpectedly passed away on the day of his wedding, including his father, who was attempting to stop his kingdom from returning to its original owner at the time of his son's untimely death. After the traumatic experience of Conrad's death, Manfred was driven to maintain his throne despite the fact that doing so would require him to break all of the morality and laws that forbid him from acting in such a way. According to DeLamotte (1990), elements of repetition in Gothic fiction are not only that of a daring traveler moving from one peril to the next but also that of life at its most extreme. Such excess and irrationality exist as though certain events have escaped the confines of normal time.

Theodore also repeatedly used methods to avoid being imprisoned despite Manfred's efforts to keep him in custody. Repeating an action rather than remembering it led Freud to investigate the connections between the three components of transference, repetition, and resistance. The concept of transference in psychoanalytic theory means redirecting feelings about a person onto someone else, and those feelings might range from anger, fear, or distrust. According to Christine Berthin (2010), those affected by this temporal disorientation of the Gothic are not connected with themselves and are haunted. "They are not contemporary with themselves and perform actions that only make sense beyond the frame of the present where they find themselves ungrounded" (Berthin, 2010, p.67). In *The Castle of Otranto*, the presence of Theodore is inconsistent with Manfred's repeated desires to survive and preserve the throne. Manfred openly transfers his feelings of fear and distrust towards Theodore by following him and imprisoning him because he knows he is the true heir to the throne. Even when he suspected Theodore of having an affair with Isabella, Manfred's feelings of intense hatred grew, and he transferred those feelings by plotting to kill Theodore. In this scene, Manfred recognizes Theodore as a vengeful villain bent on removing him from power. A part of him is terrified that the prophecy will come to pass and he will be left with nothing he has worked for all his life.

Walpole uses a third form of repetition in *The Castle of Otranto*: historical repetition. According to Freud's psychoanalytic theory (1985), repetition is nothing more than the "transfer of the forgotten past" (p.151). The historical repetition in the novel is apparent when Walpole applies the transference of the forgetting past through the prophecy that commands the castle to be brought back

to its legitimate owners. Hence, the recurrence of history is evidence of Manfred's inner conflict. The prophecy has caused a rift between Manfred's id, basic survival instinct, and his ego, or his desire to leave an heir to the throne. Manfred's life was filled with anxiety and tension because he was terrified that his predictions would come true and he would lose everything. Therefore, the prophecy was one of the reasons why he announced two important things: his desire to marry Isabella to guarantee an heir to his throne, and the second is to murder Theodore to prevent the predictions from coming true. For all its abstractness, this notion of "historical repetition" is nonetheless instructive. Thus, a forcible insertion of historical details into the character's real-world curves the Gothic plot loop. Its appearance serves a number of literary purposes, the most important of which is the invocation of a very animated, even dramatic way of reviving melancholy (Juránovszky, 2014). The castle was taken from its legitimate row of heirs, but it is restored to its true heir at the novel's end. In addition, literary and visual references to the dreaming process are mostly infused with every context of the supernatural. These works provide a complete sense of either escapism or exploration of the taboos.

4.3 Taboos and Incestuous

The darker side of human existence is explored in the novel in which the Id is the darkest side of humanity. By usurping the throne and forcing Isabella to marry him, Manfred cracks the chain of being, contrary to both the laws of religion and the nature of being, although the plot of *The Castle of Otranto* does not contain any explicit instances of incest. When Conrad is about to wed Isabella and thus fulfill the secret contract by establishing a new generation of issue males, a giant helmet from an Alfonso statue falls from the sky and crushes him. This helmet here stands as a representation of the incestuous desire as it is a clue that the prophecy is being accomplished: it indicates the arrival of the valid owner and ends Ricardo's lineage by killing Conrad. This occurrence alarmed Manfred; in light of various circumstances, he treads cautiously once he announces his intention to marry Isabella nearly instantly after Conrad's passing, including a figure emerging from a portrait and a skeleton being covered. Manfred describes Isabella as "as dear as my blood" (Walpole, 1966, p. 69); however, Manfred remains steadfast in his desire, even though the friar said Manfred's plans to wed Isabella would be viewed as incestuous, as he asserts to Manfred, "by me, you are reprimanded for your adulterous intention of repudiating her [Hippolita]: by me, you are warned not to pursue the incestuous design on thy contracted daughter" (p. 50). Manfred's desire to have an heir was clearly visible, and survival dominated his mental activity, as it had a clear impact on his behavior and decision-making. One could argue that this incestuous plan is one of the main sources of worry in the text because, if carried out, it would be even more fundamentally wrong than Manfred's illegitimate throne-occupying (Chaplin, 2006). Manfred's Id or instinct to have an heir and survive prevailed. Consequently, his experiences helped his Innate create mechanisms that assessed him and predicted his future actions and reactions. To some extent, Manfred's marriage to Isabella can be considered a self-defense mechanism to repel the threat to his throne.

However, before Conrad's untimely death, Isabella was already on the path to becoming Manfred's daughter-in-law. Observed by Walpole, Isabella was "treated by Hippolita like a daughter" and "returned that tenderness with equal duty and affection" (p. 19-20), implying that Hippolita had cared for Isabella "like a daughter" Manfred would have treated her the same way. According to Freud (1989), the personality in the psychoanalytic theory is the id, which is the psychological study of unconscious psychic energy that serves to satisfy basic urges, needs, and desires. Because Manfred wants to satisfy his id and ego, he resolves to wed Isabella and divorce his first spouse, Hippolyta. Manfred is under the impression that he will be able to accomplish all his ambitions, including his incestuous desires, if he marries Isabella. She is a beautiful young woman who can satisfy all his instinctual desires, and it does not matter to him whether or not this marriage is forbidden by religion and social norms. In addition, Isabella has a chance of giving birth to the Prince of the Kingdom. The previous analysis offers sufficient proof that Manfred wants to wed a family member in order to fulfill his incestuous desire and ensure his survival. Or, to put it another way, If all he wanted to do was survive, why did he not marry another girl?

Manfred's possible incestuous desires for Matilda and Isabella should also be considered, as they are frequently connected. When Theodore's real bride, Matilda, is murdered, he marries Isabella as a substitute. Both Isabella and Matilda are not attracted to Theodore; however, they act as replacement brides. Matilda's replacement by Isabella appears to be a deliberate decision rather than an accident. Thus, according to psychoanalytic interpretations, Manfred is trying to "replace" his feelings for Matilda by marrying Isabella, just as Theodore is doing with Matilda by marrying Isabella. The desire to have a son or daughter who would succeed him as king appears to be the primary driver behind Manfred's actions at first. Following Conrad's passing, Matilda visits her father's room, and "Manfred, stepping back hastily, cried, Begone, I do not want a daughter; and, flinging back abruptly; and, clapping the door against the terrified Matilda" (Walpole, 2009, p.19). Manfred's statement highlights Freud's arguments about the terms of the projected, repressed desires and the traumatic fears imposed by social taboos. In other words, examples of Manfred's frequent mistreatment and obvious contempt for his daughter can be seen in those responses. He kills his daughter in a fit of rage after symbolically disowning her and mistaking her for Isabella after overhearing her speaking to Theodore (Chaplin, 2006). Manfred's ferocious refusal of his daughter could be interpreted, whether consciously or unconsciously, as an effort to repress his forbidden, taboo sexual desires for Matilda.

5. Conclusion

The popular fiction subgenre is known as Gothic literature. It is an investigation into the true or other self, but it is ultimately realized in horror, sexual, and perverse freedom of belief genres, which are seen as damaging to the strict mores of cultured society. In order to satisfy the reader's interest, Ríos-Cordero (2003) claims that Gothic novels conjured up images of horror from the suspenseful setting, harsh villains, as well as sporadic paranormal events. Gothic literature is believed to have started with the publication of Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*, a book about an English aristocrat, which is the best work of Gothic fiction ever written. Gothic novels preserve freedom of thought and explore the truth of individuals, revealing the Id of thoughts and their hidden desires in a Gothic frame. The conflicts in novels explore the naturally occurring conflicts; all conflicts have their origin in nature. Conflicts arise in nature, both within and between individuals, as these conflicts can be both internal and external.

The novel is a straightforward narrative with a few flashbacks that pose no linguistic challenges to the reader. When Sigmund Freud's concepts, ideas, and theories saw the light of day, he provided practical explanations and predictions of behaviours, which allowed the creation of more realistic and tangible fictional characters, in which he questioned religious ideas and the notion of behavior, which was ground-breaking for his peers. Sigmund Freud proposed the primary division of the human psyche, between the conscious and unconscious, augmented his hypothesis with the second topographical (ego, id, and super-ego), and developed the theory of the reality principle and the pleasure principle. Freud concentrated on the idea of the "unconscious mind" as the main cause of disturbance of human behaviour as a result of his systematic study of the structure of the human mind. Finally, it is believed that the Gothic as a literary form will continue to be an applicable form of societal warning, continually and obsessively trying to point towards literary modifications of traumatic experiences unless they are resolved, as long as widespread societal traumas, like those involving societal or cultural identity, continue to exist.

Limitation: This study examines Freud's psychoanalytic theory, emphasizing internal psychological processes, unconscious urges, and their relevance to self-conflict, language repetition, and taboos in *The Castle of Otranto*. It has a limited scope that overlooks the socio-cultural, historical, and literary influences influencing these themes in the novel. Relying exclusively on Freudian theory could limit a thorough comprehension of the characters and their struggles in the work.

Suggestion: Future research could explore how other psychoanalytic frameworks, such as Jungian or Lacanian psychology, might offer alternative interpretations of the novel. Further research could investigate the historical and cultural context of *The Castle of Otranto*, examining how Enlightenment-era perspectives on psychology and human nature intersect with Freudian theories.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

ORCID ID: ¹<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7450-7478>

²<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8626-6069>

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