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**Shelly’s Frankenstein through Marxist Lens**

Considering the excerpt and basic ideologies presented in The Manifesto, Victor Frankenstein may be considered a parallel to the bourgeoisie class and although he isn’t always the controlling power in the plot, Victor, for the most part reflects the same actions, background and attitude towards his monster as did the bourgeoisie towards the working class (proletariats). To begin with, he proudly narrates his lineage in the book and states that his “family is one of the most distinguished of Geneva” and that his forefathers had been reputable syndics and the ruling class, which represents his family pride and that he has a wealthy family background. So naturally, with such a jeweled background shadowing his head, Frankenstein is a proud character who not only does whatever he believes would benefit himself, but also doesn’t give much thought to elements like morality and humanity as long it benefits his cause, similar to the bourgeoisies running after the riches. Based on this proud psychological foundation, Victor treats his monster with utmost revulsion, and completely disregarding the fact that he is responsible for the creation and acts of monster, goes on to try controlling him for his own benefit, much as the bourgeoisie did to the proletariat.

But just as Marx’s Manifesto states, “Modern bourgeoisie society is like the sorcerer, who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world whom he has called up by his spells” (Marx), this idea may well be implied to Frankenstein’s plot as he, since the monster was created as a mighty beast, loses control of his own creation, much like Marx had argued that an oppressive society would surrender to the demands of a revolting inferior class like the proletariats. Furthermore, just like bourgeoisies would according to Marx’s predictions, Victor fails to regards the needlessness of the monster and keeps on pursuing it regardless of its possible repercussion, putting all his energy into creating his monster, not knowing he would be making something he didn’t know and wouldn’t be able to control. But having created it, his statement that “my limbs now tremble, and my eyes swim with the remembrance, but then a resistless, and almost frantic, impulse, urged me forward; I seemed to have lost all soul or sensation but for this one pursuit” (Shelly) complies with Marxist criticism of the rich ruling class in a capitalist regime striving to grow richer and not realizing its effects on the ones around them. This act, as expected ends up back-firing for Victor, where although his motive was not gaining riches like the bourgeoisie, he still ends up disregarding everything other than his creation and ends up making a mighty uncontrollable monster. Such commitment to his pursuits regardless of their need, endeavors to control the lower class (Monster) and regardless of morals and laws brings Frankenstein in the same character frame as the bourgeoisies and hence, presents him as a Shelly’s symbolic bourgeoisie character.

On the other hand, the Monster is evidently in a less privileged position where he has been denied the basic rights of existence by his creator and been disregarded, similar to the treatment the proletariats received. Similarly, as Marx’s states that bourgeoisie “created” the proletariats, the monster has been created by Frankenstein and owing to Frankenstein’s bourgeoisie-like tendencies, received a proletariat treatment. Another reason I believe the monster to by symbolic of the proletariats is the composition of the monster. As Marx states, “the monster is made up for many different parts from various sources” and this is symbolic of the mixed-population comprising the proletariats and even though the monster’s diverse combination makes it more powerful than his creator, he is initially forced to rely on him to fulfill his basic wish of a companion. So, not only is the monster far more physically imposing than his creator, a symbolic link to the population disparity in the proletariats, but his literal flexibility and agility, such as when he climbs the mountains rapidly, which he developed over time owing to the roughness of his conditions and his needs may be interpreted as a reference to the harshness the labor class has faced and the strength they have developed out of it.

Yet, as Marx states in the topic excerpt that the bourgeoisie will lose their leverage over the proletariats in their pursuit of riches (pursuit for the creation of monster for Victor), Frankenstein, after a point is unable to control the monster. So, the monster’s demands to make his creator comply by threatening his loved ones is parallel to those of the lower working class population against the ruling powers. As the monsters gains knowledge and power, he is able to reverse the roles of master and slave by commanding Victor to make him a partner by saying “We may not part until you have promised to comply with my requisition. I am alone, and miserable; man will not associate with me; but one as deformed and horrible as myself would not deny herself to me. My companion must be of the same species, and have the same defects. This being you must create” (Shelly). So, it appears that just like the working class under the bourgeoisie regime is bound to realize that it was the masters that needed the working class and could be leveraged out of it, the monster realizes Frankenstein’s love for his family and utilizes it to gain his interests.

In this way the monster can symbolize the working class wanting to level the playing field with their employer. Looking at it from a point over century later on, it appears that the true essence of the difference between the bourgeoisies and the proletariats is one’s ability to exploit and the other patience to work out of nothing, realize their value and stand up against the powers. So, whether it be the treatment he received from his creator, the atrocities he has to go through the life that make him a resilient power against his master or be it his understanding of the power dynamics and utilizing it to manipulate Victor Frankenstein into obeying him, Mary Shelly empowers the character of the monster with a voice against the master and presents him rising up against the regime and so the monster closely complies with the proletariatian image portrayed in Marx’s *The Communist Manifesto*. Whereas on the other hand, Victor Frankenstein is an apt representation of the proud, hasty and greedy bourgeoisies who once decide they want something, keep on pursuing it without regards to the its need or repercussions.

Marx’s Communist Manifesto explains that in a social order, two major classes exist: the bourgeoisie and the proletariats. And having analyzed both characters earlier, it appears that Frankenstein is a parallel of the bourgeoisies while his monster depicts attitude and tendencies of the working class (proletariats). So naturally, as the Marx’s text states, there is a constant struggle between the two where Victor enjoys consolidation of the power while exploiting the proletariat (Monster). But later on in the story, just like Marx’s theory states as the product of labor, the monster does the inevitable and gains leverage over his master and takes a stand against Victor Frankenstein, presenting him as a solid parallel to the proletariats. But looking at the gothic masterpiece by Shelly, in my opinion, ruins the much more significant themes portrayed in the text, including but not limited to repercussions of dangerous knowledge, ambition, and a story of revenge. By filtering the *Frankenstein* through Marx’s lens, we risk enclosing a truly emotional and fantasized story of human error at play into a lesson of political and social structures of the society which, although is a good interpretation, is supposedly not the original intent and message of Mary Shelly in her text.