

**PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
UNIVERSITY OF TLEMCEEN**



**FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

**THE STATUS OF THE BRITISH WOMEN IN THE
LATE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY IN MARY
SHELLEY'S *FRANKENSTEIN***

Dissertation submitted to the department of english as partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of master's in literature and civilization.

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Academic Year: 2021-2022

DEDICATIONS

My deepest gratitude goes to the sun of my life –my mother- who has been always helping and encouraging me through my educational career.

This work is dedicated to my dear father (God keeps his soul in peace)

To my lovely family my sister and my brothers who were always supporting me and overwhelming me by their unconditional love

My sincere thanks go to my friends Amina and Fatima and Chaima for their help to complete this research paper

HIZIYA

DEDICATIONS

I dedicate this thesis to my family for their affection and love, as well as their unwavering support for my success in life.

To my sisters and brothers who have encouraged me to work hard for goals I want to reach.

This work is dedicated to my husband, Karim, who has been a support to me in everything in my whole life, I am very grateful to have you.

To my best friends and only friends I've got hizi ya and sabrine thank you for being here with me love you.

CHAIMA

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to convey our heartfelt thanks to our supervisor, Dr Omar RAHMOUN, for his encouragement constructive feedback, and the time he spent in guiding us throughout completion of our dissertation

We would like to thank the examiners, Dr Souad Berber, and Miss Meriyem MENGOUCHI, for their willingness to review our work

Special appreciation to all our teachers for their efforts in passing on their expertise. Their efforts are not in vai

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to cast a wide net on how was living like in the late eighteenth century and how women were seen in society .To explain this we focused on mary Shelley and portrayal of women in her novel *Frankenstein*. To approach the aim of this work, the researcher has invested an analytical method to depict the position of women in the eyes of Mary Shelley as a British female writer. Thus, this paper has shown how women have found in literature, particularly in the novel, a solace to conjugate their existence on earth. The research will begin with an overview about British society that era .Then, it will provide a sample background data about feminism and women writers shedding light on marry Shelley and her gothic novel *Fankenstein* .Therefore, it will examine the position of women in the late eighteenth's society by analysing *Frankenstein* and explaining how Marry want to transfer this to readers

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

General Introduction

In the early nineteenth Century, women lived in hard situation characterized by inequality of rights in education and freedom, and they were expected to remain under the power of their fathers and husbands. However, Britain witnessed many changes in this Period that influenced English society in philosophy, economics, and politics. It was also a period of flourish in English Literature. *Frankenstein*, however, was the finest work of Marry Shelley. It was first published in 1818, and it was telling the story of Victor Frankenstein, a young scientist who creates a sapient creature in an unorthodox scientific experiment. It was also from another side such a challenge for Mary Shelley since women at that time were expected to write just about romantic themes. In addition to that, Shelley tried to shed light to women who were ignored and rejected by men who were putting their wives into the dark.

This level to have a background about an important era in British literature and it goes deeply to the social features ,as well as, the prominent authors of that period .Besides it focuses on women's status over analyzing a novel that tackles various social problems from female's point of view .Thus , in the current research there is a highlights on the status of women both in British society and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* to which the questions could be raised following

1. How was the social life like in the British society in the late eighteenth century? How were feminism and women writers? And what was the role of women in that period?
2. What was the status of woman in Frankenstein? And how it was seen by men according to Marry Shelley?

The present research contains two main chapters. The First chapter will give a theoretical framework of the current research putting light on the late eighteenth century literature and feminism then it will discuss the women writers at that period shedding light to Marry SHELLEY .Then the second

General Introduction

chapter will study the status of women in Marry Shelley's Frankenstein that tells a monster creature by a scientist and how he lost his wife because of his mad of work and ignoring her. At the same sense it will give the relevance of the feminine gender and how women were seen that age. conclusion

CHAPTER ONE:

**REFLECTION ON THE LATE EIGHTEENTH
CENTURY, FEMINISM AND MARY SHELLEY**

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1.1 Introduction

The Eighteenth Century (1701-1800) was a time when science, commerce, and trade advanced significantly. It was also a century of political upheaval, according to Locke, with the Enlightenment's new political views culminating in the American and French Revolutions. The democratic movement that swept England following the Glorious Revolution of 1689 could be considered one of the factors that influenced the development of the novel in the 18th century. This is due to the democratic system's emphasis on average people's stories, which were the subjects of many of the novels created at the time. In Europe, a woman's position arose. Feminism, a social and political movement aimed at achieving gender equality, began in the twentieth century. The Enlightenment in Europe during the late 1700s had a big effect on early feminism. The movement centered on reason and equality for everyone, and it influenced the American and French Revolutions in the eighteenth century with enlightened ideals about the formation of the society

This chapter will give some background information about how was the life like in the late eighteenth century in Britain .After, it will provide a feminism definition and how it was by that period, and the research paper will discuss the women writers putting light on Mary SHELLEY *Frankenstein* writer

1.2 British Society In The Late Eighteenth And Nineteenth Century

The industrial revolution which began in the mid-nineteenth century came and brought a huge development in all domains in Britain. It made with its equipments the wealthy wealthier and the poor became poorer. There were two very different lifestyles in 18th-century England: that of the rich and that of the

poor. With the Industrial Revolution, which started in the middle of the century, came new machinery that saved time and made some people very wealthy. The rich were getting Richer and the poor, poorer »In which we can imagine how was social life like in Britain for both lifestyles..

1.2.1 Economy

The 18th century was affluent as business visionaries expanded the extent of the trade around the globe.“ The economy of England was mainly agricultural until the 18th century, but the Industrial Revolution caused it to evolve gradually into a highly urbanized and industrial region during the 18th and 19th centuries.”(P Flynn & Giraldez, 113).In this sense, it has been explained that the economy in the 1700s was based in farming, local production, fur trading, and Atlantic jobs. In the 1800s Americans changed how they moved, who worked, and how they worked. In the mid-1800s the industrial revolution shifted jobs from the farm to the factory.

1.2.2 Social Life

In the late 18th century, the industrial revolution began to transform life in Britain .Until then most people lived in the countryside and made their living from farming. By the early 19th century most people in Britain lived in towns and made their living from mining or manufacturing industries. “The industrial revolution was another of those extraordinary jumps forward in the story of civilization” (Gardiner, 35)

Below them, were the great mass of the population craftsmen, and labourers. In the 18th century, probably half of the population lived at subsistence or bare survival level. During this period, England suffered from gin drinking .It was cheap and sold everywhere as you did not need a license to sell it. “Many people ruined their health by drinking gin” (Life in the

eighteenth century,para3). Sadly for many poor people it was their only comfort. The situation improved after 1751 when a tax was imposed on gin. At the end of 1700s, a group of Evangelical Christians formed what is called the *Clapham sect*. they campaigned for an end to slavery and cruel sports they were called the Clapham sect because so many of them lived in Clapham.

1.2.3 The Role Of Men And Women

During the 17th and 18th centuries, women were responsible for a variety of duties in the home. The women were in charge of running the household and overseeing the servants. They also had responsibility for raising and teaching their children. “The ideal wife would be the angel in the house, supporting her husband. She would keep his home clean and orderly, make him meals when he was tired from work, and listen to him talk about his ideas for improving their business or town” (the role of women in the nineteenth century,para1). This necessitated women being well-versed in herbal and plant medicine, as well as needlework, reading, and writing.

Women had minimal rights and were oppressed by the patriarchy in general. Due to the lack of contemporary cleaning methods, housework was particularly exhausting. Gardening, cooking for the household, caring for the children, and seeing to their husbands' needs were all required of women. Because few children survived childhood, the woman of the household would frequently have a large family. Most moms had up to eight children in the hopes that at least one of them would survive and be able to support the family. During this time, high infant mortality rates were a prominent issue.

1.3. Feminism

Feminist theory is based on the assumption that women have been treated as second-class citizens by masculine-dominated social discourse and western intellectual tradition from the dawn of civilization. Women have always been subjugated throughout every civilization's history, and they have no chance of reclaiming their distinctive identity until and until they revisit history, investigate it, and eventually re-establish it via their own experiences and discoveries. Women must identify themselves against male-informed ideas and beliefs that are passed down from generation to generation in order to develop their own unique identity. These ideas have resulted in a dominating system by conditioning female individuals to adopt the system's ideals.

1.3.1. FEMINISM DEFINED

Feminism is the struggle to end women's oppression in the nineteenth century, as a movement to resist this discrimination because women had no right at that time searching for equality to men in all fields of life (Freedman, 120). It considered women as the main interest of their achievements Jane Freedman said that feminism combined the French word for women, femme and ism which referred to a social movement or political ideology. "feminism is a belief that women and men are inherently of equal worth, (freedman,133). In another opinion "Feminism is a movement to end sexism , sexist exploitation , and oppression "(Bell ,120). "Feminism is not a static notion ; rather it evolves with us throughout our lives and is shaped by the various lenses we use to view the world at large and , most importantly , ourselves"(121). The power of femininity during the eighteenth century in Britain will be examined by an example of the most popular Mary Shelley's novels *Frankenstein*. During this century, feminist writing came in many forms... This idea as women need feminism became there are women who

suffer injustice . Feminism has made a great stride of development through time, especially from the eighteenth century to the early nineteenth century.

1.3.2 Feminism In The Late Eighteenth Century And The Early Nineteenth

The eighteenth century British literature described the middle class life and debated what would later be called bourgeois morality. Its role was somewhat connected to the greater education of the ordinary woman. Early feminism was heavily influenced by the Enlightenment in Europe during the late 1700s. In this period, females were able to express their cultural power by means of theatre and novel. Issues of gender were widely debated in the eighteenth century English society. “The period witnessed a spurge of argument about women's roles. Much of the literature of the nineteenth century glorified the work performed by women in their homes, and females wrote many of these texts” (Hume and Offen, 273).

Women entered into marriage for partnerships ; however , for some unfortunate wives , Estelle Freedman and Erna Olafson Hellerstein contend that " the relative powerlessness of women in marriage left them vulnerable to physical and sexual abuse , as contemporary accounts of domestic violence , incest , and adultery illustrate " (123).

1.4 Women Writers

In pure literature, the women writers of the 18th century achieved, indeed, many triumphs, but their great, their peculiar, triumphs were in the domain of thought .Many women writers emerged and fought against the injustice and the bad situation of women during the eighteenth century through their novels. They challenged the structure of the male who dominated society they lived and most of them called for their rights and being equal with men. In this approach, Sofia illustrated in her article *women not inferior to men* “It is a

known truth, that the difference of sexes regards only the body, and that merely as it relates to the propagation of human nature. But the soul concurring to it only by consent, actuates all after the same manner, so that in *that* there is *no sex* at all” (Chap 3, para4)

It was also impossible to give the right and exact number of these women writers. For instance, Elaine Showalter claimed that eighteenth and the nineteenth century was the time of the female writers like Jane Austen, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley. In fact, these female writers used their novels to express their voices demanding equality between men and women and avoiding oppression and suffering.

Modern critical analysis of nineteenth-century women's literature seeks, in part, to understand the underlying reasons that women authors, especially in America, Britain, and France, were able to gain such widespread exposure and prominence in an age known for its patriarchal and often dismissive attitude toward the intellectual abilities of women. In addition, scholars have examined the broad thematic concerns that characterize much of the literary output of nineteenth-century women writers, many arguing that it was in the nineteenth century that gender-consciousness and feminist attitudes first came to the forefront of the literary imagination, changing forever how the works of female authors would be written and regarded.

As a result, it is preferable to say, In the nineteenth century, there were more published women authors than in any previous century. During the century, women's access to higher education grew at an exponential rate, giving them with abilities that they could utilize to further their art. Women in Europe and the United States were required to adapt to new cultural constraints as market economies, cities, and life expectancies grew, and many women became more aware of their enforced social, legal, and political inequality. Finally, many nineteenth-century women headed social reform organizations such as religious

revivalism, abolitionism, temperance, and suffrage provided a backdrop, an audience, and a place for women authors to express themselves

1.4.1 Marry Shelley

Mary Shelley was a literary star from the moment of her birth on August 30, 1797. She was the daughter of Mary Wollstonecraft and William Godwin, both forceful political writers famous for their ideals, revered by many progressive thinkers and reviled by those in the English establishment. By the time she was born, her mother had written a *Vindication Of The Rights Of Women*. Her father's *Political Justice* drew many literary men to her family home, including Samuel Coleridge and, years later, Percy Shelley.

One of the most successful novels of her was *Frankenstein*. However, when *Frankenstein* was first published in 1818, many readers were shocked.” What could be more appalling than the tale of a mad scientist creating life? What kind of person would write such a terrible story? Critics believed the novel was hostile to religion, as it depicted a human being attempting to appropriate the role of God” (Mary Shelley: Abandoned by Her Creator and Rejected by Society, para 4)

. Women in the middle class were expected to be excellent wives, daughters, and mothers only, they were not expected or allowed to write such kind of novels. All of society's laws forbade a lady from venturing outside of her rightful area. Critics speculated that Mary Shelley must be as hideous and depraved as the fiction she wrote. They were astonished, however, to discover Mary to be ladylike and quiet when they met her. Mary's contemporaries struggled to reconcile her work's audacity with their own.

1.4 CONCLUSION

To sum up, this chapter has shown the characteristics of the British society in the late eighteenth century and both of economy and social life. It has also examined the role of men and women at that period. Then it dealt with feminism as a movement and how it was in the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth century. Last, it has provided a short overview about women writers, and the well-known ones at that time. Finally, it shed the light on Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley and her gothic novel *Frankenstein*. It is found out that Britain at that period knew a huge raise and development thanks to the industrial revolution. Also, feminism was a movement that witnessed many changes over time; it considered women as the main interest of their achievements. For instance, Marry Shelley discussed this position in her notorious novel *Frankenstein*.

**CHAPTER TWO:
ANALYSIS OF FRANKENSTEIN BY MARY
SHELLEY.**

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2.5 CONCLUSION.....

2.1 Introduction

Novelist Mary Shelley created *Frankenstein*, which quickly became one of the most well-known Gothic stories of the nineteenth century. She delivers a variety of themes via her writing, some of which are pertinent to modern culture. One would expect that the reader would have to look at the work through a fresh historicist lens, that is, cognitively grasp it via its cultural context, as well as a contemporary one. We can try to understand this work through the lens of life in the early nineteenth century, but possibly she had a foresight into the future in terms of the advancement of science, technology, and human situations.

When Mary Shelley penned *Frankenstein*, she probably had no clue that her work would be memorialized with bolts around her neck in films, computer games, toys, and clothes like Boris Karloff's. *Frankenstein* is a literary work authored by Mary Shelley and released in 1818 that is still regarded essential today. It is most probably due to the novel's wide range of topics. Shelley in *Frankenstein* critiques society by demonstrating what occurs when female characters such as Elizabeth, the bride of Victor, Justine the innocent woman who gets accused by murder and Caroline the mother who continue following patriarchal norms all these women were a self-sacrificial worldview when there are plainly better options available. Shelley's novel is a feminist masterpiece that rejects male dominance. *Frankenstein* criticizes established gender norms through the novel's narrator and characters, while also employing nature as a feminine metaphor to punish or reward individuals based on their behaviour. Male characters are ambitious and self-centered, while feminine characters are selfless and passive. Victor Frankenstein, the main protagonist, epitomizes the patriarchal mentality and is incapable of any feminine traits, which leads to the destruction of everyone he loves, as well as himself. The male-only narrator highlights the male characters' view of women's insignificance since they are rarely mentioned and, in most cases, disregarded. Nature is portrayed in the

narrative as aggressive and feminine, punishing or rewarding humans based on their behavior. *Frankenstein* gently presents a social critique by telling the reader what occurs, for example, when female characters embrace a self-sacrificing mentality when there are clearly other possibilities with better consequences.

2.2 Summary of Frankenstein

In 1818, the piece was first published. Mary Shelley created Frankenstein as a short story after Lord Byron advised that each member of a group of friends compose a terrible story to keep themselves occupied. Without a question, Mary's narrative was the winner. *Frankenstein* portrays the narrative of Victor Frankenstein, a brilliant scientist who succeeds in bringing to life a creature he created. However, this is not the flawless specimen he expects, but rather a horrible monster shunned by Victor and humanity in general. The Monster seeks vengeance through murder and fear.

Victor Frankenstein's major conflict is that he is unaware of the implications of his deeds. Victor is just interested in his own goals and does not think about the implications of his actions. This monster is a clear reminder that Victor is not taking responsibility for his actions because he violated the laws of nature. The first tension arises when Victor is so absorbed in his studies at Ingolstadt University that he ignores his family and fiancé. He is unconcerned about what that monster's experiences would be like, and he is unconcerned about the fact that he neglects his family in order to pursue his career. He is so concentrated on his objective, that he does not notice anything else. The escalating action of his rash drive to bring life to life reaches a pinnacle when, moments after animating the monster, he responds with fear and disgust and flees the room. Victor's battle with moral responsibility is exemplified by this incident: he was responsible for creating the monster and bringing him to life, yet when he does not like the result, he just rejects it. The following part will be

encountered with status of women in *Frankenstein* and how Mary Shelley tried to explain that by her female characters.

2.3 THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN THE NOVEL

Each woman is described as a position that is weak, throwaway, and useless role in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. In the piece of work, there are several female characters such as, Elizabeth, Margaret, Safi, Justine, and Agatha, who serve only to establish a plot for the other gender characters. They are subjected to events and activities, which are typically intended to teach the male character a lesson or arouse his emotions. In *Frankenstein*, each of Shelley's spouses has a distinct role. To begin with, Justine's character in the story is quite quiet and rarely speaks. She was torn between her family and *Frankenstein*, and she was finally accused of murdering William *Frankenstein*. Justine defies the wrongly accused manslaughter's expectations by being cool and collected. She describes out of her own terms: "God knows how entirely I am innocent. But I do pretend that my protestations should acquit me; I rest my innocence on a plain and simple explanation of the facts" (Shelley 65).

Her words alone do not suffice to show negativity, but the process of being defined itself shows that this is her character's goal, "But I have no right to explain... I can only conjecture that it happened in my pocket" .As a result, Justine is reduced to a helpless environmental woman.

The second female character is Agatha, a young farmer's daughter. Agatha, a caring and a lovely lady, wants to embrace and demonstrate all of these characteristics and senses. This was the monster's first lesson; he'd never seen such generosity before. Agatha most moves him in her interactions with her blind father: "Agatha listened with respect, her eyes sometimes filled with tears, which she endeavoured to wipe away unperceived" (Shelley 93).

Agatha's feminine role serves to educate the monster his first lessons in good human interactions and love through her passive and gentle disposition.

Margaret Seville, Robert Walton's sister, disagrees. Margaret stays at home while Robert is away in the North Pole, receiving letters from her adored brother. Margaret and Robert might be seen as role models. While he travels the world and works in the public sector, Margaret works in the private sector and stays at home, as was normal at the time. Her goal is to be nice and caring while "lifting his spirits" (Shelley 22). Margaret, while being a secondary character in the novel, had a profound impact on Robert: "My best years spent under your tender and feminine fosterage, has thus refined the foundations of my character" (Shelley 20). Margaret, from the other hand, may be considered a significant figure in the novel because it is only because of her that Robert feels compelled to relate the Victor Frankenstein narrative. She is more of a feminine subject than a female individualist.

Victor met Elizabeth Lavenza, whom he refers to as "the lovely and loving partner of all my interests and delights" (Shelley 29). These are thoughtful remarks, but Victor frequently stresses physical appeal above psychological qualities like compassion or intellect. The belief that females must be lovely, pleasant, and youthful if they are to be deserving of romantic affection" is part of patriarchal attitudes on women's physical appearance. Victor's patriarchal ideas against female ownership begin with the following comment, which comes from his upbringing:

On the evening previous to her being brought to my home, my mother had said playfully, 'I have a pretty present for my Victor 'tomorrow he shall have it. And when, on the morrow, she presented Elizabeth to me as her promised gift, I, with childish seriousness,

interpreted her words literally and looked upon Elizabeth as mine
_mine to protect, love, and cherish. (Shelley 29).

It is worth mentioning that his mother, Caroline, presents Elizabeth to him. Caroline encourages patriarchal attitudes by treating Elizabeth like a toy for her son's entertainment. Elizabeth is referred to as “my possession” by Victor (Shelley 30). Victor maintains his possessive attitude throughout the novel, referring to Elizabeth as “my Caroline is a patriarchal woman who is committed to her father's care and is described as kind and sympathetic” (Shelley 26). Caroline's story is cut short, however, when Elizabeth was the only one ready to care for her. Caroline is told that “many reasons had been given throughout her illness to encourage my mother to cease from visiting upon her” (Shelley 39), because the danger of transmission is near.

In the story, Victor refers to Caroline as “his heavenly mother” (Shelley 80) because she reinforced traditional gender roles by giving herself to breastfeed Elizabeth. Victor is too preoccupied with planning a trip to University to study and learn about other cultures to assist “Elizabeth in caring for his mother” (Shelley 39). When his mother die, His ideas are solely “My mother was dead, but we had still duties which we ought to perform; we must continue our course with the rest and learn to think ourselves fortunate whilst one remains whom the spoiler has not seized, my departure for Ingolstadt, which had been deferred by these events, was now again determined upon”. (Shelley 40-41). When she dies, Elizabeth is obliged to take over as housemother: “She indeed veiled her grief and strove to act the comforter to us all. She looked steadily on life and assumed its duties with courage and zeal” (Shelley 41).

These obligations appear to be hers and hers alone, and she is the one who soothes everyone, despite her anguish. In brief, Elizabeth, the same as Caroline before her, is supposed to be an angel. "Never was she so fascinating as at this

time, when she recalled the sunlight of her smiles and showered them upon us," Victor responds (Shelley 41). Despite her grief and sadness, Elizabeth strives to accept this new job, which Caroline formerly had, with enthusiasm. Elizabeth does not appear to be angry about her situation or patriarchal expectations throughout the narrative. Victor, on the other hand, just admires her for her selflessness. Because Victor is too preoccupied with his studies, Elizabeth has become the nurse, housekeeper, and mother for William, the last of the Frankenstein offspring.

Safie, an Arab woman, is well-known for her beauty "beautiful" voice and "hair of a brilliant raven black, and wonderfully braided; her eyes were dark, but gentle, though lively: "her features of a regular proportion, and her skin wondrously fair, each cheek tinted with a charming pink" (Shelley 136-137), which is the polar opposite of the Creature's description. The Creature's first description, rather than the melodic voice, is "he muttered some inarticulate sounds, while a grin wrinkled his cheeks" (Shelley 59), and "his yellow skin scarcely covered the work of muscles and arteries beneath; his hair was of a lustrous black" (Shelley 58) instead of "his complexion was wondrously fair and black, and his braided hair". Safie, on the other hand, is more than just pretty. She is the novel's lone female character who is not killed. This is the case since she is the novel's lone female character who defies some patriarchal conventions. When comparing appearances, Safie and the Creature appear to be diametrically opposed, but they are actually rather similar. They both want to be a part of something, which is why they want to be a part of the De Lacey family. Both have feminine qualities of softness and compassion.

When Safie is welcomed into the family and the Creature is not, the benefits of physical beauty are clear. This demonstrates that society is patriarchal in that it places a high value on beauty. Women, as previously said, must be treated with respect as beautiful ... "in order to be respected women who

are seen to be attractive serve as objects to impress other men. Patriarchy prioritizes appearance over other values, which is understandable. Despite their physical distinctions, the Creature and Safie have comparable backstories. Safie is a wanderer, despite her gender. Throughout the story, masculine characters go or explore while female ones remain at home.

As a result, Safie defies gender stereotypes. She is a foreigner with enough education to comprehend French. “In the story, as in early nineteenth-century society, education is primarily a masculine desire, and education is constantly mentioned in relation to male characters. Along with the Creature who is hiding, she is the only female character who is actively being schooled” (Para, 20 feminist reading of Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*). Safie says of the De Lacey: “Felix and Agatha spent more time in entertainment and discussion, and were supported in their labors by slaves.” (Shelley, 156). They are not affluent, yet they appear to be wealthy enough to hire staff. Safie's mother encouraged her “to lift to greater capacities of intellect and a freedom ” before she left (Shelley, 146). This demonstrates that Safie is taught to aspire to intellect and independence by the presence of a female mother figure who was reared in liberty (Shelley 147). Safie defies expectations and goes to live with the De Lacey family.

Safie chose for herself, against the wishes of every other female character in the tale. Safie is dubbed a monster because she defies gender preconceptions and thereby opposes patriarchy; she is also the novel's only female protagonist who does so and lives. Safie's social standing is what allows her to defy gender stereotypes. There are no expectations for Safie because she is not a member of the society she has escaped to. Traditional gender roles had already been imposed on the other female characters. This shows how a seemingly unimportant character can have a prosperous life independent of established

gender stereotypes. After all, other female characters that follow traditional gender norms perish.

2.3.1 THE RELEVANCE OF THE FEMININE GENDER IN MARY SHELLEY'S *FRANKENSTEIN*.

Gender issues are addressed in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, in which the birth of an unnatural monster in an otherwise perfect civilization tackles gender identity difficulties. The creation of *Frankenstein's* monster raises important problems regarding 19th century British society, with its main characters embodying idealized gender norms of the time. The creature's unexpected newborn, represent as a counterpoint to illustrate the significance of female gender roles in British society, ultimately recommending that women, instead of simply becoming partner to men, play a major role in making a contribution to the security of the dominant social system. The representation of the masculine gender in *Frankenstein* has a strong similarity to typical male clichés from the outset. Male characters are emotionally disconnected from family concerns and instead pursue their goals with zeal. Victor Frankenstein exemplifies masculine characteristics with his rational and controlled temperament and a strong scientific inclination well-suited for the male-centric subject of natural philosophy, as a sophisticated and smart man who loves researching information about the real world.

Feminism as well as motherly characteristics was required for survival, so Victor killed as a result of his absence of such characteristics. The claim is that the narrative of Prometheus conveys a feminist perspective; as well as a rejection of traditional norms by penalizing and murdering the people who obey them whereas the rare outliers live. *Frankenstein* is able to evaluate culture due to conventional gender norms throughout this.

The female gender, on the other hand, is portrayed more sympathetically in *Frankenstein* and corresponds closely to Victorian notions of women as home carers. Elizabeth Lavenza is described as submissive and good-natured, yet gay and energetic. These seemingly conflicting characteristics underline Elizabeth's duty as a conventional Victorian woman whose primary task is to care for her husband and kids. Elizabeth's selflessness is also emphasized throughout the novel by her "constant effort to bring the happiness of others, completely forgetful of herself." (Shelley 130). The word "totally" highlights the female gender's full relegation to the Victorian social environment. Furthermore, the phrase "soft and kind disposition" associates Elizabeth with maternal characteristics and solidifies her role as the family's primary caretaker. Throughout the trip, Safie nourishes her attendant "with the closest care" (Shelley 141), emphasizing Safie's maternal compassion, which transcends position and region. The use of the word "affection" underscores the common thread of a warm and empathetic disposition that runs through all of Frankenstein's female characters. Thus, in both characterization and behavior, Frankenstein's female characters demonstrate self-sacrificing, motherly instincts evocative of the Angels in the Home, whose existence is characterized by an entire commitment to their family's income interests.

2.3.2 THE THEME OF FEMINISM IN THE NOVEL.

The mother Mary Wollstonecraft the icon feminist ever inspire in her period women to be more powerful than ever in one of her publication most known *A vindication of the rights of women* Approximately three decades later, her daughter, Mary Shelly, creates *Frankenstein*, a terrifying gothic book with no strong female protagonists. Frankenstein has a more interesting philosophy to convey, yet being populated with frail female characters who illustrate the brutal treatment of women inside a patriarchal society. The topic of *Frankenstein* is

mainly derived from the fact that, males play the prominent parts throughout the novel, it is full of errors made by them. (*Frankenstein's* message Para 1)

The basic premise of *Frankenstein* is derived from the fact that males play the principal roles throughout the work, which is riddled with falsehoods. Mary Shelley presents an extremely feminist argument by emphasizing that women are the major source of income in society.

Throughout the novel, the ladies serve as a metaphor of virtue and innocence. The ladies operate as a conduit for the men's actions; they serve as the moral compass that allows characters like Victor to follow predetermined ethical norms. They are also the subjects of Romantic ideals, as opposed to the notion of enlightenment, which is mostly represented in masculine characters. Shelly created these female personas to underline her viewpoint on women's responsibilities and their absence from the creative process.

2.3.3 The Representation of Women in the Novel

The male characters get to do all kinds of exciting things like explore the North Pole, read books and do science. The females all have the same role and this is a domestic role within the home. This is a direct commentary on Mary Shelley's society and the early 1800's. Men occupied the public sphere outside of the home, and women, on the other hand, often occupy what is called the private sphere, which is completely within the home and they merely step outside of it. In fact, here is a clue in *Frankenstein* that talks about this public and the private sphere as well. This comes in chapter 18 with *Frankenstein* about to set off on the journey to Europe and create a second creature.

Mary Shelley, motivated by her feminist parent, depicts the implications of a cultural construction of gender that favors males over women. In Victor *Frankenstein's* 19th century Genevan society, gender roles are tightly divided. While Alphonse *Frankenstein* is a public worker, Victor *Frankenstein* is a

scientist, Clerval and his father are businesspeople, and Walton is an adventurer, the women spend the most of their time at home. All of the book's intriguing, complicated characters are male:

The ladies, on the other hand, are pretty, charming, selfless, dull nurturers and victims who never sense inner turmoil or actual desire.”The majority of women continue to be magnificent objects in their own households. Additionally, in *Frankenstein*, no woman speaks directly everything we heard by and about them is processed via the three masculine narrators. Although *Frankenstein* shows the importance of women in the home as guiding, maternal figures, the novel also explores the importance of female gender roles as social order bulwarks (feminist reading of *Frankenstein* Para 4).

As previously stated, one central question in the novel is whether the monster's unnatural circumstances or *Frankenstein's* subsequent abandonment are more responsible for his monstrosity; however, if nature is comprehended to be an ideal scenario conducive to the optimal, the significance of feminine care in making sure that social stability in *Frankenstein* thus underlines a false choice. Because of the fallback, there is a conflict betwixt essence and raised *Frankenstein's* quest for nature's secret areas emphasizes his discovery of natural norms that had been hidden for a reason. *Frankenstein* is, at its core, a story about the obvious possibilities and ramifications that occur when humans confronts and beyond the boundaries of nature.

In so far as women are vital in the nurturing of infants and loved ones, Shelley not only underlines their maternal relevance, but raises it to parity with men's social duties in nineteenth-century British society by imbuing its characters with normally gender-specific features. In disclosing the actuality of the underlying laws of human nature, Shelley even goes so far as to show the patchwork intricacies of female gender roles that had not yet been entrenched.

Shelley also flips current gender orthodoxy on its head: but instead of women's caring and child-rearing responsibilities demoting them to the periphery of society, it is precisely their indispensability that puts them in the limelight.

Shelley's reclaiming of the female gender and its social relevance is "strikingly similar to that of her mother, Mary Wollstonecraft, who famously advocated for comprehensive women's rights in *A VINDICATION OF THE RIGHTS OF WOMAN* for essentially similar reasons" (Para 7: The Female Gender and its Significance in *Frankenstein*). Despite being unmistakably essentialist, Shelley critiques women's purportedly small contributions to social order and offers a more progressive vision of human nature and society than was promoted at the time of publication. "The failure of Frankenstein's monster to invalidate female gender norms attests to the latter's kaleidoscopic importance in both the domestic and social arenas and finally paves the way for the New Woman to break free from these severely restrictive limits" (Para 2: The Female Gender and its significance in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*).

2.4 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN

Mary Shelley describes the nineteenth century in which she wrote her work as a time when males were seen to be superior to women and when women had no place in society. Males had many advantages in life and could pursue any job they chose, but women may only have a home existence where their duties were limited to caring for and serving others, whereas men had many benefits in life and could follow any career they wanted. Women's rights to a decent and equal existence were muted by this divide between men and women.

The female characters in the novel, who are meant to represent all women, are looking for ways to express themselves and integrate into society according to Mary Shelley "women are defined as a nonappearance, a mysteries, curiosity,

or violent assault in patriarchal culture, or they are allowed to be an existence only so that they can be defined as a lack, a mutilated body that can only be symbolized to enable men to join the symbolic order as well as preserve their secret. (Para 21 the elimination of female character in *Frankenstein*).

Victor Frankenstein eliminates the relevance or the presence of the female in life by making a living person on his own, and it becomes clear that he is attempting to build a male-dominated society with no place for women. “He turns his creature male, abandons the female monster's construction, and abandons Elizabeth for several years, preferring to devote his attention to scientific endeavors. In turn; the monster murders every woman he can get his hands on throughout the narrative”. (Para 22 Feminism and the Elimination of Female Characters in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*).

2.5. Conclusion

The female characters in the novel all die because they put the needs of others ahead of their own. These women were all working at home as mothers or housewives, whereas the men all work outside the house as doctors, scientists, or businessmen. Victor, the central character, does not have any feminine traits, so he gets angry with the Creature. It seems that Victor and Robert share the same lack of purpose and goals. Both of them are in dangerous situations: Robert is trapped in ice, while Victor is insane. This demonstrates the severe consequences of following the standards of either gender in an extreme manner. Safie is the only female figure that stands out. She has all the feminine qualities and many manly qualities, indicating to the reader that a 13-year-old strong, independent girl can still achieve pleasure and success. She is one of the most unique female characters around, and that is probably why she is survived for so long. *Frankenstein* shows readers that following traditional gender roles can be deadly. The fact that Safie, the novel's only woman who remains a threat

CHAPTER TWO: ANALYSIS OF FRANKENSTEIN BY MARY SHELLEY

throughout demonstrates the importance of resisting traditional male power dynamics.

Male-dominated norms are reinforced in the novel through the use of exclusively male narrators who barely mention the female characters. The focus is on their goals, not on their past. The women are absent and barely heard of, and Victor often talks about how attractive they are. These men don't even respect us, we' just background noise to them. Victor even destroyed his female creation and then made her live because he could not stand the idea, the thought and the independence of a female creature.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

For decades, women have been forced to live on the periphery of a male-dominated society. Throughout the 1800s, women's potential was severely constrained, and Mary Shelly does an excellent job of depicting this in her gothic novel, *Frankenstein*. In addition, Mary Shelly's art exposes how society regards women as commodities rather than independent human beings. Furthermore, the female characters are heavily dependent on males for life and assistance, emphasizing their inability to do so on their own. Last but not least, in this story, the masculine characters victimize the female characters in a variety of ways. Finally, the female characters in Mary Shelly's novel *Frankenstein* inevitably fulfill the confined and archetypical roles that society assigns to them.

In the first chapter, we discussed the conditions that existed in Great Britain during the eighteenth century, the most important of which were the economy and social life. One of the most important aspects of what was previously mentioned was women's role at that period of time, and how society glorified men while undervaluing women in all aspects of life, including marriage, work, and education. As previously stated, the feminist movement was widespread at that time, and we used the opportunity to highlight some of the most famous writers who excelled in this movement. One of those pillars was Mary Shelly, through her well-known work *Frankenstein*.

With regard to the second chapter, we have touched upon the analysis of the novel *Frankenstein* and how Mary Shelley wrote about women, particularly how they are marginalized in all aspects, such as Elizabeth, who was considered as an object of beauty to please her husband Victor, Justine, the innocent one who got accused unjustly, and generally all female characters that got killed and suffered from injustice just because they were women. Not only that, but they were also suffering from patriarchal society and its customs.

General Conclusion

In this novel, Shelley has presented an important theme in eighteenth-century society, where many women, like the characters in *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley, face inequity and tyranny. They are considered property and are denied privileges that men enjoy. In Shelley's tale, the ladies are slaughtered and created to symbolize how fast women may be replaced. Overall, female characters are always attacked because of their characteristics and gender. Finally, by eliminating the female characters, Mary Shelly refers to the notion that women have always been victims in society, women in that period, and how they were seen by society. Mary challenged the norms by writing a novel that was not expected by female writers at that time. My argument is that literature can offer a feminist perspective and critique traditional gender roles. There are exceptions. In this sense, *Frankenstein* is able to criticize society because of traditional values. Gender stereotypes can be limiting and can often lead to discrimination. They can also be harmful to both men and women.

The women in *Frankenstein* match all of the expectations placed on women, wives, and daughters of the period. In her work, Mary Shelley depicts the situation of women in the nineteenth century as well as the prevalent social order. She also employs the notion of different realms to meet societal expectations. On closer inspection, Shelley does, in fact, challenge women's inferior status and the gender division of labour, not only through the novel's submissive behaviour, but also through her own life, because she does not fit easily into the traditional female image of the time. Shelley's work should be viewed as a warning tale.

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