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THE INHUMANELY ABUSED
Psychoanalytical Defence Mechanisms in *Wuthering Heights* and *Frankenstein or The Modern Prometheus*

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this research was to find out parallels between the creature from *Frankenstein or The Modern Prometheus* (1818) by Mary Shelley and Heathcliff from *Wuthering Heights* (1847) by Emily Brontë. Previous studies have identified similarities between the two novels, but the parallels between them have not been explicitly researched. The novels are similar in many ways from their structure to the characters: for example, the creature and Heathcliff are subjected to multiple types of abuse, excluded from the society they long for, suffer from the lack of a proper name and descent, denied sexuality and human companionship, and regarded as 'others' as they are subjected to prejudice based on their appearance and origin.

This research is conducted with the help of psychoanalytic literary theory, with close reading as the method. The different types of abuse are analysed with the help of previous research on the themes of human rights, race, mirror images, and periphrastic naming. Examples from the novels are analysed to determine which Freudian defence mechanisms the creature and Heathcliff use in order to survive the abuse.

The thesis concludes that the abuse and neglect inflicted on the creature and Heathcliff are based on similar prejudices and structures. In addition, the creature and Heathcliff often resort to similar defence mechanisms, but there are also differences in how they react to abuse. The defence mechanisms found in this research are reaction formation, sublimation, isolation, denial, and identification. These findings strengthen the hypothesis that Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* was influenced by Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*.

Keywords: Frankenstein, Wuthering Heights, Mary Shelley, Emily Brontë, psychoanalytic literary study, Freud, defence mechanism

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TIIVISTELMÄ

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Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoituksena oli selvittää, millaisia samankaltaisuuksia on Mary Shelley'n *Frankensteinin* (1818) hirviön ja Emily Brontë'n *Humisevan harjun* (1847) Heathcliffin välillä. Aiemmassa tutkimuksessa on löydetty samankaltaisuuksia näiden kahden romaanin välillä, muttei niitä ole aiemmin eksplisiittisesti vertailtu. Romaanien välillä on useita samankaltaisuuksia kerronnan rakenteesta henkilöihin: esimerkiksi hirviö ja Heathcliff joutuvat monenlaisen kaltoinkohtelun kohteeksi, heidät jätetään ulkopuolelle siitä ihmisyydestä, johon he halusivat kuulua, he kärsivät oikean nimen ja sukutaustan puutteesta, heiltä evätään seksuaalisuus ja kumppanuus, ja heitä toiseutetaan ulkonäköön ja alkuperään perustuvien ennakkoluulojen vuoksi.

Tutkimus on tehty psykoanalyttista kirjallisuusteoriaa hyödyntäen ja metodina on teosten lähiluku. Kaltoinkohtelun eri muotojen tarkastelussa on käytetty apuna aiempaa teoksista tehtyä tutkimusta liittyen ihmisoikeuksiin, rotuun, peilikuviin ja perifrastiseen nimeämiseen. Otteita romaaneista on analysoitu, jotta voidaan selvittää, millaisia Freudin määritelmien mukaisia puolustusmekanismeja hirviö ja Heathcliff käyttävät selvitäkseen kaltoinkohtelusta.

Tutkimuksessa todettiin, että Heathcliffin ja hirviön kohtaamat vääryydet perustuvat samanlaisiin ennakkoluuloihin ja rakenteisiin. Lisäksi Heathcliff ja hirviö turvautuvat usein samankaltaisiin puolustusmekanismeihin, mutta heidän tavoissaan reagoida on myös eroja. Löytämiä puolustusmekanismeja ovat reaktionmuodostus, sublimaatio, eristäminen, kieltäminen, ja samaistuminen. Nämä löydökset vahvistavat hypoteesia siitä, että Emily Brontë'n *Humiseva harju* on saanut vaikutteita Mary Shelley'n *Frankensteinista*.

Avainsanat: Frankenstein, Humiseva Harju, Mary Shelley, Emily Brontë, psykoanalyttinen kirjallisuudentutkimus, Freud, puolustusmekanismi

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1 Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to compare and illustrate the quite parallel choices and destinies of the creature from *Frankenstein or The Modern Prometheus* (1818; later *Frankenstein*) by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley and Heathcliff from *Wuthering Heights* (1847) by Emily Brontë. In their article “Frankenstein and the Genesis of Heathcliff”, H.W. Gallagher suggests that Emily Brontë read *Frankenstein* and was influenced by it (164-5). It seems that even though Gallagher’s hypothesis for this link was made already in 2004, there is no existing research to demonstrate explicit parallels between the two novels. Gallagher argues that “[t]he resemblances are striking. Even the construction of the novels is similar” (164) as both works are narrated by an outsider who happens to meet the main character near the end. In both novels the story has begun years before the narrators meet the characters; thus, the bulk of the story is told retrospectively, with only the endings witnessed by the narrators.

Gallagher claims that “[m]any biographers and critics have not been satisfied with Charlotte’s statement that Heathcliff appeared unheralded out of Emily’s imagination” (164) and points out that “[i]n the Preface to the 1850 edition of *Wuthering Heights* Charlotte says that Heathcliff has ‘a man’s shape animated by demon life’” (164), which sounds similar to the creature. Heathcliff is an enigma, no-one knows whether he is a man or a monster, a “ghoul or a vampire” (Gallagher 164). There are many similarities between the characters of the creature and Heathcliff, and even though the latter is definitely a human being,

[a] monster can be many things: anything or anybody abnormally large; a person so deformed or ugly that he or she inspires horror and revulsion; or a person whose actions are unspeakably evil and cruel. Frankenstein is all of those. He could be the archetypal monster. However he did not become a demon monster until all with whom he made contact or helped had rejected him. Heathcliff, dehumanized like

Frankenstein by having an incomplete name, only became a demon monster after his assumed rejection by Catherine. (Gallagher 164)

In this thesis I will illustrate how the creature and Heathcliff face vast amounts of oppression, discrimination, and abuse from the people whose company and love they wished for. I will use previous studies to demonstrate the different kinds of abuse. None of these previous studies cover both novels, so I will use the points made in them to draw parallels between the two main characters by producing a similar example from the other novel. Both protagonists suffer from the lack of a proper name and descent, the denial of human companionship and sexuality, being subjected to prejudice, and exclusion from society. My claim is that the prejudice against them rises chiefly from their outer appearance and origin. Both characters desire the things they are denied, and use what we can call as psychoanalytical defence mechanisms to survive. My main hypothesis is that the parallels between Heathcliff and the creature can be shown via the defence mechanisms they use. The method to demonstrate this is close reading of the novels. The parallels will illuminate the possible link between *Frankenstein* and *Wuthering Heights*, which is worthwhile, because the works that may have influenced Emily Brontë are a subject of much speculation (Gallagher, 164).

Victor Frankenstein, a young man of good family from eighteenth-century Geneva, pursues the Promethean task of building a new, living being while studying in Ingolstadt. He forms a creature from parts of dead humans, but is finally abhorred by his creation and flees to his home in Geneva. The abandoned creature has to learn everything from scratch like a child, only he is alone in the world and shunned by everyone because of his fearful appearance. Eventually Victor meets the creature who chastises Victor for abandoning his creation, narrates his misfortunes, and then demands another of his kind for his companion. Victor first refuses, but then yields to protect his loved ones, only to destroy the female creature before its completion. The creature, already responsible for the deaths of several Victor's loved ones, vows revenge and murders Victor's bride Elizabeth on their wedding night.

The story is narrated by a polar explorer Robert Walton, who meets Victor when he chases the creature to the North. Before his death Victor shares the entire story with Walton. The creature is struck by Victor's death, and declares that he too shall die soon.

As for *Wuthering Heights*, Mr. Earnshaw of Wuthering Heights adopts a foundling child, whom he names Heathcliff after his dead son. The Earnshaw family has two children, Hindley and Catherine; the former views Heathcliff as an intruder and treats him cruelly after Mr. Earnshaw dies, while the latter becomes Heathcliff's friend. Catherine and Heathcliff have a complicated relationship, which takes a turn for the worse when she decides to marry Edgar Linton of the neighbouring estate, Thrushcross Grange. During their estrangement Heathcliff becomes a rich man, and marries Linton's sister Isabella. Catherine dies in agony, and in his grief Heathcliff takes revenge on everyone in the two families.

The story is narrated by Mr. Lockwood, a new tenant of Heathcliff's, who is the new owner of Thrushcross Grange. At this point Heathcliff despondently controls the lives of Hindley's son Hareton, Catherine and Edgar's daughter Cathy, and other occupants of Wuthering Heights. Heathcliff and Catherine are finally united in death, and the new generation is freed from the yoke of the past.

2 Theory

In this section I will firstly introduce the psychoanalytic theory used in this thesis, and then previous literary studies on *Wuthering Heights* and *Frankenstein*.

2.1 Psychoanalytic theory

In this section I will introduce the defence mechanisms used for analysis: reaction formation, sublimation, projection, repression, denial, isolation, and identification. These defence mechanisms are used to obtain a "desirable conclusion or favorable view of self that is conscious" (Baumeister et al. 1084), thus helping to preserve self-esteem. Some of the defence mechanisms are

such that can be used either consciously or unconsciously. Since “socially unacceptable impulses of sex or violence may have constituted a self-esteem threat for the Victorian middle-class adults [Sigmund Freud] studied” (1082), the defence mechanisms originally defined by Freud can be used to analyse the forbidden desires of the creature and Heathcliff. The two characters are approximately from that era, and they display anger and desires not allowed to them by the norms of their time. Although *Frankenstein* is pre-Victorian, the social norms of Shelley’s time are not that different from the Victorian society described a couple of decades later in *Wuthering Heights*.

Reaction formation means rejecting “unacceptable thoughts and instead assert[ing] the opposite, socially acceptable view” (Baumeister et al. 1088). When one is accused of something socially undesirable, for example being racist, having abnormal sexual urges, or being a failure, some people defend their self-esteem by exaggeratedly proving the opposite to seem for example peace-loving or tolerant. This occurs whether the accusation is implied or public (Baumeister et al. 1085, 1089, 1113). I will illustrate how especially the creature eloquently argues for his rights by presenting a favourable view of himself, whereas Heathcliff may resort to more unconscious defence mechanisms.

Somewhat related to reaction formation is sublimation, which

involves expressing an instinct in a sphere or manner that shows no relation to its original aim. Freud’s most common allusions to sublimation featured how the sexual instinct could be channeled into artistic or intellectual endeavors ... In particular, the concept of sublimation meant taking a fundamentally antisocial or unacceptable desire and channeling the energy into socially valued activities. (Baumeister et al. 1103)

Much like in the case of reaction formation, sublimation is used to protect the self-esteem from the damage caused the acknowledgement of undesirable “sexual or aggressive impulses” by transforming them into something socially acceptable (Baumeister et al. 1104). The

difference between reaction formation and sublimation is that the former means displaying the opposite of the undesirable trait (e.g. displays of excess tolerance when faced with for example accusations of racism), whereas the latter means one tries to prove their self-worth by excelling in some completely unrelated field.

Projection helps the individual to avoid recognising something negative in themselves whilst perceiving the trait in others (Baumeister et al. 1090). In other studies projection is linked to repression and defined as “a withdrawal from painful stimuli and act[ing] to minimize the immediate distress following “psychical traumas” (Boag 75). The creature and Heathcliff both have emotional trauma as a result of abuse. According to Simon Boag, repression includes motivated forgetting as traumatic or offending thoughts are “intentionally repressed from [the traumatised person’s] conscious thought and inhibited and suppressed” (75) to prevent acting upon them (78). The aim is to avoid the feeling of “shame, self-reproach or psychical pain” (75). Projection may be more applicable to other characters, such as Victor or Hindley, whereas at least Heathcliff may show signs of repression; hence, I will use the latter in my analysis.

Repression is also linked to denial, which in Freudian terms can be everything “from a rare, almost psychotic refusal to perceive the physical facts of the immediate environment, to the common reluctance to accept the implications of some event” (Baumeister et al. 1107) and disputing the evidence (1113). The distinction between denial and repression is somewhat blurred, as one means “the simple refusal to face certain facts” (Baumeister et al. 1107), and the other deliberate forgetting of those facts. Denial includes making “external attributions for failure, such as by pointing to bad luck or task difficulty” instead of admitting one’s own shortcomings (Baumeister et al. 1108).

In contrast to denial or repression, isolation works by minimising the impact of the threatening idea by “creating a mental gap or barrier between some threatening cognition and other thoughts and feelings.” (Baumeister et al. 1100). People with low self-esteem describe their greatest

failures by using temporal bracketing, which means they acknowledge the negative reflection of something they did, but defend their current self by isolating their offence to the past as irrelevant to their self-esteem and identity (Baumeister et al. 1102; 1113).

The final psychoanalytical concept used in this thesis is that of identification. The four main features of identification according to Phebe Cramer are: changing the ego somehow, i.e. changing one's personality, behaviour, or motives; changing oneself to become more similar to "some other individual, group, or cause"; changing oneself in a manner that helps maintain "an affective relationship with a significant other"; and lastly changing oneself in order to develop and maintain one's self-esteem (94).

2.2 Previous studies

In this section I will introduce previous studies on *Wuthering Heights* and *Frankenstein*, that use the same themes I will use in the analysis: the lack of a proper name and descent, the denial of human companionship and sexuality, prejudice, and exclusion. In my analysis I will use these studies to demonstrate the abuse that leads to the need for defence mechanisms.

Firstly I will explain the concepts of Unlove and Overlove as defined by Eric Levy (1996). Fulfilling love in adulthood is barred by a "defective love in childhood", and the Earnshaw family is an example of Unlove "where childhood is an experience of neglect, abuse, and rejection". The Linton family on the other hand is an example of Overlove, as they overprotect and pamper children (Levy 159).

Both Unlove and Overlove are paralleled in *Frankenstein*, as Victor is given much parental love and nurture, and the creature none. In addition to this, the results of these defective types of loving are similar, as Victor ends up hurting everyone because of his hubris and sense of entitlement, the latter of which is very similar to Hindley's behaviour in *Wuthering Heights*. By building and animating the creature Victor can be seen to be moving "into a structure analogous to the mother-child relationship, only now he assumes the mother's role. In either role, mother or

child, Victor fantasizes that he is the recipient of love and gratitude as the fulfiller of another's desire" (Franco 82). The creature does not have this luxury, as he suffers from this Unlove quite similarly to Heathcliff, and this I will analyse more closely in the following sections.

The second concept is periphrastic naming as researched by Bernard Duyfhuizen (1995). The relationship between a proper name and periphrasis is linguistically indirect, because periphrasis in real life "arises often through synecdoches of physical attributes ... or through metonymic figures tied to a context of social conditions" (Duyfhuizen 479). Periphrasis is often used to impose derogatory names on others in hate speech (Duyfhuizen 479- 80). A proper name is "a legal construction of identity" (Duyfhuizen 480) produced by family and society, and when one grows up, the proper name is already present before one is rationally conscious of it, and it is "seemingly a piece of one's nature" (Duyfhuizen 480). The lack of a proper name is something that concerns both the creature and Heathcliff, and they both use defence mechanisms to survive this.

The last concepts are mirror images, race, and otherness, which are related to for example identification. Dean Franco ponders about Victor's being overcome with terror the moment the creature opens his eyes and argues that "I believe the reason for Victor's sudden insight has to do with seeing and self-perception. When the Monster awakens, Victor acts like one who suddenly sees for the first time, and in a way he is" (80). It is also suggested that the first description of the creature by Victor is similar to imagery used to describe Asian, Indian, and African people in "racial discourse popularised in the seventeenth century and persistent throughout the eighteenth, whereby the racial other was identified as grotesque and of a lower order" (Lloyd Smith 210). According to Allan Lloyd Smith the creature is thus described not because of being black, which he is not, but

because of his grotesque ugliness, superhuman animal powers, and the animal/human taint of miscegenation involved in his creation; entirely the opposite of a pure line of descent. Shelley chose not to give her scientist the arguably more straightforward route of reanimation of a dead human body: her choice of an assemblage of various

human and animal parts introduces the issues attached to cross-racial and even cross-species reproduction (211).

In my analysis I will link this to how the creature and Heathcliff mirror themselves in relation to others, and how they are pictured by others. The prejudice and abuse they are met with traumatises them, and leads to the use of several defence mechanisms.

3 Analysis of the defence mechanisms

3.1 Lack of a proper name and descent

The creature and Heathcliff both lack a full proper name and descent. Heathcliff does come from somewhere, but no-one knows his origins, so in that sense he is without ancestry similarly to the creature. In this section I will examine the effects of being thus rootless, and which defence mechanisms are used to survive this.

Diana Reese argues that “[t]hrough childhood had already been invented by the time Frankenstein appeared, the monster notably lacks one” (49). Not only is the creature without a family and descent, but he also had to learn about their existence and his lack of them through literature after already having been shunned by everyone he had met: “As I read, however, I applied much personally to my own feelings and condition. I found myself similar, yet at the same time strangely unlike to the beings concerning whom I read, and to whose conversation I was a listener. I sympathised with, and partly understood them, but I was unformed in mind; I was dependent on none, and related to none” (Shelley 153). Duyfhuizen calls this “one of the most persuasive moments of the creature’s narration of his experiences” (480), with which I agree, because it perfectly encapsulates his loneliness, as he had no-one to help him come to terms with his condition. This passage demonstrates the creature’s difficulties in using identification as a defence mechanism. He needs to defend his self-esteem, because his lack of descent adds to the otherness already caused by his appearance. Prior to this, he has learned about feelings and other human

features from the De Lacey family and identified with for example their sorrow, and his feelings and language are now what mostly connects him to humans.

Unlike Adam, the creature is not named by his creator: instead he is continuously referred to by periphrastic names such as a “hellish fiend”, or even a “vile insect” (Shelley 118), and prior to my research Duyfhuizen has already listed the following attributive names for the creature: “‘monster’, ‘fiend’, ‘daemon’, ‘creature’, ‘wretch’, ‘devil’, ‘being’, ‘ogre’, ‘murderer’, ‘destroyer’, and even the more extreme ‘odious companion’, ‘dreaded spectre’, ‘the work of my own hands’, and ‘the filthy mass that moved and talked’” (479). All of these highlight the creature’s otherness and separate him from the humans whose society he longs for. In addition to the above Duyfhuizen has counted 61 appearances of “wretch” (484), which “is a primary signifier for the creature” (486). Duyfhuizen argues that “[f]or the creature, however, the absence of a proper name, of a signifier that constructs identity before the first glimmerings of subjectivity enter consciousness, marks his alienation by and from the world of human existence. Moreover, it signifies his lack of a family and his exclusion from a chain of generation” (480). The creature is perplexed by the cruel behaviour he has met and asks “Who was I? What was I? Whence did I come?” (Shelley 154) It is noteworthy that after *who*, he uses the word *what* instead, demonstrating how he begins to realise that he is not completely human. This foreshadows his want of a companion of his own kind, i.e., wanting to identify with someone similar to him as he can not successfully identify with humans.

Franco compares the creature with the Biblical Eve, who sees beauty when looking at her reflection for the first time, whereas “the Monster realizes that he is the epitome of ugliness” (87) and later recollects: “At first I started back, unable to believe that it was indeed I who was reflected in the mirror; and when I became fully convinced that I was in reality the monster that I am, I was filled with the bitterest sensations of despondence and mortification” (Shelley 136-137). This demonstrates a loss of identification for the creature, and he resorts to reaction formation instead, as he tries to obtain the good opinion of the De Lacey family. This is an exemplary case of

reaction formation, as he tries to be exceedingly benevolent to prove he is no monster. The creature does, however continue in his effort to identify with the De Lacey's feelings and other human features. The De Lacey's are the only living creatures he has been able to get to know so far, and therefore he has mirrored himself to them, and tried to acquire their characteristics, i.e. language.

The creature has no foundation to which he could fix his identity, as his periphrastic names mean "that [he] cannot partake of the social illusion of uniqueness that is conferred through the individual proper name or the social construction of community that starts with and is modeled on the family and perpetuated through the family name" (Duyfhuizen 488). The creature is connected to Victor's family by periphrastic naming only, being called Frankenstein's monster (Duyfhuizen 480-481), an attribute only known to the readers. The creature learns quite early that he lacks the essential characteristics needed to enter the society of humans: "the possessions most esteemed by your fellow creatures were high and unsullied descent united with riches. A man might be respected with only one of these advantages, but without either he was considered, except in very rare instances, as a vagabond and a slave" (Shelley 144). As the creature is completely without descent, he feels doomed to be judged by any society, not just high.

It is noteworthy that Elizabeth with her genteel descent is treated well, even though she is extremely poor. Lloyd Smith underlines the importance of the difference between the creature's and Elizabeth's appearance by pointing out that "Mary Shelley's 1831 revisions intensified Elizabeth's Saxon racial features as the flower of white girlhood, ... no longer as in the first edition simply beautiful and hazel-eyed" (217), but instead "[s]he appeared of a different stock. The four others were dark-eyed, hardy little vagrants; this child was thin, and very fair. Her hair was the brightest living gold, and, despite the poverty of her clothing, seemed to set a crown of distinction on her head" (Shelley 41). The description later continues to define Elizabeth as someone "of a distinct species, a being heaven-sent, and bearing a celestial stamp in all her features" (Shelley 41). These excerpts illustrate the prejudice, in Elizabeth's case positive, that defines how the characters

view and judge strangers. In the creature's case distinct features of a different species are what causes the kind of prejudice and need for defence mechanisms I will analyse in more detail in section 3.2.

Similar to the creature, Heathcliff is without a proper family and first name, he is just Heathcliff. Though this name comes from the dead son of old Mr. Earnshaw, Heathcliff is still excluded from the family. Mr. Earnshaw describes his good intentions when he found a starving, homeless child in the street: "Not a soul knew to whom *it* belonged, he said, and his money and time, being both limited, he thought it better to take *it* home with him, at once, than run into vain expenses there; because he was determined he would not leave *it* as he found *it*" (Brontë 43; emphasis added). When Heathcliff is first introduced, he is not even called "he" but "it" instead, and the same pronoun is used several times before he becomes a "boy" or "he" (Brontë 42-43). The periphrastic naming continues with attributes such as "that gipsy brat", "as good as dumb" (Brontë 42), "fiend", "the hellish villain" (208), and "villain" (209). This never-ending torment leads to Heathcliff's feeling worthless, even to his one friend Catherine. He eavesdrops on Catherine and Nelly's conversation about him: "It would degrade me to marry Heathcliff, now; so he shall never know how I love him" (Brontë 94). Heathcliff leaves before hearing the end of her statement, and is therefore quite unaware of being loved by her, which leads to the belief that she too must be revenged just as the others. This demonstrates his loss of identification, as Catherine has grown up and their difference in rank becomes more evident. Catherine was the only one he could identify with when growing up, as they were both abused by Hindley.

3.2 Prejudice caused by otherness

The creature and Heathcliff are both subjected to prejudice originating from their outer appearance and otherness. This is illustrated in how Victor fears the creature's ability to reproduce and thus pose a threat to all mankind. Reese points out that "the monster's hideous and outcast status is constantly emphasized ... [and it] results in the horrifying vision of the reproduction of an

alien ‘species’, a ‘race of evils’” (60). Victor uses his prejudice as a reason to reject the creature’s wish for a companion. The parallels between the pairs of the creature and Victor, and Adam and his God, are discussed in several studies due to the way in which the creature uses Milton to plead his case to Victor. The creature’s speech is “an optimistic view of language, and Adamic if we recall Adam’s use of language to signify a human nature that could not be seen and thus form the primordial bonds of society” (Franco 87-88). Franco claims that the creature misapprehends himself, describing “himself as a paradox” (89). This is seen when the creature introduces himself to the old and blind De Lacey by saying that “where they ought to see a feeling and kind friend, they behold only a detestable monster” (Shelley 160). De Lacey replies with a question: “but if you are really blameless, cannot you undeceive them?” (160). This demonstrates how only someone literally blind, i.e., someone not prejudiced by appearance can give the creature the benefit of a doubt. This illustrates how the creature, despite his knowledge of his non-human characteristics, uses conscious denial as a defence mechanism and tries to enter the human society. There are signs of isolation as well, as the creature hopes to isolate his unwanted characteristics, i.e. his monstrosity and budding anger, and treat them as insignificant, and he hopes to be judged by his positive characteristics only.

It is noteworthy that the creature, having been subjected to several unfair and dismissive encounters with humans, may be thought to have some excuse for his vengefulness and anger. Lloyd Smith compares this with the slaves’ revenges in response to atrocities committed in the name of “racial superiority and subordination of the racial Other” (220). The argument is that, just as in the case of white oppressors, responsibility for the creature’s vengeance lies with Victor and others who did not give the creature a chance. Duyfhuizen too remarks that “[i]ndeed, Victor is essentially guilty, both because of his original overreaching in the making of the creature and because of his failure to parent, to give even basic kindness to his creation once it had come to life” (486). According to Lloyd Smith “Shelley attempts to give voice to those people in society who are

traditionally removed from the centers of linguistic power, people who are defined as alien, inferior, or monstrous solely because of physical features” (209). For slaves “the possession of a voice, and of literacy, was a disproof of Enlightenment assumptions” (Lloyd Smith 215) of their otherness and “[t]he creature’s assertion of his literacy, and his human sensitivity, is emblematic of the breaking down of such boundary assumptions” (Lloyd Smith 215). Much like a slave, the creature was “[d]enied knowledge by his master [and] forced to learn language and literacy in secret” (Lloyd Smith 212). The creature comes to understand his otherness when he acquires “cultural knowledge, and [h]is realisation is then painfully confirmed by the revulsion of the De Lacey family when they discover him. Before this moment of catastrophe, the creature positions himself much as a domestic slave or ‘house-nigger’, admiring but invisible” (Lloyd Smith 212). The creature makes the mistake of believing that “when [De Lacey] should become acquainted with [his] admiration of their virtues, they would compassionate [him] and overlook [his] personal deformity” (Shelley 156). “In Lacanian terms, the Monster hopes to become the object in the gaze of the cottagers, in which they can see themselves seeing him. But the affect of disgust is more powerful, and persists in excluding the Monster from the signifying chain” (Franco 89). This demonstrates how the creature “hope[s] that language will serve as syntactical make-up, causing others to overlook his deformity” (Franco 88). This illustrates the creature using sublimation as a defence mechanism, as he is trying to compensate for his appearance with his kind aid and language that portray benevolence, all because of his strong desire to enter the society of humans.

Duyfhuizen argues that “through his acquisition of language ... the creature is able to make a logical case for his right to basic kindness especially from his creator” (483-484). The creature is most eloquent about his misfortunes: “Cursed, cursed creator! Why did I live? Why, in that instant, did I not extinguish the spark of existence which you had so wantonly bestowed? I know not; despair had not yet taken possession of me; my feelings were those of rage and revenge” (Shelley 162). This highlights how the creature is not only able to vocalise his suffering, but he is

also able to do so in retrospective, which suggests that the creature is not repressing his trauma, but actively works on it. This supports the idea that the traumatised, here the creature, channels his anger and resentment into his intellectual development, in other words uses sublimation as a defence mechanism when he endeavours to learn language and the rules of human society.

The other common defence mechanism for the creature is reaction formation, as he tries to be as benevolent as possible when he is accused of being a monster. The De Lacey's rejected him, and he became angry and vengeful. Nevertheless, the creature describes to Victor how he only a while later rescues a little girl from a river, but is shot at in return:

This was then the reward of my benevolence! I had saved a human being from destruction, and, as a recompense, I now writhed under the miserable pain of a wound, which shattered the flesh and bone. The feelings of kindness and gentleness which I had entertained but a few moments before gave place to hellish rage and gnashing of teeth. Inflamed by pain, I vowed eternal hatred and vengeance to all mankind. (Shelley 169)

The creature's agony is further highlighted by how he saw himself before being shot. According to Franco the creature "believes that he can control his signifiers and not the other way around. He also believes ... that language ... will represent him as controlled, whole and peaceful" (Franco 85). In other words, the creature hopes that with his inner beauty, his "gentle demeanour and conciliating words, [he] should first win their favour and afterwards their love" (Shelley 138). This once again shows the creature using denial as a defence mechanism, as he tries to portray himself as gentle when he is already turning vengeful and aggressive.

Heathcliff, on the other, hand lacks the eloquence of the creature and he reacts to being wronged or ridiculed with direct angry retorts. For example, when Catherine returns from the Lintons he is reluctant to greet her: "for shame and pride threw a double gloom over his countenance, and kept him immovable ... 'I shall not [shake hands]!' replied the boy [sic], finding

his tongue at last, ‘I shall not stand to be laughed at, I shall not bear it!’” (Brontë 63) This demonstrates his loss of identification in relation to Catherine, as he was formerly able to identify with her as his equal. Unlike the creature Heathcliff does not vocalise his desires but instead asserts the opposite, declaring that he will be as dirty as he likes (Brontë 63) because he claims he does not want Catherine to touch him. A while later he wants to be presentable to Catherine and says: “Nelly, make me decent, I’m going to be good” (Brontë 65). Heathcliff attempts to use identification to preserve his self-esteem; he tries to make himself more similar to the others, but it does not work out as his tormentor Hindley immediately bars his entrance to the company of others, and Edgar Linton still feels it his right to view him as a beast. Nelly’s claim that Edgar “ventured this remark without any intention to insult” (Brontë 68) heightens the sense that Heathcliff is not given a chance to prove himself as human and civilized as others, but instead those prejudiced against him are immediately excused from taunting him. This parallels the positive and negative prejudices imposed on Elizabeth and the creature in *Frankenstein*, as the others (using projection) are quick to point out faults in Heathcliff, but see none in themselves. Hindley is more savage than Heathcliff at this point, but the society is on Hindley’s side.

Heathcliff’s being subjected to racial stereotypes and prejudice can already be seen from the way he is first described by the narrator to be “as dark almost as if it came from the devil” and “a dirty, ragged, black-haired child”, and Heathcliff’s initial speech being is described as “gibberish” (Brontë 42). Later he is described via expressions such as “his black countenance”, “his sharp cannibal teeth, revealed by cold and wrath” (Brontë 209), and “he’s only half a man – not so much” (Brontë 214), in addition to being often referred to as a “gipsy” or “dark” by many of the characters. This is similar to the treatment, prejudice, and racial otherness the creature endures due to his appearance, as both of them are initially judged by their appearance, and periphrastic, racial names such as the “gipsy” are inflicted upon Heathcliff for years.

Nelly’s cruel initial treatment of Heathcliff is punished by the old Mr. Earnshaw for

being “cowardice and inhumanity” (Brontë 43), but she continues to abuse Heathcliff in secret. When Heathcliff is ill she describes him as being “as uncomplaining as a lamb; though hardness, not gentleness, made him give little trouble” (Brontë 44). This highlights the prejudice against Heathcliff and also the effect of Unlove which I will discuss in more detail in chapter 3.4. Heathcliff is already as a child using reaction formation as a defence mechanism, as he tries to be of as little trouble as possible, so that he would not be abandoned. Levy explains that “the Unloved ... learned in childhood that to expose one’s vulnerability is to risk increasing it” (161).

3.3 Barring entrance to society

The creature and Heathcliff both try to enter the society of others, but are in many ways barred from entering. Reese argues that “[t]he monster should by all rights inherit the rights of man and the citizen: he is possessed of sensibility and can reason on his own behalf” (53), and continues to point out how sarcastic the creature is about his being simultaneously “outside of the protection of the law” and still judged according to it (Reese 53-54) or even more harshly. This exclusion from society is underlined by the argument that what makes the creature terrifying in addition to his appearance is his undermining the racial or familial determinations of humans by demanding to be recognized as human and included in society (Lloyd Smith 216). It is suggested that the way Victor, the De Laceys, and the rescued child’s parents deny the creature’s humanity “echoes the larger cultural denial of full humanity to African slaves, a convenient and even necessary justification for their bondage and mistreatment” (Lloyd Smith 215-216). Franco describes how the creature’s learning language and trying to obtain the good opinion of the De Lacey family demonstrates his attempt to “enter the social symbolic order” (85), but as he fails time after time, he starts to feel increasingly angry and vengeful towards the whole mankind, and ceases to identify with the human population. After this, he goes to Victor with his plea, using isolation as a defence mechanism, as discussed in section 3.2.

Heathcliff is subjected to the same law of human ranking as the creature, which can be

seen in the constant belittling and malevolence he has to endure from Hindley for being “dark” and “a gipsy”. As shown earlier, both Heathcliff and the creature have been denied the things (a name and chance of proving themselves against prejudice) they need to enter society. Heathcliff’s solution to this is gathering a fortune, which he then uses to oppress those who have oppressed him. The creature on the other hand resolves to seek companionship by asking Victor to build him a bride. Before this, he has ventured to vengeance, but once more the creature attempts, or at least promises benevolence. He isolates his evident anger and the murder he committed as not his true nature, but as the result of neglect and exclusion. He claims that he would be good, if anyone treated him kindly: “If any being felt emotions of benevolence towards me, I should return them an hundred and an hundred fold; for that one creature’s sake, I would make peace with the whole kind! But I now indulge in dreams of a bliss that cannot be realised” (Shelley 174). By voicing his demand for a companion of his kind “the monster announces himself as member of a species, though he importantly lacks the requisite other members. The monster demands, in the name of community, that he be provided with not only a companion but also one of the formal preconditions of his status as member of a species – that there be others” (Reese 50). This illustrates how the creature has abandoned hope of being accepted into human society and uses the kind of identification that includes changing oneself to become more similar to someone else, even though that someone does not exist yet.

The creature hopes to gain “a right to the exchange of sympathies with ‘one of his own species.’ This claim, the monster believes, follows as a consequence of his tale” (Reese 50-51). The creature’s belief for the justification of his hopes is further illustrated by his expression “By the virtues that I once possessed, I demand this from you. Hear my tale” (Shelley 121). This quote demonstrates isolation as a defence mechanism, more precisely temporal bracketing, because the creature uses his former innocence and benevolence as reasons to be heard, while temporally isolating the evil deeds he has committed in the meantime. The creature needs his self-esteem to be

intact to make a convincing case to Victor, and cannot face the implications of his evil deeds, i.e. that he may not be deserving of kindness any more.

Heathcliff's plan of vengeance is much more secretive. He disappears for years and comes back a rich man. His manner and appearance have also changed, as described by Nelly: "He had grown a tall, athletic, well-formed man ... His upright carriage suggested the idea of his having been in the army. His countenance was much older in expression and decision of feature than Mr. Linton's; it looked intelligent, and retained no marks of former degradation. A half-civilized ferocity lurked yet in the depressed brows, and eyes full of black fire, but it was subdued" (Brontë 112). This demonstrates identification as a defence mechanism, Heathcliff is trying (and superficially succeeding) to become more like the others, and this scene illustrates how the others still want to see faults in him and find reasons to exclude him. Even though they are all surprised by his change, Catherine is the only one who would be ready to welcome him in their society. This also shows how Heathcliff is, unlike the creature, able to change his appearance and status from a "gipsy brat" to what the society requires and thus he is allowed in for a time sufficient for his revenge. Heathcliff practically kidnaps Isabella Linton into marriage and uses his own son Linton to lure in young Cathy. Heathcliff uses reaction formation as a defence mechanism, as both Isabella and Cathy are deceived by his apparent suitability, as he has learned to express himself in a civilised manner.

3.4 The denial of companionship and sexuality

The creature and Heathcliff are denied companionship and sexuality. Victor's complete abandonment of the "newborn" creature is as damaging as the abandonment of an infant would be to one's normal development. The creature chastises Victor and says "Accursed creator! Why did you form a monster so hideous that even *you* turned from me in disgust?" (Shelley 156). The concepts of Overlove and Unlove are crucial to this, as the effects of Overlove are clearly visible in Victor. Therefore it is even more unjust that he inflicts Unlove on his creation.

The creature identifies with Adam since he too is "apparently united by no link to any

other being in existence” (Shelley 155). It can be said that the creature’s “goal throughout the novel is to link with society in some way, desiring above all the love of another” (Franco 85). The injustice of Victor’s actions is pinpointed by the statement that “this parody of Adam receives no consolation from his maker” (Duyfhuizen 478), even though the creature, with several quotes from Milton, questions Victor about his motives and responsibilities in having created and then abandoned him. The creature parallels his treatment to Adam’s creation by his God, and questions his obligation to obey his creator’s rules, as he had not asked to be created. This is somewhat paralleled in *Wuthering Heights* as one would assume that old Mr. Earnshaw would be responsible for the happiness and socialisation of those he has taken under his protection. The result of Mr. Earnshaw’s protection is that by the time of his death two years after Heathcliff came into the house Hindley “had learnt to regard his father as an oppressor rather than a friend, and Heathcliff as a usurper of his parent’s affections, and his privileges” (Brontë 44). With Mr. Earnshaw dies Heathcliff’s chance of being treated humanely. For both the creature and Heathcliff the lack of a protector is what leads to abuse and the need for defence mechanisms.

Several studies find the creature’s request for a partner and a community entirely reasonable, and parallel the “denied control and fulfilment in sexuality” (Lloyd Smith 216) to the unjust treatment of slaves (Reese 49-50; Lloyd Smith 216). The effect of Unlove on the creature is depicted in his demand of a bride like himself to ensure she has no choice but to be with him: “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” (Shelley 172). This demonstrates the creature’s identification with his prospective companion. Reese argues that the creature “is excluded from the *human in general* because of his relation to a group – a group that does not yet exist” (59). Heathcliff on the other hand is often denied the companionship of others when he is literally locked in the cold and isolated attic. Heathcliff’s love for Catherine includes “[t]he distrust of the Unloved result[ing] from the

expectation of rejection ... [he] can trust only a love unable to leave” (Levy 159). The painful distrust of love learned in childhood leads to a need of “secure possession” (Levy 160). This is similar to the creature’s wish for a deformed bride, as Heathcliff does not want Catherine to become a lady, but wishes instead that she remain abused like he is. With all the abuse Heathcliff endures, he grows up Unloved despite of her love (of which he is unaware).

When the creature is finally denied a bride, he turns to relentless vengeance against Victor, instead of trying to channel his anger elsewhere as he did before. Victor describes the destroying of the bride like this: “The wretch saw me destroy the creature on whose future existence he depended for happiness, and, with a howl of devilish despair and revenge, withdrew” (Shelley 199). This shows how Victor is well aware of the inevitable consequences of the denial of companionship, though at this point the creature has lost his eloquence for a moment.

Parallel to the creature’s wishes, the Unloved Heathcliff loves one whom he believed to be in the same position as he himself is. Levy claims that shared wretchedness is “the essence of the childhood love between Heathcliff and Catherine. ... Their love, in other words, is founded on rejection” (164). Levy concludes that “[f]or Heathcliff, love has always been associated with the pain of absence, rejection, and disappointment” (162). As he is a foundling child with no proper place in Wuthering Heights, Heathcliff has had no opportunity to learn another kind of love. Mr. Earnshaw cared for him, but did not really include him in the family, and was not present in Heathcliff’s life but for a couple of years.

Levy argues that “[a]s Unloved, Heathcliff imposes loneliness on others in revenge against the lack of love he himself was forced to endure” (171). The Unloved can be seen protecting “himself from further loss of love by becoming the thief who steals it from others through making *them* suffer rejection” (Levy 167-168). Similarly, the creature cannot acquire the kind of love and inclusion Victor has enjoyed from birth, and he reacts by destroying everyone Victor loves. Heathcliff does the same to Hindley, and also to the children of those Heathcliff feels have wronged

him. Duyfhuizen points out that “[the] creature never strikes directly at Victor; instead, he strikes always through surrogates” (486), whereas Heathcliff does also directly attack Hindley in addition to avenging himself on all the members of the Earnshaw and Linton families.

Lloyd Smith argues that “the discourse of slavery in the novel is more than metaphorical” (216), because the creature ultimately becomes “the more autonomous of the two” (216), leading Victor to pursue him and even leaving supplies for Victor to ensure Victor follows him. This argument is highlighted in how the creature proclaims: “Slave, I before reasoned with you, but you have proved yourself unworthy of my condescension. ... You are my creator, but I am your master – obey!” (Shelley 200).

Heathcliff’s revenge is similar. When he has returned a rich man and swindles Wuthering Heights to his own possession, he seems to despondently echo all the wrongs he endured growing up there. Hindley tries to lock Heathcliff out, but is sorely beaten by him. After Hindley’s untimely death Heathcliff claims ownership over both Hindley’s estate and his son Hareton, muttering to the child “Now, my bonny lad, you are *mine!* And we’ll see if one tree won’t grow as crooked as the another, with the same wind to twist it!” (Brontë 221). For both Heathcliff and the creature the path of revenge described in these last paragraphs means they have changed themselves more similar to their tormentors, which is one of the characteristics of identification. Here it is not a positive occurrence, but arguably a means to survive, hence a working defence mechanism. They could have simply avenged themselves by murdering their oppressors, but instead they assumed Hindley and Victor’s former roles as those in command. The creature and Heathcliff’s identification with their oppressors is further shown in how they take care of Victor and Hindley even after the power balance has shifted. Heathcliff tends to Hindley’s wounds (roughly though), and the creature takes care of Victor’s provisions in the end and laments his death. This may also be linked to the cruel way the Unloved have learned to care for others.

4 Conclusion

It seems that both the creature and Heathcliff are subjected to several similar types of abuse. Both are denied a proper name and are not given a chance to prove themselves; instead of approval, they are shunned on the grounds of prejudice and the right of the more powerful. Both characters resort to parallel if not the same kind of premeditated violence, which can be excused to some degree due to the abuse they have suffered.

Along the way both the creature and Heathcliff use several Freudian defence mechanisms in order to cope with the abuse they endure. There is a slight tendency for the creature to use mechanisms that are more conscious and arguably more intellectual, such as reaction formation. Heathcliff on the other hand uses identification repeatedly. The defence mechanisms found in this research are reaction formation, sublimation, isolation, denial, and identification. As predicted, projection is something that can be seen used by other characters, and repression was not found.

As the parallels between the two novels seem undeniable, it might be worthwhile to conduct further studies concentrating on other characters and themes. For example the use of imagery regarding nature and weather, and the projection used by other characters are topics that could reveal interesting parallels. It might be an interesting addition to the discussion about which works have influenced *Wuthering Heights*.

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