



**Master-Slave Dialectic and Mimicry: A Postcolonial Analysis of the
Subjectivity of Frankenstein and his Monster in Mary Shelley's
*Frankenstein***

Dr. Hemangi Bhagwat & Tanya D'souza

Abstract

The central premise of this paper is to examine how Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* enacts the interminable master-slave dialectic. It will begin by temporally locating *Frankenstein* within the historical context of slavery, imperialism, and racism embroiled within Mary Shelley's nineteenth-century British society. While doing so, it will mainly uncover the racial stereotypes, Manichean binaries and colonial anxieties embedded within *Frankenstein* and the characters' perceptions of the Creature. The paper will then investigate how the master-slave dialectic is played out through the republican framework of the novel. It will undertake a contrasting analysis of the dialectic as propounded by Hegel and revisioned by Fanon. It will mainly examine Fanon's postcolonial revisioning of the Hegelian dialectic to understand how it enhances and limits the subjectivity of *Frankenstein* and the Creature. To arrive at a better understanding of this dialectic, the second half of this paper will analyse how Bhabha's concept of mimicry can be used as a tool to study the mechanisms used by *Frankenstein*'s Creature to negotiate his position within the spaces inhabited by his master and protectors. It will unpack how the education which the Creature accesses, is responsible for his ability to mimic, manipulate and revolt against his master. In conclusion, the paper will attempt to understand the result of the interminable revolt between *Frankenstein* and the Creature who oscillate between both the extremes of the master-slave dialectic.

Keywords: Postcolonial, Master, Slave, Race, Mimicry.