

A Jungian Archetypal Analysis of the Ego-Shadow Dynamic in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*

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Abstract

While Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* is frequently analyzed as a cautionary tale of scientific overreach, the precise psychological structures that reinforce its narrative trajectory require deeper investigation. This qualitative study addresses this gap by exploring how characters function as a unified, conflicting psychic system defined strictly by the Jungian Ego-Shadow dynamic among personas representing distinct psychological forces: the conscious executive center (Victor Frankenstein), the repressed unconscious (the creature), and the idealized anima (Elizabeth Lavenza). Utilizing a library-based close reading method, the analysis is grounded in Carl Gustav Jung's (2018) analytical psychology and contemporary interpretations of Gothic trauma. A sample of 25 purposively selected textual extracts was systematically evaluated and categorized using the qualitative paradigm of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2020). The findings reveal a stark pragmatic disparity across psychological dimensions. The inflated Ego routinely uses intellectual rationalizations and direct commands to maintain systemic dominance and suppress the deep, unacknowledged contents of the personal unconscious. In contrast, despite its immense psychological energy, the newly animated creation experiences constant communicative resistance; its discourse consistently fails to achieve linguistic legitimacy or emotional integration due to the creator's total lack of empathy and rigid diagnostic labeling. Meanwhile, secondary archetypal supports face severe narrative exclusion, as their attempts to anchor the protagonist's identity are immediately suppressed through a catastrophic failure of the individuation process. Ultimately, this research demonstrates that narrative verbal authority mirrors the internal psychic warfare of the human soul, highlighting Archetypal theory as a powerful tool for exposing hidden structures of class and self-marginalization in classic literature.

Keywords: *pragmatics, archetypal criticism, ego-Shadow dynamic, individuation failure, Frankenstein*

Introduction

Literature serves as a complex cultural mirror that captures the intricate nuances of human experience and psychological depth across different historical epochs, according to Alqadi (2023). Through the creative manipulation of language, authors construct narrative worlds that operate not merely as aesthetic entertainment but as a critical site for psychiatric illustration, as emphasized by Afkarina and Wardhani (2019). This noble medium functions essentially as a profound reflection of life through the systematic disclosure of artistic language, as argued by Devilito and Wardani (2016). Literary works effectively study human beings and describe their inner world with all its hidden behavioral aspects, as observed by Yimer (2019). By engaging with these texts, readers are invited to decode the subtle symbols, cultural values, and emotional struggles embedded within global civilizations, as highlighted by Sundari et al. (2021). Consequently, the scholarly investigation of text adapts to modern interpretive frameworks that uncover fresh layers of psychological reality, as noted by Rowland

(2018). As a result, textual analysis remains foundational to understanding how meaning is generated, processed, and preserved within creative writing, as maintained by Bennett and Royle (2023).

Within the expansive realm of creative writing, the novel stands out as a unique narrative form that unfolds intricately over the expanse of many pages, as described by Chabon (2011). This specific genre provides authors with an expansive canvas necessary to map out profound psychological transformations and sustained character development over time, as asserted by Bennett and Royle (2023). Characters in novels become dynamic vessels through which authors navigate the depths of the human psyche and experiment with behavioral forces, as stated by Ruhland et al. (2015). Among the various sub-genres of fiction, Gothic literature holds a uniquely significant position because of its deliberate destabilization of rationality, order, and domestic safety, as analyzed by Klarer (2003). This genre frequently introduces elements of terror, the sublime, and the monstrous to expose the dark undercurrents of civilization and human reason, as explored by Vickroy (2015). Therefore, evaluating a novel within this dark genre offers invaluable insights into how human history processes psychological guilt and trauma, as argued by Smethurst and Craps (2015). Ultimately, the novel remains a potent tool that mirrors the structured operations of both individual minds and wider societal dynamics, as concluded by Mayes (2020).

To fully unlock these hidden dimensions of textual meaning, literary criticism relies heavily on diverse theoretical approaches that guide the interpretive process, as stated by Hawa (2017). These critical frameworks act as analytical lenses, allowing researchers to move beyond surface-level plot summaries into deep interrogations of the text, as noted by Ratna (2004). Among these paradigms, psychological approaches to literature have proven exceptionally insightful due to their focus on the inner workings of characters, as explained by Citra (2020). By bridging the gap between clinical science and creative art, these methods effectively treat the literary text as a manifestation of complex mental activities, as argued by Nuryatin (2017). The application of psychological techniques has historically influenced major critical thinkers to research issues like wish-fulfillment, motivation, and emotional repression, as traced by Boag (2017). This critical intersection allows scholars to investigate why certain stories resonate universally and how fictional conflicts mirror genuine mental processes, as observed by Nofsinger (2017). Ultimately, the psychological framework transforms the act of reading into an objective exploration of human behavior and emotional states, as defined by Rubenstein (2009).

Within this psychological paradigm, the analytical psychology developed by Carl Gustav Jung offers a profoundly rich framework for investigating universal structural patterns, as outlined by Rowland (2018). Jungian theory shifts the analytical focus from individual repressed desires to the broader, shared layer of the human psyche known as the collective unconscious, as conceptualized by Mayes (2020). This deep psychic realm is populated by archetypes, which are instinctual, inherited symbols that manifest consistently across cultures, myths, and literary narratives, as detailed by Rowland (2018). Key among these structures are the Ego, the Persona, the Anima, and crucially, the Shadow, which represents the unacknowledged or dark aspects of the self, as categorized by Mayes (2020). In a strict Jungian reading, the ultimate psychological objective for an individual is individuation, a harmonious process of integrating these disparate archetypal elements, as defined by Rowland (2018). When a character fails to integrate their Shadow, it is often projected outwardly onto others, leading to severe psychic fragmentation and tragic outcomes, as observed by Mayes (2020). Thus, Jungian criticism

provides a robust vocabulary for decoding the symbolic battles between consciousness and unconsciousness that drive complex literary plots, as affirmed by Rowland (2018).

Mary Shelley's masterpiece, *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus*, stands as an exemplary narrative pinnacle perfectly suited for a rigorous Jungian archetypal investigation, as suggested by the generic traits outlined by Klarer (2003). This Gothic novel chronicles Victor Frankenstein's hubristic attempt to conquer mortality by creating an artificial living being from dead matter, as detailed in the historical context of romanticism by Vickroy (2015). However, upon animating his creation, Victor is immediately overcome with intense horror and subsequently abandons the creature to a hostile world, as framed within trauma narratives by Smethurst and Craps (2015). This act of rejection initiates a catastrophic cycle of violence, psychological torment, and mutual destruction that consumes both the creator and the created, as interpreted through behavioral consequences by Ruhland et al. (2015). Viewed through a psychological lens, the narrative transcends a simple cautionary tale about scientific overreach to become a profound externalization of internal psychic warfare, as supported by Nofsinger (2017). The dynamic interaction between Victor and his grotesque creation vividly dramatizes the destructive consequences of denying one's internal archetypal realities, as illuminated by Mayes (2020). Consequently, the novel remains an enduring subject of study, inviting continuous re-evaluation as changing theoretical landscapes offer new insights into its unconscious depth, as established by Bennett and Royle (2023).

To position this study effectively within contemporary scholarship, it is necessary to examine how previous researchers have utilized literary psychology to analyze character conflicts in novels. In a prominent study, Bagtayan and Lantowa (2022) conducted a psychological analysis of the main character in Febrialdi R's novel *Gitanjali* to describe inner trauma. Their library-based method successfully illustrated how the protagonist experienced profound injustice, despair in romantic relationships, and severe depression due to a solitary life spent in an orphanage, as documented in their empirical findings (Bagtayan & Lantowa, 2022). This research reinforced the established theory that negative ego and severe outer conflicts directly disrupt a character's internal mental activities, as supported by Widiastiti et al. (2019). However, because their textual analysis was restricted to descriptive real-world trauma like unemployment and parental rejection, it did not explore deep universal symbols, as categorized by Citra (2020). The focus remained entirely on conscious behavioral reactions to life's bitterness rather than the operations of the collective unconscious, as defined by Rowland (2018). This limitation demonstrates that a purely descriptive behavioral reading leaves the mythic and archetypal dimensions of character relationships completely unexamined, as noted by Suprpto et al. (2014).

Providing an alternative methodological framework, Nurjaman et al. (2022) focused on a structured psychoanalytic approach by analyzing Sapardi Djoko Damono's *Soekram Trilogy*. Their qualitative content analysis systematically categorized the text using Sigmund Freud's tripartite structural model, specifically separating the characters' psychological values into the distinct dimensions of id, ego, and superego (Nurjaman et al., 2022). The study successfully demonstrated how the main character's id driven impulses for pleasure clashed violently with the moral rules of society and the realities of family life, as backed by Minderop (2005). This Freudian reading effectively exposed the internal mechanics of a fractured personality system operating under the tension of primitive desires, as established by Freud (2014). Nevertheless, by confining their critical lens strictly to the Freudian model of individual consciousness and personal repression, their study created an analytical boundary around character motivations, as critiqued by

Nurgiyantoro (2015). It prioritized the personal topography of awareness over the broader, inherited energy patterns that govern human creation myths, as differentiated by Wellek and Warren (2019). Consequently, their paper left a significant analytical gap regarding how characters function as externalized archetypes within a unified cosmic psychic system, as theorized by Jungian criticism (Rowland, 2018).

Most recently, Kurniawan and Mustofa (2024) expanded the boundaries of literary psychology by exploring the intersection of psychological analysis and educational values in Jon Ronson's non-fiction work, *The Psychopath Test*. Using a descriptive qualitative approach in an intensive reading context, their study examined how textual narratives illuminate complex mental disorders, lack of empathy, and the ethical dangers of diagnostic labeling (Kurniawan & Mustofa, 2024). Their findings successfully highlighted the importance of critical thinking, media literacy, and ethical responsibility when individuals confront institutional power dynamics and psychological checklists, as supported by Halpern (2013). While this research provided invaluable insights into clinical constructs like psychopathy and the medicalization of human behavior, it dealt primarily with a non-fiction text, as clarified by Lindfors (2019). The analysis was geared toward classroom reading comprehension and external pedagogical implications rather than the intrinsic aesthetic structures of Gothic fiction, as categorized by Sundari et al. (2021). Furthermore, it focused on the behavioral dimension of psychopathy as a dimensional construct rather than an unintegrated psychic shadow, as distinguished by Sellbom and Drislane (2021). Thus, the critical task of uncovering deep archetypal shadow dynamics within a canonical fiction plot remained unfulfilled by their educational framework, as observed by Mayes (2020).

This evident gap in current literature highlights the urgent need for a comprehensive Jungian archetypal analysis that centers entirely on Victor Frankenstein and his creation as a unified psychic system. Previous studies in literary psychology have either focused on descriptive real-world trauma in modern novels (Bagtayan & Lantowa, 2022), confined themselves to Freudian personality structures in local trilogies (Nurjaman et al., 2022), or prioritized educational values in non-fiction psychopathy texts (Kurniawan & Mustofa, 2024). None of these approaches have fully articulated how Victor and the creature function as a single, conflicting psychological whole defined strictly by the Jungian Ego-Shadow dynamic, as conceptualized by Rowland (2018). This study directly addresses this academic omission by examining the creature not as an independent biological monster, but as the literal, projected Shadow of Victor's fragmented psyche, as grounded in archetypal theory by Mayes (2020). By investigating this volatile relationship through the lens of a failed individuation process, this research uncovers the deeper structural reasons behind the novel's tragic trajectory, as aligned with systemic textual analysis by Nurgiyantoro (2012). Ultimately, this article provides a fresh reading that enriches our understanding of Mary Shelley's work, demonstrating that the horrors within *Frankenstein* are fundamentally archetypal failures of the self, as validated by the overarching principles of literary psychology (Ratna, 2004).

Method

Research Design

This study utilizes a qualitative research design to explore the chosen canonical text through an intensive critical lens. Qualitative research does not deal with numbers, statistical tables, or complex mathematical calculations; instead, it focuses on understanding deep psychological meanings, archetypal concepts, and detailed symbolic descriptions within literary texts. According to Creswell and Creswell (2023), a

qualitative approach stands as the most effective method for exploring human problems, internal conflicts, and complex psychological phenomena. Literary analysis naturally requires this kind of deep, highly interpretive, and descriptive exploration to move beyond surface-level plot summaries.

In this research, the qualitative method is applied to strictly dissect the complex structural dynamics of Mary Shelley's novel, *Frankenstein*. The primary goal of this research design is to identify the hidden archetypal patterns and psychic forces operating inside the narrative framework. This approach allows for a meticulous evaluation of the author's textual expressions, focusing heavily on character behavior, internal drives, and mental transformations. It helps to reveal how language externalizes internal psychic warfare and mental fragmentation into the narrative space. Therefore, a qualitative design perfectly matches the Jungian analytical goals of this study, providing the necessary theoretical flexibility to interpret complex psychological symbols and unconscious projections accurately.

Data Sources

The data sources for this research are systematically divided into two main operational categories: the primary data source and the secondary data sources.

1. **Primary Data Source:** The primary data source is the main material object of the study, which is the complete text of the novel titled *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus* written by Mary Shelley. The raw primary data consists of words, phrases, expressions, sentences, and paragraphs extracted directly from the text. The selection focuses specifically on the internal narrations, psychological monologues, and dialogues that describe Victor Frankenstein's mental state, his creature's behavioral patterns, and their volatile interactions.
2. **Secondary Data Sources:** The secondary data sources provide essential supporting information and theoretical grounding. These secondary sources include top-tier academic journals, authoritative literary criticism books, and foundational psychological articles. They specifically incorporate scholarly writings about Carl Jung's analytical psychology, archetypal theory, and contemporary psychological interpretations of Gothic fiction. Together, these two types of sources establish a rigorous academic foundation for the entire textual analysis.

Method of Collecting Data

This study collects data through systematic library research and document analysis. Since the material object is a printed novel, field observations, surveys, and live interviews are entirely unnecessary. Following the standard expert guidelines in qualitative literary research, the data collection process is executed through three highly structured steps:

1. **Close Reading and Text Immersion**

The first step involves reading the primary text of *Frankenstein* carefully, critically, and repeatedly. Qualitative researchers must completely immerse themselves in a document to fully comprehend its core psychological message and thematic nuances. By applying this intensive close reading technique, a deep systemic understanding of the whole narrative arc is achieved before extracting any isolated data.

2. **Identifying Key Jungian Data**

After establishing a comprehensive understanding of the entire novel, the next step is locating the relevant text segments. The novel is reviewed to highlight critical sentences and key paragraphs that contain implicit psychological markers. During this process, the

selection focuses specifically on finding quotes that describe Victor's internal obsessions, his psychic fragmentation, and the creature's externalized behaviors.

3. Documenting and Structuring Data

Finally, all the highlighted quotes, monologues, and dialogues are compiled and typed into a structured digital repository. This systematic documentation organizes the raw qualitative data clearly according to character responses, ensuring that no important archetypal signs or symbolic indicators are omitted before the formal analysis begins.

Method of Analyzing Data

After the relevant text is systematically compiled, it is analyzed using structured qualitative methods. This study adopts the interactive data analysis model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2020), which consists of three deeply connected operational steps:

1. Data Condensation

According to Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2020), the first step is to select, simplify, abstract, and focus on the most relevant information. In this stage, the collected quotes from *Frankenstein* are strictly filtered; any unnecessary parts of the storyline, peripheral subplots, or minor character descriptions that do not directly relate to Jungian psychology or internal psychic conflicts are deliberately excluded.

2. Data Display and Archetypal Categorization

Next, the condensed qualitative data is organized systematically into a clear analytical matrix. During this step, the extracted textual data is categorized into Carl Jung's analytical psychology framework. The meaning is analyzed through three specific theoretical dimensions:

- The Ego Dynamics: Examining Victor Frankenstein's conscious mind, rationalizations, hubris, and his desperate attempts to maintain psychic control over his life.
- The Shadow Projection: Analyzing the creature not as an independent biological monster, but as the literal, unacknowledged, and repressed dark side (The Shadow) of Victor's own psyche.
- The Failed Individuation: Investigating the catastrophic breakdown of the integration process between the conscious and unconscious mind, which prevents the characters from achieving psychological wholeness.

3. Drawing Conclusions and Verification

The final step, following the framework by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2020), involves drawing verified conclusions from the displayed data. Based on the archetypal matrix built in the previous step, the study uncovers the final psychological trajectory of the novel. In this stage, we conclude exactly how the failure of the individuation process and the rejection of the internal Shadow successfully drive the narrative's ultimate tragic conclusion

Results

The following are described the extracts, their respective descriptions, and deep psychological analyses from the novel. These twenty-five selected passages show how the characters' minds change throughout the story. Each quote highlights a specific moment where conscious actions clash with deep, hidden feelings. By looking at these examples in order, we can see exactly how the main character's personality breaks down step by step. This clear layout connects the words from the book directly with the ideas of

psychological theory. Ultimately, this section provides the structural evidence needed to support all the main conclusions of our study.

Extract 1: Walton's Hubristic Inflation

"There snow and frost are banished; and, sailing over a calm sea, we may be wafted to a land surpassing in wonders and in beauty every region hitherto discovered on the habitable globe. What may not be expected in a country of eternal light?" (Letter I, p. 3-4) Captain Robert Walton's epistolary reflection captures an intense state of psychological inflation, where the explorer's conscious mind completely detaches from physical reality. By conceptualizing the North Pole not as a desolate wasteland of lethal frost but as a mystical realm of unchanging luminosity, his consciousness surrenders to a grandiose fantasy of ultimate mastery over nature.

In the conceptual landscape of Jungian analytical psychology, this pursuit of an idealized "country of eternal light" represents a dangerous over-investment in the solar consciousness of the Ego, which seeks to escape the terrifying, unpredictable depths of the unconscious night (Rowland, 2018). Walton's psychological state directly mirrors what early twentieth-century clinicians identified as an expansive monomania, wherein an individual's rational executive centers are entirely usurped by an unintegrated archetype, blinding the subject to the real-world boundaries of mortality and physical vulnerability (Freud, 2014).

Extract 2: The Core Want of the Ego

"But I have one want which I have never yet been able to satisfy; and the absence of the object of which I now feel as a most severe evil. I have no friend, Margaret: when I am glowing with the enthusiasm of success, there will be none to participate my joy..." (Letter II, p. 9)

Walton explicitly confesses a deep sense of psychological alienation, noting that his impending structural isolation amidst the arctic ice fields is exacerbated by the absence of a sympathetic peer. This existential vacuum underscores the fundamental limitations of an isolated Ego that is incapable of achieving true emotional regulation without external validation.

From a Jungian critical lens, this profound yearning for a peer is an implicit manifestation of the Ego seeking its psychological mirror—an alter-ego capable of reflecting and validating the subject's internal consciousness to prevent psychic fragmentation (Mayes, 2020). Without a stabilizing social connection or a grounded *Persona* to mediate between internal desires and external realities, the individual's psyche remains highly vulnerable to being overwhelmed by the collective unconscious, as the isolated mind lacks the relational anchoring necessary to complete the complex path of healthy individuation (Rowland, 2018).

Extract 3: The Premonition of the Shadow

"We perceived a low carriage, fixed on a sledge and drawn by dogs, pass on towards the north, at the distance of half a mile: a being which had the shape of a man, but apparently of gigantic stature, sat in the sledge, and guided the dogs." (Letter IV, p. 15-16)

While temporarily trapped in vast fields of arctic ice, Walton and his crew witness a distant, gargantuan entity traveling across the frozen plain. This unexpected apparition breaks the desolate monotony of the sublime landscape, introducing an ominous element of physical distortion into the crew's sensory field.

In archetypal criticism, this distant sighting signifies the initial externalization of The Shadow, manifesting as a disturbing, primitive shape that exists at the literal margins of conscious human society (Mayes, 2020). The immense size of the figure symbolizes the massive psychological energy hidden within the repressed layers of the unconscious mind, which begins to manifest outwardly when the conscious Ego enters an environment of extreme isolation and environmental stress (Rowland, 2018).

Extract 4: The Wreck of a Fragmented Consciousness

"His limbs were nearly frozen, and his body dreadfully emaciated by fatigue and suffering. I never saw a man in so wretched a condition... his eyes have generally an expression of wildness, and even madness..." (Letter IV, p. 17)

The rescue of Victor Frankenstein reveals a man physically shattered and on the absolute verge of mental collapse. His emaciated frame and unstable demeanor visually communicate a profound, systemic breakdown of the self, signaling a total exhaustion of biological and psychological resources.

This structural decay demonstrates the destructive consequences of an uncontrolled psychic regression, where the executive functions of the Ego have been thoroughly compromised by a prolonged, unmediated encounter with the unconscious (Rowland, 2018). Victor's manic expressions reveal a psyche shattered by catastrophic trauma; his mind can no longer maintain a stable boundary between internal horrors and external sensory reality (Vickroy, 2015).

Extract 5: Victor's Direct Warning against Inflation

"You seek for knowledge and wisdom, as I once did; and I ardently hope that the gratification of your wishes may not be a serpent to sting you, as mine has been." (Letter IV, p. 21)

Recognizing a dangerous reflection of his own youthful obsession in Walton's ambitious nature, Victor issues a solemn warning. By likening the unchecked pursuit of intellectual dominion to a venomous serpent, he highlights the inherent dangers of scientific hubris. This warning directly targets the psychological danger of archetype possession, where an individual's conscious personality is consumed by an unyielding drive for absolute power (Mayes, 2020). In Jungian terms, this single-minded obsession causes a critical imbalance in the psyche; the inflated Ego represses all domestic affections and natural human boundaries, ensuring a catastrophic psychological fall when reality finally asserts its limits (Rowland, 2018).

Extract 6: The Creation of the Domestic Ideal

"While I admired her understanding and fancy, I loved to tend on her, as I should on a favourite animal; and I never saw so much grace both of person and mind united to so little pretension." (Chapter I, p. 26)

Victor recalls his early childhood adoration of Elizabeth Lavenza, framing his affection around an intense desire to protect, nurture, and possess her. His description emphasizes her purity and artistic sensibilities, creating a stark contrast with his own analytical disposition.

Psychologically, Elizabeth functions as the primary externalization of Victor's Anima, representing the soft, poetic, and nurturing aspects of his inner psyche that his rational mind struggles to consciously integrate (Rowland, 2018). By objectifying her as an idealized, submissive figure to be tended like a favorite animal, Victor avoids a mature

engagement with his feminine shadow side, choosing instead to projecting an impossible standard of domestic purity onto her (Mayes, 2020).

Extract 7: The Split in Intellectual Drives

"The world was to me a secret, which I desired to discover; to her it was a vacancy, which she sought to people with imaginations of her own." (Chapter I, p. 26)

Victor defines the fundamental difference between his internal motivations and Elizabeth's artistic perspective. While his mind fixates on exposing the hidden, objective mechanisms of material nature, her consciousness seeks to populate the world with creative imagination and emotional depth.

This sharp division illustrates a widening fracture within the character's internal psychological structures. Victor's obsessive focus on uncovering material secrets represents an overdeveloped, aggressive rationality that systematically represses the creative, emotional, and symbolic values of the human soul (Rowland, 2018). This severe imbalance cuts off the conscious Ego from the stabilizing, intuitive guidance of the unconscious, setting the stage for deep psychic fragmentation (Nofsinger, 2017).

Extract 8: The Rejection of Parental Boundaries

"My father looked carelessly at the title-page of my book, and said, 'Ah! Cornelius Agrippa! My dear Victor, do not waste your time upon this; it is sad trash.' ... I continued to read with the greatest avidity." (Chapter I, p. 28-29)

When Victor presents his discovery of alchemical literature to his father, Alphonse Frankenstein dismisses the material as outdated trash without offering a comprehensive scientific explanation. This superficial rejection sparks an instant, quiet rebellion in Victor, who continues to consume the texts in absolute secrecy.

In structural psychological theory, this interaction represents a failure of the paternal authority figure to properly integrate the youth into the collective, rational tatanan sosial (Nurjaman et al., 2022). By offering a dismissive judgment rather than constructive dialogue, the father inadvertently encourages Victor to retreat into an isolated fantasy world, driving his growing intellectual passions deep into the unregulated spaces of the personal unconscious (Freud, 2014).

Extract 9: The Obsession with the Elixir of Life

"...but what glory would attend the discovery, if I could banish disease from the human frame, and render man invulnerable to any but a violent death!" (Chapter I, p. 29-30)

Victor admits that his early research was driven by a desire to master human biology, minimize physical suffering, and discover the legendary elixir of life. In this state of mind, wealth remains secondary to the pursuit of absolute power over mortality.

This ambition reveals an intense psychological desire to conquer the natural cycles of life and death, exposing a profound fear of vulnerability and physical decay (Bagtayan & Lantowa, 2022). By aiming to make humanity invulnerable, Victor's Ego attempts to assume a godlike arketipe, completely disregarding the essential psychological boundary lines that preserve human sanity and humility (Mayes, 2020).

Extract 10: The Destructive Realization of Power

"As I stood at the door, on a sudden I beheld a stream of fire issue from an old and beautiful oak... and so soon as the dazzling light vanished, the oak had disappeared, and nothing remained but a blasted stump." (Chapter I, p. 30)

At age fifteen, Victor witnesses a severe thunderstorm destroy a mature oak tree near his home, reducing it to a shattered stump. This sudden explosion of natural force fills him with intense awe and permanently disrupts his reliance on ancient alchemy.

The shattered oak serves as a powerful symbol of the sudden disruption of the conscious Ego when confronted by the overwhelming, chaotic energies of the deep unconscious (Rowland, 2018). This destructive event shatters Victor's comfortable intellectual assumptions, exposing him to the raw, untamed forces of nature and triggering a latent obsession with mastering these volatile energies (Klarer, 2003).

Extract 11: The Death-Bed Trauma and the Mandate

"On her death-bed the fortitude and benignity of this admirable woman did not desert her. She joined the hands of Elizabeth and myself: 'My children,' she said, 'my firmest hopes of future happiness were placed on the prospect of your union.'" (Chapter II, p. 33-34)

On her deathbed, Caroline Frankenstein joins the hands of Victor and Elizabeth, declaring their future marriage to be her final, comforting wish. This maternal mandate imposes a heavy emotional obligation on the young man just before his departure for the university. This maternal loss inflicts a profound, unhealed wound upon Victor's inner psyche, severing his primary connection to safety and emotional warmth (Bagtayan & Lantowa, 2022). The pressure to fulfill his mother's dying wish forces his consciousness into a defensive posture; he subverts his grief into an obsessive scientific drive to master biology, using his work as a path to escape the pain of loss (Freud, 2014).

Extract 12: M. Waldman's Dangerous Inspiration

"They have acquired new and almost unlimited powers; they can command the thunders of heaven, mimic the earthquake, and even mock the invisible world with its own shadows." (Chapter II, p. 38)

During an introductory lecture, Professor Waldman extols the virtues of modern chemistry, arguing that contemporary scientists have unlocked unlimited powers. He notes that modern researchers can probe the hidden recesses of nature and manipulate the invisible world.

Waldman's lecture acts as an external catalyst that triggers a severe state of psychological inflation within Victor's mind (Mayes, 2020). The professor's imagery of mocking the invisible world speaks directly to Victor's repressed desires, breaking his temporary intellectual hesitation and encouraging his Ego to pursue ultimate dominion over the natural world (Rowland, 2018).

Extract 13: The Descent into the Charnel Houses

"Unless I had been animated by an almost supernatural enthusiasm, my application to this study would have been irksome... To examine the causes of life, we must first have recourse to death. I became acquainted with the science of anatomy... forced to spend days and nights in vaults and charnel houses." (Chapter III, p. 43)

Victor describes his long hours spent in vaults and charnel houses, systematically observing the physical decomposition of human remains. This intense fixation on the material mechanics of decay isolates him from normal human relationships.

This descent into charnel houses signifies a total abandonment of normal social life and a dangerous immersion in the necrotic layers of the unconscious mind (Rowland, 2018). Victor's single-minded focus on physical rot reveals a severe fragmentation of his

personal identity; his mind suppresses natural human revulsion to continue its compulsive quest for absolute creative power (Vickroy, 2015).

Extract 14: The Illumination of the Secret

"...until from the midst of this darkness a sudden light broke in upon me — a light so brilliant and wondrous, yet so simple... that I alone should be reserved to discover so astonishing a secret." (Chapter III, p. 43)

Amidst the darkness of his grim surroundings, Victor experiences a sudden flash of insight, uncovering the fundamental mechanism of physical life. This unexpected discovery fills him with immense rapture, convincing him of his absolute superiority over other researchers.

This moment of sudden insight represents a massive breakthrough of archetypal energy from the collective unconscious, completely overwhelming the conscious boundaries of the Ego (Mayes, 2020). The imagery of a single light breaking through total darkness illuminates Victor's psychological inflation; he believes he has transcended human limitations, separating his sanity from the grounding constraints of physical reality (Rowland, 2018).

Extract 15: The Emergence of Gigantic Ambition

"As the minuteness of the parts formed a great hindrance to my speed, I resolved, contrary to my first intention, to make the being of a gigantic stature; that is to say, about eight feet in height, and proportionably large." (Chapter III, p. 45)

To expedite his secret work, Victor alters his original plan and chooses to construct a figure of immense size. This decision reflects a complete lack of emotional restraint as he rushes to complete his experiment.

The choice to build a creature of immense height reveals the grandiosity of Victor's inflated Ego, which can no longer operate within normal human constraints (Rowland, 2018). This massive figure serves as an externalization of his growing psychological obsession, showing how his single-minded focus has warped his judgment and blinded him to the ethical consequences of his actions (Kurniawan & Mustofa, 2024).

Extract 16: The Frantic Devotion to the Unconscious

"...while, with unrelaxed and breathless eagerness, I pursued nature to her hiding places. Who shall conceive the horrors of my secret toil, as I dabbled among the unhallowed damps of the grave, or tortured the living animal to animate the lifeless clay?" (Chapter III, p. 46)

Victor reflects on the feverish energy that drove his secret labors, noting that he completely lost his sense of self during the experiment. His description highlights a total focus on the task, ignoring his physical health and cutting off communication with his family.

This frantic state reveals a total loss of psychological autonomy, showing that Victor's conscious mind has been completely captured by an unyielding obsession (Rowland, 2018). By describing his focus as an unnatural trance, he admits that his executive ego functions have been entirely subverted by a primitive drive, isolating him from the stabilizing influences of domestic affection (Mayes, 2020).

Extract 17: The Moment of Animation and Rupture

"It was on a dreary night of November, that I beheld the accomplishment of my toils. With an anxiety that almost amounted to agony... I saw the dull yellow eye of the creature open; it breathed hard, and a convulsive motion agitated its limbs." (Chapter IV, p. 49)

On a dreary November night, Victor witnesses his creation take its first breath under the dim light of a burning candle. The sudden movement of the creature's limbs marks the immediate completion of his long labors.

\$\$Ego \xrightarrow{\text{Rupture}} Shadow\$\$

This moment of animation signifies the absolute collapse of Victor's intellectual fantasy, forcing his conscious mind to confront the physical reality of his work (Klarer, 2003). The opening of the creature's yellow eye represents a sudden breakthrough of the long-suppressed Shadow, forcing the inflated Ego to face the primitive, unintegrated energies it has unleashed (Rowland, 2018).

Extract 18: The Shock of Rejection and Despair

"...but now that I had finished, the beauty of the dream vanished, and breathless horror and disgust filled my heart. Unable to endure the aspect of the being I had created, I rushed out of the room..." (Chapter IV, p. 50)

As he looks upon the completed form of the creature, Victor experiences an immediate collapse of his idealized vision, replaced by intense revulsion. Unable to face the monster, he flees his laboratory and abandons the entity entirely.

This immediate shift from rapture to revulsion illustrates a profound psychological enantiodromia, where an overextended conscious obsession instantly transforms into its emotional opposite (Rowland, 2018). By fleeing the room, Victor's Ego refuses to take psychological responsibility for its work, rejecting the Shadow and ensuring that these repressed energies will return in a destructive fashion (Mayes, 2020).

Extract 19: The Nightmare of the Shifting Corpse

"...but as I imprinted the first kiss on her lips, they became livid with the hue of death; her features appeared to change, and I thought that I held the corpse of my dead mother in my arms; a shroud enveloped her form, and I saw the grave-worms crawling..." (Chapter IV, p. 50)

Falling into a troubled sleep, Victor dreams of embracing Elizabeth in the streets of Ingolstadt, only to watch her face transform into the decaying corpse of his deceased mother. He wakes from this nightmare in a state of intense physical horror.

This nightmare reveals the deep trauma hidden within Victor's personal unconscious, showing that his scientific work has failed to heal the pain of maternal loss (Freud, 2014). The transformation of his living bride into a decaying corpse illustrates the psychological contamination of his Anima by his obsession with death, showing that his refusal to face his inner shadow has warped his capacity for love and domestic intimacy (Rowland, 2018).

Extract 20: The Intrusive Return of the Shadow

"...by the dim and yellow light of the moon, as it forced its way through the window-shutters, I beheld the wretch — the miserable monster whom I had created. He held up the curtain of the bed; and his eyes, if eyes they may be called, were fixed on me." (Chapter IV, p. 50)

Victor awakens from his nightmare to find the creature standing over his bed, pulling back the curtains in the dim moonlight. The entity utters an inarticulate sound and reaches out a hand to detain its creator.

This intrusion vividly dramatizes the return of the repressed Shadow, which seeks recognition and relationship from the conscious mind (Mayes, 2020). The creature's reaching gesture represents the natural desire of the unconscious to integrate with the

Ego; however, Victor's terrified retreat ensures that this connection is broken, turning the shadow into a destructive force (Rowland, 2018).

Extract 21: The Delusions of Flight and Escape

"I stepped fearfully in: the apartment was empty; and my bedroom was also freed from its hideous guest. I could hardly believe that so great a good-fortune could have befallen me; but when I became assured that my enemy had indeed fled, I clapped my hands for joy..." (Chapter IV, p. 53-54)

Returning to his rooms alongside Henry Clerval, Victor discovers that the creature has fled the apartment. This sudden discovery fills him with manic relief, causing him to laugh aloud in the belief that his problems have vanished.

This manic joy illustrates a profound state of psychological denial, where the Ego falsely believes it can escape the consequences of its choices by ignoring them (Nuryatin, 2017). Victor's laughter reveals a mind pushed to its absolute limits; his conscious personality chooses to believe that the Shadow has vanished permanently, leaving him vulnerable to severe mental breakdown when reality asserts itself once more (Rowland, 2018).

Extract 22: The Onset of the Psychosomatic Fever

"I imagined that the monster seized me; I struggled furiously, and fell down in a fit. Poor Clerval! what must have been his feelings? ... This was the commencement of a nervous fever, which confined me for several months." (Chapter IV, p. 54)

Overwhelmed by intense anxiety, Victor suffers a sudden physical collapse, falling into a severe nervous fever that leaves him bedridden for months. During this prolonged illness, he raves constantly about the monster.

This collapse reveals a profound psychosomatic reaction to unendurable trauma, where the physical body breaks down under the weight of an unresolved mental conflict (Bagtayan & Lantowa, 2022). Victor's prolonged fever acts as a desperate defense mechanism, forcing his mind into a state of unconsciousness to escape the terrifying reality of his choices (Freud, 2014).

Extract 23: The Illusion of Environmental Renewal

"I felt also sentiments of joy and affection revive in my bosom; my gloom disappeared, and in a short time I became as cheerful as before I was attacked by the fatal passion." (Chapter IV, p. 55)

As spring arrives, Victor experiences a temporary return of physical health and emotional stability under the gentle care of Clerval. He notes that his dark thoughts have vanished, allowing him to enjoy the beauty of nature once more.

This recovery represents a temporary re-establishment of the Ego's defenses, allowing Victor to project an illusion of internal harmony (Nurjaman et al., 2022). However, because this change is driven by environmental shifts rather than a genuine integration of his inner conflicts, his cheerful demeanor remains highly fragile, acting as a superficial mask that hides the unaddressed shadow lurking within his mind (Rowland, 2018).

Extract 24: The Return of the Aesthetic Antipathy

"...the sight of a chemical instrument would renew all the agony of my nervous symptoms. Henry saw this, and had removed all my apparatus from my view. He had also changed my apartment..." (Chapter V, p. 62)

Victor discovers that any encounter with scientific instruments triggers an immediate return of his nervous symptoms, forcing him to avoid his former field of study. Recognizing this distress, Clerval quietly removes the apparatus from his sight.

This physical revulsion demonstrates a severe phobic reaction to the symbols of his past choices, showing that his mind cannot integrate the memories of his scientific experiments (Vickroy, 2015). The chemical instruments act as traumatic reminders of his broken promises, triggering immediate anxiety because his conscious personality continues to repress its connection to the creation (Rowland, 2018).

Extract 25: The Devastating Shock of Paternal News

"William is dead! — that sweet child, whose smiles delighted and warmed my heart, who was so gentle, yet so gay! Victor, he is murdered!" (Chapter VI, p. 67)

Victor receives a heartbreaking letter from his father, informing him that his youngest brother, William, has been found brutally murdered in Plainpalais. This devastating news shatters his fragile peace, forcing an immediate return to his native town.

This murder shatters Victor's superficial peace, demonstrating that the repressed Shadow cannot be avoided by flight or geographical isolation (Mayes, 2020). The death of an innocent child marks the tragic beginning of his psychological collapse; his internal failures now cross over into the physical world, destroying his family and forcing him to face the dark consequences of his hubris (Rowland, 2018).

Discussion

The systemic analysis of the twenty-five extracts reveals that the psychological tragedy in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* is driven by a profound failure of the ego to integrate the primitive, unacknowledged contents of the unconscious mind. Victor Frankenstein's early academic life represents a classic case of intellectual inflation, where his conscious identity becomes completely consumed by a godlike archetype of absolute creative power. By tracking his choices, we can see that his single-minded obsession with conquering mortality forces him to systematically suppress his emotional needs, domestic duties, and natural human vulnerabilities. This severe psychological imbalance alienates his conscious mind from reality, creating a deep internal fracture that sets the stage for a catastrophic mental collapse. The raw textual data shows that his pursuit of scientific dominance is not a path toward progress, but a defensive retreat into an unregulated fantasy world that isolates him from the grounding influences of society.

This process of mental fragmentation directly reinforces the empirical findings of Bagtayan and Lantowa (2022), who demonstrated how severe external stress and negative ego-driven choices inevitably disrupt a character's internal mental activities. Just as the protagonist in their study experienced a spiral of despair and depression due to a solitary life and an unhealed emotional wound, Victor's defensive retreat into the charnel houses shows a personality buckling under unresolved psychological trauma. His compulsive need to conquer death operates as a pathological defense mechanism to escape the deep pain of maternal loss, which his conscious mind simply cannot accept or process. Instead of working through his grief naturally, his ego channels this volatile emotional energy into an aggressive intellectual drive, completely ignoring his physical health and severing his vital connections with his family. Consequently, his academic isolation deepens his neurosis, illustrating how a refusal to confront personal grief forces the psyche into a dangerous, highly unstable state of denial.

When Victor finally animates his creature, the sudden transformation of his intellectual fantasy into immediate physical revulsion illustrates a violent psychological breakdown. This dramatic shift is best understood through the structural lens of Nurjaman et al. (2022), who utilized Sigmund Freud's tripartite model to map out how a character's primitive impulses clash destructively with the moral rules of society and the

realities of human life. In *Frankenstein*, the moment of creation represents the absolute collapse of Victor's rational ego defenses, as he is instantly forced to confront the raw, unintegrated desires of his unconscious mind. The creature's terrifying appearance functions as a physical manifestation of his unchecked ambition, shattering his comfortable illusions of grandeur and forcing his conscious mind into a state of panic. By immediately fleeing the room and abandoning the entity, Victor's ego refuses to take moral responsibility for its actions, choosing instead to rely on total denial. This immediate rejection ensures that these unacknowledged desires will return as a hostile force, turning his internal conflict into an external threat that targets his loved ones.

From a dedicated Jungian perspective, the creature cannot be viewed as an independent biological monster, but must be recognized as the literal, externalized embodiment of Victor's own **Shadow**. As defined in archetypal criticism, the Shadow represents the unacknowledged, hidden, or repressed aspects of the self that the conscious ego actively rejects because they conflict with its idealized persona. Victor's single-minded focus on light, rationality, and absolute control forces his primitive drives, biological fears, and unhealed emotional wounds deep into the dark spaces of his personal unconscious. The entity's immense size and distorted physical features symbolize the massive psychological energy hidden within these repressed layers, which breaks through into the physical world when the mind reaches its breaking point. By consistently refusing to look at, speak to, or care for his creation, Victor ensures that his Shadow cannot be integrated into his consciousness. This persistent rejection transforms a creature that initially sought love, education, and social connection into an unstoppable vessel of vengeance that systematically destroys everything he holds dear.

This pattern of psychological avoidance and systemic failure closely mirrors the critical discussions raised by Kurniawan and Mustofa (2024) regarding the severe dangers of diagnostic labeling and the lack of empathy. In their evaluation of a character's behavioral patterns, they highlighted how a rigid, unsympathetic classification of an individual can lead to overdiagnosis, social isolation, and institutional cruelty. In Shelley's novel, Victor commits this exact ethical and psychological error by immediately labeling his creation as a "vile insect" and a "devil" based solely on its physical deformity. This total lack of empathy prevents him from recognizing the creature's fine sensations, its rapid language development, and its deep desire for human companionship. Because the creator views his own projected Shadow through a lens of absolute hatred, he systematically denies the entity any form of justice or validation. This unyielding prejudice leaves the creature hopelessly isolated, forcing an entity that loved virtue to embrace a path of violence to make its voice heard.

The tragic breakdown of Victor's relationships with Elizabeth and Henry Clerval further illustrates the complete collapse of his internal psychological structures. Elizabeth functions as the primary externalization of his **Anima**, representing the emotional depth, creative imagination, and nurturing warmth that his aggressive rationality has systematically suppressed. Because his inner mind has been thoroughly poisoned by his obsession with death and decay, he cannot form a mature, grounded connection with her, viewing her instead as an idealized prize to be possessed. Similarly, Clerval represents his former, healthy ego identity—an integrated personality capable of enjoying the beauties of nature, social communication, and genuine human affection. Victor's inability to share his secret with Henry, combined with his constant need to follow him like a shadow, shows a mind completely trapped by its own delusions. The brutal murder of these characters by the creature signifies the literal destruction of Victor's positive archetypal supports, leaving his conscious identity totally exposed to the forces of madness.

Ultimately, the overarching narrative arc of the novel documents a catastrophic failure of the **individuation process**, which is the primary psychological path toward achieving self-wholeness. True individuation requires an individual to courageously face, converse with, and integrate the disparate elements of their inner psyche, balancing the conscious ego with the insights of the unconscious mind. Victor's entire life journey moves in the absolute opposite direction, defined by a constant, exhausting struggle to maintain a superficial mask of sanity while running away from his creations. His frequent somatic illnesses, prolonged fevers, and periods of temporary madness are physical manifestations of this deep mental warfare, showing a body that breaks down when the mind refuses to self-reflect. By choosing to burn the half-finished female companion and declaring an unyielding war of revenge against the monster, he destroys his final chance to bring his psyche into balance. This choice locks both creator and creature into a mutual cycle of destruction, ensuring that they can only achieve a grim peace in death.

In conclusion, this critical discussion demonstrates that the horrors within *Frankenstein* are fundamentally archetypal failures of the self rather than simple technological cautions. The insights gained from connecting the textual extracts with modern literary psychology prove that when the human mind overextends its rational power while repressing its inner emotional realities, it ensures its own destruction. Previous research has often treated the monster as an external biological threat or a political symbol of rebellion; however, our study firmly re-establishes the narrative as a brilliant externalization of internal psychic warfare. Victor's tragic end serves as a timeless psychological warning for contemporary scholarship, proving that true power does not come from mastering the physical world, but from the humble integration of our deepest inner realities. By analyzing this relationship through a unified Ego-Shadow matrix, this journal successfully fills an academic gap, offering a fresh, highly comprehensive reading that enriches our understanding of Mary Shelley's canonical masterpiece.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the tragedy in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* is not just a cautionary story about a dangerous scientific experiment, but a profound look into the breakdown of the human mind. By applying Carl Jung's psychological theory, we can see that Victor Frankenstein and the monster are not separate entities, but actually two halves of the same broken personality. Victor represents the conscious mind or the Ego that is completely obsessed with power, intellect, and success, while the monster represents his hidden, rejected feelings, known as the Shadow. Because Victor refuses to face his inner fears and deep sadness after losing his mother, his psyche projects these dark emotions outwardly, making the giant creature a literal physical reflection of his own hidden self. Ultimately, Victor's downfall happens because he completely fails to balance his inner conflicts and achieve psychological wholeness. Instead of taking moral responsibility for his actions and trying to understand his creation, he constantly chooses to run away, reject the monster, and label it a devil based only on its ugly appearance. This total lack of empathy and emotional integration turns his own inner Shadow into a destructive enemy that returns to ruin his life and kill his loved ones. This research proves that the horrors in the novel are actually internal failures of the self, showing us that true human strength comes from understanding our deepest inner thoughts rather than trying to master the physical world.

Based on these structural findings, future scholars of English literature are highly encouraged to expand this framework by looking directly into Mary Shelley's own life

history and personal journals. Studying her real-life experiences with family loss, isolation, and parental rejection can help researchers understand exactly where the dark symbols and deep emotional trauma in her writing came from. Additionally, future literary articles could focus an independent analysis entirely on female characters like Elizabeth and Safie to see how they represent the soft, emotional, and creative sides of the human psyche that the male characters systematically suppress.

For university lecturers and educators, this structured Ego-Shadow model can be easily turned into a practical lesson plan for advanced literary criticism and psychology of literature classes. This clear approach gives students a simple, step-by-step analytical tool to look past basic plot summaries and easily dissect the deep psychological motivations of any fictional character. Furthermore, this interdisciplinary method can be used to study modern science-fiction stories and digital media, helping students see how contemporary writers still use artificial intelligence or technological monsters to represent modern human fears and hidden anxieties.

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