

ENGLISH ADVANCED: MODULE A

Frankenstein and Blade Runner: Summarised Study Notes, Sample Essays and Other Information

Thesis

When comparing Frankenstein (M. Shelley 1818) and Blade Runner (R. Scott 1982), responders become aware of similar core issues explored in the texts despite an almost two century wide gap in context. These issues stem from the narrative premise of a man of superior intellect harnessing scientific knowledge to create artificial life. Both texts seek to make a critique of their ideological context, Shelley challenging 19th century paradigms of the Romantic creative ego and faith in scientific achievement stemming from Enlightenment philosophy, while Scott critiques 20th century attitudes towards commercialism, technology and environmental resources resting upon post modern ideology. While Blade Runner reengages with issues raised in Frankenstein; of the role of science and technology in society, questioning notions of humanity and heroism, and the relationship between man and nature; a different manifestation of these issues exposes shifting contextual paradigms. When comparing these texts, therefore, it is interesting to note that despite a change in context, both composers deal with a similar set of moral discourses that recognise but transcend contextual paradigms.

CONCEPT #1

The role of science and technology in the development of human society: particularly when pursuit is divorced from a moral framework, all with the assumption that all scientific progress is good.

Both FR/BR make critique of ideological contexts by constructing a creator overpowered by created, result of science divorced from moral paradigm.

Both texts insist of their own contexts that relationship between the scientific/moral discourses needs to be intimate- morality guides scientific pursuit.

FRANKENSTEIN:

Critique of intellectual context: paradigms of Romanticism and scientific discovery, where immediate abrogation of responsibility challenges notions of invincibility/rational logic (science), exclusively positive approach to all human creativity (Rom.) when divorced from moral principle of respect for life.

critique of lack of moral foresight	ironic alternative title 'The Modern Prometheus'
hubristic endeavour, expose nature's mysteries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > "A new species would bless me as its creator and source... no father could claim the gratitude of his child so completely as I should deserve theirs" > "life and death appeared to me in ideal bounds, which I should... pour a torrent of light into our dark world."
antithesis, grotesque parody of birth scene - revealing lack of moral foresight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > gothic tropes: "I saw the dull yellow eye of the creature open... a convulsive motion agitated its limbs." > abandonment: "How can I describe my emotions at this catastrophe [?]", "I rushed out of the room."
confrontation on mountain: creature superior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > physically dominating "He bounded over the crevices in the ice, among which I had walked with caution; his stature... seemed to exceed that of man." > intellectually superior, imperatives "How dare you sport thus with life? Do your duty towards me, and I will do mine towards you..." > biblical allusion "I ought to be thy Adam, but I am rather the fallen angel, whom thou drivest from joy for no misdeed."

Frankenstein – unbridled attempts in scientific endeavour, unchecked Romantic passions- unable to properly control creation, be responsible for consequences.

Unnegotiable dilemma constructed to make warning.

BLADE RUNNER

Critique of own 1980s context of globalisation and associated paradigms of technology and commercialism, constructing affronting view of future subject to unrestrained forces of science and technological development.

opening sequence	industrialised cityscape, fiery hell, natural elements: plumes of fire into darkened sky
context of advent of computer age, space exploration: neg. depiction of uncontrolled technological/scientific advanced (void moral judgement) - exploitation spreading beyond borders	LA 2019 characterised: huge electronic billboards on decaying buildings, overhead blimp preaching "a golden land of opportunity and adventure" in offshore colonies.
Tyrell Corp: conflation of science/commercialism paradigms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > low angle shots, immensity > intertextual references - shape/appearance/light - allude to temple of ancient worship = seat of power > shrine to false gods of commerce and technology "commerce is our goal" - T > ziggurat structure represents power, influence, domination: commercial greed commodified everything/humanity itself

Challenge to context attitude to science/tech development, in accelerating globalisation/commercialism

→ exploited by false gods, world is morally corrupt capitalist environment, Tyrell Corp ultimate figure of authority freed from moral obligation.

CONCEPT #2

Investigation into the state of humanity, via models of heroism offered. A hero is an ideal expression of the most valued traits of heroism in any context

Both texts use notion of heroism as a measure of/commentary on the state of humanity in their own contexts.

FRANKENSTEIN

framing technique	<p>> letters, construct Walton as foil to F, parallels in male/macho perceptions of heroism-- conflation of R/S paradigms</p> <p>> Creature view of humanity, capacity for empathy, self knowledge, accepts own mortality/finite knowledge</p>
Walton	<p>> articulation of individual quest for glory "I preferred glory to every enticement that wealth placed in my path" ----- derived from Romantic passions</p>
	<p>> scientific discovery as straight forward conquest "by ascertaining the secret of the magnet" "do I not deserve to accomplish some great purpose?"</p>
	<p>> Intertextual references Samuel Taylor Coleridge 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner' emphasise irony in pursuit of glory, hubris blinding him to relevant warning</p>
F lack of self knowledge in rousing speech, W subsequent reaction, critique stubborn perception of heroism: DOMINION AND CONQUEST, BLAMELESSNESS IN THESE DISCOURSES	<p>> "Oh! be men or be more than men... return as heroes who have fought and conquered, and who know not what it is to turn their backs on the foe"</p> <p>> "He spoke this with a voice so modulated... with an eye so full of lofty design and heroism, that can you wonder that these men were moved?" ---</p> <p>> F maintains view of C as "enemy and persecutor", asserts he does not find his conduct "blameable"</p>
Cs tale: reflects capacity for compassion and self knowledge, yearning for community/society	<p>> "what chiefly struck me was the gentle manners of these people; and I longed to join them, but dared not."</p>
ed/or final words: ed greater feeling/wisdom. Complicated irony of ed demonstrating more human sensibilities than or.	<p>> C final words (vs bitter resentment) are remorseful, honest. C accepts malignancy, owns the "frightful catalogue of [his] sins."</p>

Walton's intent "acquisition of knowledge...I sought for...dominion", hubris. Ironic assumption of F to be man of "intuitive discernment" "never failing judgement"

-> no guiding authorial presence, responder forced to make personal judgements/ confront and engage with idea of humanity and heroism explored within the novel:

comparison of W/F stubborn views of masculinity/heroism, C ironic capacity for compassion/self knowledge

BLADE RUNNER

Replicants	>"more human than human" >have faith in own humanity, tell JF Sebastian "We're not computers, we're physical"
Compassion R show each other makes them seem superior: juxtaposition to Ts attitude to Ra.	>"Rachel is an experiment, nothing more" >indifference//affection Roy-Pris "If we don't find help soon, Pris doesn't have long to live- I can't allow that" >incredible grieving, primal howling
Penultimate scene- inverted power relationship Deck/Roy	>upshot of R and D hangs below >R saves D in undeniable show of humanity/compassion >Roy gains heroic status with responders, total contrast to F/W view of conquest.
Roy: moral conscience, ironic comparison to Tyrell: lack of self knowledge: epitomised in ethically conscious conversation in T apartment	>scene like Catholic confession, gothic candelabra, flickering light/shadow, magnificent wall hangings/furniture alluding to Gothic themes in Frank. >Roy "questionable things" >Tyrell inadequate/condescending response Also extraordinary things. Revel in your time" >gruesome killing
Construction of Deckard as anti-hero	> film noir techniques light/shadow >character development, cynical/self orientated- callous/insensitive treatment of Ra "How can it not know what it is?"
	>revulsion of 'retirement' of Zhora, transformation/shifting allegiance from human to replicant
	>series of challenges from reps. "Quite an experience to live in fear isn't it?" "You ever take that test yourself?" >redemptively rejects human world, be with Rac. reclaims position as hero, nexus btwn human/non human

Similarly, greater manifestation of humanity is evident in the Replicants when compared to human characters ambiguity around Deckard as Rep? -- adds to discussion of humanity-- no longer a biological or technical question to be answered by the Voigt-Kampf test, but rather moral/philosophical one to be debated by viewers.

Narrative interest in Deckard allows audience to follow moral journey separated from ed/or relationship.

Makes more immediate request of moral response in which they live, whether directly involved in creation process or not, question notions of humanity/heroism represented in the texts.

CONCEPT #3

Relationship between man and the natural world,

F: *conflation of appreciation for nature, attempts to dominate.*

BR: *consequences of man conquering attitude to nature.*

BOTH COMPOSERS ASSERT AN ETHICAL DIMENSION – moral duty to care for, protect and value nature// exploitation of her resources.

FRANKENSTEIN

Characters of W/F: critique of own ideological context of scientific pursuit // C Romantic appreciation/admiration nature.

Walton, confident attitude to exploration of Arctic wasteland	"I will not rashly encounter danger. I will be cool, persevering and prudent"
assured victory over N elements	"Why not still proceed over the untamed yet obedient element? What can stop the determined heart and resolved will of man?"
rhetorical questions reflect Enlightenment philosophy	
sentiments not adjusted by end of novel, overwhelming ignorance in defeat	"I have consented to return... thus my hopes are blasted by cowardice and indecision"
Walton: constructed as impulsive explorer, ignorant to overpowering influences of nature, critique of scientific endeavours: ENLIGHTENMENT PHILOSOPHY = HUBRIS	

<p>F, fundamental to critique of ideological attitude to nature: RAPE ANALOGY (forced delving into secrets of nature)</p>	<p>"fervent longing to penetrate the secrets of nature" "unveil the face of nature"</p> <p>>fervent passion/ LUST FOR KNOWLEDGE</p>
<p>paradox: mental rest, source of healing: CONFLATION OF S/R PARADIGMS, ULTIMATELY SELF DEFEATING</p>	<p>"I contemplated the lake: the waters were placid; all around was calm, and the snowy mountains, "palaces of nature", were not changed. By degrees the calm and heavenly scene restored me."</p>
<p>C: attitude, emphasises fundamental awe/appreciation, source of comfort, indomitable beauty</p>	<p>>early life, ENORMOUS SELF AWARENESS "I was a poor, helpless, miserable wretch"</p> <p>>however, moon source of raw delight "soon a gentle light stole over the heavens, and gave me a sensation of pleasure... I gazed at it with a kind of wonder."</p> <p>>"when night came again I found, with pleasure, that the fire gave light as well as heat...was useful to me in my food."</p>

Walton/Frankenstein attitude of conquest, based in scientific paradigms, Romantic reliance on her as source of inspiration and healing

SHELLEY ARGUES NATURE AS THE SOURCE OF STABILITY FOR VICTOR IN A WORLD HE HIMSELF HAS UNDONE

Rejecting notions of domination and conquest, placing value on mans moral responsibility to treat her with respect

BLADE RUNNER

Overwhelmingly negative depiction of LA 2019, bereft any depiction of nature

F able to retreat to mountains, seek solace, Creature feels heavy feelings elevate after commencement of spring: NO RELIEF FROM CONTINUAL VISION OF URBAN MEGA POLIS GONE MAD

bonsai tree	symbolise retardation, manipulation
only glimpses of nature man made, synthetic replicant	Zhora's snake, Tyrell's owl
Mis en scene exploits humanity	dominating cityscape, total absence of landscape in director's cut, claustrophobic world where natures only presence: ACID RAIN/FIRE

Reflects environmental concerns in Scott's context.

COMPARISON ESSAY (LONG)

"The most interesting aspect of considering a pair of texts together is seeing the differences in what composers identify as the most crucial issues facing mankind."

The purpose of both Mary Shelley's Frankenstein and Ridley Scott's Blade Runner is to make a critique of the contexts in which they live and think. In doing this, the composers seek to identify and evaluate the most crucial issues facing mankind. In making this analysis, the most interesting aspect of the paired texts is seeing the similarities in core values and issues identified as crucial, despite the 200-year gap in context. Both texts explore the role of science and technology in the development of society; the significance in the relationship between man and nature; and questions humanity and heroism, as the most crucial issues facing mankind. When comparing these texts, however, divergences in literary and ideological contexts are seen to shape the representation of these issues differently, exposing the alternative ways in which the composers explore their key issues for their own context. When considering a pair of texts, it is therefore interesting to note both similarities and divergences in what composers identify as the most crucial issues facing mankind, as a reflection of the context of each composition.

The most significant issue that both texts investigate is the role of science and technology in the development of human society, particularly when science is pursued without a moral framework, or with the assumption that all scientific progress is good. Both Frankenstein and Blade Runner make a critique of their ideological contexts by constructing a creator that is overpowered by the created, as a result of science divorced from the moral paradigm. Therefore, both texts insist of their own contexts that the relationship between the scientific and moral discourse needs to be an intimate one, where morality guides the scientific pursuit.

In Frankenstein, Mary Shelley offers a critique of her own intellectual context, particularly in the paradigms of Romanticism and scientific discovery. This is immediately evident in Frankenstein's ironic alternative title, 'The Modern Prometheus', introducing Shelley's criticism of Frankenstein's lack of moral foresight in his pursuit of scientific discovery, parallel to the attitude to science and Romantic creativity of her own late 18thC context. Through Frankenstein's immediate abrogation of responsibility to his Creature, and the subsequent consequences, Shelley challenges notions of invincibility and rational logic in scientific endeavour and the Romantic paradigm's exclusively positive approach to all human creativity when divorced from the moral principle of respect for life.

Shelley is critical of Frankenstein's hubristic endeavour to expose nature's mysteries in the manipulation of life itself, "A new species would bless me as its creator and source... No father could claim the gratitude of his child so completely as I should deserve theirs", "life and death

appeared to me as ideal bounds, which I should...pour a torrent of light into our dark world”, when Frankenstein’s unchecked Romantic and scientific enterprise leads to an antithesis of his prediction in a grotesque parody of the birth scene. Shelley appropriates the popular gothic literary form of her context in the deliberate subversion of the archetypal conventions of birth, a symbol of hope and new life; gothic tropes are used in the description of the creature’s ‘birth’ to paint a gruesome and confronting image, “I saw the dull yellow eye of the creature open...a convulsive motion agitated its limbs,” followed by Frankenstein’s immediate abandonment of his ‘child’, “How can I describe my emotions at this catastrophe [?]” “I rushed out of the room.” This perversion of the creator/created relationship is a judgement of Frankenstein’s hubris, his immediate abrogation of responsibility revealing his lack of moral foresight.

Finally, Frankenstein’s confrontation on the mountain with the Creature reveals evidence of the created becoming far superior to the creator. This is evident in the use of imperatives in the Creature’s speech, and an insightful biblical allusion. Shelley raises concerns of scientific creation becoming a potential threat to mankind when she constructs the Creature not only as physically more dominating than Frankenstein- “He bounded over the crevices in the ice, among which I had walked with caution; his stature...seemed to exceed that of man”, but also as intellectually superior and powerful through use of imperatives in conversation- “How dare you sport thus with life? Do your duty towards me, and I will do mine towards you...” The Creature also uses biblical allusion in order to challenge Frankenstein’s retreat from his position as creator, “I ought to be thy Adam, but I am rather the fallen angel, whom thou drivest from joy for no misdeed,” as Shelley challenges the existence of man’s moral foresight in unimpeded scientific discovery, and the capacity of man to accept responsibility for the products of his own undertaking.

Shelley critiques Frankenstein’s incapacity as a human to anticipate and handle the consequences of his unbridled attempts in his scientific endeavour, where his unchecked Romantic and scientific passions in his quest for discovery have led him to a situation where he is unable to properly control his own creation and be responsible for the consequences of his actions. In constructing an unnegotiable dilemma, Shelley makes a warning against the exclusively positive attitude to the scientific and creative paradigms of her context, if divorced from a moral framework.

Similarly, Scott makes a critique of his own 1980s context of globalisation and its associated paradigms of technology and commercialism, constructing an affronting view of the future that has been subject to the unconstrained forces of science and technological development.

The opening sequence shows an industrialised cityscape likened to a fiery hell, void of any natural elements except plumes of fire shooting into a darkened sky. Synthesised music with heavy, ominous tones constructs a melancholic and claustrophobic atmosphere of perpetual night, a world destroyed and lacking any aesthetic beauty. L.A. 2019 is characterised by huge electronic billboards attached to decaying buildings, and an overhead blimp preached a “golden land of opportunity and adventure” in ‘off shore colonies’ in space. In Scott’s context where the advent of the computer age and recent advances in space exploration are increasingly impacting social development and dominating public discussion, the world of Blade Runner is an overwhelmingly negative depiction of the result of uncontrolled technological and scientific advancement void of any moral judgement, a spent world where exploitation and commercialism is spreading beyond earth’s very borders.

The construction of the Tyrell Corporation is crucial to Scott’s criticism of his own ideological context, as a symbol of the conflation of the paradigms of science and commercialism. The Tyrell Corporation is first introduced through low angle shots, emphasising the immensity of the building, with intertextual references of the shape and appearance of the building- backed by bright light- alluding to a temple of ancient worship to suggest that this is the seat of power in this world. In a reflection of the attitudes of Scott’s context, it is seen as a shrine to the false gods of commerce and technology, emphasised in Tyrell’s own words- “Commerce is our goal.” This ziggurat structure is representative of power, influence and domination in this futuristic landscape, where commercial greed has commodified everything, even humanity.

In a direct challenge to the attitude towards science and technological development in Scott's context of accelerating globalisation and commercialism, Scott constructs an view of the future that is both confronting and unrecognisable to viewers. Exploited by the false gods of commercialism and technological advancement, the world in 2019 from Scott's perspective is a morally corrupt capitalist environment, with the Tyrell Corporation as the ultimate figure of authority freed from moral obligation.

The second key issue explored in both Frankenstein and Blade Runner is the investigation into the state of humanity, via the models of heroism offered. A hero is an ideal expression of the most valued traits of humanity in any context, yet both texts use the notion of heroism to act as a measure of, or commentary on, the state of humanity in their own contexts.

In Frankenstein, Shelley critiques perceptions of heroism within her ideological context using a framing technique in the structure of the text itself in contrast to these perceptions. She offers a view of humanity, represented by the Creature, that has the capacity for empathy and self knowledge and accepts its own mortality and finite knowledge. The letters introducing the text play an important role in constructing Walton as a foil to Frankenstein's character; as the novel pans out we come to appreciate the parallels in both men's male (almost 'macho') perceptions of heroism through a conflation of Romantic and scientific paradigms. Walton's veneration of the creative genius "my daydreams become more fervent and vivid" and articulation of his individual quest for glory- "I preferred glory to every enticement that wealth placed in my path" are clearly derived from passions of Romanticism, as well as his view of scientific discovery as straightforward conquest-"by ascertaining the secret of the magnet", "do I not deserve to accomplish some great purpose?" Intertextual references to Samuel Taylor Coleridge's 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner' further emphasise the irony in Walton's pursuit of glory, hubris blinding him to the relevant warning contained within the story. Shelley seeks to critique this philosophy in her own context simply as a form of hubris, rhetorical questions emphasising Walton's frightening arrogance-"What can stop the determined heart and resolved will of man?"

Frankenstein's own heroic aspirations for scientific discovery are accompanied with admirable traits of creativity, passion and genius, "I read and studied...with delight; they [scientific writings] appeared to me treasures..." However, his pursuit is ironic and disturbing by his obvious lack of moral foresight and compassion for the Creature in his abandonment and vengeful pursuit throughout the novel. Frankenstein's lack of self knowledge in a rousing speech near the end of the novel, and Walton's subsequent reaction, act to further critique both men's stubborn perception of heroism-"Oh! be men or be more than men...return as heroes who have fought and conquered, and who know not what it is to turn their backs on the foe", "He spoke this with a voice so modulated...with an eye so full of lofty design and heroism, that can you wonder that these men were moved?" It is in the conclusion of the novel that we can see Frankenstein maintains his view that the Creature is his "enemy and persecutor", and asserts that he does not find his conduct "blameable."

In stark contrast to these views of dominion and conquest in heroism, and the attitude of blamelessness in these discourses, the Creature's tale at the centre of the tale reflects a capacity for compassion and self knowledge, as well as yearning for community and society-"What chiefly struck me was the gentle manners of these people; and I longed to join them, but dared not." In comparison to Frankenstein's final words of bitter resentment towards the Creature, the Creature's final words are more remorseful and honest. The Creature accepts his own malignancy, and own "the frightful catalogue of [his] sins". For many readers, these words represent greater feeling and wisdom than those of the man who created the speaker- a complicated irony of the created demonstrating more human sensibilities than the human creator.

Ultimately, Walton's intent of "the acquirement of knowledge...I sought for ... dominion", his hubris and ironic assumption of Frankenstein to be a man of "intuitive discernment" and "never-failing judgement" force the responder to making personal judgements throughout the novel in the light of

Frankenstein's tale without any guiding authorial presence, readers must confront and engage with the idea of humanity and heroism explored within the novel through the comparison of Frankenstein and Walton's stubborn views of masculinity and heroism, and the Creatures ironic capacity for compassion and self knowledge.

In an irony similar to Frankenstein, a greater manifestation of humanity is evident in the Replicants when compared to human characters in Blade Runner – the Replicants are described as “more human than human.” The Replicants themselves have faith in their own ‘humanity’, as they tell J.F. Sebastian “We’re not computers, we’re physical.” This ambiguity is further explored through the compassion they show towards each other, which makes them appear superior to their human masters-particularly compared to Tyrell's attitude towards Rachel, “Rachel is an experiment, nothing more.” Tyrell's indifference is in total juxtaposition to Roy's affection shown for Pris, “If we don't find help soon, Pris doesn't have long to live- I can't allow that” as well as his incredible grieving of her death, expressed with primal howling throughout the scene. Despite a clear depiction in the penultimate scene of the inverted relationship between Deckard and Roy, with an upshot of Roy as Deckard hangs from a beam below, Roy saves Deckard from falling in an undeniable show of humanity and compassion. In doing so, Roy gains heroic status with responders, in total contrast to Frankenstein and Walton's view of conquest.

Roy also shows evidence of a moral conscience in ironic comparison to Tyrell's lack of self knowledge, epitomised in his ethically conscious conversation with Tyrell in Tyrell's apartment. The scene acts almost as a Catholic confession, with Gothic candelabra, flickering light and shadow, and magnificent furniture and wall hangings alluding to Gothic themes in Shelley's text. Roy speaks of doing “questionable things”, and Tyrell's inadequate and condescending response “Also extraordinary things. Revel in your time” precedes Roy gruesome killing of Tyrell.

In addition, the construction of Deckard is initially of an anti-hero, using film noir techniques of light and shadow, and character development of Deckard as cynical and self-oriented, particularly in his initial callous and insensitive treatment of Rachael “how can it not know what it is?” However, Deckard's revulsion at his ‘retirement’ of Zhora begins his transformation and shifting allegiance from human to replicant, and after a series of challenges from the Replicants themselves, “Quite an experience to live in fear, isn't it?”, “You ever take that test yourself?”, he redemptively rejects the human world to be with Rachel, reclaiming his position as a hero, becoming the nexus between human and non-human. The ambiguity that surrounds Deckard as a Replicant or human further adds to the discussion of humanity in Blade Runner, as this is no longer a biological or technical question to be solved by the Voigt-Kampf test, but rather a moral or philosophic one to be debated by viewers.

The narrative interest in Deckard allows the audience to follow a moral journey separated from the creator/created relationship. This makes a more immediate request of responders to make a moral response to the context in which they live, whether they are directly involved in the creation process or not- particularly in questioning notions of humanity and heroism represented in the texts.

The relationship between man and the natural world is another crucial issue explored in both texts, with a conflation of appreciation for nature with attempts to dominate her in Frankenstein, and the consequences of man's conquering attitude to nature represented in Blade Runner. In this, both composers assert an ethical dimension to man's role in the natural world; a moral duty to care for, protect and value nature as opposed to exploitation of her resources.

Through the characters of both Walton and Frankenstein, Shelley is able to make her critique of her own ideological context of scientific pursuit juxtaposed to the Creature's Romantic appreciation and admiration of nature. Walton has an overwhelmingly confident attitude to his exploration of the Arctic wasteland, “I will not rashly encounter danger. I will be cool, persevering and prudent.” This is paired with his feeling of an assured victory over nature's elements, “Why not still proceed over the untamed yet obedient element? What can stop the determined heart and resolved will of man?”

Walton's series of rhetorical questions in the beginning of the novel reflect Enlightenment philosophy of Shelley's context, and his sentiments have not adjusted much by the end of the novel, reflecting an overwhelming ignorance in his defeat by the forces of nature, "I have consented to return...thus my hopes are blasted by cowardice and indecision." Shelley's construction of Walton as an impulsive explorer ignorant to the overpowering forces of nature acts a critique of scientific endeavours in her own context, with Enlightenment philosophy simply a form of hubris.

Frankenstein is fundamental to Shelley's critique of her context's ideological attitude to nature, his forced delving into nature's secrets represented in an analogy of rape, ultimately leading to his own ruin, paradoxically compared to the mental rest he finds within nature. Frankenstein articulates a "fervent longing to penetrate the secrets of nature (p36)", of "unveil[ing][the face of Nature]", a rape analogy that positions readers to make a negative judgement on his fervent passion, almost lust for knowledge.

However, nature is also a source of healing for Frankenstein, "I remained two days at Lausanne, in this painful state of mind. I contemplated the lake: the waters were placid; all around was calm, and the snowy mountains, "the palaces of nature," were not changed. By degrees the calm and heavenly scene restored me, and I continued my journey towards Geneva," representing a conflation of scientific and Romantic paradigms which are ultimately self-defeating.

Through the Creature, Shelley represents an attitude towards nature that emphasises a fundamental awe and appreciation of her as a source of comfort and indomitable beauty. In his early days of life, the Creature describes himself, with enormous self awareness, "I was a poor, helpless, miserable wretch," however the moon is a source of raw delight, "soon a gentle light stole over the heavens, and gave me a sensation of pleasure...I gazed at it with a kind of wonder."

Through Walton and Frankenstein's attitude of conquest based in scientific paradigms, and a Romantic reliance on her for a source of inspiration and healing, Shelley argues nature as the source of stability for Victor in a world that he has himself undone, rejecting notions of dominion and conquest over nature and placing value on man's moral responsibility to treat her with respect.

Scott:

Overwhelmingly negative depiction of LA 2019, bereft of any depiction of nature

Frankenstein able to retreat to mountains to seek solace, and the creature feels his heavy feelings elevate after the commencement of spring, there is no relief from the continual visions of an urban mega polis gone mad in BR

Bonsai tree, symbolise retardation/manipulation of nature

Only glimpses of nature are manmade/ synthetic replicant creatures- Zhoras snake, artificial

Mis en scene in turn exploits humanity. Dominating cityscape, total absence of landscape, claustrophobic world where nature's only presence- acid rain, fire,

Environmental concerns in Scott's context.

Discuss the function of the first four letters with which the novel begins....

Mary Shelley structures her novel Frankenstein with three first person narratives. Each voice represented in the novel produces a strong, credible and convincing perspective, and by purposely excluding any authorial presence in the text Shelley invites responders to form personal judgements of the issues explored in the text- made complicated by the collection of credible yet conflicting perspectives. The first four letters of Frankenstein play a significant role in the unfolding of this

classic gothic novel, framing the novel with a tone of suspense and anticipation, constructing a foil to Victor Frankenstein and establishing the scientist as a tragic hero, as well as claiming a moral dimension to the tale.

The series of letters are a significant frame in which we are introduced to Victor Frankenstein, found in a state of disrepair- "his body dreadfully emaciated...I never saw a man in so wretched a condition." Captain Robert Walton's enthusiasm towards his ward- relayed to the reader in intimate letters to his sister- create a tone of intrigue in the character of Frankenstein, constructing him as a tragic hero- "I never saw a more interesting creature...his eyes...an expression of wildness", "Yet his manners are so conciliating and gentle," "He must have been a noble creature in his better days." Walton's genuine appreciation of this man-"I have no friend, Margaret" to "I begin to love him as a brother" further adds credibility to Frankenstein's character. Finally, a dramatic outburst from Frankenstein-"Unhappy man! ... Have you drunk also of the intoxicating draught? Hear me- ...and you will dash the cup from your lips!" followed later by insight-" I... hope that the gratification of your wishes may not be a serpent to sting you, as mine has been" create an atmosphere of expectation for the relaying of Frankenstein's tale.

The letters also play a role in constructing Walton as a foil to Frankenstein's character- as the novel pans out we come to appreciate the parallels in both men's male- almost 'macho'- perceptions of heroism through a conflation of Romantic and scientific paradigms- his veneration of the creative genius "my daydreams become more fervent and vivid" and articulation of his individual quest for glory- "I preferred glory to every enticement that wealth placed in my path" are clearly derived from passions of Romanticism, as well as his view of scientific discovery as straightforward conquest-"by ascertaining the secret of the magnet", " do I not deserve to accomplish some great purpose?" Shelley seeks to critique this philosophy in her own context as an extension to hubris, rhetorical questions emphasising Walton's frightening arrogance-"What can stop the determined heart and resolved will of man?"

Finally, the letters in the text introduce the concept of Frankenstein as a moral tale- Walton's intent of "the acquirement of knowledge...I sought for ... dominion", his hubris and ironic assumption of Frankenstein to be a man of "intuitive discernment" and "never-failing judgement" forcing the responder to making personal judgements throughout the novel in the light of Frankenstein's tale- we must reflect on our own humanity, morality and positions on the Romantic's way of valuing the individual, and the scientific paradigm's pursuit of the secrets of the world. Walton's letters offer a strong perspective on these issues, and the reader is forced to respond without any guiding authorial presence.