Leaves #9

L'ensemble des métadonnées est accessible en cliquant sur le lien suivant :
http://dx.doi.org/10.21412/leaves_0911

Frankenstein in the Digital Age: Shelley Jackson's *Patchwork Girl* and Dave Morris' *Frankenstein Interactive*

Antonella Braida

In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* has undergone surprising transformations. Both philosophy and science have adopted the novel and made it the "signifier" of a variety of contemporary approaches to humanity, science, or technology. The modern myth has largely shaped public response to recent developments in the biological sciences, and in particular to genetics (Turney). More recently, Mary Shelley's cautionary tale has been applied to scientific discourse as a warning against the dangers of artificial intelligence and Information Technology (Briggle), or a trope to write a history of biology (Vacquin). Moreover, the novel has become the ideal means to explore new perceptions about the body, its limitations and its possible extensions: in the wake of Donna Haraway's "Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century" (1991), post-humanism has adopted the Frankenstein text as its preferred "modern myth." There is, however, another posterity of the novel in which literature and technology coexist: Digital Humanities and e-literature. According to Lisa Spiro, "Digital Humanities is a diverse and still emerging field that encompasses the practice of humanities research in and through information technology and the exploration of how the humanities may evolve through their engagement with technology, media, and computational methods" (Spiro). It is a large umbrella term that also comprises electronic literature. Supported by the Electronic Literature Organization, this is a form of creative writing in which, according to Marc Marino "all the technologies we know are harnessed to tell a different story" (Marino). It is highly experimental and multimedia in nature. Both Digital Humanities (DH) and electronic literature have made extensive use of Mary Shelley's novel. According to Andrew Burkett, "over the last two decades, Romanticist scholarship addressing interactive electronic hypertext environments has relied heavily upon *Frankenstein* (1818, 1831) in an almost uncanny manner" (Burkett 579). Among the attempts to explain the hypermedia success of *Frankenstein*, Jack Lynch claims that "the novel is a natural for hypertext: every page is filled with pointers to other texts, both within the novel itself and beyond Shelley's text to a world of contemporary contexts" (Burkett 581). Eric Sonstroem further explains that "*Frankenstein* is already thematically engaged with the revolutionary dynamics of new technology**" (**Burkett 580). These transformations are part of

the afterlife of the novel and can be classified as *mediamorphosis*, rewritings of the novel in which "its literary message has been disseminated in many different media, undergoing a transformation" (Pennacchia Punzi 10). Whatever the interpretation, this afterlife is interesting not only in itself, but also as a means to reveal new approaches to *Frankenstein*, as pointed out by Fred Botting and Chris Baldick. This article will focus on two examples of *Frankenstein* in DH: Shelley Jackson's *Patchwork Girl* and Dave Morris's application for Mac, *Frankenstein Interactive*. The aim will be to understand how these forms of digital art revolutionize more traditional forms of adaptation or illustration. I will investigate whether the new media enhance readers' understanding of Mary Shelley's novel or whether they are a new palimpsest that can be considered a "digital translation" of the original text.

***Patchwork Girl*: in search of the text through the female creature**

In 1995, Shelley Jackson's *Patchwork Girl* created a digital spinoff of the novel. Exploiting the interactivity of hypermedia, Jackson expands the nature of *Frankenstein* as an "open text" by inviting the reader to literally "patch together" the female creature's bodily parts. These are shown in a mosaic-style black and white cover illustration, representing a dismembered female body, reassembled haphazardly. The text reproduces the process of dissecting and reassembling the body/text by exploiting the structure of the hypertext.

According to Paul Delaney and John Landow, literary "hypertext" can be defined as "the use of computer to transcend the linear, bounded, and fixed qualities of the linear text" (Delaney 6). These characteristics are surprisingly similar to the aims of deconstruction. As Delaney and Landow point out, some "deep implications of the literary hypertext converge with some major points of contemporary literary and semiotic theory, particularly with Derrida's emphasis on decentering, with Barthes' conception of the readerly versus the writerly text, with post-modernism's rejection of sequential narratives and unitary perspectives, and with the issue of intertextuality" (Delaney 6). Jackson combined the possibilities offered by the new medium with Jacques Derrida's deconstructionism. As will be shown, *Patchwork Girl* introduces a dialogic intertext with Derrida's *La Dissémination*. In a similar way, Jackson's rewriting of *Frankenstein* with a female creature responded also to a clear feminist perspective and could be seen as superposing Haraway's view of the Cyborg onto Mary Shelley's novel. These two perspectives of Jackson's re-writing of *Frankenstein* will be analyzed in order to assess the contribution of *Patchwork Girl* to the Frankenstein and the Mary Shelley's myths.

Patchwork Girl presents itself as a hypertext program within the program "Storyspace"; it is composed of various blocks of texts – "lexia" – linked hierarchically by titles that work as

chapters ("a graveyard," "a journal," "a quilt," "a story" "& broken accents"). The text develops in a non-linear way through links or "guard fields" that activate links as the reader moves through the narrative. These semantic links can be used to assemble the text as the reader identifies and activates them. This absence of traditional narrative progression corresponds to the postmodern concept of the non-linearity of a literary work. As Derrida explains, "un texte n'est un texte que s'il cache au premier regard, au premier venu, la loi de sa composition et la règle de son jeu. […] La dissimulation de la texture peut en tout cas mettre des siècles à défaire sa toile" (Derrida 71). *Patchwork Girl* applies this tenet to the letter by exploiting the non-linear structure of the hypertext.

The narrator relies on Derrida's analysis of the concept of text as "textus," or "something woven," which knits together, and empowers the physicality of the page with that of the patched body. For example, in the lexia "metaphor me," the narrator-creature claims "the metaphorical principle is my true skeleton." In the lexia "lives" the metaphor of living as narrative is developed: "We live in the expectation of traditional narrative progression; we read the first chapters and begin already to figure out whether our lives are romantic comedy, or high tragedy, mystery or adventure." By applying a similar metaphorical principle, in *Patchwork Girl*, the dotted line is both a typographic convention implying vagueness or absence, and the physical illustration of the stitches that assemble the creature's limbs. Both are the signifier of an absence: absence of identity as far as the monster is concerned, and absence of textual completeness as for the hypertext.

Furthermore, *Patchwork Girl* refuses the traditional narrative both in its form and in its embedded references to M/S, or Mary Shelley the author of *Frankenstein*. Like other postmodern texts—for example Italo Calvino in *If on a Winter's Night A Traveller*—Jackson introduces self-referential discussions about the changing and imperceptible nature of the author, conceived as a narrative function and separate from the flesh and blood author. The lexia "this writing" comprises a self-referential discussion about the implied author "assembling these patched words in an electronic space" (*Patchwork Girl*, "This writing").

Jackson exploits the encyclopedic nature of the hypertext in order to engage a dialogue with her chosen hypotexts and in particular with Derrida's essay "La Pharmacie de Platon" included in *La Dissémination*. In the lexia "Interrupting D," Jackson juxtaposes excerpts from Derrida's essays and comments by the intradiegetic narrator. These are written in red with dashes, the typographical convention for direct speech. Arnauld Regnauld defines this approach as "ghostwriting" (Regnauld 74). The passages quoted and commented on by the narrator are extrapolated from section 8 of Derrida's essay: "L'Héritage du pharmakon: la scène de famille". In the essay Derrida analyses Plato's apparent condemnation of writing in

the Socratic dialogue *Phaedrus*. Derrida underlines the apparent absence of the mother in Plato's myth:

> La mère est passée sous silence mais on ne nous en fera pas objection. Et si on cherche bien, comme dans ces images-devinettes, on en verra peut-être la forme instable, dessinée à l'envers, dans le feuillage, au fond d'un jardin, *eis Adônidos kepous*. Dans les jardins d'Adonis. (Derrida 164-179)

He then cites the analogy introduced by Plato between writing and good and bad seed, the fruitful one being the spoken word. The comparison then switches to generation metaphor, and here the "pharmakon" passes into the hand of midwives, "accoucheuses" capable of suppressing pain to ease birth or provoke abortions (Derrida 177). Jackson incorporates and expands Derrida's reference to the figure of the mother. Adopting Derrida's critique of the father/son relationship as a figuration of the author/text one, Jackson introduces a feminine author, called M/S, whom she defines as "a nominal mother, who is more like a midwife, and spring [sic] unparented from my own past selves—"(Jackson, "Interrupting D"). Shelley Jackson's five quotations from Derrida's essay are connected by dialogic comments aiming at reproducing—while simplifying—the philosopher's approach. In typical postmodern fashion the text physically reproduces the fragmented, or disseminated, meaning: the implied writer's meaning can be accessed through Derrida's essay, which, in turn, is interspersed with long passages from Plato's *Phaedrus*. Onto Derrida's interpretation of a classical myth, Jackson superposes a modern myth: she re-writes Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* by identifying the author with the fictional creator, Victor.

In Jackson's digital spinoff, M/S or Mary Shelley reassembles the female creature destroyed by Frankenstein, becomes her lover, and then moves to the States where she dies after living for 175 years (*Patchwork Girl*, "I am"). Yet, although Jackson undertakes a re-fashioning of the original novel in the form of a sequel, she also introduces intertextual reference to *Frankenstein*. As Birgit Spengler points out, this is a common feature of contemporary spinoffs and it is part of their contribution to the reshaping of literary and cultural history:

> Canonic pre-texts and influential cultural discourses become vehicle(s) for participating powerfully and effectively in processes of cultural imagining. [...] This strategy allows the texts under consideration to engage explicitly and recognizably with cultural narratives and discourses – and, thus, with highly charged symbolic systems, which provides ideal ground for re-assessment and effective contestation. (Spengler 20)

Patchwork Girl engages the reader in a feminist re-contextualization of *Frankenstein*. This approach takes the form of a close reading of the novel. While Jackson's work has been read as a postmodern hypertext novel and most critics have explored its relationship to

philosophical hypotexts or to postmodern literature, I would like to underline its contribution to the creation of the Mary Shelley myth and to a feminist interpretation of *Frankenstein*.

As Christian Moraru has pointed out, “the rewriter is a critical reader in the deepest sense” (Moraru 4). Jackson puts into practice this predicament by introducing into the sections “plea” and “promise” three long direct quotations from *Frankenstein* without any typographical identification of its source, such as inverted commas or title of the novel in brackets or in the footnotes. They are taken from volume II, chapters 8 and 9, and narrate the creature’s demand of a female being (*Frankenstein* 101). “Filthy work” quotes Frankenstein’s “disgust” when creating the female creature: “But now I went to it in cold and blood, and my heart often sickened at the work of my hands” (*Frankenstein* 118). “Treachery” includes an excerpt from *Frankenstein*, volume II, chapter 3, narrating the destruction of the creature, while “The Remains” reproduces the passages describing how Victor gets rid of the limbs of the female creature on board a skiff and casts them into a lake (*Frankenstein* 122). These sections of *Patchwork Girl*, immediately followed by Jackson’s sequel, have the effect of magnifying for the reader this particular section of the novel, narrated by Victor Frankenstein. The episode had already been transformed by James Whale’s *The Bride of Frankenstein* and the film is often superposed or indeed replaces Mary Shelley’s novel in contemporary re-writings. Jackson, however, confronts the reader with Shelley’s text. The selections, included as they are in a postmodern narrative, provoke in the reader a feminist critique of the novel, encouraged by the narrator’s juxtaposed commentaries. Thus, for example, the narrative incongruity of having Frankenstein pile the remains of the female creature in a “basket, with a great quantity of stones” (*Patchwork Girl* ,“Scam”), becomes the turning point of the narrative. The she/monster calls it “a scam, a cover-up” in order to guarantee the privacy of her union with Mary:

> That’s right: it was a cover-up, a scam, a lie. We celebrated my death with wine and crusty bread at the little table in the garden, overlooking the lake where fictitious bubbles rose and burst, my phantasmic epigraphs. I had my privacy—I had my life—and I had Mary. (*Patchwork Girl*, “Scam”)

The she/monster then narrates her search for the real Mary in her journals and in her purposely multiple narratives, “as if every precaution was needed to secure the monster behind those locks and screens” (*Patchwork Girl*, “real M.”). The appearance and nature of the female creature is explored in the lexia “I am”. Jackson’s creature is well aware of her socially-constructed gender, as she states, “I belong nowhere. This is not bizarre for my sex, nor is it uncomfortable for us, for whom belonging has generally meant belonging TO” (*Patchwork Girl*, “I am”). However, Jackson’s creature is characterized by an androgynous nature and is endowed with eternal life: “Women and men alike mistake my gender and both are drawn to me […]. Born full-grown, I have lived in this frame for 175 years” (*Patchwork*

Girl, "I am"). Thus, the creature is able to move beyond sexual differentiation as an incarnation of Haraway's cyborg. According to Heather Latimer:

> The patchwork girl is therefore a cyborg who contrasts the naturalized subjectivity evoked by the fetal image, both by having a birth outside the heterosexual matrix and by embracing the potential horrors of reproductive technologies. [...] She both facilitates and undermines preoccupations with the benefits and dangers of reproductive technologies by embracing all of the monstrosities that reproductive/fetal screenings are imagined to "catch" and one day prevent. (Latimer 320)

The use of excerpts from the hypotext, *Frankenstein*, enacts Barthes' predicament of the death of the author and leaves the reader free to access the new meanings acquired by the original text, due to the inscription in a new narrative, in a new media, and in the changed postmodern context. Yet, by doing so, Jackson collates contemporary aspects of the Frankenstein myth to the original nineteenth-century text: *Patchwork Girl* focuses mostly on the creation scene, intended as life-giving process by a woman/writer, and turns into a philosophical reflection on the nature of female identity in narrative. The main plot of *Patchwork Girl* is the act of writing the text, undertaken conjointly by the narrator and by the reader in their search for the dissembled/embedded text/s. The use of the present tense in most of the narrative further betrays the metanarrative, self-reflexive and philosophical nature of the text: in *Patchwork Girl* two narrators meditate on the nature of the text/word as life in death, with a polysemy enriched by intertextuality from *Frankenstein*, Derrida, and the multiplicity of texts they in their turn embed.

Dave Morris's *Frankenstein*

Dave Morris's *Frankenstein* application offers another interesting example of the afterlife of the novel in digital format. Despite its different readership and scope, *Frankenstein* reveals some analogies with *Patchwork Girl*, while lacking a similar engagement and reflection on the use of digital media. Morris's application can be classified as young adult fiction, as will be pointed out below. Morris' spinoff is embedded in a Mac iOS system and is the result of a collaboration between the author and Inkle Studies, a company founded in 2011 by Cambridge developers. There are two aspects to the application: the text, edited and written by Dave Morris, and the visual layout, created by Inkle. This is aimed at reproducing the experience of turning the pages of a leather-bound book, with the leaves assembling themselves and held by a pin. The application also includes illustrations that are either introduced by the incipit of each chapter or in the table of contents, mostly covering a quarter page, occasionally a half page. They can also be viewed in the "extras" section of the application, in a section entitled "The Art of Frankenstein." These illustrations can be classified in two categories (anatomical drawings and landscapes or maps) and they produce

an electronic illustrated *Frankenstein*. The anatomical drawings (fig. 2) are mostly reproductions of well-known sixteenth- to nineteenth-century collections of drawings and prints: among the best-known examples, there are Amé Bourdon's *Nouvelles Tables Anatomiques* (1678), Adriaan van den Spiegel's *De humani corporis fabrica libri decem* (1627), and Andreas Vesalius's *De corporis humani fabrica libri septem* (1543). The historical maps correspond to the names of towns or regions cited in the sequel (fig.3): there are historical maps of Paris, Constantinople, a map of France and a map of the Northern Hemisphere. Other place-names are illustrated by William Miller (1796-1882), a Scottish engraver well known for his reproductions of contemporary painters. The only illustration reproduced in colour is William Turner's "The Sarner See, Evening" (c. 1842).

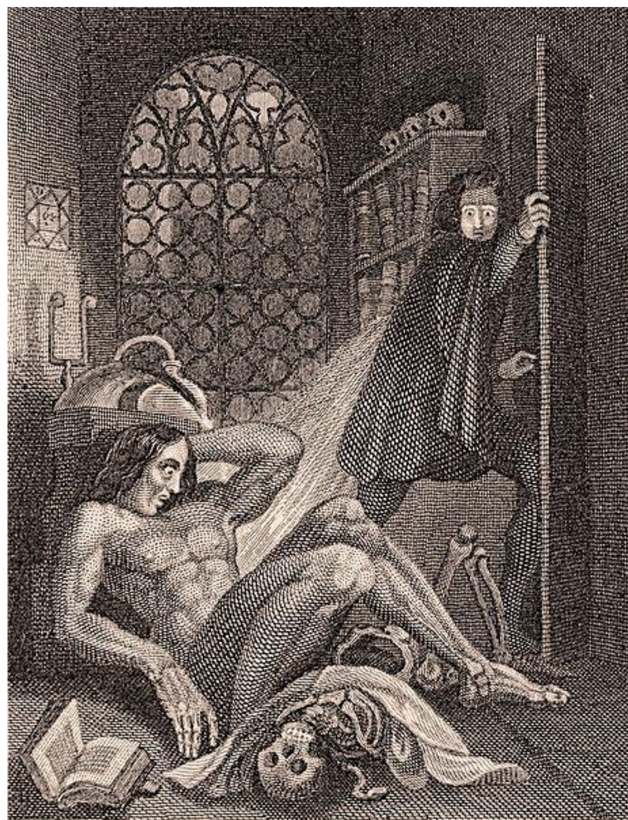

Fig. 1: Illustration from the frontispiece of the 1831 edition. Steel engraving (993 x 71mm) to the revised edition of *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley, published by Colburn and Bentley, London 1831. Theodore Von Holst (1810-1844). Wikipedia Commons.

Fig. 2: Screenshot from the table of contents with reproduction of anatomical drawings. Accessed on 12 July 2019. https://www.inklestudios.com/frankenstein/

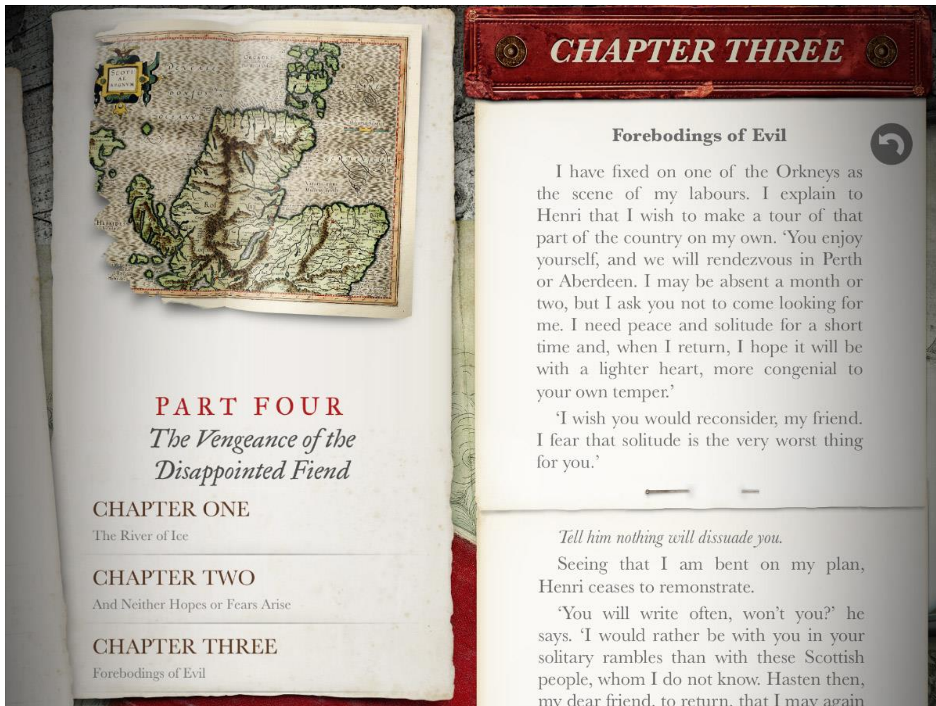

Fig. 3: Screenshot of the opening of part 4 with reproduction of a map of Scotland. Accessed on 12 July 2019. https://www.inklestudios.com/frankenstein

The function of these illustrations is two-fold. The anatomical drawings emphasize a scientific approach to *Frankenstein*, while maintaining the association with the Gothic. Inkle

foregrounds this in the "Extras section," by stating that the engravings "combine stunning levels of scientific accuracy with a sense of macabre beauty" (*Frankenstein Interactive*, "The Art of Frankenstein"). When one compares the use of anatomical drawings with the well-known engraved title page by T. Von Holst in the Colburn and Bentley 1831 edition, a similar search for a Gothic and scientific illustration of the novel can be identified. Holst introduces a skull, bones, but also Galvani's electrodes in the background.[1]

The historical maps and the various engravings mostly relating to places cited in the novel, have the effect of associating Frankenstein with historical novels, more prone to feature illustrations.

When one turns to the text, written by Dave Morris, the fact that *Frankenstein interactive* is a spinoff is foregrounded by the subtitle "based on the novel by Mary Shelley." The application employs the format of the "Choose your Own Adventure Series" created by Edward Packard and published by the Vermont Crossroad Press, and later by Bantam Books in the 1980s and 1990s.[2] The series has more recently evolved into more experimental formats, known as gamebooks. Not surprisingly, before his Frankenstein application, Dave Morris's work has featured very successful gamebooks—*Golden Dragon*, *Blood Sword*, *Virtual Reality* and *Fabled Lands*—and role-playing games (Morris "An Interview with Dave Morris"). As in *Patchwork Girl*, in *Frankenstein Interactive* the informed reader is confronted with sections of the original novel within a new plot and background, set within the game-book narrative structure (fig. 4). The introduction of sections from Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* is one of the characteristics of contemporary literary spinoffs identified by Spengler: typically they preserve the setting of the original novel, they rewrite the original, while filling in the pre-text's "dark areas," "in a way that results in a competing, rather than just complimentary, version of the pre-textual diegetic world" (Spengler 59).

---

[1] This detail has been identified by Stuart Curran in an unpublished Plenary Lecture at the conference "Mary Shelley's Frankenstein, 1818–2018: Circuits and Circulation," Bologna, 19–21 September 2018.
[2] The first publication was *Sugarcane Island* in 1976. Addressed to young adults (7 to 14 years old) these books are written in the second person in order to help the reader identify with a character.

Fig. 4: Screenshot of the conclusion of Chapter 2. Morris, Dave. *Frankenstein*. London: Profile Books and Inkle, 2012. Application for Mac OS. Accessed on 12 July 2019. https://www.inklestudios.com/frankenstein/

Morris's *Frankenstein* is divided into six sections and into chapters, each chapter ending with a question followed by two or three answers marked in italics. As the reader activates the chosen page, the chapter begins to assume a fixed form that can be re-read through a scroll function. A new configuration is possible by enabling a "reset" function in the application.

This possibility of reassembling the novel partakes of Jackson's critique of traditional narrative. However, the fact that the original novel is included in the "extras" section of the application reveals a desire to preserve a text inscribed within the Western canon. The spinoff thus performs a role of endorsement of the literary tradition while challenging it.

In Morris's spinoff, the events are set in Paris where Clerval and Victor witness the beheading of Robespierre. I will focus on two sections to exemplify his approach: the animation of the creature and the conclusion. Victor's animation of the creature takes place in Paris, where he is studying and living in rue Mouffetard, a witness of the ongoing events of the French Revolution. There he becomes interested in restoring life when he finds "a mummified hand" in a tavern:

> Yes. I succeeded in discovering the cause of generation and life. More than that: I am myself capable of bestowing animation upon lifeless matter. Here are my lodgings. Come up and I'll show you. (...)

> You're familiar with Galvinism. Then Good. That's part of the process I've been working on. (*Frankenstein Interactive*, Part 1, Chapter 1, "And you have found the answer")

Morris indulges in detailed pseudo-scientific and pseudo-medical explanations of the creative process thus filling in gaps in the novel. The creature is kept in a "liquor amnii" and apart from being endowed with giant forms, has transparent skin, "an accident of the skin-culturing technique," preserved for the advantages it offers "to study the functioning of the creature's muscles and arteries" (*Frankenstein Interactive*, Part 1, Chapter 1, "Why is the skin transparent"). The structure of the brain is the result of implanted tissue from unborn children grafted to a fully developed brain-stem: "the creature will be born an infant mind, but the mind should mature at a great accelerated rate" (*Frankenstein Interactive*, Part 1, Chapter 1, "Will it think and have feelings like a man?"). In order to obtain his bodily parts, Victor goes to the "Jeu de paume court," looking for the bodies of guillotined corpses in order to snatch a larynx.

The scene of creation takes place on a "dreary evening" but, as in most filmic versions of Frankenstein, Morris develops the moment when the life-spark is provided. Thanks to "condensers," Victor generates an electrical charge:

> Ah well, the stage is set. Watch as I attach the electrodes. And with a throw of the switch—stand back, the electrical charge is considerable—there! A convulsive movement. Galvani saw the same twitch in his frogs' legs, but there's more. The stimulus is removed but the motions continues. See there! The hand is flexing. The chest rises and falls. Hark! Hear it? The rasp of breath. The creature's first breath!
>
> *"He's alive!"* (*Frankenstein Interactive*, Part 1, Chapter 1, "First let's see if the process works")

Morris's episode is largely indebted to James Whale's *Frankenstein*, as it reproduces Colin Clive's famous phrase at the success of the creature's reanimation. However, other debts to the filmic tradition can be found: for example, the indulgence on Victor's search for bodily parts, and in particular of a head (*Frankenstein Interactive*, Part 1, Chapter 2) is reminiscent of *The Curse of Frankenstein,* focusing on the severed head of a professor murdered by Frankenstein.

Morris's spinoff aims at establishing an unequivocal, direct identification of the reader with both Victor and the creature by the use of the second person and of the present tense, in line with the structure of "Choose your own story" narratives. The narrative structure therefore includes focalization through two characters, with the omission of Walton's retrospective narrative. However, as shown above, *Frankenstein Interactive* comprises sections freely drawn from the novel and other sections with a new narrative freely inspired by the novel.

Thus, Justine's trial is mostly taken from the novel (*Frankenstein* 52-60 and *Frankenstein Interactive*, Part 3, Chapter 3). Part 2 relates the episode of the De Lacey household through the creature's focalisation, but Felix now also reads to "Safiye," Thomas Jefferson's *Travels* describing France and Italy (*Frankenstein Interactive*, Part 2, Chapter 2). Part 4 describes the meeting between Victor and the creature, but the focus is now mostly on the creation of the female creature. The female creature sees the light in an episode that is a calque from *The Bride of Frankenstein* and kills herself with a scalpel when she recognizes her own monstrosity (*Frankenstein Interactive*, Part 4, Chapter 2). After Elizabeth's murder, described in Part 5, Victor pursues the creature. He travels through Venice, Athens, Istanbul, and on his way to the pole is taken onboard by Captain Walton.

Morris's spinoff aims thus at amplifying the geography of the novel and at superposing the modern myth onto Mary Shelley's novel. As Spengler points out, this increased closeness between past and present is characteristic of spinoffs in which "the nineteenth century past not only haunts the present by exerting a powerful influence on the cultural imagination, but the present also begins to haunt the past" (Spengler 123).

Morris's *Frankenstein* concludes with an "Epilogue" in which the reader is invited to identify with the creature looking at its creator:

> You hold your creator's hand. You will not long survive him, and what you now feel will be no longer felt. Soon your misery will be over. The light of your funeral pyre will fade away, your ashes will be swept into the sea by the winds, and your spirit will sleep in peace. Or, if it thinks, it will surely not think thus.
>
> The wind and ice surround you to the limits of existence, and the frail, heatless sun looks down. But it knows nothing of the cares of human beings. Nor would it intervene to help them if it did. (*Frankenstein Interactive*, Part 6, Epilogue)

While in *Patchwork Girl* the present tense introduces a self-reflexive dimension, in *Frankenstein Interactive* it is part of the need to simplify the "chronotope" and transform the novel into a less complex narrative, suitable to the genre of young adult fiction. However, Dave Morris's project partakes of some constant elements in the twenty-first century Frankenstein myth: the presence of a filmic palimpsest, the desire to amplify the Gothic aspects of the novel, the need to simplify the narrative structure with the reduction of focalization. Like *Patchwork Girl*, Morris's intervention is aimed at fragmenting the narrative in order to adapt it to the hypermedia environment. While Jackson approaches this fragmentation as a critique of totalizing approaches to identities and to textual cohesion, Morris aims at transforming a "literary classic" of the western tradition and adapting it to a young adult role-playing environment, in which the reader chooses which path to follow and

the book itself becomes a beautiful commodity, relegated to the background, like the gilded frame of a painting.

Conclusion

In both hypertextual works, Mary Shelley's powerful narrative survives in patches, as a modern metaphor of the original body of the creature. In the age of "DH as ethics" (Spiro), an ethics of the open source freely accessed and shared, the literature of the "western canon" may become a patched-up monster, in which readers will struggle to disentangle spinoffs from the original works. However, the contemporary hypertextual and hypermedia afterlife of *Frankenstein* is only part of a continuous transformation, or *mediamorphosis*, of Mary Shelley's novel that continues to reveal its permeability to creative projects in new media.

Bibliography

Baldick, Chris. *In Frankenstein's Shadow: Myth, Monstrosity, and Nineteenth-Century Writing*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990.

Barthes, Roland. "The Death of the Author". *Aspen Magazine*, n° 5/6, 1967. Reprinted in *Image / Music / Text*. Translated by Stephen Heath. New York: Hill and Wang, 1977. 142-148.

Botting, Fred. *Making Monstruous; Frankenstein, Criticism, Theory*. Manchester and New York: Manchester UP, 1991.

Briggle, Adam. "As Frankenstein Turns 200, Can We Control our 'Modern Monsters'?". *Scientific American* (29 December 2017). Web. Accessed 12 May 2018. www.scientificamerican.com/article/as-frankenstein-turns-200-can-we-control-our-modern-monsters/

Burkett, Andrew. "Mediating Monstrosity: Media, Information, and Mary Shelley's 'Frankenstein'". *Studies in Romanticism* 51. 4 (Winter 2012): 579-605.

Delaney, Paul, and Landow John. *Hypermedia and Literary Studies*. 1994. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991.

Derrida, Jacques. *La Dissémination*. Paris: Seuil, 1972.

Fidler, Roger. *Mediamorphosis: Understanding New Media*. Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press, 1997.

Haraway, Donna. “A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century.” *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*. New York: Routledge, 1991. 149-81.

Heise-von der Lippe, Anya. “'Hypertext and the Creation of Choice: Making Monsters in the Age of Digital Textual (Re)Production.” *New Directions in 21st-Century Gothic: The Gothic Compass*. Edited by Lorna Piatti-Farnell and Donna Lee Brien. New York and London: Routledge, 2015. 117-31.

Jackson, Shelley. *Patchwork Girl; or, a Modern Monster*. Watertown: Eastgate Systems, 1995.

Latimer, Heather. “Reproductive Technologies, Fetal Icons, and Genetic Freaks: Shelley Jackson’s *Patchwork Girl* and the Limits and Possibilities of Donna Haraway’s *Cyborg*.” *Modern Fiction Studies* 57.2 (2011): 318-335.

Moraru, Christian. *Rewriting: Postmodern Narrative and Cultural Critique in the Age of Cloning*. Albany: State University of New York, 2001.

Marino, Marc. *E-Literature Revealed*. YouTube. 11. October 2010. Web. Accessed 24 June 2019. https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=62&v=GOihjPnq_A4

Morris, Dave. *Frankenstein*. London: Profile Books and Inkle, 2012. Application for Mac OS.

Pennacchia Punzi Maddalena, ed. *Literary Intermediality; The Transit of Literature Through the Media Circuit*. Bern: Peter Lang, 2007.

Regnauld, Arnaud. “Interrupting D: *Patchwork Girl’s* Syncopated Body.” *Revue française d’études américaines*. 121 (2009): 72-83.

Shelley, Mary Wollstonecraft. *Frankenstein*. Edited by J. Paul Hunter. New York and London: Longman, 2012.

Spengler, Birgit. *Literary Spinoffs; Re-writing the Classics – Re-Imagining the Community*. Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2015.

Spiro, Lisa. “About”. *DHQ: Digital Humanities Quarterly*. Web. 31 January 2018. <www.digitalhumanities.org/dhq/about/about.html>

Turney, Jon. *Frankenstein’s Footsteps; Science, Genetics and Popular Culture*. Yale: Yale UP, 1998.

Vacquin, Monette. *Frankenstein aujourd’hui. Égarements de la science moderne*. Paris: Belin, 2016.