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Science and the Scientist in *Frankenstein*: From Literature to Film Adaptation

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ABSTRACT

In the following study, I analyze the figure of the scientist and the scientific process in Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein* as well as in five different cinematographic adaptations: *Frankenstein* (1931), by James Whale; *The Curse of Frankenstein* (1957), by Terence Fisher; *The Young Frankenstein* (1974), by Mel Brooks; *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* (1994), by Kenneth Branagh; and *Victor Frankenstein* (2015), by Paul McGuigan. I also carry out a review of the scientific background in the nineteenth century and of Mary Shelley's education and the scientific influences she may have had while writing the novel. Then each representation of the scientist is classified according to Haynes' classification in *From Faustus to Strangelove*. Afterwards, I analyze the way in which the scientific process is carried out in each film adaptation. Finally, I conclude outlining the homogeneous depictions of Victor Frankenstein and the free, detailed representations of the scientific process made by the different film adaptations.

Key words: *Frankenstein*; Mary Shelley; scientist; science fiction; film adaptation.

RESUMEN

En el siguiente estudio, analizo la figura del científico y del proceso científico llevado a cabo en la novela de Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, así como en cinco de sus adaptaciones cinematográficas: *Frankenstein* (1931), de James Whale; *La maldición de Frankenstein* (1957), de Terence Fisher; *El Jovencito Frankenstein* (1974), de Mel Brooks; *Frankenstein de Mary Shelley* (1994), de Kenneth Branagh; y *Victor Frankenstein* (2015), de Paul McGuigan. Mi análisis comienza con una breve presentación de los avances científicos del siglo XIX relacionados con la novela, así como de la educación y las posibles influencias científicas que Mary Shelley pudo tener cuando la escribió. Catalogo cada representación de la figura del científico siguiendo la clasificación que Haynes realiza en *From Faustus to Strangelove*. A continuación, analizo la manera en la que el proceso científico se ha llevado a cabo en cada adaptación cinematográfica. Finalmente, concluyo mi estudio destacando cuestiones como la homogeneidad en las representaciones de Víctor Frankenstein y el libre y detallado desarrollo del proceso científico que se realiza en las diferentes adaptaciones cinematográficas.

Palabras clave: *Frankenstein*; Mary Shelley; científico; ciencia ficción; adaptación cinematográfica.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<i>Introduction</i>	9
1.	The Scientific Background of <i>Frankenstein</i>	13
2.	Mary Shelley's Education and Scientific Influences.....	16
3.	Methodology.....	19
4.	Analysis of the Novel: Science and the Scientist in Mary Shelley's <i>Frankenstein</i>	24
	4.1. Main Differences between the 1818 and the 1831 Editions.....	24
	4.2. Victor Frankenstein: the Archetypal Scientist.....	25
	4.3. The Scientific Process in the Novel.....	26
5.	Analysis of the Films.....	28
	5.1. <i>Frankenstein</i> (1931), by James Whale.....	28
	5.2. <i>The Curse of Frankenstein</i> (1957), by Terence Fisher.....	31
	5.3. <i>The Young Frankenstein</i> (1974), by Mel Brooks.....	33
	5.4. <i>Mary Shelley's Frankenstein</i> (1994), by Kenneth Branagh.....	36
	5.5. <i>Victor Frankenstein</i> (2015), by Paul McGuigan.....	39
	<i>Conclusion</i>	42
	<i>References</i>	45

INTRODUCTION

In this dissertation, I will analyze the emblematic figure of the scientist and the scientific method used to create “the Creature” in the original novel *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus* by Mary Shelley as well as in five different film adaptations: *Frankenstein* (1931), by James Whale; *The curse of Frankenstein* (1957), by Terence Fisher; *The Young Frankenstein* (1974), by Mel Brooks; *Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein* (1994), by Kenneth Branagh; and *Victor Frankenstein* (2015), by Paul McGuigan.

As it is explained in the introduction of *From Faustus to Strangelove*, a book written by Roslynn D. Haynes, throughout history, literature has drawn on the character of the scientist in many cases. The way this figure has been portrayed has depended on one main aspect: the historical consideration of science. The first reports date from the fourth century A.D., with Aristotle’s thesis about the theory of transmutation and the unity of matter. During this time, the word “scientist” was not used yet, it did not even exist. Instead, people at the time referred to the person involved with scientific matters as an “alchemist.” From this date until the sixteenth century, the name “alchemist” was the only way in which writers referred to people carrying out different experiments, most of them dealing with transmutation processes. The figure of the scientist has received different names along history; it has been linked to the figure of God, of an adventurer, an offender or a foolish among others. But it was only in 1818, with the publication of *Frankenstein*, that the character of the modern scientist started to be seen as an archetypal character that influenced later literary works and visual adaptations. It was a breakthrough motif later used in universal literature.

Mary Shelley contributed to the creation of the stereotype of the scientist, which has remained the same until today. It is her horror story the one that, nowadays, everybody acknowledges and that has been adapted in uncounted occasions. Despite of its being so well known worldwide, the original version has been distorted in the manifold on-screen adaptations.

Frankenstein is one of the most widely adapted literary novels of all time. From its first representation, on July 28, 1823, in Peake’s melodrama *Presumption; or, The Fate*

of *Frankenstein* performed at the English Opera House until its latter film adaptation *Victor Frankenstein* (2015), by Paul McGuigan. It has been re-written and adapted for so many times that it has been misinterpreted by those only acquainted with popular culture. Victor Frankenstein has been confused with the Monster¹ itself, confounding the name of the doctor with the name of the Creature. As we know, in Mary Shelley's novel, Frankenstein is the doctor who creates the Creature, which is not given a name at any moment. The term "monster" has been used to refer to the Creature in films, TV shows and some books adapted for children. One of these examples is one of the films that is going to be later studied, the Universal production *Frankenstein*, which dates from 1931. This film included other clichés such as the hunchback assistant, Fritz that helps Doctor Frankenstein in the creation of the Creature. This character is not included in the novel, it is an added device used to emphasize the image of the crazy scientist and the supernatural atmosphere the cinematographic industry wanted to create.

Gothic or Romantic literature is an appealing subject to students and literary critics, which is why it has been covered so many times. We can find numerous studies about this genre and about *Frankenstein* indeed. When we look for an analysis of the novel, we encounter essays analyzing the different interpretations, film adaptations and essays related to language and structure. Besides, there are several relevant researches that look into the same matter as this dissertation, the scientific perspective and how it is depicted in the novel. However, we do not easily find this analysis taking into account its film adaptations. Most of the times, films leave the scientific process in the background, focusing on the Creature's evil deeds.

Notwithstanding, due to its undeniable literary value, it is a topic which deserves to be studied. Victor Frankenstein is a timeless representation of a type of character that merits a thorough analysis to understand why it has transcended for so many centuries and what remains truthful to its original representation. For this, I will focus my following research on the study of the character of Frankenstein and the scientific

¹ The character of the Monster is not given any name in the novel. Even though it is called "monster" in many film and literary adaptations, from now on I will name it as "the Creature" in the same way that Mary Shelley does in her novel.

process to create the Creature recreated not only in the novel, but also in the previously stated film adaptations.

The methodology I will follow will be based on the classification of the character of the scientist in literature through history established by Haynes in *From Faustus to Strangelove*, taking into account both the social and the scientific perspectives in each period. I will use this classification as the typology to judge the cinematographic adaptations of Frankenstein. I will sort the different approaches according to the way in which Victor Frankenstein, the main character and scientist of the novel, is depicted. I will finally assess whether these approaches remain faithful to Mary Shelley's representation or whether they are closer to any other types of historical scientific characters described by Haynes.

I will also focus on the scientific processes chosen to create the Creature, taking into account their scientific basis and the similarities and differences they may have with the original novel. For this, I will not only compare the novel and the film adaptations, but also analyze the influences Mary Shelley had from this perspective when composing the scientific process in the novel. I will gather all the information about Mary Shelley's education, considering her previous knowledge before writing the novel and how the intellectual background in which she grew up contributed to it. This framework will be useful to analyze the different influences used to portray the image of the scientist and to comprehend why Mary Shelley chose electric reanimation as the process to bring the Creature to life.

Considering that there are three different editions of the novel, I will first ensure that there are no major changes regarding my topic in this research work between the first edition from 1818 and the third edition from 1831. If this is the case, I will record them and take them into account when proceeding with the analysis.

Another important aspect that I will take into account is the purpose with which each work was created. Unlike the original novel, some of the considered films approach the story from a comic outlook. Thus, their main purpose is not to scare the audience, but to

entertain and amuse them. This new treatment of the story changes completely the way in which our subject matter, the figure of the scientist and the ensuing scientific process, is approached.

Finally, I will compare both analysis, the one of the original novel and the ones from the cinematographic adaptations. By doing so, the main similarities and differences among them will be clearly displayed. Lastly, I will present a conclusion gathering all the relevant considerations.

1.

THE SCIENTIFIC BACKGROUND OF *FRANKENSTEIN*

The twentieth century was marked by a change of mentality in the population. Science acquired “professional respectability”, as Haynes states in her introduction in *From Faustus to Strangelove* (7). It stopped being satirized to become a recognized discipline and it was no longer linked to the image of alchemists. Alchemists were responsible for the bad reputation science had had during subsequent centuries, as they used it as a way to benefit themselves. In contrast with them, in the seventeenth century, there was a serious scientific figure called Isaac Newton. He was one of the few scientific personalities to be well liked by society. His influence contributed to change the popular image of the scientist from that of a stupid greedy character into that of an ambitious genius. The main cause for this might be the liaison he created between astronomy and religion. Unlike some of his contemporaries, Newton provided a place for God in his scientific explanations. As Haynes says in her article: “The former image of the arrogant scientist competing with God, was replaced by that of a wise religious teacher interpreting the ways of God to Man.” (“Representations of Astronomers...”, 144)

However, in the eighteenth century, there was a reaction against the excessive adulation Newton had received. The scientific community was accused of ignoring moral dimensions; they were depicted as arrogant, destructive people. There was a fear for science to succeed with no moral standards and completely godless.

During the nineteenth century, the experiments with exhumed bodies and electricity aroused many critiques from scientific community. The number of claims for death bodies by anatomists grew up at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Due to this, the practice of body snatching increased. It was not considered illegal to take the corpses out of their graves. The death body was not considered a property, it had no owner. The illegal actions were both the dissection of a death body and the theft of the items that were inside the grave. The exhumation of corpses was a regular acting because there was a great demand by physicians and medical students. The body snatchers, also

known as resurrectionists, sold the corpses they took. Even though exhumation was not illegal, it was not a well-considered practice, neither morally nor religiously.

Due to the practice of exhumation and other related crimes such as murder or resurrection riots, the Anatomy Act was signed in Britain, in 1832. In this Act, the need for bodies for medical research was recognized. More corpses were provided for study most of them were unclaimed bodies from poor or sick people, but later a family permit was required. Nonetheless, what actually led to the end of body snatching was the practice of embalming at the end of the nineteenth century.

Another particular activity that contributed to question the moral dimension of the scientific community were the experiments with electricity on animals carried out by Luigi Galvani. Galvani (1737-1798) was a physician born in Bologna, Italy, where he studied natural sciences and specialized in anatomy and physiology.

He started his experiments with electricity one day he was observing his assistant using a scalpel, which had accumulated electric charge, on a frog. He noticed that when it touched the nerve of the frog's leg, the leg contracted. Thanks to this observation, Galvani became interested in the way muscle nerves work with electric impulses. He thought the electricity flowed through the muscle's nerve, which was connected to the brain, creating a closed circuit. He used different electrical sources as well as materials, and finally stated that there were three existing types of electricity: natural, artificial and animal.

Galvani's theory has been discredited thanks to further discoveries, but at the time it was considered one of the great findings of science and he was known as one of the best scientists in Europe, despite the dilemma on the moral appeal.

The last remarkable scientific finding developed at the beginning of the nineteenth century was the theory of the development of organic life. It was carried out by Erasmus Darwin, grandfather of Charles Darwin. Erasmus Darwin was a physician and a poet. It is in two of his poems that he writes about the nature of organic life. These poems are

The Loves of the Plants (1789) and *The Economy of Vegetation* (1791). He also set the theory about its development, the precedent for the theory that his grandson pursued in *On the Origin of Species* (1859).

2.

MARY SHELLEY'S EDUCATION

Mary Shelley was the only daughter of Mary Wollstonecraft and William Godwin. Her mother was well known for being a feminist activist who worked on behalf of women's rights, and her father was a political writer and a novelist. Mary Wollstonecraft died just 10 days after Mary Shelley was born and her father was left alone in charge of the education of her and her stepsister, Fanny. William Godwin got married again with Jane Clairmont, with whom he had two more children.

Although Mary Shelley did not receive a formal education, she read the books her mother had left for her and her father raised her under the Enlightenment rationalism values. Mary Wollstonecraft was one of the most famous advocates for female education and, despite her early death, her ideals got to Mary through her legacy. She also grew up in an intellectual atmosphere, surrounded by the most important writers and thinkers of the time, who were her father's friends, such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Joseph Priestley and William Wordsworth among others.

She met Percy Bysshe Shelley one day when he visited her father, as he was an admirer of Godwin, but at that time, she was only 14. It was not until two years later, when they met again, that they started their affective relationship. Percy Shelley was already married to another woman, Harriet Westbrook, but he started his love bond with Mary anyway. When Percy and Mary eloped, Harriet's unhappiness caught up on her and, finally, she committed suicide. Consequently, they got married and took charge of Percy's children with Harriet.

Mary and Percy tried to have children of their own, but the first two attempts ended up in premature deaths. Finally, her third child was born, Percy Florence, but the former failures had created a great impact upon Mary. She published her masterpiece novel *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus* in 1818. Mary finally dies on February 1st, 1851, at the age of 53.

At the time *Frankenstein* was written, the debate about science was at the cutting edge. Mary Shelley was familiar with the issues discussed at that time thanks to the intellectual context in which she had lived all her life. In 1816, she participated in many conversations about science and the principles of life, as well as undertaking her own scientific reading. Her husband, Percy B. Shelley, and her friend, Lord Byron, were also deeply interested in scientific matters.

Mary was influenced by many scientists of the time. As has been explained in the previous section, the nineteenth century was marked by the experiments with electricity carried out by Galvani, and, although we are not given a precise description of the process Victor Frankenstein follows to bring the Creature to life, we can assume that this process is closely linked with galvanic stimulation. Of all sciences, electricity caught the revolutionary imagination during this time.

Another direct influence was Erasmus Darwin, grandfather of the famous naturalist Charles Darwin. Both Mary's father and her husband were enthusiastic admirers of Darwin and his theory about the development of organic life. His name appears on the preface of *Frankenstein*, written by Percy B. Shelley, stating that Darwin supposed that the creation of life was "not of impossible occurrence". Mary Shelley used the figure of Darwin to explain the different ways in which organic life could be created. In this way, she makes clear that electric stimulation was not regarded as a proved theory.

Although there is no evidence, Mary Shelley is thought to have attended a lecture given by Andrew Crosse, which could have been one of the main influences of the scientific process developed in *Frankenstein*, in London, December 1814. In this lecture, Crosse explained his experiments with atmospheric electricity and electrocrystallization. His experiments consisted in the creation of different types of crystals using voltaic currents in mineral solutions. During one of these experiments, he noticed that little insects were growing from the minerals used (Hintz).

Finally, the last scientific figure who might have influenced Mary Shelley was Humphrey Davy. Davy was a natural scientist and a poet, and he was familiar with

Galvani's theory. As a result, he became interested in several phenomena related to it such as electrochemistry, the study of electricity's effect on chemical reactions (Kenyon). The Shelleys owned some of Davy's books, such as *A Discourse, Introductory to a Course of Lectures on Chemistry* and *Elements of Chemical Philosophy* (1812). As Laura Crouch states, it is probable that Mary studied them at the time she was working on *Frankenstein* (35).

Mary Shelley's novel is a perfect reflection of the scientific findings in the fields of physiology and electricity in the early nineteenth century. As Patricia Fara says: "Frankenstein has an air of reality attached to it, by being connected with the favorite passions and projects of the time" (18).

3.

METHODOLOGY

Even though science has contributed with startling discoveries, it has not been accounted as a valid field of study until the late seventeenth century. As it can be seen in Hayne's *From Faustus to Strangelove*, the figure of the scientist (or alchemist, as it was called before the term "scientist" was coined) has been perceived in many different ways through history. In most cases, it has been acknowledged in negative terms, considering them as ambitious individuals who are only interested in their own wealth. Due to this, they have been assigned a social stigma related with unethical values. However, this perception has been shifting along centuries, losing and retrieving the confidence in the scientific community. For this reason, their representation in literature is so diverse.

I will analyze these changes focusing on one main literary novel *Frankenstein*, written by the English writer Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, née Godwin, and several of its film adaptations. To do so, I will rely on the following methodology.

The methodology I have selected is mainly based on the classification made by Haynes in *From Faustus to Strangelove*. In this study, the author identifies the different ways in which the scientist has been depicted along history. She takes into account several factors: the state of science, the social considerations and the way the figure of the scientist is reflected on literature. I will apply these to the novel, taking into account its first and third editions, the one from 1818 and the one from 1831 to see if there are any significant changes related to the issue between the two versions.

Later, I will analyze five different filmed adaptations: *Frankenstein* (1931), by James Whale; *The curse of Frankenstein* (1957), by Terence Fisher; *The Young Frankenstein* (1974), by Mel Brooks; *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* (1994), by Kenneth Branagh; and *Victor Frankenstein* (2015), by Paul McGuigan. I chose five different films in a chronological order, from the early twentieth century up to the twenty first century, in order to see how Frankenstein's story and, particularly, the image of the scientist and the scientific process, had evolved through the years.

As we know, literature has always acted as a mirror to society. In the same way, it has been used to depict the public perception of certain aspects, as in this case, the image of the scientist. Haynes constantly exemplifies each period with literary works to explain the different characteristics scientific figures are given. She divides the different types of scientific characters into six recurrent stereotypes:

a. The alchemist.

This archetype dates from the fourth century A.D, when Aristotle's thesis of the unity of matter was published. Alchemists believed in the theory of transmutation and they used it to increase their wealth by doing metalworking. They are depicted as obsessed or maniacal people whose real goal is fame and power. They are thought to be ideologically evil. Alchemists were rejected by the Church due to the amorality of their aims. Haynes explains that there were three types of alchemists: the charlatans, who deceived others about their ability to create gold; the puffers, or "laboratory assistants", who were involved in the creation of gold but did not master it; and the adepts, who really thought to be able to carry out transmutation.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, their goal changed into the production of a minute human being. However, they suffered a decline during the last years of the sixteenth century and they were replaced by philosophers like Descartes and Hobbes, who defended a simple and mechanical way of understanding "science", at this time called Natural Philosophy.

b. The stupid *virtuoso*.

This new approach to the image of the scientist is more comic than sinister. It still has obscure implications as it represents a person that ignores his social responsibilities and falls short of morals. Haynes compares this figure with the absent-minded professor of early twentieth-century films. The first time these characters appear in literature is in the mid-seventeenth century. Science was associated with Puritanism so most of the times the scientific characters in the plays were ridiculed. These characters are blinded with their pursuit of marvels and,

consequently, lose their moral standards. They follow several characteristics: they are wholly comic, most of the times hypocritical, invariably stupid, and finally easily outwitted.

c. The Romantic.

The Romantic scientist is described as a witless human who rejects all kinds of relationships, suppressing all demonstrations of affection in order to focus on one main task: science. Haynes states that this is the most enduring stereotype, providing the common image of the scientist in popular thinking. We can find this archetypal character in twentieth-century plays, novels and films.

He is considered inhuman and sinister, but at the same time, he provokes admiration. Their isolation is considered the price that has to be paid to achieve their goals. They are not only destructive to themselves, but also to the people around them. Victor Frankenstein could be classified as belonging to this type, but, for Haynes, he is an archetypal character itself.

d. The heroic adventurer.

This new approach entails a positive point of view. The scientist is no longer considered an isolated person; instead, he is enhanced to a heroic position. This archetype is the consequence of a shift in the consideration of science. Unlike previous times, the exploitation of technology carried out by scientists, which produces more wealth, is seen as morally good. In this new vision, the scientist is someone who explores new territories, engages with new concepts full of resourcefulness that transcend human limitations. He constitutes an almost utopian image of the character, which is based upon the idea that the products of science are going to lead society into a better world. There is a confidence in science leading towards the progress of mankind.

e. The helpless scientist.

This character is depicted as someone who has lost control over his discovery or over the direction of its application. Due to this, they cause social or environmental

disasters, as they did not see the upcoming consequences of their discoveries. Their archetypal predecessor is Victor Frankenstein, who loses control over his creation. This type is usually applied to wartime stories in which the scientist is the perpetrator of the cause that will destroy the natural environment.

f. The scientist as idealist.

This type of scientist is tirelessly devoted to science in order to contribute to the well-being of society. He is unambiguously accepted by everyone as a result of a new wave of optimism about science. In this case, his role is to provide the welfare of humankind and save them in case of attack. He may be in conflict with technology-based systems such as robots, which lack of any type of human values.

As a conclusion to this classification, the author states that each society creates the scientist they deserve. For this, the era in which each archetype is used is important to be taken into account as it could be determinant for the analysis. The power of religion, the scientific advances, the culture of the time or the number of illiterate population are determinant factors that contribute to the consideration of the image of scientists in relation with the society in which they exist.

In addition to the categorization of the representation of Victor Frankenstein both in the novel and in the films, I will analyze the faithfulness of the films in relation to the original novel. I will concentrate not only on the main character and on his creation, Frankenstein and the Creature, but also on the scientific process he follows to create this new living being. I will determine if the films share the same scientific process to create the Creature as the novel. If they differ in significant details, I will gather them and point them out.

Another important aspect to take into account when analyzing the selected cinematographic material is the purpose of their creators. Depending on the genre into which they are classified, they will have different impacts on the audience. It is not the same to watch a horror film about *Frankenstein* than a comedy. One question that may

arise when examining this is the following one; does the genre of the film affect its faithfulness to the novel?

Finally, I will gather all my findings on a final conclusion, trying to give a general perspective of the issue by comparing the objects of study, novel and films, in all the different fields in which they have been analyzed.

4.

ANALYSIS OF THE NOVEL: SCIENCE AND THE SCIENTIST IN MARY
SHELLEY'S *FRANKENSTEIN*

Before analyzing any cinematographic adaptation, it is important to point out the main differences we may encounter between the 1818 and the 1831 editions. I will only focus on issues related to the subject matter: the depiction of Victor Frankenstein and the development of the scientific process. Thus, it would be easier to see which elements from the two different editions have been taken into account in the different adaptations that I will later examine.

4.1. Main differences between the 1818 and the 1831 editions.

The first and most noticeable difference between both editions is the way in which Mary Shelley decides to begin her novel. In the 1818 edition, we find a prologue written anonymously, but many times attributed to her husband, Percy Bysshe Shelley. This prologue speaks superficially about the plot of the novel and mentions Dr Darwin and “some of the physiological writers of Germany” (9) as notorious identities which could support the veracity of the narrated events. Differently, in the 1831 introduction, written by Mary Shelley indeed, it can be found the story of the origin of *Frankenstein*. But the most interesting information one comes across is the mention to Dr Darwin and galvanism:

Dr Darwin (...) who preserved a piece of vermicelli in a glass case, till by some extraordinary means it began to move with voluntary motion. Not thus, after all, would life be given. Perhaps a corpse would be re-animated; galvanism had given token of such things: perhaps the component parts of a creature might be manufactured, brought together and endued with vital warmth. (8)

This information, not included in the 1818 edition, is crucial for the understanding of the scientific process Victor Frankenstein follows to create his being. As in the novel there is no elaborated account of the process, we need Shelley’s scientific sources to infer the way in which Dr Frankenstein developed his experiment.

Another difference between the first and third edition is the episode of the burnt oak tree. In both editions, Victor talks about the time when he was fifteen and a flash of lightning burnt a tree. He was marveled by the power it had over nature. Until this point, both editions share the same way of telling the story, but immediately after it, we find the first great difference.

In the 1818 edition, Victor recalls how his father told him everything about electricity and showed him how to use a machine to convert the lighting into controlled electricity. However, in the 1831 edition, he says it was not his father, but “a man of great research in natural philosophy” that was with them who explained “a theory of electricity” called galvanism.

There exist other differences between both editions, but none of them concerns the description of Victor Frankenstein or the way the scientific process is explained or influenced.

4.2. Victor Frankenstein: the archetypal scientist.

Victor Frankenstein is considered by Haynes an archetypal scientist. As she states in her chapter “Frankenstein and the Monster”, Victor is “the overreach whose aspirations lead inevitably to the destruction of himself and others yet who is instinctively admired as the heroic genius” (94).

Inspired by alchemists such as Paracelsus or Agrippa, Victor Frankenstein wants to use science to create a new human-like being. The creation of a homunculus by artificial means was one of the main aims of alchemists, as Haynes suggests (13). They were concerned with the creation and preservation of life, pursuing the elixir of life. In the same way, Victor wants to bestow animation upon a lifeless matter.

He becomes obsessed with the creation of life, dedicating all his time to his experiment. At first, he doubts if he should follow his experiment or change it into a simpler one: “I doubted at first whether I should attempt the creation of a being like

myself, or one of simpler organization; but my imagination was too much exalted by my first success to permit me to doubt of my ability to give life to an animal as complex and wonderful as man” (53). However, he finally decides to isolate himself and dedicate all his time to his work.

Frankenstein is portrayed at the beginning of the novel as a sociable person, charming and admired by others. Although, at the beginning, he is an enthusiast of science, and his commitment with his work and studies is appreciated by others, later on he turns out into an ill, pale man who looks as if he never sleeps. He becomes obsessed with the creation of life and his work leads him to somehow lose his mind and lose, consequently, control over his creation. After completing his experiment, he immediately rejects the Creature as he sees it as a failure. Suddenly, he becomes aware of the amoral act he has committed and decides to run away from it, trying to restore his past life unsuccessfully.

4.3. The scientific process in the novel.

In the novel, the scientific process is not described in detail at any moment. The only information we can find about the moment in which the Creature is brought to life is the first paragraph of chapter 5 (chapter 4 in the 1818th edition):

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 collected the instruments of life around me, that I might infuse a spark of being into the lifeless thing that lay at my feet. It was already one in the morning; the rain pattered dismally against the panes, and my candle was nearly burnt out, when, by the glimmer of the half-extinguished light, I saw the dull yellow eye of the creature open; it breathed hard, and a convulsive motion agitated its limbs. (58)

Victor Frankenstein does not provide any concrete detail about the process he follows to create his being; he just says it is a complex process based on his knowledge about chemistry and alchemy. However, although the novel does not explain it, how the monster was created can be deduced thanks to the introduction Mary Shelley writes in the revised 1831 edition, previously mentioned.

Other elements that help the reader to imagine the process of creation are the references Victor Frankenstein makes to Waldman's experiments and his own scientific interests. He states he is interested in the structure of the human frame and, for this, he reads Waldman's works, taking it as his main inspiration and source for his experiment. He also mentions his acquaintance with the science of anatomy (37), which he considers insufficient for his research.

Having said this, despite its not being expressly said, one could understand that the Creature was made of different body parts, or as Victor names them "materials", taken from exhumed bodies. These materials were put together to create a human-like being, brought to life using a machine which attracts electricity. Thanks to the electric shock the machine discharges on it, the Creature comes to life.

5.

ANALYSIS OF THE FILMS

Throughout the history of film, many literary novels have been taken as a source to produce new stories. One of the most adapted novels in history is *Frankenstein*. As a horror story, *Frankenstein* meant an appealing opportunity for film producers to bring an attractive literary work to the big screen. *Frankenstein* became an icon for American horror film, reaching its most popular era during the 1920s thanks to the multiple theatrical versions as well as to the popularity of the novel (Benshoff, 214). The film adaptation records take us to 1910, when the first motion picture adaptation of Mary Shelley's novel was recorded. This film, directed by J. Searle Dawley under the name *Frankenstein*, was just 16 minutes long and it belonged to the genre of silent films. Even so, the film that still nowadays out stands from the rest is our first example: *Frankenstein* (1931), by James Whale.

5.1. *Frankenstein* (1931), by James Whale

The main differences we find with the novel are due to the original text that Whale took to write the plot of his cinema adaptation. They did not take *Frankenstein's* original text, but the stage play that Peggy Webling wrote in 1927. According to Mark Jancovich, Webling's text was adapted by John L. Balderston, creating his own "stage conception of Mary Shelley's classic tale" (192).

The decision to bring *Frankenstein* to the big screen was done after the huge success that the adapted film directed by Tom Browning, *Dracula* (1931), had obtained. As the first known film adaptation of the novel--previous films were lost and discovered some decades after-- it had a crucial task regarding the representation of the Creature and the scientific process to create it. It is a true fact that Mary Shelley never described the scientific process in a detailed way. For this, the way in which the Creature is created was a key factor for Whale.

Speaking briefly about the plot of the film, in contrast with that of the novel, we find that it does not start through a series of letters from Robert Walton to his sister, recalling Frankenstein's story. Instead, we are taken directly into a cemetery, where Dr Frankenstein and his assistant exhume several bodies. We find a character that does not appear in the book, an assistant called Fritz. Then we follow these two characters into Frankenstein's laboratory, where they begin their experiment.

Regarding the depiction of the character of Victor Frankenstein in this first popular adaptation, the first important difference we encounter compared to the novel is the name of Dr Frankenstein. In Whale's adaptation, Victor Frankenstein receives the name of Henry Frankenstein. For the connoisseurs of the novel, this might be a little confusing at first. He receives this new name due to the source text taken to create the plot, the stage play adapted by Webling.

In this film, Henry Frankenstein is depicted as someone mad, sinister and isolated. He is completely dedicated to his experiment and to science. His only partner is his assistant Fitz, who is also wicked and dim-witted. During the first nine minutes, Dr Frankenstein shows an insane ambition to create life. He does not care about his consequences or the morality his experiment has. When Dr Waldman, Elizabeth and Victor question his intention, Henry says: "Crazy Am I? Will you see whether I'm crazy or not!" (*Frankenstein*). He tries to justify his acts by sheltering himself behind science. He has lost his focus and is now obsessed with the idea of creating life.

In this first part of the film, we could classify Henry Frankenstein as a purely Romantic scientist, according to Hayne's classification. At first, Dr Frankenstein is depicted as someone sinister, with no social relationships apart from his assistant and obsessed with science. He is devoted to his experiment and the consequences of his acts are not only destructive to himself, but to those around him such as Elizabeth. Despite this, he provokes admiration for his commitment. This could be seen during the minutes 19:00 until 19:18 when Elizabeth says "Wait a moment, I understand, I believe in you, but I cannot leave you tonight." She is amazed by Henry's dedication, but she is also worried about him losing his focus.

But while the film advances, the type of scientist Henry Frankenstein represents changes drastically. He turns into a helpless scientist. When he realizes he has lost control over his experiment, he tries to recover the life he had before. He decides to marry Elizabeth and begin a new life away from the Creature he has brought to life. However, he cannot escape from it and the Creature goes against his well-being. Dr Frankenstein becomes more emotional and sociable after his failure and decides to abandon what he has been pursuing latterly. When he realizes he cannot escape from his own creation, he decides to confront it.

On another level, we should talk about the scientific process chosen in the film to create the Creature. During the scene where Elizabeth and Victor Moritz are talking with Dr Waldman, chemical Galvinism and electrical biology are mentioned. As it is stated in the third section of this dissertation, Mary Shelley was influenced by Galvani's experiments with electricity.

The film begins with Dr Frankenstein exhuming bodies, helped by his assistant Fritz. In this case, the Creature is made up of different body parts from corpses. Dr Frankenstein decides to take the body of a hanged man as well, but as the neck is broken, his brain is useless. For this reason, he asks Fritz to steal a brain from the University. There, Fritz accidentally breaks the glass containing the normal brain and, instead, he takes an abnormal one. In the film, this is the reason they give to explain why the Creature cannot talk or walk properly. Due to the fact that it is a criminal brain, it is a violent being.

We are told during the film that Dr Frankenstein has carried out previous experiments with dead animals and a human heart, but this is his first time with a human being. He places the body of the Creature on a table and lifts it up outside the ceiling, into the stormy night. He activates a sophisticated machine which is supposed to attract the electric energy the storm has. The body of the Creature receives an electric shock and comes to life. Unlike the novel, the scientific process is shown in detail. The viewer is aware of every step Dr Frankenstein takes to make his creation.

5.2. *The Curse of Frankenstein* (1957), by Terence Fisher

Terence Fisher makes one of the freest adaptations of Shelley's novel. He adapts the plot to make it more attractive for the viewers, as it has been done many times before. He maintains the characters and his names, unlike the previous example, but assigns them different roles in the story. For example, Dr Krempe appears to be Victor Frankenstein's tutor and ensuing assistant in his laboratory, but in the novel, he is Victor's professor at University.

Fisher creates a complete new character around Victor Frankenstein. The film begins in a prison where Victor is kept. All the action develops through Victor's flashback. He tells the story why he has been imprisoned to a priest that goes to visit him. In this scene, one can see Victor is totally desperate. He begins to narrate the events from his childhood, when he was an impertinent and off-putting child. Victor describes himself as someone intelligent, showing his egocentric character and high self-esteem. In fact, although the viewer perceives his character as someone surly, he is still polite and noble. He is sophisticated and ambitious, charming for the rest of the people.

He could be described as the type that is closer to the alchemists, turning out at the end into a helpless scientist. His major goal is to create a new human being, no matter the lines he has to cross. He does not have any moral scruples and, like the alchemists, he is ideologically evil. Victor's evilness is shown throughout the film in different scenes, but the most outstanding ones are the ones concerning the creation of the Creature and the murder of Professor Bernstein.

Despite the warnings of Dr Krempe, who advises him to stop his experiment, Frankenstein becomes obsessed with his work and surpasses all the limits of nature. He is not affectionate as his only love relationship is with his maid, Justine, whom he uses to satisfy his personal desires. Elizabeth, on the contrary, is shown as his love, but he does not pay her any attention when she arrives and decides to concentrate all his energy in his experiment. He is unstoppable. At this point, Dr Krempe describes Victor as someone wretched.

The second example in which we can see his evilness is the way in which he plans to obtain a brain for his Creature. He invites to his home Professor Bernstein. He treats him well and acts as the perfect host. However, when Victor asks Professor Bernstein to follow him to his chamber, he pushes him over the stairs, making him fall from the first floor down the ground and, eventually, dying. Victor exhumes the body to take his brain to provide his Creature with a brain that can make of it a being of a superior intellect.

Victor in the film is undoubtedly evil. Unlike Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Fisher's version does not show any kind of regret after his creation. In the film, Victor does not question the morality of his experiment or thinks about carrying out a simpler one. Instead, he does completely the opposite; he is ready to do whatever is needed to develop his work. Fisher's *Frankenstein* goes beyond the limits of morality more than any other adaptation that is analyzed in this research.

At the end of the film, back again to the cell, we can see a wicked, mad man who tries to get compassion from his former tutor, Dr Krempe. He has turned into a helpless scientist who has lost control over his experiment and who is desperate to get back to his previous life. Nevertheless, his actions have changed his life forever and he is condemned for what he has created. The film ends up showing Victor's fate: he is going to be beheaded.

As to the scientific process, it is one of the most elaborated films from all the instances that are being analyzed in this study. The process of creation of the Creature takes most of the time in the film, while in others it is just a small part of the plot.

Victor's scientific work begins from the moment in which he hires Dr Krempe to be his tutor and teach him chemistry and science. They create a sophisticated machine which is capable of bringing dead animals back to life. We can see how they do this with a little dog early in the film, in minutes 09:16 and 12:30. Their machine works connected to a source of electricity and gives electric shocks to the subject they are treating. But, for Victor, bringing the dog back to life is not enough, he wants to bring to

life something he makes with his own hands, he wants to create life, more specifically, human life.

Krempe never agreed with Victor's experiment and, at the end, when he realizes nothing can stop Victor, he decides to abandon him. Victor still justifies himself by stating that his work is important for science and that he will work with materials of great quality to avoid any kind of mistakes. In order to get these "materials", he steals the body of a hanged man and he gets different parts little by little, paying for them to a gravedigger. He uses the brain of Professor Bernstein for his being, but after a dispute with Krempe, the brain is damaged. Victor states that this is the reason why his being is evil and stupid. However, Mary Shelley's Creature turns out to be evil due to Victor's rejection, not because of the brain used. Indeed, it is a fully developed intellectual and moral being.

In order to make his being come to life, Victor places the reconstructed body into a container full of water and connected to some kind of cables. These cables are at the same time connected to his sophisticated machine.

Although the process happens during a stormy night, he does not use the energy produced by it, but the one produced by the electric generator of the machine. After discharging the electric shock on the body, he leaves his laboratory thinking he needs help to make the machine work properly. But when he comes back, he discovers that his experiment has been a success. For Frankenstein, this experiment is the most important achievement in his career and he is delighted by his creation.

5.3. *The Young Frankenstein* (1974), by Mel Brooks

The Young Frankenstein is a film directed by Mel Brooks which came out in the year 1974. During the 70s, a Frankenstein film was not a novelty, so Brooks had to surprise the audience with a new approach to the story. In an interview for *Los Angeles Times* in 2010, Brooks said:

I was in the middle of shooting the last few weeks of "Blazing Saddles" somewhere in the Antelope Valley, and Gene Wilder and I were having a cup of coffee and he said, I have this idea that there could be another "Frankenstein." I said not another – we've had the son of, the cousin of, the brother-in-law, we don't need another Frankenstein. His idea was very simple: What if the grandson of Dr. Frankenstein wanted nothing to do with the family whatsoever. He was ashamed of those wackos. I said, "That's funny."

For this reason, he decided to create a comedy. In his film, we can see how the original *Frankenstein's* plot is taken to build a new story upon it. At first, they present the audience the main character on which the film is going to rely: the grandson of Victor Frankenstein, Frederick Frankenstein. Despite the fact that the genre of the film is the comedy, the way in which the scientific process and F. Frankenstein are described does not ridicule them, it could be described as an amiable parody of the story. Even though it is a film from the 70s, when color was already introduced in cinema, Brooks decided to make it in black and white as a mockery of the classic films made by Universal during the previous decades.

The film tells the story of Frankenstein's grandson, a science professor who rejects all family ties with the Frankensteins. Nevertheless, he is invited to his grandfather's castle to pursue his discoveries. This goes against his idea of not wanting to be related to him, but finally accepts the offer. The action takes place in the old castle which belonged to Victor Frankenstein. The whole film acquires a dark gothic atmosphere that is softened by its comic tone.

In this case, the figure of Victor Frankenstein as a scientist is not possible to analyze. He does not appear in the film, although he is mentioned a couple of times, being described as someone who lacks of morality, is mad and obsessed with his experiment. Thus, the figure of the scientist that is going to be analyzed is Frederick Frankenstein, his grandson.

To begin with, it should be mentioned the fact that Frederick Frankenstein does not accept his family name and is obsessed about being called "Frankenstein." At first, he does not want to carry out any experiment at all, but he is concern with the preservation of life rather than with the creation of it. He maintains social relationships with other

professors at the University and he is in a relationship with Elizabeth, a refined posh woman interpreted by Madeline Kahn. When he accepts the offer to continue his grandfather's experiment, he dedicates all his efforts to make it work, but he is not an absent-minded scientist, he still maintains social relationships and does not isolate himself.

Frederick Frankenstein could be a mixture between the heroic adventurer and the helpless scientist, according to Haynes. He is not an isolated person anymore, he is well considered by those around him and they have faith in him. He uses science to transcend human limitations, but not for power or fame, but for the interests of the scientific community. But at the same time, he shares characteristics with the helpless scientist. It is clearly seen how Frankenstein loses control over his experiment, causing problems to the ones around him. Before developing his work, he could not think of the possible outcomes it could have. Frankenstein could only see this process as something empowering for himself.

Since *The Young Frankenstein* is a comedy, one could think that the scientist represented would clearly be the type Haynes calls "stupid virtuoso"; someone ridiculed, comic and outwitted, blinded with his or her search for power. However, Brooks addresses the character of the scientist in a serious way. He is not interested in someone worthless, out of control, who seems a fool for the audience. As a parody to the Universal stereotype of the scientist, he wanted Frankenstein to be someone intelligent, aware of his acts. The comic element relies on the rest of the characters around the scientist: Igor, being an inefficient assistant; Inga, who does not help Frankenstein at all, instead she is always distracting him from his duty; or Elizabeth, presented as someone who cares more about her makeup or hairstyle than about the affection of her fiancé.

Moving now into the scientific process followed in the film, it is important to highlight two scientific references that appear; the first to Darwin, and the second to the reanimation of death tissue. Both references are mentioned by a student during a lecture given by Frederick Frankenstein at the beginning of the film. This could have been done

as a clear reference to the novel since Mary Shelley mentions both issues. The student also mentions Frederick's grandfather, who is supposed to be the original Victor Frankenstein. The film, despite being a comedy, addresses the scientific matter in a serious way, sticking to the novel's scientific references.

The process to create the Creature is done by exhuming the dead body of a hanged man. Frankenstein and Igor, his assistant, decide to use the body of this man due to its big size, he is said to be seven feet tall. It is the only film in which a clear reference to the Creature's size is made. In fact, this reference is faithful to the Creature's size mentioned in the novel. Frankenstein asks Igor to steal a brain from a laboratory in order to use it with their body. Igor breaks the glass container of the brain, which belonged to a genius called Hans Delbrück, and instead he takes an abnormal brain. This explains why the Creature lacks of intelligence, does not talk or walk properly and is violent.

For bringing the Creature to life, they use electricity, like in the previous examples. They lift up the body outside the ceiling, during a stormy night, trying to reproduce the process followed in the 1931 version. However, they use a kite instead of a sophisticated machine to attract the lighting as a way to mock Universal's production. When the lighting reaches the kite, the body receives an electric shock. When the body descends, it is still lifeless. Frankenstein thumps its chest desperately but it does not work either. After a couple of minutes, the Creature comes to life and wakes up.

5.4. Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1994), by Kenneth Branagh

Mary Shelley's Frankenstein might be the most faithful adaptation of the novel. The plot sticks to the original source text despite some changes and additions. According to Julie Sloan Branon, Kenneth Branagh stated that he wanted to "use as much of Mary Shelley as had not been seen on film before [and] to take things out that earlier films had invented" (6). Sloan also refers to Pedro Javier Pardo Garcia's interpretation in which he states Branagh's adaptation is "the result of a dialogue not only with its literary

source, but also with previous film adaptations (...) and therefore with the cinematic myth” (3).

Branagh’s interpretation of Victor Frankenstein turns out to be one of the most reliable representations of the character. He is not depicted as someone unsociable, but, as in the novel, Victor is a young man who is interested in science and wants to explore the field. His interest in science begins after the death of his mother, contrarily to Victor’s motivation in the novel, which is to create a better human being. He maintains a relationship with a woman, Elizabeth, and makes a good friend in Ingoldstat with Henry. He is friendly and passionate about his studies, but not sinister or isolated. At this point of the film, Victor could be described as an idealist scientist.

Notwithstanding, there is a shift in Victor’s personality, just like in the book, when he begins to take classes at University. He tries to explain the purpose of the experiment that he has been thinking, but when Professor Krempe listens to him, he is outraged and claims that Frankenstein’s intentions are amoral, illegal and will not be accepted by the scientific community.

After this episode, he begins to turn into a helpless scientist. Someone obsessed with his work, that prefers to keep working rather than to sleep and who is locked in his dorm, rejecting any kind of visit. He strongly believes his experiment is of paramount interest, not only for him but also for the scientific world. When Elizabeth goes to visit him, he does not want to see her. Elizabeth has to insist for him to open the door, but when he finally does, the woman is horrified by his scruffy appearance. He is still in love with her, but his work is more important than their relationship.

Continuing with the second target, the scientific process, it should be pointed out that the names of Alexander Magnus, Cornelius Agrippa or Paracelsus are mentioned. They are past alchemists Victor Frankenstein admires, who inspired him to conduct his experiment. This is a fact shared with Shelley’s novel.

Frankenstein's major help is Professor Waldman, who shares his research on electric stimuli on death tissues. During minutes 28:00 and 30:00, Frankenstein and Henry go to Waldman's office where he explains his theory about electricity and how to apply it to move different body parts. This theory is considerably similar to Galvani's experiments with electricity. Despite this, Waldman insists that the creation of life is amoral and that all efforts must be concentrated on the preservation of life. This is seen during minutes 31:00 and 32:00. Sometime after this encounter, Professor Waldman is killed by a patient and Victor decides to read his notes. Thus, he discovers he needs good "raw materials" to start his experiment, and he decides to steal the hanged body of the man who killed Waldman. He begins to steal dead bodies of poor people, and he even steals Professor Waldman's brain to complete his work.

Before carrying out his final task, he practices his theories with frogs, applying electric shocks on them. For his creation, he designs a sophisticated machine, composed by a bathtub connected to electric energy and to a complex system of pulleys which he uses to place the dead body on the tub. When he has recomposed the body of his creature, he places it on the tub full of placenta and inserts needles on particular parts of the Creature's body such as its feet, head or hands. Through these needles, he gives an electric shock to the body and drops a few eels to increase the amount of electricity the body receives. The use of eels is something Branagh decides to add, as it has never been done nor in previous film adaptations nor in the novel.

By doing this, the Creature comes to life and in that exact moment, Frankenstein rejects it. He realizes he has gone beyond the limits, and just after trying to stand the Creature up, he says: "What have I done?"

In this case, the Creature can walk properly after some time. He is not retarded or unable to speak, he is an intelligent being despite the fact that he is still made of different body parts from different people. This is the closest representation of Shelley's description of the Creature.

5.5. *Victor Frankenstein* (2015), by Paul McGuigan

After numerous film adaptations of Shelley's story, Universal wanted to recreate a new version inspired by all the previous films. Paul McGuigan, in an interview to ColliderVideos (2015), states that they took what they liked from Frankenstein's adaptations and put them together to create a new outlook of the story. The film has been described, as Mark Jancovich points out, "a jaunty bromance between Victor and Igor" (202).

In the case of *Victor Frankenstein*, the main character is no longer Shelley's protagonist Dr Frankenstein, but Igor, a hunchback man rescued by Frankenstein from a circus. The film tells the story from Igor's perspective, so we do not know Victor Frankenstein's life by first hand.

McGuigan's production depicts Victor Frankenstein in a way totally different from the novel. It is an exaggerated reinterpretation of Shelley's text, tainted by the numerous previous film adaptations. An evidence of this could be seen between minutes 1:26:00 and 1:27:00, when it is said that Henry Frankenstein was Victor's brother. The name "Henry" could be a clear reference to Whale's film *Frankenstein* (1931). Whale, following Webbling's script, decided to name his main character Henry and not Victor as in the novel.

Dr Frankenstein is described as someone mad, obsessed with his experiment and even lunatic. There is no doubt that he is brilliant, but, unlike the novel, he requires Igor's help to finish his experiment. In minute 38:45, he states: "lung, heart, spine, brain...all your work. All impossible without you, in fact". Despite the fact that he is a good man to Igor, he is perceived as someone sinister by the rest. He is an ambitious person and pursues the idea to create life out of death. His dream of reversing death is received negatively by the scientific community at the University and by society.

A new component that we can find in this adaptation is that Frankenstein himself admits to be a believer at the beginning of the film. He believes in God, but he states

that God created us in an imperfect way and he wants to improve his work. Nonetheless, after finishing his second creation, he affirms there is “no Satan, no God, only humanity, only me”.

According to Haynes' classification, McGuigan's Victor Frankenstein could be a mixture between the heroic adventurer and the helpless scientist. He could be considered a heroic adventurer type of scientist because, in a way, the story is presenting Victor Frankenstein as someone with no fear, willing to do anything for science. He frees Igor from his cage at the circus and escapes in an exciting persecution. The film makes clear the admiration Igor has for him and how much he values Frankenstein's work. Conversely to this type of scientist, he is still an isolated person. It is true that he attends social events and enjoys Igor's company, but most of his time he is alone collecting materials for his experiment or working in the laboratory. All his social interactions are related to his work, either because he needs something or because he wants to celebrate his new advances.

For this reason, he could also be considered a helpless scientist, as he loses control over his experiment. He is not aware of the perils of his work and thinks nobody but Igor can understand what he is doing. These characters are truly isolated individuals because they devote their life to their work and they ignore moral standards. He is blinded by his ambition to create life.

Moving onto the scientific process that is followed in the film, we should distinguish between the two experiments that are carried out. Victor Frankenstein's first creation is an ape-like creature, made by different animal body parts that he has stolen from the zoo. In order to bring this being to life, he uses the electric current to apply an electric shock into the animal. He uses needles to connect the being with the electricity and, after the shock, it comes to life. The being turns out to be violent and it breaks free from the ropes that were holding it.

Secondly, Dr Frankenstein decides to make a second attempt, supported by Finnegan, one of his colleagues at University. In this case, his goal is to create a huge human-like

being, with two hearts that can pump enough blood for its huge size and four lungs. Finnegan and Victor Frankenstein decide to develop this experiment in a castle on the coast. To proceed with the experiment, they create several aerostatic balloons that attract lightnings, connected to a wire which sends the electricity into a platform where the Creature is placed. The Creature is lifted up into this platform through a system of pulleys and it comes to life after receiving the electric shock.

Even though the Creature is brought to life, it becomes violent and confronts Frankenstein. For this, Igor and Victor decided to kill the Creature. At the end of the film, Victor Frankenstein sends a letter to Igor saying goodbye, but also making it clear that he will not stop researching to succeed in his experiment, suggesting he might know what went wrong. Although it is not explicitly said, Frankenstein thinks it went wrong because of the brain they used. This reason is given in most of the Frankenstein films such as in *Frankenstein* by Whale, *The Curse of Frankenstein* and *The Young Frankenstein*.

CONCLUSION

As a way to conclude this dissertation, one may be aware now of the huge differences that exist concerning the novel and its film adaptations. As has been addressed before, most film adaptations do not even take Shelley's text as their source material for the resulting scripts, but rather an already made stage play adaptation or a complete original one. For this reason, the films that have been analyzed in this study show so many differences with the novel and among themselves. Some are even inspired by previous ones, like Whale's 1931 *Frankenstein* and Brook's 1977 parody *The Young Frankenstein* or McGuigan's *Victor Frankenstein*.

Concerning Victor Frankenstein, he is generally depicted as a man obsessed with his work that loses control over it when he succeeds. However, depending on the intention of every film, he could be classified into different categories. The type of the scientist that recurs in all of them is that of the helpless scientist. One feature that all film adaptations share is the fact that Victor Frankenstein becomes obsessed with his experiment, isolating completely or partially himself and finally losing control over his Creature. It depends on whether he has always been in isolation or whether he is admired by others or not that he could be classified into another type of scientist. This is why all representations of Frankenstein's character share a duality. None of them fits entirely into Haynes' classification, they all present characteristics from two different types.

However, concerning the scientific process, we can find that all adaptations carry it out in a deeper way than the novel. Mary Shelley never writes how Dr Frankenstein achieves his discovery, but she gives some clues along the novel and, particularly, in the 1831 introduction. As opposed to Victor Frankenstein, who is elaborately depicted in the novel, but performed in considerably different ways in the film adaptations, the scientific process shares numerous aspects in all the selected films.

The film adaptations make a loose interpretation of the process Victor Frankenstein might have followed, focusing on Shelley's scientific references. They all agree to use

electricity as the means to bring the Creature to life, using a sophisticated machine to collect the power of this electricity, yet the source of the electric shock is not always the same. Sometimes it is produced by the machine itself, but in other cases, it comes from the lightning of a storm. Besides, the Creature is made of different body parts, but in some films, the result is not so homogeneous as in others. For example, in *The Curse of Frankenstein*, the Creature is not so big or fragmented as in *Frankenstein* (1931).

Likewise, the reason for the evilness of the Creature is changed in all the films except in Branagh's. In the same way as in the novel, Branagh explains that the Creature becomes evil because it is rejected by its "father", Victor Frankenstein. However, in the rest of the analyzed film adaptations, the reason that is given for the Creature's evilness and stupidity is a damaged or abnormal brain. This fact takes Victor's responsibility away, making him unrelated to the issue. Frankenstein's responsibility on the Creature's evilness is the central matter of the novel, so this change in the plot removes a crucial factor.

Moreover, the importance that the scientific process has in each film varies. For example, in *The Curse of Frankenstein* more than half of the film is dedicated to Victor Frankenstein's formation and development of his experiment, while in others, like *Frankenstein* (1931) or *The Young Frankenstein*, it only occupies one third of the film.

Furthermore, I have observed that the genre of the film does not affect the faithfulness of the novel. One could expect *The Young Frankenstein*, the only comedy on the list, to be the least faithful one, but in fact, the genre is not decisive as they all take the same liberties. Kenneth Branagh's production could be considered the most accurate one, as he tries to follow the plot of the novel and even represents Elizabeth's and Victor's letters. It is the only adaptation that includes Walton's episode and the viewer can easily recognize the different remarkable events that are narrated in the novel, despite some additions that drive it away from the source.

Ultimately, this dissertation has proved that Victor Frankenstein has become a different character from the one in Mary Shelley's version. He is now an archetype

which can be interpreted with different nuances and still maintain its essence. Meanwhile, the scientific process has been treated in a uniform way by most filmmakers, assuming electricity as the means to bestow life upon a lifeless being. The film industry has contributed to maintain Mary Shelley's story alive, but, in Jancovich's words (191), their adaptations are "inevitably a response to a range of other trends within the period within which they were made" rather than a faithful representation of the novel.

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