



Doru Pop

Cinematic Mixology, Some Critical Corroborations

Connections, Convergences, Combinations and Commutations in Contemporary Culture

ABSTRACT

Many authors have critically evaluated our popular culture as an expression of hybridization, with cinema at the forefront of this process. Often used as a term negative term, hybridization was either seen as a sign of creative decay, or the mixing of opposites. The author proposes another working concept, that of *cinematic mixology*, claiming for a new science of interpreting cultural objects. Following the mathematical science called combinatorics, which provide theorems explaining the principles of serial permutations, and using the suggestions of neurosciences about connectivity, the paper makes use of the analysis of impossible pairings in film narratives. The author rejects the notion of finite morphism of cinema and proposes the reevaluation, by critical corroborations, of some of the newest connections and convergences apparent in today's popular culture. The conclusion is that we are witnessing a real "Frankensteinization" of our imaginaries, where the connections and combinations have reached a stage of total amalgamation.

KEYWORDS

Cognitive Science; Neurology; Computational Cinema; Hybridization; Film Genres; Modern Fairy-Tales; Frankenstein Myth; Steam-Punk, Mythological Mixup.

DORU POP

Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania
doru.pop@ubbcluj.ro

Introduction to the art of cinema mixology

Cinematic mixology must be understood as a science of interpreting the mixing of old myths and visual artifacts within the new media. Not unlike the art of mixing drinks in a bar, cinematic mixology could account for how magic tales (as *Zauber-märchen* or *contes merveilleux*) take shape in contemporary cinema culture. As a cocktails mixologist is a specialist in the art of mixing alcoholic ingredients and accessories, of combining recipes and flavors in order to create variations and variants of drinks, contemporary cinema-makers appear to be mixing freely elements that are not supposed to be joined. As suggested by the very name, cinematic mixology would be a cultural science which should focus on the mechanisms allowing cinema-makers, screenwriters and visual artists in movies to create combinations of visual fantasies, characters and narratives. A particular case would be to describe how zombies, vampires, witches, trolls, werewolves and other fantastic creatures are combined in an endless mixing of non-juxtaposable elements. The purpose of this particular study is to provide a map for the main mixing methods in cinema and television and to describe the mechanisms



of putting together such ingredients in recent cinematic narratives.

There is one key question to be asked before all: what was the process allowing the generation of the contemporary fuzzy genres and the strange hybridizations of our culture? Are the cinematic re-mixed images and the media hybrids natural forms of expressions? Or is it, as some film critics like Janet Staiger have suggested, that the purity of film genres does not exist? In this view, all Hollywood films, even those produced during the “pure genre” era are impure and result from an inbreeding of genres. This perspective claims that the very nature of cinema is determined by the necessity of mixing genres (Staiger 2003).

Another concept used to describe this trait of cinema as medium making was *hybridization*. There are two perspectives on this issue. As many academics who were critically evaluating modern media have indicated, media hybridity is an expression of the global blending of genres across cultures – as is the case, for example, with the Bollywood narratives which are pervading Hollywood productions (Turow 45). On the other hand, as Ira Jaffe pointed out, hybridization is a form of subversion of the accepted genres, where the use of multiple genres is a sign of the creative exhaustion of the film industry. Hybrid cinema includes any forms of “odd mixtures”, like those proposed by authors like Quentin Tarantino or the Cohen Brothers (Jaffe 2008: 6), which usually come with a plethora of parodic references. Seen as an expression of the post-modern heterogeneity, incongruity, mingling and mixing of elements, cinema hybridization is mainly referring to a global culture where parodic re-interpretations are generating new expressions, as is the case with productions such as *Tampopo* (1985) or *Kung-fu Hustle* (2004). This cultural stage of our contemporary society, where the endless absorption and appropriation leads to the

mixing of vast arrays of significations, is pushing towards a revival of the old, towards a form of retro-modernism (Collins 1995).

Jaffe sees this process of hybridization as becoming an integral part of the mainstream cinema today, an expression of the general blurring of the boundaries between genres (Jaffe 2008). The argument put forward by Jaffe is appealing, yet there are some unanswered problems which I consider to be relevant. The first comes from the fact that hybrid forms of expression were part of the cultural imaginary for a long time, not only from the beginning of the cinema industry, but from the very start of human cultural expression. Hybridization and mixing is more than just cross-mixing the forms like fiction and documentary, or joining drama and music to create contemporary melodrama. If hybridization is just another term for collage, then the hybrid forms, or the mixing of genres are simply part of the modernist ideal which was proposing the creation the new, by joining the disparate old. More important, however, is the second question, that of crossbreeding or mongrelization, and the resulting creation of a new stylistics of the inbreed, as Salman Rushdie eloquently coined the term (Rushdie quoted by Jaffe 2008: 7). My argument is that the combinations and commutations we are witnessing in our contemporary visual culture, explicit in the mainstream media, and especially in the cinema industry, are moving beyond the simple hybridization as juxtaposing, or the hybridization as ironic reference. We are no longer talking about the post-modern pastiche (Jameson 1984), but of the excess of *meaningless mashups*.



Brief history of cultural commutations

The history of human culture offers plenty of examples of visual and mythical mixtures, where opposite elements are linked together. Myth-making often operates with juxtaposing and mixing apparently contrasting structures. Contradictory creatures, like the androgynous platonic ideal, populate classical mythology; mermaids are half fish, half women; monsters like the Minotaur, are crossbreeds between man and animal; just as the Centaurs, who are half horse, half human. Also, the demigods of the ancient world correspond to this apparently illogical mixing of the human and divine. The same variations are continuously used in other folk-tale narratives, like medieval stories, pre-modern fairy-tales and or ancient legends. From the convergence of the Beauty with the Beast to the conflicts between the Evil Witch and the Good Girl, we must return once again to the Grimm fairy-tales, which have set the standards for this reunion of the opposites. Characters like the half hedgehog and half-boy, combinations between the brave and fearful, encounters between the kind boy and the evil monster, the competition between the foolish and tricksters are trademarks of this commutational dynamics.

These bindings of opposites, as it was structurally interpreted by classical authors like Lévi-Strauss (1964), are an intrinsic part of the myth-making processes. Without going too deep into the discussion on structuralist interpretation of myths, we must note that this perspective considers the binary oppositions as the basis of all primitive religious thinking: divine-human, male-female, cooked-raw, hot-cold are series of divisions which generate symbolic meaning. Many myths use this discursive opposition

and the binary contrast in order to fully manifest as a structural unity, more so since these very oppositions can be later used as tools for interpreting the mythological narratives. These binary transformations are indicators for the mental patterns of humanity. Thus, by simply following the permutations of these binary codes, the structuralists are identifying the inner essences of culture and social imaginaries (Levi-Strauss 1964: 16).

In this understanding, oppositions are seen as bridges, as links between irreconcilable elements, which finally generate unity. The same need for unity has been traced clearly in the interpretation of narrative genres. As Jaques Derrida (1980) eloquently indicated, although all the genres are founded on the idea of *difference*, on an absolute and irreconcilable principle of separation, they still operate within the logic of impurity. No text (or discourse) can be pure, so, by consequence any type of generic expression is hybrid by nature. Derrida defines this process as “the principle of contamination” (59), a “law of impurity” which generates a crossing of the borders of genres. The question arising here is if the contaminations and commutations operating in modernity are still functioning in the same way in the contemporary cinematic practices and if the mixing of elements follows the same logic of binary commutations leading to a unity of significations. Do we still have any taxonomic control over the multiplicity of permutations.



Modern monsters and other forms of romantic mixture

Of all the creations of modernity, the story of Frankenstein remains the quintessential expression of the bric-à-brac logic of industrialism, and of the desire for connections of the modern man. The traditional dichotomies of mythology and the Cartesian divide between body and the mind, prompted modernity to follow an integrative principle. In the context of overcoming the limitations of the past, the concept of *mischgedicht* was developed as an expression of the romantic ideal of the union of separated entities. As it was put forward by Friedrich Schlegel, this “new mixture” was hailed as an aesthetic solution for all the problems of art and culture. A new era was announced, where inter-penetration overcame separation, where the epic and the lyric, the fantastic and the prosaic were welcomed to live joined together. This modernist definition, following Schlegel’s idea of mixing the opposites, proposed two possible ways of mixing genres in literature, visual arts and even music. On one hand this Romantic ideal of mixing is done by juxtaposition (where it uses the joining of opposites) or by association (when it goes about by using similarities). This is the essence of what David Duff calls this “the combinatorial method” (Duff, chapter 5), in which he is finding the resources of the mixing of genres in all the works of the Romantics.

Probably the best expression of this aesthetics of combining and mixing remains “Prometheus Unbound”. The work of Percy Bysshe Shelley is a remarkable expression of the *mischgedicht* that Schlegel was describing as an ideal of Romanticism. The story of Prometheus proved to be one of the most important aesthetic manifests for the combination, the synthesis of genres (epic, dramatic and lyric) made possible by early

modernity. As Charles E. Robinson demonstrated, Percy Shelley should be considered at least the co-author of another major work of the time, another “Promethean” story: *Frankenstein* (Robinson 2008). In 1818, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelly, wife and companion of Percy Bysshe Shelley, published a novel which not only created a new literary genre, the horror story, but which ushered a radically innovative cultural meme.

Frankenstein is not only a creation of modernist belief of the joining of disparate parts, but it is also a mythological mixture. As Harriet Hustis properly describes the functioning of the novel *Frankenstein* as basically a re-contextualized narrative, a modified replica of the Greek myth of the great Titan opposing the Gods (Hustis 2009, 53). More so, Mary Shelley’s creature is simultaneously Osiris dismembered and re-assembled mistakenly, Faust searching for his soul, and even Michael Jackson, the strange creature of popular culture. Frankenstein must be seen as integral part of a general process of modernity, which can be identified “monstering” (Williams 67), which transforms humanity by technology (the links between Frank and H. G. Wells’ Invisible man are more than suggestive). This “monstering” process makes Victor Frankenstein’s creature not only an artificial monster, a proof that pointless creation exists, but also an expression of the metaphysical troubles presented by artificiality. This is why, from a cultural mixologist point of view, Michael Jackson can be seen as a manifestation of a deeply Frankensteinish consequence of modern mixing. Having an altered body, constructed of incompatible body parts, Jackson was never a monstrosity, but a popular culture ideal. His image was no longer dependent on beauty or ugliness, or about juxtaposing racial differences, nor about male vs. female sexuality. Just as Frankenstein is a body without a soul, a



creation made of spare parts, a creature of disparate components, Jackson is simultaneously joining together cultural pieces which in turn lead to pointless combinations. A Frankensteinian composite is basically a creation of madness (the Creator of the monster is a madman), which makes it a projection of a profound insanity. A Frankensteinian mixing is not simply a creature “stitched together”, a new being created by the addition of parts – following in the belief that science can produce anything, including life – but also a promiscuous “assemblage” of pieces. Unlike the modernist definition of the hybrid as alloy of various materials which is making a new unity, the Frankensteinian hybridization by re-mixing is connectivity without correlations.

More importantly, the Frankenstein narrative is also a foundational *cinemyth*, which functions as a projection of the functional hybridity of moviemaking. As suggested by Noël Burch, there is a Frankenstein complex within cinema, seen as a medium founded on the belief it can create life by means of technology, of producing monstrous existences by the sheer force of electricity, a form of reviving the dead (Burch 1981/ 1990, 20). On one hand, Frankenstein denotes the monstrosity of the cinematic art by its ability of mixing and re-mixing inanimate elements, with the purpose of presenting them as filled with life. On the other hand, although there is a deep distrust towards the monstrous (ugly) mechanical representations on screen, cinematic contents are more and more Frankensteinian in their nature.

A Frankenstein, with a twist (shaken, not stirred)

As Caroline Joan Picart has thoroughly documented this argument, Frankenstein remains one of the most “enduring” cinema myths today (Picart 2003), one which has a long standing genealogy, from the 1910 version of J. Searle Dawley, who created the first screen adaptation of the novel, to the more sophisticated production of Kenneth Branagh. No matter how different these variants are, their use of this cultural meme remained constant, and the endless fascination of our culture with Frankenstein seems infinite. From the classical production of James Whale, to its sequels and re-interpretations – *Bride of Frankenstein* (1935), *Son of Frankenstein* (1939), *House of Frankenstein* (1944), *The Ghost of Frankenstein* (1942), *The Curse of Frankenstein* (1957), *The Revenge of Frankenstein* (1958) – Hollywood used this re-used this trope in various ways. From the parodic figure in Mel Brooks’ take on the story, from *Young Frankenstein* (1974), to Tim Burton’s *Frankenweenie* (2012), a short comedic version with dogs, Frankenstein went from the tragic to the comedic, covering all the possible genre variations.

The many transformations of Frankenstein’s creature also show the transformational nature of cinema itself. More so, as the argument underlined by Picart indicates, we can trace a “Frankensteinian cinemyth” in multiple filmic narratives, with the influence of Frankenstein expanding to unexpected narratives, like the *Alien* quadrilogy, the *Terminator* franchise or *The Matrix* trilogy. This is not just the most re-mixed myth in cinema history, but also a pointer for the trouble nature of cinema narratives in general. Numberless Frankensteinian creatures populate our contemporary visual culture, from Darth Vader in *Star Wars* to *I, Robot* played by Will Smith or the *Robocop* TV



series, the representations of re-animated bodies are recurrent and the ideal of mixing incompatible elements is persistent.

A recent production, based on the graphic novels of Kevin Greivoux (also the author of the *Underworld* series) entitled *I, Frankenstein* (2014) brings an unflavored twist to the classical story of Mary Shelly and provides relevant insights about these implications of this resilient cinematic myth. The most recent film directed and written by Stuart Beattie (credited for writing several of the *Pirates of the Caribbean* movies), presents not only a re-mixed version of the story, with a “new” Frankenstein connected to the sci-fi narratives with evil robots, or mechanical monsters from *I, Robot*, but also comes with examples of how hybridity is taking extreme turns in contemporary cinema.

As seen before, Frankenstein is a re-animated creature, and this ability of the character becomes instrumental in cinematic narrative practiced. Contemporary cinema makers seem to have a proclivity to re-animate any myth available, any visual structure or story they can lay hands on. This characteristic, in its Frankensteinish ability to instill life into lifeless objects of phantasy and to make monstrous new expression, should be seen as a recent trait in the history of cinema. The re-mixed version of Frankenstein is relevant for this movement, as it is far both from the primitive, early evil version of J. Searle Dawley, and the innocent, semi-imbecile version of the 1931 movie. Actually Mary Shelley herself would not have recognized her monstrous creature from the acting of Aaron Eckhardt. Frankenstein is now transformed into “Adam”, a new man, involved in a holy war against demons. With elements borrowed from movies like *Highlander* (1986), *The Matrix* (1999) or *Constantine* (2005), Beattie portrays his hero a mildly scarred monster. Transforming Frankenstein into an extremely attractive

action hero, is not only removing our imaginary from the famous depictions of Boris Karloff or even, amongst the ugliest, Robert de Niro's take on the monster, but he is creating an impossible creature, an imaginary remix. Adam-as-Frankenstein is no longer ugly or disgusting, he is almost a fashion model, as if his creator took his body parts from a bodybuilding contest. This by-product of fashion, glamour an is beyond bad taste and the “modern Prometheus” is transformed into a special mix of the immortal warriors in the *Highlander* series, with parts from Buffy the Vampire Slayer and elements of modeling for men. He is post-modern Savior made out of pieces of popular culture, none related to him, a monstrosity of the mindless mixing of ingredients. Frankenstein is now just a metrosexual monster. Rebranded as Adam the “demon hunter”, with a stylish haircut and matching scars, not too frightful, but appealing, meets a beautiful woman of course, the good doctor Terra, who convinces him that he is not different, that he is part of our world. Indeed, the process of agglutination of myths into the most superficial layers of popular culture leads to quirky scenes, like the passionate moment happening between Terra and Adam/ Frankenstein, a reproduction of the “classical” romance scene, where the body building actor is stripping in front of the amazed and elated actress – for our eyes only. Who would have thought that Frankenstein can provide the viewers with a semi-erotic moment?

The rest of the movie is just following this logic of incompatible mingling. The demon hunting, monster slaying action film scenes, where the newly found quality of Frankenstein, that of Transformed into an action hero, the creature of Mary Shelly enters a frenzy of martial arts combats, “descending” demons, that is blazing them into flames one after the other and also



“ascending” gargoyles. It is here that another level of the cultural mingle-mangle. The narrative re-mixing is as messy as the visual hotchpotch. The story, which takes place 200 years after the creation of Victor Frankenstein (his notebook is marked 1793), brings us in the middle of a war between gargoyles and demons. In this war two sides are confronted. Lenore, the queen of the Gargoyle Order, created by no other than the Archangel Michael, leads her kind in the war against The Demon Horde, headed by Naberius, the archenemy of Adam. Apparently we are exposed to the traditional fight between good and evil, the structurally recognizable opposition between irreconcilable principles. Yet the logic of the mingling produces a strange assortment of symbols and figures, with the gargoyles as expressions of this gratuitous combination.

The gargoyles, as decorative elements who appeared in the 12th Century France, are the typical, Christian bred hybrid monsters. The old French term “gargouille” was basically describing a destructive winged being, which, after baptism, becomes the protector of the church – as it is in the legend of Friar Romanus (Varner 2008, 19). Beattie, via Greivoux, takes these Medieval imaginary building blocks, already products of inane imaginary variations, aberrant forms of Christian grotesque, and turns them into manifestations of popular culture superficiality. Now the gargoyles are operating as self-described “vigilantes”, they are no longer combinations of animal and human, stone creatures populating Gothic Europe, they become contemporary bi-products of mix-up, simultaneously human, supernatural fighters and gargoyle stones flying about. The erratic mixing up is happening both visually and narratively. The Gargoyle Order has a trilobite cross as symbol, which is an index of the mashup of images – this cross does not belong to the Western church

(where the Frankenstein monster was supposedly created), nor to the Orthodox church, which uses a three armed cross with one slightly misbalanced, nor to the only cross with three arms in the West, which is the Papal cross, since this has the arms disposed in an ascending form. The creation of a new cross, with arms disposed in a descending order as in *I, Frankenstein* is relevant for the mixed up creation of the new without any consideration for the old. The gargoyles, who are supposedly using sacramentals to kill demons, are simultaneously semi-devilish creatures and representations of the good. This is where the combinations of become obscene.

Obscene connectivities. Frankenstein in our brains

In the center of *I, Frankenstein* (2014), the retold story of Victor Frankenstein’s creature, there is a key problem similar to all the other productions dealing with lifeless existence. “God is no longer the sole creator of man”, this recurrent phrase in the movie is addressing a fundamental question which Mary Shelly (and the entire modernity) raised. How can we create new life from the old; where lies the point of origin of the living and of all the creation; what if we can create new life forms, to whom does this life, like that of Frankenstein, would belong? From the very beginning Frankenstein appeared as an expression of a possible answer to these theoretical problems. Stemming out of the desire for mixing opposites, Frankenstein was a result of the modernist promise of connectivity.

Anything can be connected with anything, and the final result will make sense. The mechanical production of Mary Shelley’s monster was followed by many other monsters coming out of the assembly lines of capitalist modes of production. This



very promise of connectivity can be seen in our multimedia environments today, in a global neural networks of the Internet, as McLuhan prophesied. Cell phones are interconnected with wireless devices, we have networks of relations, social media who are providing unprecedented connectivity among human, disconnected elements are joined together by innovative media. All made possible by electricity and technology.

Returning to Frankenstein; the monster represented an answer to the Cartesian ideal of bodily mechanics. Man as *automaton*, as René Descartes described the human (and animal) body functioning as a mechanism, no different from the machineries present in the gardens of the French king, is made possible by the new technologies. The dream of creating a human mechanism by means of mechanical instructions, coupled with the idea of galvanism, lead to the concept developed in Part V of the *Discourse on the Method*. Based on the early experiments of Fontana on the electrically stimulated muscles, this lead to a fundamental idea of the XIX th Century, techno-resurrection. *I, Frankenstein* (2014) displays a similar belief. Wessex, the evil demon trying to find a re-animation formula for dead humans, is using a technological device within a storage unit, where he keeps the bodies designed for demon possession, sharing this belief of re-vamping the human body. Albeit this unit resembles strangely with that from *The Matrix*, the possibility of transforming humans into “frankensteins”, populated by demon spirits is not so far fetched.

Without going too deep into the neuroscience of connections, it would be important to discuss how aberrant synapses function and how the theories of connectionism would come into place in the discussion about contemporary philosophies of re-mixing. Often called simply connectionism, this view of the functioning of our brains is indebted to Ramón y Cajal's proposed theory

of the neuron as separated entity. In this understanding of the neural activities, we can provide an explanation for the neurological structures of our mind by understanding the connecting process of the units of the brain, the neurons. In 1943, Warren McCulloch and Walter Pitts, a neurophysiologist and a logician, published a paper that showed how neuron-like structures (or *units*, as they were called) acted and interacted purely on the basis of a few neurophysiologically plausible principles. Their suggestion was that artificial neurons could be wired together and can perform complex logical calculation, that is they are able to “learn” by connecting patterns (McCulloch and Pitts 1943). Later Patricia Churchland, a neuroscientist, and Paul Churchland, her philosopher husband, took connectionism to another theoretical level. They argued for connectionist-style of the human mind which lead to the idea of the mind as “multilayered” network, executing almost infinite synaptic links. This is the “post-modern brain”, a consciousness governed by chance and aleatory connections and a quatum-based operations (Globus 1995). The consequences are that human mind does not follow the classical rule of thumb, that is the systematic development of connections, or of meanings which are certain or fixed. Our cognition takes place within aberrant combinations, often illogical, most of the times self-tuned by errors and mistakes.



Combinatoric anomalies – or mixing presidents and vampires

In mathematics, combinatorics is the field dealing with counting, enumeration, distribution and permutation which means, simplifying a highly conceptualized theory, studying the possible combinations of in finite elements. Basically it provides algorithms which allow us to calculate, using certain criteria which must be met, how many occurrences are possible with a given structures. Using mathematical combinatorics one can count passwords, texts, poker hands, Shidoku boards, permutations and any other manifestations. Although, in principle, permutations are infinite, as indicated by the standard Prouhet-Thue-Morse sequencing, which can create an infinite number just by using a binary sequence (0-1), there are no infinite combinations without repetitions. Just as it was proven by Max Euwe in chess, there are no “infinite combinations” in a finite game, recasting the same moves, objects, or elements leads to a repetitive distribution or to combinatorial practices which are absurd.

Without going into any mathematical theorems, the problem of combinatorics brings us to the question of finite morphism in cinematic expressions. How many non-repetitive selections can contemporary film making generate? Can the combinations be infinite, since the number of possible elements would indicate this possibility, or the mixing and re-mixing of ideas and tropes leads to an inevitable redundancy. One of the most interesting concepts in mathematical combinatorics which provides a suggestive answer is the pigeonhole principle (also known as the *Schubfachprinzip* or the *Dirichlet drawer* principle). Basically this theorem states that, even in situations with an

Doru Pop

infinite number of possible distribution of objects, there would be occurrences where unexpected results will appear.

This principle is useful when trying to prove how unexpected combinations happen in cinematic mixology. One of the best examples is provided by the novels published by Seth Grahame-Smith. The American author came up with the idea that public domain narratives and characters can be mixed with contemporary genres. Thus Grahame-Smith first published *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* (2009), where Jane Austen's novel was combined with elements from the “undead” narratives. Soon after that, he came up with another “mash-up”, in which Lincoln, the 16th President of the United States, was transformed into a vampire hunter who kept a secret journal about his adventures. So, as far as Abraham Lincoln goes, the combinations are: orphan, husband, lawyer, president, abolitionist and... vampire hunter. The image of Lincoln has been transformed from the highly respected historical figure to the post-heroic in the cinema (Schwartz 2009: 203-204), and now we find ourselves beyond the benign post-heroic era. Trivializing and ironic questioning of stereotypes (of the post-heroic) or the demystifying of authority figures (in the modern critical perspective) are replaced by incongruous combination, by mashups of incompatible connections. In the logic of re-mixing everything can be revamped. History is re-connected and re-viewed in a series of aberrant combinations. Since there is an Empire of the vampires in the American South, the Confederacy is helped by these immortal creatures to win the battles against the North. Thus the discourse of Lincoln and his politics are re-framed within the vampire hunting logic. The President has, in fact, another goal by promoting emancipation. Fighting for the “soul of the nation” is now more than just a discourse trope, in this version of Lincoln's address it becomes a



proclamation against the blood drinking monsters. When he wants to keep America as a nation of “living men” he does so in order to keep it from the slavery of the undead. Finally, this logic lead to the creation of a typical action hero; the skinny President turn into a kung-fu warrior, who, although of an old age, fights of vampires from a moving train, no different from Stephen Segal (*Under Siege 2*, 1995) or Jean-Claude Van Damme (*Derailed*, 2002). Lincoln is no longer the Union politician, but the ax-killing vampire slayer, a version of Buffy remixed with any of the unrefined characters from *Twilight*.

The story of Grahame-Smith was transformed, in 2012, into *Abraham Lincoln The Vampire Hunter* – relevantly enough the movie was produced by Tim Burton, who authored *Frankenweenie* the same year. In the visual competition for bringing to screen impossible narratives, *Abraham Lincoln The Vampire Hunter* is more than just a mixed genre film, amalgamating elements from fantasy, thriller, horror and action movies. It is also an expression of a mashed-up form of storytelling, both visually and narratively. Little Abe Lincoln witnesses as a child the killing of his mother, thus he swears revenge. In an illogical twist, Young Abe, by now the vampire hunter, has a mentor, Henry Sturges, who is also a vampire. After re-defining the vampire versus vampire wars, the director turns towards real historical events. The Civil War is re-interpreted from the perspective of the vampire involvement shows the viewer battles like Gettysburg where the Confederate army cannot be destroyed without silver bullets and canon balls. The emancipation is no longer just about the freeing of slaves, is also a war against vampire Confederates with Jefferson Davis making a pact with vampires. Finally the war is won by the might of the president who used his arsenal which included an ax, covered with silver, and bullets made from

the cursed metal, so much hated by vampires.

This transformation of history is not limited to the movie having Abraham Lincoln as a main action hero. The combinations are limitless; another mashed-up historical character in 2012 was President Roosevelt. In *FDR: American Badass!* (2012), there is another president portrayed as a monster hunter. Although this parody does not fit the logic of the mixology, the ironic treatment indicates the mechanisms of the mashup. Roosevelt did not contract polio as a child, but from a toxin released by a Nazi werewolf’s bite, which pushed him into a revenge frenzy against Hitler (who is a furry werewolf). Transforming his wheelchair into a “motorcycle of death”, the 32nd President ends up as a grotesque and incongruous fighting machine, a distorted version of the global leader who fought against the worst nightmare of contemporary history.

In a certain way, the transformations happening to Abraham Lincoln are Frankensteinish by the nature of the connections made possible by in the logic of cinematic mixology. And one of the unexpected results of making Lincoln as vampire hunter are the spawning of consecutive combinations. In the same year there were a couple of movies trying to capitalize on the notoriety of the mashup. Thus Abraham Lincoln was put face to face with zombies – in Richard Schenkman's homonymous mockbuster production; the next year Abraham Lincoln was part of the absurd cast in *30 Nights of Paranormal Activity with the Devil Inside the Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* (2013), where an evil spirit falls in love with him. The same logic is to be found in another recent production, *The Lego Movie* (2014), where Lincoln is a Master Builder, who brings together a crew of totally chaotic figures, from pirates, to Star War robots and a Batman wannabe, in a series of totally absurd connectivities.



Re-animating the Western. A mashup of aliens, cowboys and vampire-hunters

Starting as a musical genre, where bits and pieces of songs were put together in order to create a new piece, the mash-up became gradually a widespread cultural practice in contemporary society. Soon “bootleg” music, where DJ’s were bringing together songs from other authors, by simply remixing, recombining and re-authoring, showed they had a great potential, and provided an inspiration for others who wanted to practice this form of expression. The musical practices were exported in other media production environments and now we can speak about a global spread of *mashup cultures* (Sonvilla-Weiss 2010). The mashup thrives in the digital, virtual and online environments, although the practices of combining and remixing available contents and resources have entered out mainstream Industries, in a trend which was also called *remix-culture*.

It must be underlined once more that there is one level of the mashup culture which is not relevant for the current discussion. When the combinations are simply parodic mingling of previous works, then the mashup simply belongs to the “classical” hybridization. Sometimes such productions add to the genre confusion, just as productions such as the satirized version of *Gone with the Wind* – in *The Wind Done Gone*, the narrative re-telling of Margaret Mitchell’s story. Nonetheless, where the mashed-up stories are simply forms of parodic reinterpretation – they do not provide any relevant contexts for the mixologist. Just like in a “classical” hybridization of the Western movies, as is the case with Barry Sonnenfeld’s *Wild Wild West* (1999), a cinematic mixologist will not find relevant elements for interpretation.

Doru Pop

However, there are crossbreeding instances, where the Western films, mixed with other ingredients, are generating a completely new kind of cinematic imaginary, one based on the strange logic of illogic permutations. This is the case with the alien invasion Western created by Jon Favreau in *Cowboys and Aliens* (2011). This movie provides us with a clear manifestation of the promiscuous mash-up in the contemporary culture. We are witnessing more than just the patching together of incompatible genres, but also the coupling of various in-adherent elements. Favreau brings together cowboys and aliens, while keeping intact all the elements of the two incompatible genres. All the ingredients function autonomously: the aliens go about their usual activities, mining gold and abducting people; the cowboys are doing their cattle raising and shooting routines; while the Chiricahua warriors are still aggressively chasing the miner trespassers. However, they are quickly mashed up in the same narrative, where aliens, cowboys and natives populate the same space, dwell in the same spaceship, occupy the same imaginary. The combination of resources and histories is, again, done with the tools of the mashup culture. It’s first manifestation happens at the intertextual level. Daniel Craig, who plays the main hero, is dressed like Indiana Jones, the character of Harrison Ford who, in turn, is mimicking John Wayne. The aliens share similarities with the Apaches, all the while as they imitate other outer-space creatures who keep humans captive in slumber stasis. The cross-mixing is acknowledged by the director himself, in an interview he declares his movie to be inspired by productions as diverse as *Independence Day* or *Predator* and *Close Encounters of the Third Degree*. The whole operation is a mashup of elements from John Ford or Sergio Leone, amalgamated with Ridley Scott and Stephen Spielberg.



The movie, produced after the graphic novels created by Scott Mitchell Rosenberg, is also remarkable for another mashup element: *techno-convergence*. As gunslinger Jack Lonergan is defeating an entire alien mother ship he does so armed with an all powerful sci-fi gauntlet, one which he has no trouble understanding. In the remixing of visuals and objects, nobody seems to care if the frontiersmen fighting in the late 19th century have a clear understanding of alien technology or if this technology itself is somehow strangely medieval. Although such infantile techo-heterogeneity characterizes many other movies – like the recent adaptation after Bram Stoker, *Van Helsing* made by Stephen Somers, or the more recent version of Edgar Rice Burroughs’ “Princess of Mars”, *John Carter* (2012) – Favreau integrated his movie in one of the most important manifestations of mashup culture, techno-mingling.

The logic of duality, of the conflict or mingling of two opposites is not a novelty in the cinema. There is a long line of “classical” Vampire Westerns, sub-genre spawned by John Carpenter’s *Vampires* (1998). This trend includes productions like *Western Zombie*, *The Quick and the Undead*, *Dead Walkers* – where the juxtaposing of the Western frontier with incompatible creatures like the mummies, ghosts, zombies and the undead is brought together by the power of cultural reinforcement (Miller 2012). While the logic of the “new frontier” simply transformed the conflict between Good and Evil into the conflict Living versus the Undead, this encounter which started as simply re-animating an almost abandoned genre, resulted in creating new series of “chaotic categories” (Miller 10).

Following the path opened by *Vampires*, Scott Stewart specialized himself in supernatural mashups. After directing *Legion* (2010), an apocalyptic about angels gone haywire, he created *Priest* (2011), an

action-horror-science-fiction-dystopian-post-apocalyptic story. Here the mingle-mangle is reaching new edges of reason. The combination of genres reaches mind boggling heights, since *Priest* is not longer a “simple” horror western, a hybrid genre of coincidence of opposites. *Priest* takes the horror thriller and mixes it with elements from *1984* and *Blade Runner*, in a collection of motorcycle races, vampire-hunting scenes, together with Church criticizing episodes and priestly sheriffs who contest the authority of a Holy Dictator. The intermixture is then places in a science fiction context, a dystopian society amalgamating a post-apocalyptic western and authoritarian societies, which brings vampires and familiars into the mishmash and then adds a touch of steampunk technologies to everything.

Just like its predecessors, this universe, created by Min-Woo Hyung, comes from a series of comic books called *manhwa*, a very popular genre in South Korea. When transformed into a movie, the story is a blend of real hybrids (like the defective Priest, called Black Hat, who is the first hybrid between Vampires and humans) and phantasmagoric hybrids, like the artificial universe the Priests live in. These Priests are practicing a sort of Counterstrike Christianity, where the servants of the Church are a species of Kung Fu fighters and Shaolin monks all in one. These reverends have a passion for shooting vampires and a real passion for speed. In a specific twist of the mingle-mangle discourse, the Priests end up going against the Church, making anti-Christians out of the servants of the Catholic Church. More so, the itself Church is turned into a police state, where the exploitation of humanity is conducted by an elite of obtuse Monsignors. In this reversed and commingled universe nothing is in its normal place. The Resurrection does not belong to the Christ, but it is an attribute of the Vampires



and their slaves, the familiars. The artificial universe built around the idea of a Christian dictator, a form of Orwellian farm where they believers chant: To go against the Church is to go against God, where the malign fanaticism of Nazism is blending with the terrifying Vampire Police. At the end we are left with a form of mixed-up Christianity, a form of re-Christianized popular culture, one which has nothing do do with the teachings of the Church and, simultaneously, everything to do with entities outside of the Church. The laws of bricolage are long forgotten – since action movies, German expressionism, social criticism, religious fanaticism, Vampire-hunting and parodic self-referencing are co-existing and, in the same time, non adhering.

Abominable and Eclectic Grimmology

What happens when we put together a ghost, a werewolf, and a vampire? This is actually not a joke, but the answer provided by this new logic of mingling entering movies and TV series. The combinatory roots of this process must be found in the classical narratives of the Grimm Brothers. Without going too deep into the history of the connections between the Grimm Brothers and cinema, properly mapped by Jack Zipes (2002), the collection of the 200 stories put together by the German brothers widely influenced our popular culture. The process, significantly described by Simon Bronner as a form of “Americanization”, takes their fairy tales and re-uses them in various forms and contexts. Although the brothers Grimm identified their stories as *Kinder und Hausmärchen* (for children and household), as Maria Tatar (1987/ 2003) indicated, there is a “hard core” dimension of these narratives, where murder, violence and sexual innuendos are everywhere, with situations depicting

atrocities and characters which make horrendous decisions, all the better for their integration in our modern and postmodern discourses.

More interesting is the fact that Jacob and Wilhelm, who were made famous by stories like Hansel and Gretel, Sleeping Beauty or Snow White, were also integrated as characters into several cinematic narratives. Terry Gilliam’s movie entitled *The Brothers Grimm* (2005) turned them into “Will” and “Jake”, a womanizer and an idealist who were con artists running into troubles due to their fraudulent practices of fake exorcisms and demon hunting. Finally, they end up as detectives of supernatural activities in a forest, in a series of unremarkable paranormal crime investigations, very similar to the *X-Files* series. Gilliam’s movie, lost in its inability to go beyond the computer generated creatures, remained in the binary logic of mixing the real with the unreal.

Recently though, a couple of TV series have taken Wilhelm and Jakob Grimm even further into the total alteration of meanings made possible by the intermixture of narratives. *Being Human*, the NBC production developed by Stephen Carpenter, David Greenwalt and Jim Kouf, is a television drama where the descendant of the Brothers Grimm is depicted as a police officer, fighting various monsters. Another TV series, loosely based on the stories of the two brothers, ABC’s *Once Upon a Time*, is taking on a similar twist. In a small-town upstate New York, regular people are witnessing the apparition of characters from the fairy-tales, and intriguing investigations follow suit.

Since both series use elements from the stories of the famous brothers, and both are intertwining realities which are fundamentally incompatible, they are relevant for this discussion. The NBC production presents us with the so called “Grimms”, descendants



of the storytelling brothers, who are “guardians” of humanity, situated somewhere between mankind and monstrosity. The Portland detective, Nick Burkhardt, discovers that he is one of the guardians, related with the Brothers Grimm who have passed on to their descendants their superpowers. These guardians are hunting “the Wesen”, monstrous creatures that speak a strange language and live hidden among humans. The Wesen are apparently regular human beings, but, of course they have a hidden double nature, which can only be seen when they *wage*, that is when they are emotionally turning on their animal identity. In order to fight demons and Hexenbeasts, the Grimm use an entire arsenal including potions, magic books, but also neurotoxins, and even technologically advanced instruments.

The idea of an impure modern world, populated by monsters is not innovative and neither is the mixing of cop stories with fantastic creatures. What is relevant in the development of this TV series is the multiplicity of transformations and amalgamations made possible by this eclectic universe. The Wesen are creatures which include multiple variants and invariants. Thus we have Dämonfeuere (demons breathing fire), Blutbaden (variants of the Big Bad Wolf) and their enemies, the Bauerschwein (who are monstrous little pigs). Things get really fuzzy when this imaginary world gets populated with Glühenvolk (alien-like creatures who glow), Fuchsteufelwild (goblin-like monsters) or even Hexenbiests (which are rotting zombies). The combinations are almost limitless: cobras, crocodiles, leeches, otters, mice, spiders and bees, mermaids and even radioactive skeletons (Koshchie) are in the war with the Grimms. Even the main characters, as is the case with Nick’s adjutant, Monroe, who is also a Zauberbiest (a half-Hexenbiest, on his mother’s side) are amalgamating their identities. Monroe is not only half-monster, but he is vegan and trains using Pilates exercises.

The narrative mixing of fables and fairy tales is a key trait in this cinematic re-mix, re-vamping old versions of stories into “new” realities. Beautiful women are turning into hags, predator-like creatures are lurking on women wearing red, bear-like creatures enter the rooms of others and so on. Just like the Grimm are fighting against trolls and witches and, especially, a huge number of monsters who are walking among us, this idea that fantasy creatures, who can be identified only some elected people, a limited few who can see their true nature occurs in *Once Upon a Time*. Yet the mangle is also characterized by a profound lack of creativity, just like the small town which is called Storybrooke, populated by Belle, Cinderella and Snow White; Grumpy, King Midas and Rumpelstiltskin; the Huntsman, Prince Charming and the Evil Queen. In the mix are brought also Geppetto and Pinocchio and, again like in the Grimm, the main character is Swan, a mongrel child of Prince Charming and Snow White, a semi-fictional and semi-real being, very similar to Harry Potter’s adoption by the muggles. Here the number of possible permutations is so high, that it makes any further interpretation pointless.

To show the transforming power of cinematic amalgamating we must take into consideration the story of Hansel and Gretel, one of the most popular fairy-tales of Jacob and Wilhelm. The narrative of the two brothers stands apart for various reasons. First of all, Hollywood has used this narrative repeatedly, in many movies about abandonment and aggression, like *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* or *Tourist Trap*. Yet the story of the lost children in the forest has been reused in many other cinematic contexts, from European directors like Francois Ozon, in *Criminal Minds* (1999), or in the Asian cinema, in Yim Pil Sung’s 2007 homonymous movie. The fascination for this



archetypal story comes from a profound anxiety, manifested as an oral fixation and, more relevantly, from the need to integrate opposing desires. As Bruno Bettelheim suggested early on in his classical Freudian interpretation of the Hansel and Gretel story, based on a clear separation between adults and children, this narrative provides the readers with release of their own uncontrolled desires, of cannibalistic predilections and destructive impulses (Bettleheim 1976, 161). The strange attraction of this fairy-tale can be linked to the phantasm of a dark parent (Tatar 72), where an evil stepmother (or female character) is pushing the father (or a male figure) to kill the children (their own, or of others). This violence directed against young people, with the vicious cycle of aggression and abandonment, is often considered a rationalization of “abuse and guilt” (Zipes 2011, 195).

In the 2013 version of this story, *Hansel and Gretel Witch Hunters*, the tale of the two children lost, takes an abrupt turn towards the mashup. The story of the abandoned children follows a logic of hypermixing, since now Hansel and Gretel are bounty hunters, “specialized” in killing bad witches, with revenge and profit as their motivation. The two children are capitalists, self-employed heroes who not only take revenge, but also steal jewels and make money while they are on their job. This film which was created by Tommy Wirkola, the maker of zombie movies and Tarantinoque parodies was described by the director himself as “action-horror-fantasy-gothic fairy-tale-comedy”, in an almost obscene genre commingling. As it was already noted by Bettelheim, there is a cannibalistic desire in the fairy tale which must be punished brutally. Yet in the movie the dismemberment, the sacrificing of hearts, the eviscerations and all the other ritualistic executions are taking place in a mangle of scenes

which are almost abominable. This version of the children’s story shows us the adult siblings eviscerating witches and chopping heads, fighting trolls and incineration their victims, in a mayhem of violence. The mixing of elements also goes beyond any reasonable cohesion. The Sabbath rituals are taking place during the odd “Blood Moon”, the witches are showing off their broom flying abilities, the trolls are using defibrillating guns, and everything in this 2013 version of a centuries old story is excessively pushing the narrative to its extremities. Everything is linked by artificial connections. From melodrama, to gore, from the abuse of children, to parodical witchcraft practices, everything is mutating freely in this film. Even the narrative time is mutant time, while the space is completely warped. In *Hansel and Gretel* (2013) the director is moving his heroes from present to past, from modern and postmodern to the medieval and the primitive without a second thought. Once again, the same steam-punk visual philosophy follows the entire design of the film. Armed with troll defibrillating guns, automatic crossbows and even ancient grenades, a diabetic Hansel, who uses a primitive form of insulin, injected with a steam-punk searing, and a sexually asexual Gretel fight their way into our subconscious.



Convergence in the junkyard of representations

With the same retro-futuristic anachronism characterizing it *Thor: The Dark World* (2013), is a strange creation which, once again, brings one of the brothers Grimm into discussion. The movie created by Alan Taylor (director of a couple of episodes from *Games of Thrones*, among other TV series) begins with the conflict between the Dark Elves, who are misdealing with dark matter, named Aether, and the Norse Gods. Malekith, the leader of the malevolent Elves is defeated by Bor, the grandfather of Thor, in a galactic war fought with futuristic weapons, where the Nordic Gods manage to overcome with swords and hammers plasma guns and laser canons. In *Thor* the Galactic destruction put into place by the Elves looks strangely enough like that in other steampunk movies, like *Riddick* (2013), *Pitch Black* (2000) and *The Chronicles of Riddick* (2004), with a mythological mixup combining apocalyptic conflicts (nothing more than a re-mixing of movies like *2012*) and Aryan legends (with the blond gods of Asgard overlooking humanity from afar and the dark haired Loki opposing his positive brother).

All the characters in this movie are composites of non-complementary elements. Yet the evil elves described here are entirely new category, a crossbreed between the creatures from Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings* and other elfish phantasmagoric creatures. In the Nordic mythical narratives, Svartalfheim is not the home of the black elves, but that of the dark ones. Actually it was Jacob Grimm who, in his monumental *Deutsche Mythologie*, proposed the existence of a third category of elves, besides the dark and the light ones, the grey elves (Grimm 1935/ 2012). More so, in the actual mythology most of the times the dark elves are indistinguishable from dwarfs (Daly

2004, 21) and traditionally the elves are smaller than men (Grimm 449). Thus the elfish qualities of the Dark Elves are not only borrowed freely from other creators of mixup mythologies, but they are also an indicator of how in the culture of mishmash, unlike the mythological world of modernity where distinctions are important, there are no distinctions, no separation lines. Actually the leader of the Dark Elves, Malekith the Accursed, a pure creation of the Marvel universe, a brain child of Walt Simonson, is just another super-villain, a composite figure of numberless other Antagonists.

More relevantly, the central plot of *Thor 2* is centered around a “Maya-esque” prophecy, called “the convergence”. The Nine Realms (Muspelheim, Alfheim, Vanaheim, Asgard, Midgard, Jotunheim, Nidavellir, Svartalfheim and Niflheim), all fictional regions of Yggdrasil, are on the brink of converging for the first time in 5.000 years. Just like in the Maya apocalyptic prophecy, this convergence of different worlds opens the portals of the realms, making possible the crossing from one universe into another. Here the cross-mixing by convergence becomes one of the most important elements in the junkyard of representations. Just as the converging world of Yggdrasil allows for the reunion of Nordic gods with humans and dark elves, the mythological convergence allows the travel of meanings through separate worlds of significations. Actually the entire universe of this modernized Asgard represents a convergence of imaginaries, based on the coexistence of the weird, the mechanical and the witchcraft, followed by the re-mixing of contents from other narratives. The transformation of the red-bearded god from Norse mythology into a blond, beauty pageant contestant follows the logic of mixing of modern technology and ancient mythology. The structures of the city of Asgard and all the uncertain



supernatural beings from the Scandinavian mythology are highly technological, at the edges of steam punk. Some authors have seen in the steam-punk a philosophy of re-using a reaction to the disposable culture of consumerism. Following Ashurst and Powel (2012), steampunk is an aesthetic form using a blend of mechanic-magical hybridity, sometimes called techno-gothic. Combining the industrial with the artisanal, the manufactured with available antiques, steampunk sees scrap as a vital energy, borrowing and re-mixing as key mode of expression. The Japanese director Hayao Miyazaki, in one of the most remarkable examples of this re-using of elements, found in *Spirited Away*, puts forward the logic of steampunk philosophy in the following key phrase, which describes this mindset: “Yubaba rules others by stealing their names”. The “theft” instrumented by steampunk philosophy is based on a timeless conjunction of elements, where the blending of discarded elements with artifacts from the past and modern scientific discoveries allows the creation of a completely new universe. Steampunk, as a science fiction sub-genre which was born in the 80’s, is quintessentially a primary form of mashup culture. The principle of steampunk is blending by creating the inexistent from existing realities with impossible antiquities. The collapsing of time, as we historically know it, its transformation into a new, bizarre temporality is also a characteristic of the steam-punk melange. Mixing the Victorian era with medieval times, post-apocalyptic technology and primitive religiousness, this new time is neither past, nor future, nor present, albeit a mixture of time frames put together. We no longer experience linear time frame, this would explain why H.G. Wells’s “Time Machine” has long been a model for the apparition of a “punk time”. Punk time is a time frame beyond anachronism and futuristic manifestations.

The same happens in *Thor*, where mythological time (actions for Norse legends) co-exist with a science-fiction time and with the real time of humanity, in a total convergence of space and time.

As an intermediary conclusion we can describe these new hybrid representations as functioning completely different from the “rhizomatic” chains of significations proposed by Deleuze and Guattari in their classical study on postmodern mixing (1980/1987, 27). The incompatibility of elements, which is provided by the rhizomatic connecting, is still functioning within a semiotic chain (Deleuze and Guattari, 7-8), while the mangle-mangled mythologies we analyzed, with their “aethereal qualities”, refuse any unity of significations. Contemporary culture functions within an illogical development of combinations, connections, convergences and commutations, defying any structural interpretations. Mixing science, magic, medieval technologies and science-fiction “knowledge”, re-mixing mythology with occultism, vampires, undead and aliens, everything turns into a vast melange of electricity and occultism. Something which began as the trademark of Romanticism, with Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, has lead towards a total Frankensteinzation of our imaginaries.

References

Ashurst, Gail and Anna Powell, “Under Their Own Steam. Magic, Science and Steampunk”, in Justin Edwards, Agnieszka Soltysik Monnet (eds), *The Gothic in Contemporary Literature and Popular Culture: Pop Goth*, New York, Routledge, 2012.

Burch, Noël, *Life to Those Shadows*, trans. and ed. Ben Brewster, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1990 (first published in Burch, Noël “Charles Baudelaire versus Doctor Frankenstein,” *Afterimage*, nos. 8-9, Spring 1981).



- Churchland Patricia Smith, *Neurophilosophy: Toward a Unified Science of the Mind-brain*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1986.
- Churchland Paul M., *Matter and Consciousness*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1984.
- Collins, Jim, *Architectures of excess: Cultural Life in the Information Age*, New York, Routledge, 1995.
- Daly, Kathleen N. and Marian Rengel, *Norse Mythology A to Z: A Young Reader's Companion*, New York, Infobase, 2004.
- Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari, *A thousand plateaus: capitalism and schizophrenia*, translation and foreword by Brian Massumi, University of Minnesota Press, 1987 (first ed. Minuit, Paris 1980).
- Derrida, Jaques, "The Law of Genre", in *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 7, No. 1, *On Narrative* (Autumn, 1980), University of Chicago Press, pp. 55-81.
- Duff, David, *Romanticism and the Uses of Genre*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Globus, Gordon G., *The Postmodern Brain*, Amsterdam, John Benjamins, 1995.
- Grahame-Smith, Seth, *Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter*, Grand Central Publishing, 2010.
- Grimm, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, "Hansel And Gretel", in *Grimm's Fairy Tales*, NY: Pantheon, 1944, p. 86-94.
- Grimm, Jacob, *Deutsche Mythologie*, Cambridge University Press, 2012 (Göttingen, 1835, 3rd ed., 1854, 2 vols.).
- Hustis, Harriet. "Responsible Creativity and the "Modernity" of Mary Shelley's Prometheus", in Harold Bloom (ed.), *Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's Frankenstein*, New Edition, New York, Infobase, 2009.
- Jaffe, Ira, *Hollywood Hybrids: Mixing Genres in Contemporary Films*, Lanham, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008.
- McCulloch Warren and Walter Pitts, "A logical calculus of the ideas immanent in nervous activity", *Bulletin of Mathematical Biophysics*, 7, (1943), pp. 115-133.
- Miller, Cynthia J. and A. Bowdoin Van Riper (eds.), *Undead in the West: Vampires, Zombies, Mummies, and Ghosts on the Cinematic Frontier*, Lanham, Scarecrow Press, 2012.
- Picart, Caroline Joan, *Remaking the Frankenstein myth on film: Between Laughter and Horror*, Albany, State University of New York Press, 2003.
- Robinson, Charles E., (ed.), "Introduction", in Mary Shelley with Percy Shelley, *The Original Frankenstein*. New York, Random House Vintage Classics, 2008.
- Schwartz, Barry, *Abraham Lincoln in the Post-Heroic Era: History and Memory in Late Twentieth-Century America*, University of Chicago Press, 2009.
- Sonvilla-Weiss, Stefan (ed.), *Mashup Cultures*, New York:, Springer, 2010.
- Staiger, Janet, "Hybrid or Inbred: The Purity Hypothesis and Hollywood Genre History", in Barry Keith Grant (ed.), *Film Genre Reader IV*, Austin, University of Texas Press, 2012 (first ed. 1986).
- Tatar, Maria, *The Hard Facts of the Grimms' Fairy Tales*, Princeton University Press, 2003 (first ed 1987).
- Turow, Joseph, *Media Today: An Introduction to Mass Communication*, New York, Routledge, 2011 (first ed. 1999).
- Varner, Gary R., *Gargoyles, Grotesques & Green Men: Ancient Symbolism in European and American Architecture*, Oakchylde Books, 2008.
- Williams, Keith, *H.G. Wells, Modernity and the Movies*, Liverpool University Press, 2007.
- Zipes, Jack, *The Brothers Grimm: From Enchanted Forests to the Modern World*, second edition, New York, Palgrave, 2002.
- Jack Zipes, *The Enchanted Screen: The Unknown History of Fairy-Tale Films*, New York, Routledge, 2011.



344

Doru Pop

Online

Daniel Rutledge, "From Nazi zombies to Hansel & Gretel – Tommy Wirkola interview", 31 Jan 2013, available at <http://www.3-news.co.nz/From-Nazi-zombies-to-Hansel--Gretel---Tommy-Wirkola-interview/tabid/-418/articleID/285132/Default.aspx>.

Matt Maytum, "The Lowdown on Jon Favreau's Sci-Fi Western", June 22nd 2010, available at <http://www.totalfilm.com/features/cowboys-aliens-everything-we-know/-jon-favreau-has-been-reading-comics-again>