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"I know not […] what I myself am": Conceptual Integration in Susan Heyboer O'Keefe's *Frankenstein's Monster* (2010)

ABSTRACT
The article proposes a cognitive-poetic reading of Susan Heyboer O'Keefe's novel *Frankenstein's Monster* (2010) – a modern rendition of the myth of Victor Frankenstein and his Creature – with regard to the theory of conceptual integration proposed by G. Fauconnier and M. Turner (2002). It is argued that the reader's conceptualization of the eponymous Monster emerges in the process of conceptual blending, where several input mental spaces, constructed around elements of the philosophical concept of the Great Chain of Being, are merged to produce a novel entity. Thus, the reader's active participation in meaning construction allows her/him to redefine her/his perception of monstrosity.
Keywords: conceptual blending, cognitive poetics, the Gothic monster, monstrosity, Frankenstein

1. Introduction

It is almost a truism to observe that monsters have constituted a pivotal component of the Gothic convention, from its early realizations in literary texts to contemporary film and new-media incarnations. Equally obviously, it does not take an expert in the field of Gothic studies to realize that the concept of monstrosity is as old as human culture, providing food for thought for scholarly representatives of such disciplines as history and theory of visual arts and literature, philosophy, cultural studies, psychology, psychoanalysis, sociology, religious studies, politics, etc. A researcher investigating the area may feel overwhelmed by the number of monographs and academic essay collections published within the last few decades, let alone dozens of journal articles and book chapters. In this context, the authors of the most recent research guide to Gothic literature in English (Brown, Senf & Stockstill, 2018), who under the entry "Monsters and Ghosts" assert that "the

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discipline of monster studies is still in its relative nascency" (78), appear to be totally wrong. On second thoughts, however, their claim is less questionable than it seems, for investigating the multitude of (theoretical) perspectives from which the issue of monstrosity has been approached may indeed resemble the process of creating the body of Frankenstein's monster: "assembling" a patchwork of various more or less related parts, whose interconnections may or may not be conspicuous but which undoubtedly condition the creature's fascinating existence.

This article is intended as a modest contribution to (Gothic) monster studies, proposing a cognitive-poetic (*sensu* Stockwell, 2002) perspective from which to examine the *manner* in which monsters and monstrosity can be conceptualized in a literary text. More precisely, I will utilize the theory of conceptual integration, or conceptual blending (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002), appropriately characterized by Todd V. Oakley (1998) as a "unified frame for understanding the dynamic constructions of meaning that concern cognitive linguists, rhetoricians, and literary critics" (p. 322). The proposed analysis will also refer to the so-called Great Chain of Being – a hierarchical conception of the nature of the universe (Lewis, 1964; Lovejoy, 2001) which greatly affected people's worldviews from antiquity to the end of the Middle Ages (Bunnin & Yu, 2004, p. 289; Lewis, 1964, pp. 11-12, 22-23, 26-27, 40-44, 56-57, 66, 74, 152-153, 203; Lovejoy, 2001, pp. 24, 38-39, 43, 58, 67, 101, 115), and continued into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, dying out as late as in the nineteenth (Lovejoy, 2001, pp. 43, 45, 59-61, 80, 111, 143, 183-184, 317; see also Lewis, 1964, pp. 216-219).

Since, as Mark Turner (1996) contends, "[m]ost of our experience, our knowledge, and our thinking is organized as stories" (v), and conceptual blending far exceeds the boundaries of literary imagination per se (p. 67), the findings of this study are hoped to be of value not only to literary scholars but also to cognitive linguists, psychologists, students of culture, etc. As my analytical material, I will use a twenty-first century literary rendering of the myth of Doctor Frankenstein's Creature – the 2010 novel *Frankenstein's Monster* by Susan Heyboer O'Keefe (b. 1953), who thus far has made herself known as a children's author.

According to Judith Halberstam (1995), the Gothic monsters of the nineteenth century "metaphorized modern subjectivity as a balancing act between inside/outside, female/male, body/mind, native/foreign, [and] proletarian/aristocrat" (p. 1). Heyboer O'Keefe's novel continues this tradition, creating its version of the Monster via intertextual references to Mary Shelley's original as well as developing this literary character in line with what Halberstam (1995) describes as the essence of Gothic fiction:

> Within Gothic novels […] multiple interpretations are embedded in the text and part of the experience of horror comes from the realization that *meaning itself runs riot*. Gothic novels produce a symbol for this interpretive mayhem in the body of the monster.

> The monster always becomes a *primary focus of interpretation* and its monstrosity seems available for any number of meanings. (p. 2)[1]

In Heyboer O'Keefe's *Frankenstein's Monster*, this primary focus is marked by the novel's title and the first-person narration dominating the text. It is owing to this narrative perspective that the Monster's quest for identity – parallel to his physical peregrinations – is communicated to the reader in a manner which diminishes the distance between her/him and the fictional world. I will argue that the mechanism of conceptual integration involved in creating the mental image of the Monster – based on both textual suggestions and contextual knowledge – allows the reader to redefine her/his perception of monstrosity.

2. Conceptual Integration: An Overview

Since the publication of the first edition of Peter Stockwell's *Cognitive Poetics* (2002), studies of literary texts within the framework of conceptual blending have been proliferating (e.g. Freeman, 2005; Semino, 2006; Libura, 2007; Dancygier, 2011; Harbus, 2012; Kędra-Kardela, 2012, 2015; Kowalczyk, 2017; see also Mark Turner's webpage: http://markturner.org/blending.html). Nonetheless, it is worth recalling here the basic assumption of the theory. Conceptual integration can be viewed as a next step in Fauconnier's idea of mental spaces, or "conceptual packets constructed […] for purposes of local understanding and action" (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002, p. 40). Such spaces, "connected to long-term schematic knowledge" (p. 40), are also interconnected and "can be modified as thought and discourse unfold" (p. 40). Conceptual integration assumes that two (or more) conceptual spaces, or inputs, are cross-mapped and that, as a result, some features/structures selected for matching are projected – via the so called generic space, or an abstract structure containing elements shared by the inputs – into a new mental space, or a blend. In the blend, there are some elements/structures from the inputs but also – and more importantly – some *novel* elements (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002, p. 41).

A well-known example of conceptual integration is "the regatta," discussed by Fauconnier & Turner (2002, pp. 63-65). In 1993, a modern catamaran sailed from San Francisco to Boston, trying to go faster than a clipper sailing the same course in 1853. A few days before the end of the catamaran's voyage, a commentator observed: "At this point, *Great American II* [the catamaran] is 4.5 days ahead of *Northern Light* [the clipper]." Obviously enough, the situation involves two distinct events: the 1853 race and 1993 race (which correspond to two input spaces). At the conceptual level underlying the above commentary, these two events are cross-mapped mentally (common elements being the ship voyage, the same starting and ending point, the same course, etc.) and merged

[1] Emphasis added.

into one (the blend), where both vessels take part in the regatta, leaving Boston on the same day.

As Maria-Ángeles Martinez (2018) convincingly argues, conceptual blending proves "an appropriate framework for the study of narrative engagement" (p. 10), one of the major reasons being that a blend is "simultaneously predictable" (due to its links with background knowledge; in the case of literature, with cultural knowledge) and "open to idiosyncratic variation" (p. 10), that is to individual reading. With this assumption in mind, in the subsequent section I will discuss Heyboer O'Keefe's novel.

3. Reading[2]

An inherently intertextual work, Heyboer O'Keefe's *Frankenstein's Monster* resumes Mary Shelley's model story at the point of Captain Robert Walton's meeting Victor Frankenstein in the Arctic. In O'Keefe's version, Walton takes over Frankenstein's quest for the Monster, who does not die as in the original[3] but leaves the North Pole region and keeps escaping for ten years. The story proper, narrated by the Monster himself, takes place in the south of Europe, in Italy and France, to be moved to England and (Northern) Scotland. In the course of events, the Monster becomes a professional beggar in Venice, falls in love with a persecuted woman whom he has rescued, loses her due to Walton's malicious plotting, and decides to seek revenge on Walton's family in England. There, under the assumed name of Victor Hartmann, he falls for Lily Winterbourne – the daughter of Margaret Winterbourne (née Saville), Walton's beloved sister and the addressee of his writing, familiar from Mary Shelley's original. After several dramatic events, including the burning down of the Winterbourns' mansion, Lily, allegedly believed to have been dishonoured and abducted by Hartmann the Monster, accompanies him to the Orkneys. It is there that Hartmann's monstrous female partner was once created (cf. Shelley, 2003, pp. 168-172), so by taking Lily to the spot with the intention of marrying her, he hopes to find inner fulfilment and emotional rest.

Meanwhile, however, Captain Walton reappears, scorched and disfigured in the conflagration, and slashes Lily across the face with a knife, for he finds both her pregnancy and attachment to Hartmann disgraceful. The latter spares Walton's life

[2] As further explained in Kowalczyk (2017), my understanding of the concept of "reading" unifies within cognitive poetics the activities of analysis and interpretation, characteristic of "traditional" literary studies (pp. 16-17).

[3] At the closing of Mary Shelley's novel, the Monster declares that he will construct a funeral pyre and burn himself up, his "ashes […] be[ing] swept into the sea by the winds" (Shelley, 2003, p. 225). However, since the utterance is reported by Walton in a letter to his sister (i.e. by the first-person narrator who is a character and whose credibility may be an issue), it is not impossible to regard the novel as open-ended.

and tries to save Lily and take her back home to her father, Mr Winterbourne, but she refuses, continuing the flight. At one point, the protagonists find themselves in a running carriage, followed by half-mad Walton, shooting at them. Aided by Hartmann, himself severely wounded in the arm, Lily delivers a puny baby boy; however, she soon bleeds to death.

Both the new-born and Hartmann are saved by a party of coalminers. When Hartmann regains consciousness, he learns about a series of gas explosions in the colliery and decides to join the rescue action. Meanwhile, continuing his furious quest for the Monster, Walton pursues him underground, into a coalmine tunnel. The two enemies fight to the death, inflicting pain on each other. In a bout of frenzy, Walton admits to being Lily's *father* (i.e. to having an incestuous relationship with Margaret), fires a pistol shot at Hartmann and – due to a very high concentration of coal dust in the tunnel – vanishes in the ensuing fireball. As the reader learns from the Epilogue, Hartmann, who has saved the lives of several miners, wins the gratitude and respect of the locals. He also develops affection for Lily's son, "[l]ike he was the first father in all the world and this was the first baby" (April 10, 1839).[4]

This brief summary of the plot fails to shed enough light on the novel's fundamental theme: the Monster's search for identity. Suspended between the past and the present, the animal and the human, the scientific and the metaphysical, the bodily and the spiritual, etc., Hartmann keeps writing his journal, giving the reader an insight into his inmost doubts, hopes, and disillusionment. The statement quoted in the title of this study, "I know not […] what I myself am," perfectly grasps the essence of this quest.

I would like to argue that the reader, prompted by the text, constructs several mental spaces (inputs) which contain elements associated with particular aspects of the Monster's identity. Next, as a result of a series of cross-mappings, another space emerges (the blend), containing selected components of the inputs fused together into a novel entity: a conceptualization of the monster.

The temporal dimension of Heyboer O'Keefe's book's universe is marked by two dates: (i) 1829, associated with the death of Victor Frankenstein and the beginning of Captain's Walton's obsessive chase for the Monster[5] (Prologue), and (ii) 1838/1839, when the story proper takes place,[6] culminating in the events referred to in a letter by one Anne Todd. This letter offers a glimpse into

[4] Since this and further references to Heyboer O'Keefe's novel are made to an electronic edition, dates from the Monster's diary will be given where relevant, instead of page numbers.

[5] It is worth noting that in Mary Shelly's novel these events, reported by Captain Walton, are dated as "March 28th,17--" (2003, p. 19), i.e. earlier than in Heyboer O'Keefe's version.

[6] The period between these two dates is summarized by the Monster in the following manner: "It has taken me these ten years to be able to recognize that Victor Frankenstein was my father" (April 15).

Hartmann's life after the catastrophe in the mines (Epilogue). Although the events take place in the nineteenth century, when the idea of the Great Chain of Being lost its significance as a reading tool of the empirical world (see above), the Monster's considerations and descriptions of actions in his journal do bring this concept into mind. Schematically, the novel's version of the Chain can be presented as follows:

[God (the Creator)]
Satan (the devil)[7]
man
animal (beast)
object (thing)

This can be viewed as the philosophical/religious hierarchy underlying Heyboer O'Keefe's fictional universe. On its top, there is God, "maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen," as The Nicene Creed, or a statement of belief in Christian liturgy, puts it. God, angels (hardly mentioned in the novel), and his rebellious creation, Satan, are spiritual beings;[8] man, the "middle link" in the Chain (Lovejoy, 2001, p. 190), is both bodily and spiritual, possessing an immortal soul. An image of God, the human being has higher feelings; in contrast, the animal, a soulless creature subject to man's power,[9] is driven primarily by (primitive) instinct. Finally, objects/things are material but, obviously, lifeless.

The Christian underpinning of the Chain is suggested in the novel, whose first chapter proper is set in the holy city of Rome and contains the Monster's report of a theological/philosophical discussion of Vatican priests over the relationship between body and soul (April 20). Furthermore, among the characters who exert major influence on the Monster's life are a Catholic nun, sister María Tomás, and a Protestant priest, Reverend Graham, both saving him from death. The literary texts read and contemplated by the Monster are also associated with the Christian worldview: they include not only John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, as is the case in Mary Shelley's original, but also, for instance, "a stolen volume of [saint] Augustine" (April 20).

God's highest position in the Chain is alluded to in the Monster's considerations. "Where was I when God made man? (May 29)," he writes in his journal; elsewhere, he observes that "[t]o create life […] was the power of God" (October 29). The idea of the Divine superiority can also be noticed in other

[7] In the standard version of the Great Chain of Being, angels are second to God in the hierarchy (Lewis, 1964, pp. 70-74; Lovejoy, 2001, pp. 60, 90, 190, 240).

[8] However, note the discussion of popular/folklore imagery below.

[9] Cf. "And God blessed them, and God said unto them: […] and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Gen. 1:28, *KJV*).

characters' utterances. For instance, one of the Vatican priests argues that "[t]he universe – the whole universe, along with our bodies – was created out of pure goodness" (April 20). Walton mentions "Eternal Justice [that] has prepared [the North Pole] for the rebellious" (Prologue), as well as interprets himself as "the Hand of God, carrying out His will" (November 26). Reverend Graham states that "God made everything once and perfectly at Creation" (November 21), while Sister María Tomás consoles the Monster with the following sentence from the Bible: "*And God saw all the things that He had made and they were very good*" [italics orig.] (December 12).

The overall effect of such passages is precisely that of establishing a philosophical/religious hierarchy in the novel's fictional universe. Simultaneously, they more or less directly underscore the blasphemous character of Victor Frankenstein's rebellion against the Divine order. As the Monster himself bitterly observes:

> My father [Victor Frankenstein] was not a believer. Nevertheless, if he had accepted me as his son, would he have made me learn, even if by rote, the Christian creed? Left alone, abandoned, I made my own creed. In mine, the son does not die as atonement; the father dies. This is *as blasphemous as my father's seizing the power of creation* [emphasis added] – and as unsatisfying. (October 10)

Not surprisingly, in Heyboer O'Keefe's novel the unnatural/unholy character of Victor's creative act and its "product" is conceptualized via references to Satan – the evil spirit in the Great Chain of Being. Consider the following instances:

- "*Devil*. Was that not his [Frankenstein's] very first word upon seeing me rise up?"[italics orig.] (April 15);[10]
- "Would those men […] have feared me as the incarnation of Satan?" (April 20);
- "I am the real Devil" (June 6);
- "I can imagine myself Satan in Hell, *plotting against all mankind*" [emphasis added] (October 24);[11]
- "He [Frankenstein] unwittingly created *pure evil* [emphasis added] (November 7);
- "Earlier today I met the priest. He believes he has met the Devil" (June 5);
- [letter of Ann Todd:] "I was so shocked, with him being *so tall* and having such a *dreadful face*, that I blurted out, 'It's such a start you gave me, your being *so ugly*, sir. It's you, isn't it? The *Black Angel*" [emphasis added] (April 10, 1839).

The statements above combine theological aspects with folklore imagery: not only is the Monster an embodiment of metaphysical evil but also a physical

[10] In Mary Shelley's novel, Victor Frankenstein frequently uses the word "devil" both to address the Creature directly (e.g. "Devil!" "Wretched devil!") and to describe him ("the devil").

[11] Cf. "Many times I [the Monster] considered Satan as the fitter emblem of my condition" (Shelley, 2003, p. 132).

creature of considerable size (and might),[12] which is repulsively ugly. In the case of conceptual blending under discussion, the statements reveal an underlying mental input space (Input 1, or the "Satan" space) involving such elements as: being God's creature; having a spiritual nature; epitomizing pure evil; being the (arch-)enemy of God and man; featuring repulsive ugliness; and having a symbolic connection with darkness/blackness (see Fig. 1).

Perhaps the most developed of all the input spaces – in the sense of being evoked by the greatest number of textual elements and, arguably, involving the Monster's strongest emotions – is the one created around the category of man/human (Input 2, or the "man" space). The frequency of such elements in the novel's text reflects the supreme wish of Hartmann the Monster, namely being recognized as a human – a creature included in God's plan, or the Great Chain. He may allude to the category both in a positive and negative manner, but it stays in the centre of his conceptualizations. First, consider the examples below:

- "[Lily's] beauty forced me to seek out *what little humanity I possessed* [emphasis added], and I took my father's name: Victor" (October 26);
- "Am I a new type of man?" (November 21);
- "Winterbourne made me believe I *was his equal* in many ways" [emphasis added] (November 25);
- "I cried, 'I am a man!'" (February 17);
- "I have decided to be a man" (March 3).

And now juxtapose them with these "negative" statements:

- "I am […] a mockery of all that is human" (May 11);
- "I […] still had no part in humanity" (March 3);
- "Where was I when God made man?" (May 29);
- [about having sex with Lily:] "Humanity and inhumanity met and joined in us" (January 1);
- [Walton's letter:] "[Victor Frankenstein] took the natural and made it unnatural" (November 24).

Even though Hartmann the Monster questions his links with humanity (cf. "mockery"; "no part in humanity"; "inhumanity"; "unnatural"), his emotions prove to the contrary.

Hartmann's innermost desire manifests itself also through the concept of Victor Frankenstein being his "father," which, in turn, entails sonhood, and hence – being a human (cf. "might [Victor] have learned to call me his son?" [April 15]; "if he

[12] In a letter to Margaret, Heyboer O'Keefe's Walton describes the Monster as follows: "For the first time I knew its *full enormity*, *as if a mountain had fallen on my back* [emphasis added], breaking every bone, crushing the meat of every muscle to pulp" (Prologue).

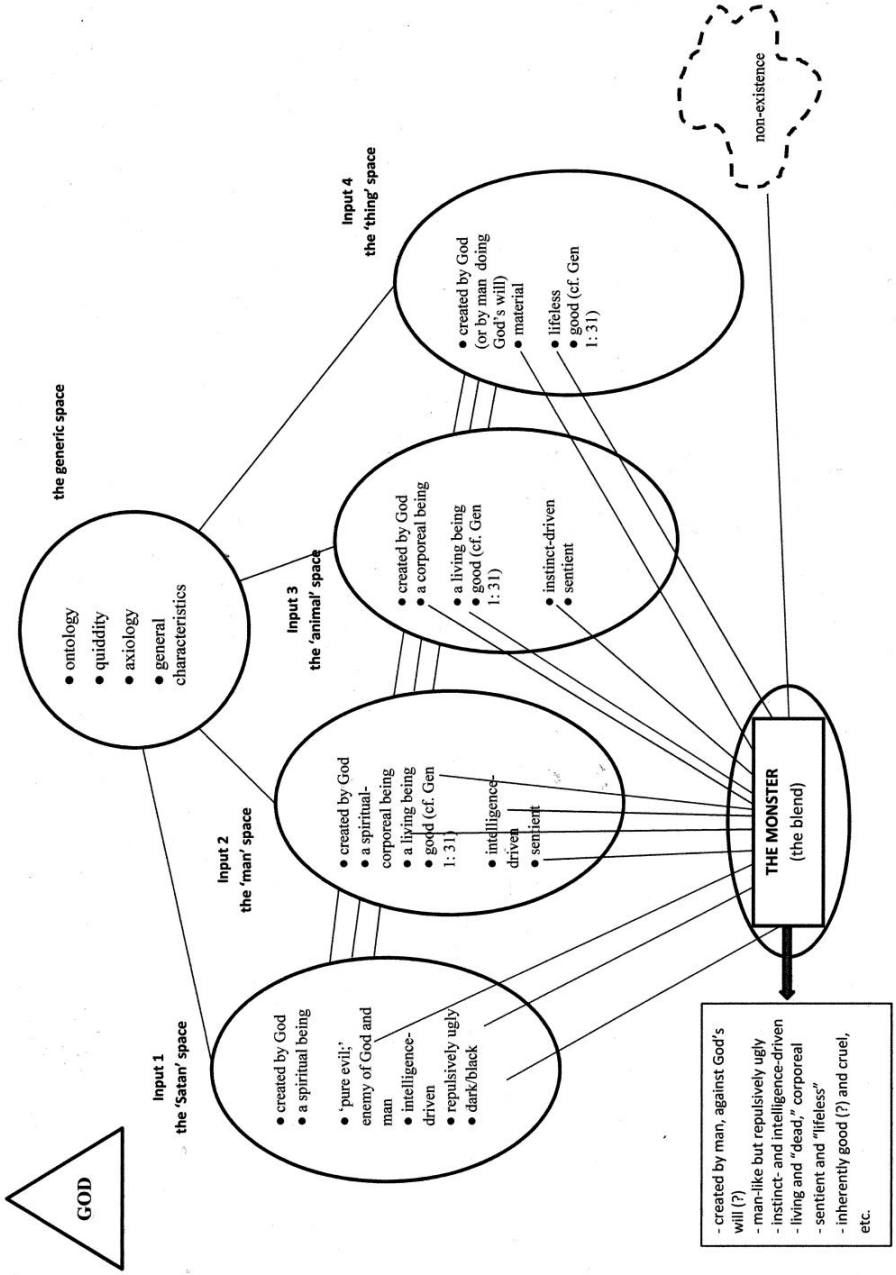

Figure 1. The Monster as a blend

had accepted me as his son" [October 10]). The pivotal character of this particular conceptualization can be seen in Hartmann's recurring nightmare:

> I killed *my father* again last night.
> It was the same dream as always, *my father and myself* pursuing and pursued till I no longer knew who he was, who I was; indeed, *if there were any difference* between us. […] In the dream, as in life, he chases me endlessly. […] *My father* is nearby. […] I reach out. My fingers curl around his throat, as his reach out to mine. He laughs. […] I know that I have killed him. I do not know if he has killed me. [emphasis added] (April 15)

Here, the Creature and his creator merge into one, Victor Frankenstein virtually becoming Hartmann's *doppelgänger* (cf. "His face appears, framed by white mist; *it mirrors* my own horror and hatred" [emphasis added] [April 15]).

Furthermore, the Monster's conceptualizing himself as a *dead* member of the category of man is still less painful than not belonging to it at all. Several statements Hartmann makes may, indeed, sound shocking: "having taken shelter in one of the catacombs, […] I sit watch among my dead brothers" (April 20); "I am a dead man resting in a graveyard" (June 5); "I, who had been made of death" (March 3). In this context, it is worth considering the Monster's deplorable act of taking Lily to a graveyard, digging up a coffin, and lifting a female corpse out of it:

> Slowly I unwrapped the winding sheet. […] [B]efore me lay a stout matron of fifty, her fleshiness slack as a deflated balloon, her ashen face spotted with black. […] If she had had a soul once, if any human had one, it was gone now. […] I grasped the woman under her arms and began to haul her up […]. […] Ignoring [Lily], I once more put my arms around the body and lifted. This time I easily pulled it up over the edge and onto the ground. The same perversity that had brought me here tonight […] now made me sit at the hole, feet dangling, and gather the corpse up close. I balanced it on my lap as one might hold a child. […] I smoothed the woman's gray hair, cupped her chin to tilt her face up, pressed my lips upon hers, and with feigned fondness said, "Mother!" (December 10).

On the one hand, Hartmann is evidently breaking a death taboo in an attempt to retaliate against Lily, who has spitefully underscored his affinity with the dead, alluding to the manner in which he was created[13]. Furthermore, the act of caressing the dead woman smacks of necrophilia, and, in a sense, of incest (cf. "Mother!").[14] There is, however, the other side of the coin: what appears to be inhumane and inherently profane can be construed as Hartmann's desperate endeavour to stir Lily's feelings and make her emotionally "alive" towards him, if at the cost of

[13] Cf. "You have been created from the dead" (November 5); "You have already been dead. You come from death. What does it feel like?" (November 13).

[14] Nevertheless, Sally Cline (1997) points out that "in certain parts of Ireland today the practice of children kissing a corpse continues," while in the Victorian times "*most children* would have been encouraged to touch a corpse with either reverence or attention" [emphasis added] (p. 121).

transgressing moral principles.[15] After all, the act is performed with "[his] nerves throbbing, tears pricking [his] eyes," and the Monster is perfectly aware that "it was […] appalling to hold the human dead, knowing [the human corpse] had been violated to make [him]" (December 10).

To recapitulate, the "man" input space (Input 2) would contain the following elements: being created/having a father; having a spiritual-corporeal nature; being alive (and destined to die); being intelligence-driven; being sentient; and, finally, being designed as "very good" (cf. Gen 1:31, quoted by Sister María Tomás [December 12]) (see Fig. 1).

The third major input (Input 3, or the "animal" space) can be constructed around the category of animal/beast – the one which is regarded by Hartmann – whose assumed name unites the animal ("Hart") with the human ("man") – as a threatening possibility which opposes his quest for being a human. In a sense, he is obsessed with the idea of *not* being categorized as a member of the animal world, bitterly recalling the evidence to the contrary:

- "She [Mirabella, the woman with whom he falls in love in Venice] has seen the *beast in my nature*" [emphasis added] (May 14);
- "One wall [of the house] was lined with the mounted heads of dozen animals […]. You are *just one more beast*, their eyes said" [emphasis added] (October 29);
- "Victor Hartmann. Hart-mann. *Animal* man" [emphasis added] (October 29);
- [Lily to Hartmann:] "At best you are *some freakish animal*" [emphasis added] (November 30);
- "I […] felt dark enjoyment last night at the feel of bones being crushed" (October 28).

Perhaps the most disconcerting scene associated with the discussed mental space is Hartmann's reaction to Lily's disdainful calling him "a dog eager to lap cunt" (December 4). Emotionally hurt and blindingly furious, the Monster runs away to a forest, getting rid of his clothes – the last token of his belonging to the human race – and gradually *becoming* a wild animal. As he admits later on, even his senses of sight, smell, hearing, and taste "flood[ed] with a beast's thousand perceptions" (December 4). This desperate act of Hartmann's immersion in primal instincts culminates in a forced sexual intercourse with a doe, which would be classified in terms of zoophilia, were the perpetrator human. Needless to say, such a desperate attempt to turn into "an animal in truth" brings no emotional relief whatsoever; as the Monster confesses, "At the last moment I cried out from the pain of knowing there had been no one human to accept me" (December 4).

The "animal" input (Input 3), therefore, constructed by the reader in the process of interpreting textual signals, would feature such elements as being created by God

[15] Cf. "I threw the body to the side, grabbed Lily by the back of the neck, forced her to her knees over the corpse, and pressed her head down till her face rubbed the dead woman's" (December 10).

(cf. Gen. 1:31, quoted by Sister María Tomás: "And God saw all the things that He had made and they were very good" [December 12]); having a corporeal nature; being alive; as well as being instinct-driven and sentient (see Fig. 1).

Yet another mental space which takes part in the blending process in question would be related to the Monster's conceptualizing himself and being conceptualized as an object/thing (Input 4, or the "thing" space) – a subordinate category in the Great Chain of Being. Hartmann refers to himself as "the thing" (November 4), "a created thing, an *artificial* man" [emphasis added] (April 18) and "a vile thing, a mockery of all that is human" (May 11), also asking about *what* (rather than *who*) he is (November 3, November 21). Likewise, other characters call the Creature "the thing" (Walton, October 13, 1828; July 17, 1829; Lily, November 7) and regard him as soulless (Rev. Graham, November 24) – possibly "no more than a machine" (November 21). A particularly conspicuous group of expressions reveal the conceptual metaphor[16] THE MONSTER IS A (CRUDELY-WROUGHT) PATCHWORK which has been shaping Hartmann's perception of himself. Consider:

- "–and suddenly I had my name. […] [T]he Patchwork Man" (October 29);
- "I've been created from […] pieces" (April 20);
- "I […] exposed the *ugly network* of scars" [emphasis added] (April 20);
- "There was no symmetry in me anywhere" (June 5);
- "I was made of such obviously mismatched pieces" (November 4);
- [Lily was] "like a seamstress examining a bolt of cloth. […] She tasted my every scar and counted each stitch that held me together" (January 1).

Apparently, this mental structure is saturated with strong negative emotions connected with the Monster's awareness of being poorly "assembled," or created (cf. "ugly"; "no symmetry"; "mismatched pieces," etc.), but these emotions seem to be associated with the monster blend rather than the "thing" input (Input 4) as such. The features distinguished in the fourth input include being created (by God or man); being material; being lifeless; and having no sentient nature; as well as being good (cf. Gen 1:31, quoted by Sister María Tomás [December 12]) (see Fig. 1).

It will be remembered that mental spaces are on-line structures created for the purposes of (complex) meaning construction. In the process of blending, cross-space mappings take place between the inputs, the generic space providing general information common to the inputs. In our case, the generic space would contain such abstract components as ontology, quiddity, axiology, and general characteristics of the Great Chain entities (see Fig. 1). As a result of the cross-

[16] According to George Lakoff & Mark Johnson (1980), metaphor is not a mere poetic or rhetorical device; on the contrary, "our ordinary conceptual system […] is fundamentally metaphorical in nature" (p. 3). Conceptual metaphors enable us to understand one idea (or the so-called conceptual domain) in terms of another. For instance, Lakoff and Johnson contend, the metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR ACTUALLY "*structures* the actions we perform in arguing" (p. 4).

mappings among the four inputs (i.e. the "Satan" space, the "man" space, "the animal" space, and the "thing" space), certain elements are *creatively* mapped out to the new mental space, or the blend – a novel, emergent structure through which monstrosity is conceptualized. Thus, the "monster" blend features a man-created being[17] which unites the corporeal and the material;[18] the dead with the living; being intelligence-driven with being instinct driven; the sentient with the insensible, and so on. In Heyboer O'Keefe's novel, the Monster proves good, even though he may have committed evil deeds. Such a blend is further developed by the reader (the so-called running the blend), who can refer to her/his frames of knowledge, including, for instance the knowledge of Mary Shelley's hypotext (*sensu* Genette, 1997), references to other literary texts and criticism, philosophical/theological awareness, etc. The modern reader's cultural knowledge of monstrosity may also take part in the process, complementing the blend based on certain notions of sociology, literary history, gender issues, etc.

Significantly, the cognitive phenomenon in question, i.e. conceptual integration, involves the reader's emotions. Looking at the act of reading from a cognitive perspective, Magdalena Rembowska-Płuciennik (2014) underscores a close link between emotions and perception, emotions and memory, as well as emotions and attention [*napięcie uwagi*] (p. 564). She further contends that emotions are intrinsically associated with textual information processing (pp. 565-566). In a similar vein, Agnieszka Libura (2006) demonstrates how emotions work in conceptual blending. Analysing, among others, the "regatta" scheme invoked above, she comes to the conclusion that emotions are "guides of intellect" [*przewodnicy intelektu*] as well as co-factors in the process of global meaning creation (pp. 66-67). With regard to Heyboer O'Keefe's Monster, the key role of emotions is doubly evident: not only are they omnipresent in his narrative but also interwoven with the reader's construction of the blend. It is enough to mention the feelings which accompany the Monster's being rejected or accepted, singled out or ignored, respected or despised, self-assured or internally shattered, as well as his complex relationships with other human characters. As he finally puts it himself, and not without some ironic distance:

> And what of Lily? Must I discount our days together as meaningless because she was mad? I never knew happiness with her, but I glimpsed its possibility. And, in the end as

[17] On the one hand, Victor Frankenstein's creative act is conspicuously rebellious, for it violates God's will, traditionally construed via reference to the Chain of Being. On the other hand, Heyboer O'Keefe – especially through the character of sister María Tomás – seems to propose a more hopeful interpretation, namely that ultimately *nothing* happens out of God's will.

[18] The question whether the Monster possesses a soul may remain "technically" unanswered (Cf. "But of my senses, my soul, […] I am no less ignorant than any man" [November 3]), but if his ability to love is interpreted in Christian terms, he does seem to have one.

> she lay dying and later as I worked in the mine, I felt pity. I felt forgiveness. I felt … even love? For a monster, such emotion is itself a prize to be treasured. (March 15)

If accepted, this recapitulation prompts a Christian interpretation of the novel: what makes one a human being is her/his ability to love.

Conclusion

Cognitive-poetic analysis, which, in the words of Peter Stockwell (2002), does not deal with "the artifice of the literary text alone, or [with] the reader alone, but [with] the more natural process of reading when one is engaged with the other" (p. 2), sheds some new light on the construction of monstrosity in Heyboer O'Keefe's *Frankenstein's Monster*. Owing to the mechanism of conceptual integration, the reader, who actively participates in meaning creation, builds her/his conceptualization of the eponymous Monster and of monstrosity in general. Monstrosity, in turn, proves to be intrinsically associated with humanity, whose shapes, in the words of Richard Bleiler (2006), are also "mutable, variable, and at some level fragile and unstable" (p. 342).

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