Reading Videos, Watching Novels: Towards a Critical Appreciation Paradigm of the Portmanteau (Frankenstein) Literature.

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Abstract

The merger between technology and literature produces what the current paper proposes to term "*Portmanteau Literature*". The researcher describes reasons for discarding other relevant terms, specifically "Frankenstein Literature," justifying the suitability of the proposed term to its signified. The researcher then proposes a paradigm that approaches the *Portmanteau Literature* from both form and content perspectives taking into consideration the variant production and consumption circumstances and conditions of such products. The new paradigm addresses the various aspects of the wide range of produced literary works with the aid of technology. These works do not only include online works. The scope includes all works that requires in its production or consumption a technologically related tool. With such a scope, the inclusion of works that were not normally included within the traditional literary academia is not only acceptable but also a necessity to avoid literature becoming a relic that can only be reached on the abandoned shelves of traditionally constructed physical libraries. As such, works like movies could be considered literature as it fulfills the main aspects of what literature is and specifically being of artistic value and 'merit'. The researcher then puts the proposed paradigm to the use in critically approaching *Pride and Prejudice: The Movie* as an example of *Portmanteau Literature*.

Key Words: Digital Literature- Electronic Literature- E-literature- Frankenstein Literature- Internet of Minds- LitTech- Cyberbrain- Criticism- Critical Appreciation- Technology- Literature- Paradigm- Tech-Lit- Internet- Pride and Prejudice- Jane Austen.

قراءة الفيديو و مشاهدة الروايات: نحو نموذج نقدي لأدب البورتمانتو (فرانكشتاين)

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ملخص البحث

ينتج عن الدمج بين التكنولوجيا والأدب ما تقترح الورقة الحالية أن يطلق عليه مصطلح "أدب بورتمانتو". تصف الباحثة أسباب نبذ المصطلحات الأخرى ذات الصلة، وتحديداً "أدب فرانكشتاين"، مبررةً ملاءمة المصطلح المقترح للمدلول به. ثم تقترح الباحثة نموذجًا نقديا يقترب من أدب بورتمانتو من منظوري الشكل والمحتوى مع الأخذ في الاعتبار تنوع ظروف الإنتاج والاستهلاك لهذا المنتج. يعالج النموذج الجديد الجوانب المختلفة لمجموعة واسعة من الأعمال الأدبية المنتجة بمساعدة التكنولوجيا. هذه الأعمال لا تشمل فقط الأعمال المبثوثة عبر الإنترنت إنما تشمل أيضا جميع الأعمال التي تتطلب في إنتاجها أو استهلاكها أداة تكنولوجية. من هذا المنطلق, فإن إدراج الأعمال التي لم يكن يتم تضمينها عادةً في الأوساط الأكاديمية الأدبية التقليدية ليس أمرًا مقبولاً فحسب، بل إنه ضروري أيضًا لتجنب تحول الأدب إلى بقايا تاريخية لا يمكن الوصول إليها إلا على الأرفف المهجورة للمكتبات التقليدية. على هذا النحو، يمكن اعتبار أعمال مثل الأفلام أدبًا لأنها تفي بالجوانب الرئيسية لما هو الأدب وعلى وجه التحديد كونه عمل ذا قيمة فنية و"جدارة" أدبية. ثم تقوم الباحثة بوضع النموذج المقترح للاستخدام في الاقتراب النقدي من فيلم كبرياء وتحامل كمثال علي أدب البورتمانتو.

كلمات مفتاحية: الأدب الرقمي– الأدب الإلكتروني– أدب فرانكشتاين– إنترنت العقول– Lit–Tech– الدماغ السيبراني– نقد أدبي– التكنولوجيا– الأدب– نموذج– الادبتكنولوجية– إنترنت– كبرياء وتحامل– جين اوستين.

Reading Videos, Watching Novels: Towards a Critical Appreciation Paradigm of the Portmanteau (Frankenstein) Literature.

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In a previous paper, "The Internet of Minds (IoM) and the Evolution of the Frankenstein Literature", it was argued that the merger between technology and literature produces what that paper proposed calling the 'Frankenstein Literature'. This term, "*Frankenstein Literature*", refers to the total written content transferred and produced using digital technology, whether individually or combined with other forms of art, both audio and visual. Drawing on the work of Marshall McLuhan, Salvatore D. Morgera, Roman Jakobson, and Mikhail Bakhtin, the paper introduced a proposal for what might be called Internet of Minds (IOM) which justifies the naming of those works as Frankenstein. The IOM process explains the lack of control over the components of the message as received and understood by its recipients. The following diagrams illustrated the Frankenstein Literature and IOM terms:
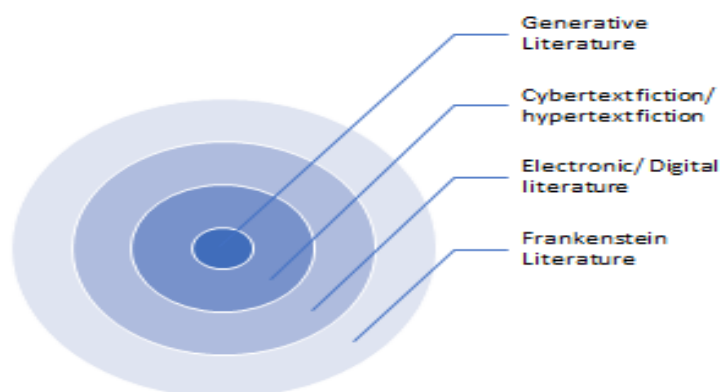
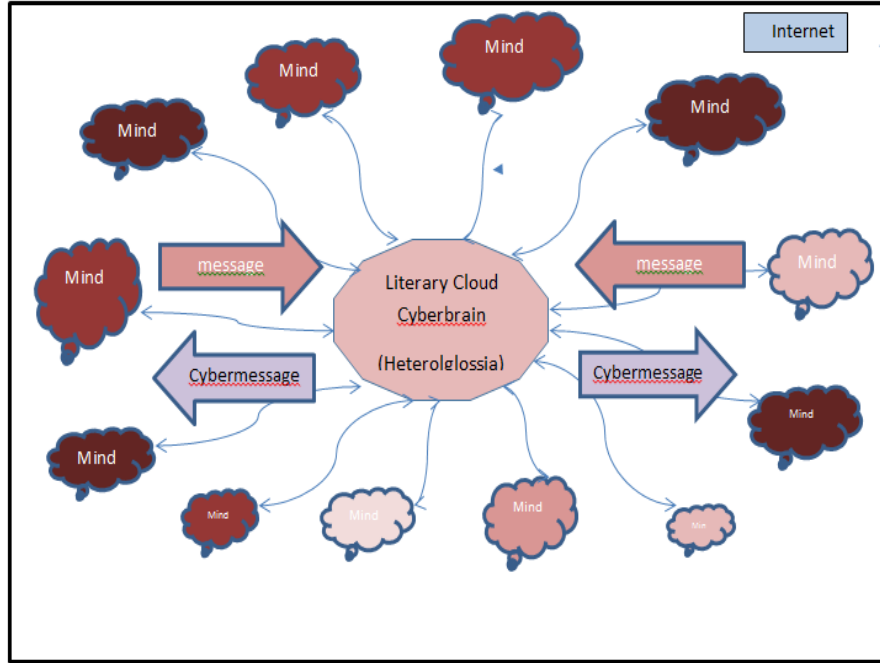**Figure 1 Relation between Frankenstein Literature and other cyberspace literary terms**

Figure 2 The Internet of Minds IoM

The current research is an attempt to present a proposed paradigm of critical appreciation of the *Frankenstein Literature*. *Frankenstein Literature* refers to any online or offline past, present, or future production in any form or format with the basic condition of carrying 'literary merit' within this era of Lit-tech encounter. When I started working on the current research, the term kept popping in front of me with its negative associations and infinite borders. While that term *Frankenstein Literature*, I believe, fits perfectly with the nature and implications of its current uses and practices, it however confiscates the future by implying a loss of hope leading to a state similar to the ending of Shelley's *Frankenstein*. While in an extremely interesting book *The Ulysses Delusion: Rethinking Standards of Literary Merit*, Konchar Farr the writer who is also a professor of Literature and

Women's Studies, proposes a liberal definition of literary merit or what she calls "excellence", different scholars and theorists have discussed the issue from different angles and perspectives. However, whichever criteria one decides to adopt for what is considered a literary work of 'merit', which could be the scope of another study, this work is part of that larger umbrella of the *Frankenstein Literature*. Literature of literary merit should not be referred to permanently carrying negative connotations and associations.

Another aspect of the term *Frankenstein Literature* that called for a search for a new more permanent term is that it includes within its scope the traditional literature with the tech influenced literature together under its umbrella with the assumption that in a digital age, even the originally paper printed works will be 'electronic' or 'digitized' one way or another. While traditional print literature does not carry features of monstrosity and lack of control as long as it is kept in its old form and is not merged mindlessly on the internet or with technology, the term carries implications that are only relevant under certain conditions not only concerning the when, but also concerning the how. The term thus refers to a period where boundaries and limits are chaotic not a permanent term that refers to the basic features of its signified.

Lastly, *Frankenstein Literature* is most fitting with the use of the internet and other computer or internet related productions-the IOM distorted productions. However, a term that simply refers to the literary technological encounter and consolidation is absent. In other words, a distinctive term for the Lit-Tech encounter is required. In fact, while there could be a term referring to literature in general whether online or offline-Literature- and a term that refers to all literature online and offline of any form or format that shows literary merit, a need for a term that describes all modes and forms of production of works that carry literary merit AND combines technology with literature is, I believe, a dire necessity. This combination goes beyond the use of the internet and

computers. Technology expands beyond this; for example VR and AR works. VR works (Virtual Reality) and AR works (Augmented Reality) are works that employ technology with literature. *Portmanteau Literature* could be the appropriate term for such a pursuit.

According to the American Heritage Dictionary entry of the word "Portmanteau", it is explained as:

> **port·man·teau** (pôrt-măn□tō, pôrt′măn-tō□)
> n. pl. **port·man·teaus** or **port·man·teaux** (-tōz,-tōz□)
> **1.** A large leather suitcase that opens into two hinged compartments.
> **2.**
> **a.** A word formed by merging the sounds and meanings of two different words, as chortle, from chuckle and snort. Also called portmanteau word.
> **b.** A word or part of a word that is analyzable as consisting of more than one morpheme without a clear boundary between them, as French du "of the" from de "of"and le "the." Also called portmanteau morph.
> Adj.
> General or generalized: a portmanteau description; portmanteau terms.

Looking into the origin of the word, it comes from the French "*portemanteau : porte-*, from *porter,* to carry" and is a combination of the old French word "*port*", "to carry" and "*manteaux*", "cloak", (from Old French *mantel*, from Latin *mantellum*).

As such, Portmanteau is a word that perfectly fits describing the production of combined Lit-Tech works. For one, Portmanteau itself is a combination of two words, and it refers to the combination of two words with two meanings. It is thus a case in which the signifier is a manifestation of the signified. This kind of literature is simply a combination of two tenets and of two worlds:

the world of technology and the world of literature. The other reason is that one of the associations of the meaning of Portmanteau is having a quality of movement and travel as a suitcase with two compartments. As a trans production, not only a combination of two worlds, but also a production that is constantly dynamic and vigorous, transcending barriers of genres and traditional epistemologies of both worlds, Portmanteau is a word of most propriety. Putting two words together to create a third one is a creative process with infinite possibilities. As conceived by Chmosky, language is "a set (finite or infinite) of sentences, each finite in length and constructed out of a finite set of elements." (13) Those finite set of elements become doubled or more by the window of creating portmanteaus. This window does not only increase the number of words, it opens the space for significantly creative pursuits and outcomes. It is creativity creating creativity. While the *Portmanteau Literature* includes different and diverse modes and forms of works, this literature has common features that are spelled in the term itself namely the Lit-Tech feature, the interactivity and dynamism feature, expansiveness, and most importantly of course constituting or demonstrating creativity and literary merit.

The first feature is the combination of technology with the creative process. When we refer to technology, reference is not primarily to the computer or the internet only. It is to the use of technology in general. In a previous paper, I called for "a more liberal understanding and analysis … in which many types and creations of traditional Media and New Media were usually excluded as literature. Movies and songs were never considered literature in the mainstream academia of literary criticism in spite of the fact that plays are, although both were originally written literary texts that are performed by artists." With such a view, a movie or a song could be considered an example of *The Portmanteau Literature.* It is not a traditional literary production in the classic meaning; neither is it a Frankenstein Literature as long as it is not uploaded to the internet. However, watching a

movie in the theatre or at home on a TV set, a movie that carries features of literary merit makes it eligibly a *Portmanteau Literature* native.

The second feature is interactivity and dynamism. In her book, *An Introduction to Interactive Literature Mōd͟hāl īlā Ālād͟b Ālīāfāʿlī,* Fatma Al-Beriki presents an attempt into presenting a framework for exploring the new forms of literature that are connected to the internet and the use of technology. She approaches the literary works from an 'interactivity perspective' exploring one 'genre' of *The Portmanteau Literature* namely the Interactive Literature which she defined as "the literature that employs the inputs of modern technology into introducing a new literary genre that combines literarity and the electronic medium which is it's recipients only route- the blue screen. This literature can never be interactive except if the recipient receives a space that is equal or more than the space given that original creator of the text (49)." As such, Al Beriki is confining her study to the digital works that require interactivity as their primary feature among other features she enumerates as she presents an epistemological study of the term 'Interactivity'. She thus builds her work of exploring literary theories that could help with producing a critical perspective of interactive literary works on theories of Reception and Intertextuality. The term refers to interactivity as the major aspect of this kind of literature however it still does not include other works that *Portmanteau Literature* refers to as the feature of interactivity is in fact not lacking in the traditional form of literature to an extent of Roland Barthes' announcement almost half a century ago 'the death of the author'. It is helpful to consider this aspect of interactivity as one of the major features of *The Portmanteau Literature* though not the basic feature. Interactivity and dynamism together are. *Portmanteau Literature* is distinctively dynamic and interactive. Whether an uploaded novel to the internet, a digital novel, a literary blog, or a YouTube song, any of these works are highly dynamic and interactive. As employing technology and media, the role of the recipient/reader is significant. The opportunity for creating a dynamic work in which

the literary elements interplay, roles of author/reader are exchanged, and limits between the different literary genres are in constant change.

The third feature is the extensiveness of the scope of the term. As David Golumbia points out, "the field of digital media can be arguably understood to be so wide as to encompass virtually everything (55)." If *Portmanteau Literature* refers to all works of literary merit that includes the use of technology in its production or consumption, this could include almost everything written, spoken, drawn, performed, or produced in a digital or electronic form. So, if movies are to be included as a form of literature, which movies should be included and which are excluded? Are game apps included? What else? With such a wide scope, it is challenging to create a paradigm that would achieve both goals: precision and comprehensiveness. However, this extensiveness of the term along with the possible development of these works into larger, more vibrant, and further creative products requires the critical mode to be in parallel with such pursuits.

The fourth feature is that the work constitutes or demonstrates creativity and literary merit. When literature was only considered literature on condition of its being written, the question of literary merit was different; *different* here is a keyword. What might have been considered literature was controlled and confined by the amount of artistic freedom and the tools writers had had access to. William J. Long, (1909) in *English Literature: Its History And Its Significance For The Life Of The English-Speaking World* simply identified what could be considered literature by a number of factors that includes its being artistic, suggestive, permanent, universal, and enjoyable (2- 9). He thus defines literature as:

> Literature is the expression of life in words of truth and beauty; it is the written record of man's spirit, of his thoughts, emotions, aspirations; it is the history, and the only history of the

human soul. It is characterized by its artistic, its suggestive, its permanent qualities. Its two tests are its universal interest and its personal style. Its object, aside from the delight it gives us, is to know man, that is, the soul of man rather than his actions ; and since it preserves to the race the ideals upon which all our civilization is founded, it is one of the most important and delightful subjects that can occupy the human mind. (8,9)

Note the stress on the works being 'written'. It is needless to enumerate the long list of literary critics and schools of literary criticism that were preoccupied by the questions of literariness of the written text and of what is and is not literature. But being written is not the only issue that preoccupied them. As Terry Eaglton points out "literature does not exist in the sense that insects do (14)." It is a sociological matter as well as it refers in the end "simply to private taste… to the assumptions by which certain social groups exercise and maintain power over others (14)." This among other factors as well should be an issue of further study of what literature is and is not in the digital age as well as what is and what is not literature.

However, confining our interest to the digital, and although Arab writers are not strongly involved in the production of digital or Portmanteau literary works, various serious attempts were and are being made to approach the digital literary world; an effort that apparently equates and sometimes supersedes efforts of other literary groups around the world. The Western world, so to say, is deeply concerned with studying the phenomena, discussing its various features and presenting new and creative methods of producing these works. Janez Strehovec in "E-Literature, New Media Art, and E-Literary Criticism", attempts to demonstrate that "that new media art is questioning the very ontological status of the field in terms of abandoning aesthetic and artistic functions in

favor of their functions of use (2).” Julian Kücklich in "Literary Theory and Digital Games" explores three critical approaches: poetics, hermeneutics and aesthetics highlighting the possibilities as well as the limitations of these approaches in approaching digital games as a form of digital literature. As his paper proposes, William Benzon discusses a changed approach of digital criticism. Instead of approaching it “digital criticism is the only game that's producing anything really new in literary criticism. We've got data mining studies that examine 1000s of texts at once (7).”

Arab critics, and Arabic digital criticism in particular, however, as Khadidja Belloudmou confirms in her study “Curriculum Question in Arab Digital Criticism Research into Visualization and Mechanism”, “did not take its mechanisms from the environment of the digital text, but from monetary approaches accepted with the paper medium, which did not supply the digital literature with anything, and most of the available approaches that deal with Arabic digital texts were based on pre-accepted Silver procedures (7).” One outstanding example is a contribution made by a Professor of Arabic Literature in which he created a critical criticism of a digital book by Mohamed Sanajelah, on an electronic link. He terms the paradigm Cyber Criticism Methodology[1] referring it to his book Renewal of Critical Discourse (2010). However, while he calls on the renewal of the critical discourse, he is still heavily affected by traditional terms and frames of print books. For instance, in discussing Sanajelah's book, he makes a long argument against the author's description of his book as digital as his proposed paradigm carries. In fact various attempts were conducted by a number of critics and scholars into discussing various elements of the literary work produced within the digital age. As a relatively new field, not many books or studies were conducted. Most discussions revolved around identifying which is where epistemologically and categorically.

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[1] منهجية النقد المعلوماتي (my translation)
https://5fb5c7ef8975c.site123.me/

This paper proposes a paradigm that approaches the literary work

discussing: (1) its Form, and (2) its Content as per the following:

The *Portmanteau Literature* Critical Appreciation Paradigm
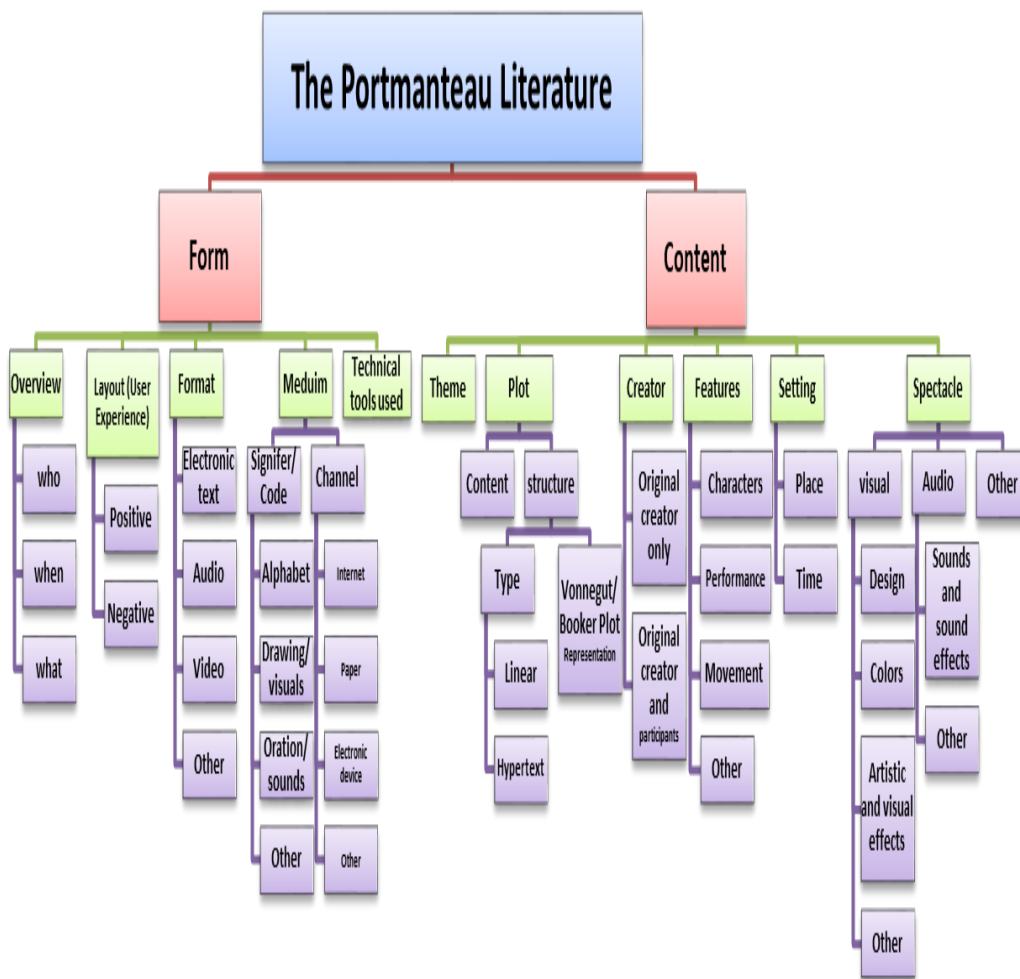
Figure 3 The Portmanteau Literature Critical Appreciation Paradigm

As this figure shows, this critical appreciation paradigm will discuss the *Portmanteau* work on two levels: form and content. After the overview of the work, it could be discussed whether the layout of these works is positive or negative. A negative layout is the digital text with a negative format: "it is a closed text that does not benefit from the techniques of the digital revolution such as the hypertext technology, or the various multimedia techniques including the use of audio and visual effects and others. That is, it is the text that may be published in an ordinary paper book, without the slightest sense of the necessity or importance of employing well-known computer technologies (22)." Thus, the text becomes digital on basis of its being published electronically, such as: "[S]cientific encyclopedias, and even the legal formulas of a law (23)" (Al-Buraiki). On the other hand, the positive layout is "that text that is published digitally, and uses the techniques made available by the information and digital revolution from the use of hypertext, other audio and visual effects, animations, graphics and other influences made available by the digital revolution. (Al-Khatib) I would like to employ the term a little more widely. Within the paradigm, a negative layout is a layout that requires neither the use of special technology nor the interactivity of the user while a positive one does; meaning that a hypertext novel is a positive layout while a movie is a negative one.

The Format, the Media, and The Technical Tools Used are closely connected elements and they form the most significant difference from the traditional print form of the literary works, in which paper was the only medium. The Format discusses the form of the work. As discussed earlier, one of the major features of *The Portmanteau Literature* is the width of its scope. Thus, it is necessary to approach the format that is being used, whether the work is an electronic text like books PDFs, an audio format like audio novels, songs, or recitals of poems, or a video like the one we will be discussing later I the current paper, which is the video of the performed version of Pride and Prejudice on stage or a

movie like also the other work which is the movie of Pride and Prejudice. For each of these formats, there are specific elements to be tackled pertinent to the format that the creators used. That is why the current proposed paradigm covers the overall elements of any work that can be considered *Portmanteau Literature.*

Directly connected to the format is the Medium through which the work is received by the recipient. The medium includes two main issues: The Code or the Signifier through which the signified or the meanings are delivered to the recipient; the other is the Channel through which the work is delivered. This means that for a print novel, the code is the alphabet and the channel is paper, while for digital novels, it is the alphabet and the computer, and for a Kindle novel, it is the alphabet and the Kindle device while for Augmented Reality Novels, it is most probably the alphabet and the smart phone. Other forms of *Portmanteau Literature* could be tackled as well. A YouTube Video it is the visuals and the internet, while a Facebook Post that includes a photo or a picture it is the alphabet. Sometimes, for the work to be available, that is to run properly through that channel, the presence of a device and the internet are both necessary meaning that the internet could be the only required medium with any smart device but in other cases, a specific device is needed with or without the internet. It is necessary to point out the channel not only because the requirements for each channel differs, but also because each has its specificity and nature. As Mclauhun points out in the way *Medium is the Massage*:

> The dominant organ of sensory and social orientation in pre-alphabet societies was the ear- "hearing was believing." The phonetic alphabet forced the magic world of the ear to yield to the neutral world of the eye. Man was given an eye for an ear.
>
> Western history was shaped for some three thousand years by the introduction of the phonetic alphabet, a medium that depends

> solely on the eye for comprehension. The alphabet is a construct of fragmented bits and parts which have no semantic meaning in themselves, and which must be strung together in a line, bead-like, and in a prescribed order. Its use fostered and encouraged the habit of perceiving all environment in visual and spatial terms—particularly in terms of a space and of a time that are uniform, c,o,n,t,i,n,u,o,u,s
>
> and
>
> c-o-n-n-e-c-t-e-d. (45)

Visuals were the first alphabet, and the most comprehensive. Man's resort to a set of finite phonemes within a language has only threatened the original creativity and resourcefulness of humans. How many times have you found language, any language deficient in explaining an idea or an image? Isn't it true that a picture is worth a thousand words? Why would we place alphabet in a higher esteem than visuals?

The technical tools used are a major component that not only affects the user experience, but most importantly affects the durability and continuity of the presence of the work in the world. It is significantly important to notice that the technical tools used to create a work of art and the one that is needed to have it run properly is one of the biggest challenges that I believe will be facing authors and creators. For one, an extremely creative creator of content could not be able to deliver his creation for lack of technical knowledge or lack of a technician who can translate his creative ideas into a technically and aesthetically acceptable creation. For another, the constantly updated and progressing technology threatens the durability of the presence of these works. One example of this has already happened that almost deleted the presence of a large volume of created literary content. The most

popular and widely used graphics program, the Adobe Flash player, has been initially released in 1996 and has been since the major tool for games and digital content creation. On December 31st, 2020, Adobe officially killed the Flash Player and did not release a replacement due to technical reasons as Apple stopped supporting it. The result was that all websites that offer Flash-based content had to remove all that content or keep it unplayable. Very few of these works became downloadable content to be played offline, while others were neither playable offline of online. Loss of digital data on our smart devices is one of the familiar painful experiences for anyone who uses one. This experience is present in the literary digital world as well and requires more sustainable and practical solutions.

The Content of the work is divided into Theme, Plot, Narrative, Features, Setting, and Spectacle. Whereas most of these terms reflect the traditional linear narrative critical appreciation paradigm, however the Portmanteau Paradigm gives space for both traditional and digital (the Portmanteau) content critical approach. The theme is of course the main idea or the message of the work which is the term used to describe the same role for traditional texts. The plot, however, while used traditionally as well, it should be studied on two levels: the content, and the structure of that plot. The content refers to the story of the work, what it is about and how it is told. The other level is the structure of the work; the work building blocks and the map of the structuring of those building blocks that would lead eventually to the routes and the effects imagined and meant by the creator(s) of that work. In fact, studying the plot has been a preoccupying topic to scholars as old as storytelling itself. However, I believe two writers had presented two patterns that could serve as a guiding light for any user of *The Portmanteau Literature*.

The first pattern is presented by an American novelist who has given lectures on the art of writing presenting a plot pattern that I believe is both holistic and comprehensive. This simple plot pattern suggestion, because of its simplicity, could serve with the interactivity and dynamism which is a major feature of

Portmanteau Literature. In his autobiography, *Palm Sunday: An Autobiographical Collage,* author Kurt Vonnegut explains this pattern:

> The fundamental idea is that stories have shapes which can be drawn on graph paper, and that the shape of a given society's stories is at least as interesting as the shape of its pots or spearheads. In the thesis, I collected popular stories from fantastically various societies, not excluding the one which used to read Collier's and The Saturday Evening Post. I graphed each one. Anyone can graph a simple story if he or she will crucify it, so to speak, on the intersecting axes I here depict: "G" stands for good fortune. "I" stands for ill fortune. "B" stands for the beginning of a story. "E" stands for its end (285).

He then goes to explore each one. The first is of someone leading an average life but then falls into misfortune, rises again:
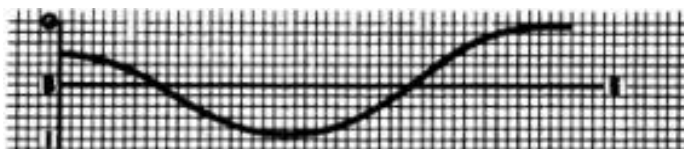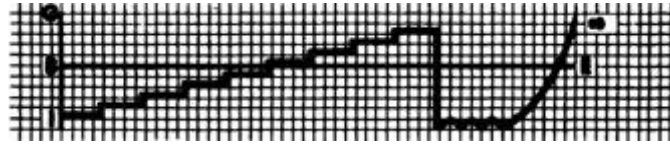

The second pattern is a little bit different in which someone starts from scratch, rises up, and then falls deeply down to rise back up.
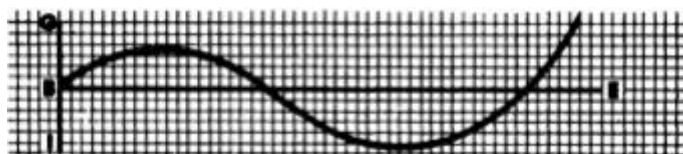
There is also what can be called a pattern of accumulation in which one action leads to the other reaching the ultimate success or happiness:
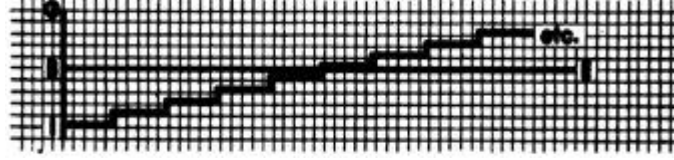
There is that pattern which is considered the Cinderella pattern:

What is helpful in these patterns is the way the plot is portrayed. This method could be used to present patterns within a digital trans-world of various media and formats. It could be helpful to resort to one of the seven plots presented in Christopher Booker's book *The Seven Basic Plots: Why We Tell Stories* in which he presents us with seven plots. In spite of the writer's sustenance that those seven plots are THE plots out there, the labels he gives to these plots could be helpful as concise and representative titles of the various plots without rejecting the possibility of the presence of new patterns of plots. The seven plots that Booker presents are:

1- Overcoming the Monster (The Monster and the Thrilling Escape From Death),
2- Rags to Riches,
3- The Quest,
4- Voyage and Return,
5- Comedy (The Plot Disguised),
6- Tragedy (The Five Stages, The Divided Self, and The Hero as Monster),
7- Rebirth.

In other words, what I am proposing is a dual representation of the plot bearing in mind the infinity of possibilities and patterns of plots. What both Vonnegut and Booker are giving us is an example of some of the most popular and recurrent plots specifically in Western culture. *The Portmanteau Literature* with its infinite possibilities and patterns requires a pattern that allows such possibilities to be represented and labeled. For instance, if we take the famous Cinderella story, a very simple linear plot, it can be represented as both a graphic representation and a Booker label. Something we may call "the Vonnegut/Booker Plot Representation":
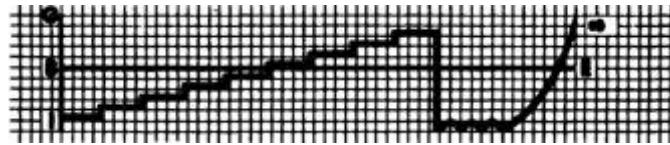
Cinderella Story: Rebirth

Figure 4: Proposed Vonnegut/ Booker Plot Representation

It is important to note that one title might serve different graphs under the same title and vice versa. For instance, the abovementioned pattern can be also represented through a different graph.
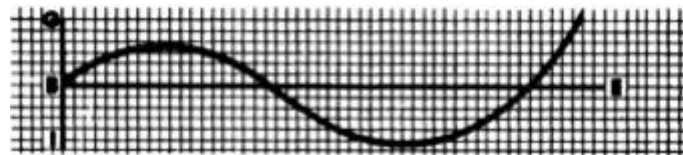
Cinderella: Rags to Riches

Figure 5: Proposed Vonnegut/ Booker Plot Representation 2

As it is quite clear, the idea of representing the plot through a graph is helpful especially in the nonlinear nature of most *Portmanteau Literature* - one of the major contributions of the digital age. In the first figure, the protagonist of the work is not moving upwards and downwards and then upwards smoothly. There is rather a building up of the action till reaching a high point and then suddenly everything collapses and later moves upwards.

It is noteworthy that whereas Booker in his seminal book confines all the stories and novels out there to seven plots only, dismissing much brilliant work as long as it does not fit his categorization, I believe that creativity in storytelling is beyond plot sets. In other words, while those seven plots as well as the other books that establish four, five or seven or thirty six plots..etc, (including Andrew Regean et al.'s suggested universal six plots and Georges Polti's *The Thirty Six Dramatic Situations)*, identify recurrent storyline in literature, creating this proposed plot representation with a graph and a title is the suitable plot representation method with infinite possibilities that responds to the infinite possibilities of storytelling. Thus, naming it a Vonnegut/ Booker Plot Representation is a loose title that refers to two *methods* of plot representation rather than those two specific plot categories. I believe applying this proposed pattern will be helpful in both simple and intricate plots, whether linear plots or hypertext ones.

It is important I think to point out two technological instances. On 2017, Facebook and other major organizations announced shutting down some of their AI machines as they have produced a new language of their own unintelligible to humans. As Aaron Mamiite explains, "Facebook was forced to shut down one of its artificial intelligence systems after researchers discovered that it had started communicating in a language that they could not understand." He elaborates on the incident, "with AI systems using their own language, humans will not be able to follow just what exactly the AI agents are talking about. Humans are not able to understand how complex AI systems think due to their hidden thought processes, so the secrecy of AI agents will be made even

worse when their conversations are made in an unknown language. If AI agents are allowed to speak in a language that they created, they might no longer even need human intervention." While this only enforces my prior hypothesis on the threat of the merger of technology and literature, calling the products Frankenstein Literature, on the positive side it refers to the infinite possibilities of producing beauty, aestheticism, and values into the human life. For a more specific note, it reflects the infinite literary and linguistic possibilities of the machines.

The second instance is the work of Andrew Regean et al, "The Emotional Arcs of Stories are Dominated by Six Basic Shapes" in which they employed artificial intelligence technology on about thirteen hundred works of literature (1327 works specifically) producing six plot line described as "a set of six core emotional arcs which form the essential building blocks of complex emotional trajectories (55)." Those plot lines where tested on other works "we examine the closest characteristic stories in publication today and find that particular emotional arcs enjoy greater success, as measured by downloads (55)." Thus, through the use of technology, recurrent plot lines were identified with recognition of which ones are the most popular; from among the six proposed plots- 'Rags to riches' (rise),''Tragedy', or 'Riches to rags' (fall), 'Man in a hole' (fall-rise),' Icarus' (rise-fall), 'Cinderella' (rise-fall-rise), and 'Oedipus' (fall-rise-fall)- Icarus, Oedipus, and Man in a hole plots are the most appealing to readers. This points out to the infinite possibilities that the merging of technology with literature proposes. Not only can technology analyze huge 'Big Data' with accuracy and speed producing results and statistics; it can be used to reproduce those same results. It might be possible one day to feed computers with the most appealing and successful plot lines along with basic literary parameters, and leave it to the computer to produce lifelike literature or beyond.

Both instances, along others refer to the infinite possibilities of the use of technology in the creative process; not only as

channels and displays, but also as analyzers and creators. Such possibilities impel us to produce patterns that are specific enough to standardize literary studies, but loose enough to embrace the infinite possibilities of the merger of the creative process of storytelling and technology. That is why the Creator element is important. Some works have one or two creators, others have various. In the case of positive layout, the narrative has infinite number of creators as each reader or consumer of the work is a participating creator of the work.

Content Features is an element that responds to the variety of infinite possibilities with which the Portmanteau work is poignant. It depends on the perspective of the critic/ reader/ consumer that those features are defined. For instance, a digital poem could include features like diction, figures of speech, characterization, and word order while a digital novel could include content features like characterization, and diction. On the other hand, a movie could include script, characterization, and performance. Each of these features could be discussed on various levels, angles, and perspectives and the decision as to which and what is discussed is an aesthetic decision.

While Setting in the context of traditional literature is simply the place(s) and time(s) of the work, it extends with the *Portmanteau Literature* to include other elements under those two titles depending on the nature of the work. In a movie for instance, the setting is not only the place and time of the action but also the setting of the movie, the timing of the different shots…etc., while in an Augmented Reality Book, it involves the merger of the setting of the narrative with the actual setting of the reader. As such, this merger, its validity, effect, and suitability are issues of discussion. This differs with a hypertext narrative in which the movement of place and time of the narrative takes different forms- a plot graph would be specifically helpful with such type.

The last element, the Spectacle, clearly borrows itself from Aristotle's element of tragedy. Spectacle here refers to the sound and visual effects that are used in *The Portmanteau Literature.* This goes into aesthetic and symbolic associations of the design,

color significance, screen transitions, fonts types, fonts sizes, colors combinations, fading, zoom in and out…etc. Aristotle states in his *Poetics*, that the Spectacle "has, indeed, an emotional attraction of its own, but, of all the parts, it is the least artistic, and connected least with the art of poetry. For the power of Tragedy, we may be sure, is felt even apart from representation and actors." I would like to dare to disagree with Aristotle on this within the current context. Whereas Aristotle's premise was valid then, the opposite is currently true. Now is definitely the age of the use of the images and visuals.

It is important to point out that this paradigm, though complete in its current form for the print use, is far from complete as a proposed digital critical appreciation paradigm. In other words, my proposition is not a paper based paradigm. It is a digital Portmanteau work itself in which these elements are the foundation for. However for this proposition to be complete, a digitized form of this paradigm will be made and documented in the future. For now, we will be applying this paradigm on a Portmanteau work: *Pride and Prejudice: The Movie. Pride and Prejudice* is the classic novel by Jane Austen that has been read, analyzed, discussed, and studied thousands of times between formal and informal forums and publications from academic journals to women's social gatherings and amateur book clubs. What this paper proposes to present is *The Portmanteau Literature   Critical Appreciation Paradigm*. To do so, we need to study Portmanteau works and apply this paradigm on them to test the extent of its validity and practicality. Second is that, this paradigm is far from complete. As mentioned earlier, it will be completed when it has a digital version that corresponds and utilizes the latest techno-digital tools available. Third is that since the purpose of this paper is not the critical appreciation of the works included by only to put the paradigm to use, what will be presented in this prospect is more of a roadmap and broad analysis of these works using this paradigm. Fourth, as with all creative work and literary appreciation pursuits, this is not "*the*" way to apply the paradigm. It is only one of

various ways to appreciate those Portmanteau works using this paradigm. In other words, not only is this paradigm not the only way to appreciate a Portmanteau work, what will be proposed in this paper is one of many ways this paradigm could be applied. Future studies, hopefully, would elaborate on that.

It is noteworthy that discussing this movie within the scope of this paper is simply to clarify and examine the suggested pattern rather than presenting a whole deep analysis of the movie. The choice of this specific work is by no means random or haphazard. First, the choice is of a work that is far from being a digitized literary work like an e-novel, flash fiction, digital or electronic novel or poem. It is a distinct work with distinct elements and production circumstances. If this paradigm applies to the furthest, it would apply to the closer. Second, it is an adaptation from a classic novel by the Shakespeare of novel writing, Jane Austen. In the mind of almost any literary scholar, it would be easy to relate, draw comparisons, approve, or reject based on a relatively known work. Third, this work is easily available on YouTube or other digital platforms. Again, it is easy to reach and examine. Fourth, it is collectively a successful and beautiful adaptation that is not only an award winning movie in almost every category, but that is a true manifestation of the Jane Austen spirit in all her novels: the era, the costumes, the atmosphere, and the setting of an authentic England that was introduced to the world, and us, through her writing. For a scholar of English literature, the movie is a home, away from home. Hopefully, it would be a future home for literary scholars and academics. In fact, the idea of adapted movies could be, as Thomas Leitch calls for in "Adaptation, the Genre" be a genre by itself: adaptations. Fifth, choosing such a work enables us to put aside the question of "literary merit" as this is a given with regard to the origin of the script. The choice of this work is simply to examine the proposed paradigm and clarify its different components. It is important to stress that the coming critical approach is thus relatively simple one-layered approach with the emphasis on the untraditionally literary elements. The theme,

characterization, tone, style…etc. issues are not stressed upon as beyond the purpose of this study.

Overview, Layout, and Format

Pride and Prejudice: The Movie is a 2005 production that was first presented in theaters in the United Kingdom and two months later in the United States of America and the world, and then later on DVDs, TVs, and the internet streaming websites. As the title clearly clarifies, this movie is a reproduction of Jane Austen's all-time classic under the same title. It is about 120 minutes long. The cast includes Keira Knightley as Elizabeth Bennett, Matthew Macfadyen as Mr. Darcy, Brenda Blethyn as Mrs. Bennett, Rosamund Pike as Jane Bennett and Donald Sutherland as Mr. Bennett. The movie is directed by Joe Wright. The movie earned 13 wins and 59 nominations for national and international awards including the Oscars and BAFTA Awards. The movie script is a sincere reflection of Jane Austen's original work and directly quotes much of the novel's dialogue. As a 'traditional' movie, *Pride and Prejudice: The Movie* has a *Negative Layout* that requires the recipient to sit in the theatre watching or using a movie-playing device like a computer or DVD player with very basic programs. Its format combines both visual and audio effects; some websites provide subtitling in many languages including the language of the movie which is English. This work was primarily a film is a video of a film available on the internet with different extensions but mostly as an MP4 video.

Filmmaking is a huge and deep pursuit and industry. Since the very first pursuits of 'telling stories' through visuals, or a motion picture which at the end of the day is placing pictures successively as the *Kodak Essential Reference Manual for Filmmakers* puts it, "communicating with light and shadows (5)", the pursuit became an industry with budgets that exceeds the GDP of some countries. This industry in itself is undergoing huge changes and developments due to the digitized age: "Today, thanks to modern technology, there are myriad digital tools available to filmmakers in the form of hardware and software. And the old

studio workflow, while still potentially valuable, is in need of an upgrade (Digital Filmmaking Handbook, xxiii)." As such, if at a certain time, literature and filmmaking were considered diverse fields, it is definitely about time to place filmmaking besides theatrical plays as literary genres. This will not only enrich the literary field with creative and original works expanding the horizons of literary scholars and enthusiasts as carriers of values of aestheticism, development, and beauty, it will also enrich the filmmaking industry with valuable insights and perspectives that would eventually facilitate delivery of values and images that addresses the minds and hearts more than the eyes and the instincts. The movie, like the novel, addresses various themes but most prominently, it is a romantic plot of Cinderella stori(es), not only of the five sisters of the Bennett household, but even of their mother who attains her dreams of marrying off her daughters to suitable suitors.

Plot

The movie has the same linear plot of the novel that revolves around the Bennett household with the protagonist, Elizabeth Bennett and her other four sisters' love-lives. The plot can be represented through the following graph:
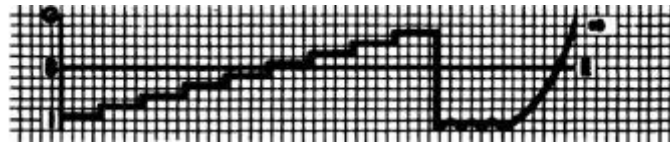
Figure 6 Cinderella Plot: Rebirth

In the movie, we tackle the journey of evolution and rebirth that both Elizabeth and the eternally enchantingly cold Mr. Darcy. Just like all Cinderella stories, there is an attraction that is followed by loss, then realization and living happily ever after.

On the first scene of the movie we follow Elizabeth Bennett as she moves through the pastors and greenery of the beautiful British countryside carrying a book in her hands, occasionally

reading from its pages as she walks. On the background we hear soft musical piano notes that the camera shows us later is coming from the hands of a young lady on the piano. As Elizabeth continues her movement, she reaches her father's study and joins her other three sisters' ear dropping on a conversation between her parents. Their mother is enthusiastically telling the news of the arrival of a new bachelor in the neighborhood with extreme excitement among the ladies at the happy news reflecting on the novel's main issue: suitors for the Bennett ladies. As the film proceeds we follow the main line of action which is primarily the relation between Elizabeth Bennett and Mr. Darcy as per the graph: it starts from lack of attraction as Elizabeth overhears Mr. Darcy's comment on her moderate beauty and unacceptable wit (10:11) and then the relation builds up they reach a climax as he uncovers his intentions of marrying her at the same time when she uncovers her disdain at his interference with ruining her sister's and Mr. Bingley's courtship and his wickedness towards Mr. Wickham. Their relations move straight as she gets more acquainted with him and as he interferes saving her sister Lydia from the scandal of elopement, and brings back Mr. Bingley to reconcile with Jane Bennett asking her to marry him. He repeats his proposal and they live happily ever after.

Both Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy are reborn by the end movie. Elizabeth or Lizzie as her family fondly calls her is presented as a combination of pride and prejudice in almost her first dialogue in the movie:

> LIZZIE: Well, if every man in this room does not end the evening in love with you then I am no judge of beauty.
> JANE: Or men.
> LIZZIE: Oh, they are far too easy to judge.
> JANE: They are not all bad.

> LIZZIE: Humourless poppycocks, in my limited experience.
>
> JANE: One of these days, Lizzie, someone will catch your eye and then you'll have to watch your tongue. (5:40- 6:07)

Mr. Darcy then enters the room along with Mr. and Miss Bingley with matching pride and prejudice. As Mr. Bingley mingles quickly with Jane, he speaks on the side with Mr. Darcy whose harsh opinion is spelled straightforward:

> MR BINGLEY: Upon my word I've never seen so many pretty girls in my life.
>
> DARCY: You are dancing with the only handsome girl in the room.
>
> BINGLEY: Oh, she is the most beautiful creature I ever beheld, but her sister Lizzie is very agreeable.
>
> DARCY: Perfectly tolerable, I dare say, but not handsome enough to tempt me. (9:50- 10:39)

This dialogue which Lizzie was not supposed to overhear but did is the beginning of their love marathon which consumes throughout the movie. Their rebirth, both of them is signaled with the climax of the movie; the master scène. This Ping-Pong scene of exchange of unintended insults and accusations along with epiphanies and realizations starts with a harsh marriage proposal that is both extremely romantic and insulting at the same time- a classic Austen pride and prejudice recipe that we watched repeatedly in on-screen and off-screen love stories; the knightly lover who is of a higher social class that gives up to love disregarding traditions and commonsense but maintains a disdainful posture to the less unfortunate beloved:

> DARCY: Miss Bennet, I have struggled in vain but I can bear it no longer... The past months have

been a torment...I came to Rosings with the single object of seeing you...l had to see you

LIZZIE: Me?

DARCY: l've fought against my better judgement, my family's expectation… The inferiority of your birth. . .my rank and circumstance.. all those things.. .but I'm willing to put them aside.. .and ask you to end my agony...

LIZZIE: I don't understand...

DARCY: I love you. Most ardently…Please do me the honour of accepting my hand.

LIZZIE: Sir, I appreciate the struggle you have been through, and I am very sorry to have caused you pain. Believe me, it was unconsciously done.

DARCY: Is this your reply?

LIZZIE: Yes, sir.

DARCY: Are you laughing at me?

LIZZIE: No!

DARCY: Are you rejecting me?

LIZZIE: I'm sure that the feelings which, as you've told me, have hindered your regard, will help you in overcoming it.

DARCY: Might I ask why, with so little endeavour at civility, I am thus repulsed?

LIZZIE: I might as well enquire why, with so evident a design of

insulting me, you chose to tell me that you liked me against your better judgement. If I was uncivil, that was some excuse-

DARCY: Believe me, I didn't mean (01:08:50)

But Elizabeth is far from being modest or tactful in her opinion of him. Besides rejecting him in the most not-so-courteous way, she moreover ignorantly accuses him of brutality; an accusation nurtured by her pride as Mr. Darcy rightfully points out:

LIZZIE: And what about Mr. Wickham?

DARCY: Mr. Wickham?

LIZZIE: What excuse can you give for your behaviour to him?

DARCY: You take an eager interest in that gentleman's concerns!

LIZZIE: He told me of his misfortunes.

DARCY: Oh yes, his misfortunes have been very great indeed!

LIZZIE: You have ruined his chances, and yet treat him with sarcasm?

DARCY: So this is your opinion of me! Thank you for explaining so fully. Perhaps these offences might have been overlooked, if your pride had not been hurt.

LIZZIE: My pride?

DARCY: by my honesty in admitting scruples about our relationship. Could you expect me to rejoice in the inferiority of your circumstances?

LIZZIE: And those are the words of a gentleman? From the first moment I met you, your

> arrogance and conceit, your selfish disdain of the feelings of others, made me realize that you were the last man in the world I could ever be prevailed upon to marry. (01:11:15)

While Elizabeth was pointing out his flaws, she was actually mirroring those flaws.

As the action accumulates for both of them, their arrogance and prejudice disappear and is replaced by affectionate love, tolerance, and understanding. Elizabeth epitomes this in her conversation with her bewildered dad at her sudden acceptance of his marriage proposal:

> LIZZIE: We misjudged him, me more than anyone. In every way, not just in this matter. I've been nonsensical. He's been a fool! About Jane, about so many things. Then so have I... You see, he and I are so similar.. .we're both so stubborn. . . Oh Papa. . .
> MR BENNET: You do love him, don't you?
> LIZZIE: Very much.

Creators

The movie, like any film, was created by a number of creators: the producers, the author of the original work, the director, and the script writer. Movies, unlike novels, do not rely completely on the reader's imagination to formulate the fantasy world the novel is taking the reader to. The most significant among those is definitely the scriptwriter (screenplay). This is the artist responsible for writing not only the dialogue but also directions, actors' gestures, setting description, and the general atmosphere of the scene. For instance, one of the dialogues that I have already quoted, this is how the scriptwriter had written them:

A Grecian summer house by the lake. The rain is now bucketing down. Lizzie hurries into the summer house and sits down, heavily, on a bench.

A man approaches, across the park. He draws nearer. lt's Darcy. Lizzie stiffens. He's hurrying towards her. Sodden, breathless, he comes into the summer house. He is far too agitated to notice her upset face.

DARCY: Miss Bennet, I have struggled in vain but I can bear it no longer... The past months have been a torment...

He pauses, unable to speak. Lizzie stares at him in astonishment. He struggles on.

DARCY: (cont'd) I came to Rosings with the single object of seeing you...l had to see you
LlZZlE: Me?
DARCY: l've fought against my better judgement, my family's expectation . .

(Pause)

DARCY: (cont'd) The inferiority of your birth. . .my rank and circumstance.. (stumblingly) all those things.. .but I'm willing to put them aside.. .and ask you to end my agony...
LlZZIE: I don't understand...

DARCY: (with passion) I love you. Most ardently.

Lizzie stares at him.

DARCY: (cont'd) Please do me the honour of accepting my hand.

A silence. Lizzie struggles with the most painful confusion of feeling. Finally she recovers.

LIZZIE: (voice shaking) Sir, I appreciate the struggle you have been through, and I am very sorry to have caused you pain. Believe me, it was unconsciously done.

A silence. Gathering her shawl, she gets to her feet.

DARCY: (stares) Is this your reply?
LIZZIE: Yes, sir.
DARCY: Are you laughing at me?
LIZZIE: No!
DARCY: Are you rejecting me?
LIZZIE: (pause) I'm sure that the feelings which, as you've told me, have hindered your regard, will help you in overcoming it.

A terrible silence, as this sinks in. Neither of them can move. (58)

The scriptwriter borrows many of Austen's lines throughout the movie; however the effect that is created in the movie is surplus. It

captures the Austen spirit in just a couple of hours and replaces words and descriptions with gestures and whispers. As Deborah Cartmell states in *Screen Adaptations: Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice": The Relationship between Text and Film*, "[T]he quality of Austen's writing is usually summarized by Lady Catherine de Bourgh in her pronouncement on how Elizabeth ought to behave: with 'honour, decourum, prudence' (25)." The movie is a two hours of honour, decorum, and prudence and the lack of thereof in some instances.

Features & Setting

The movie is rich in features that could be discussed. It depends on the critic's eye and purpose of the study. It could include characterization, dialogue, performance, and faithfulness to the original script… etc. The setting is not only the place and time of action. The word 'setting' extends beyond the literary term to merge with the cinematic one. For instance, in this movie the setting of the opening scene is not only a splendid countryside, but it also signals the beginning of the story as the dawn is just opening up to the morning while Elizabeth moves through with a book in her hand. The setting of the scene where Elizabeth accepts Mr. Darcy's proposal, we watch the sun as it sets from between their lips. The final scene where the happily married couple contemplate on their story and living the 'happily ever after' takes place again in the open air, at night. The movie is truly a journey and their love story is a charming ride.

Spectacle

In a movie, there are various elements for Spectacle: music, costumes, accessories, makeup and hair, choreography, sound, and scenery… etc. Discussion could be of one, some, or all. Discussion could be on the effect, success or failure, extent, meaning, value or any other aspect. In the digital age, a picture is not worth a thousand words, it *is* the thousand words, and more. Actually *Pride and Prejudice* Spectacle would consume papers of discussions and comparisons with the original novel, with the actual age portrayed, or even with other adaptations of the novel, just to name a few. This could be the interesting topic of many literary critical studies.

In my freshman year, we took "An Introduction to Literature" course in which the professor kept repeating the sentence "authors take life incidents and experiences into creating litertature that become completely unrecognizable the way a chicken cannot recognize its eggs in the omlett." This sentence keeps appearing in my mind whenever I work on a lit-tech topic. Writing started as a form of art, meanings were transmitted to recepients through engarvings and drawings on cave walls; later sign systems were created to replace those drawings as language codes. The fact is that technology is bringing us back to what we already had; a Farancis Fukuyama 'end of history' moment in which we can argue that there is nothing new under the sun. We are simply reliving an early era with a modern twist. Literature is a pursuit of aesthetism, art is a manifestation of it, and technology is combining them together in infinite ways into an omelett in which its mergerd ingeredients can never be separated into individual components and dealing with each one on a distance. This paper is not simply arguing that the *Potmanteau Literature* is a form of literature. It is arguing that emabracing the change the world has been undergoing for a while, accelarated by the Covid-19 pandemic, into the digitization of life- literature included- is not only the right but it is also the duty of scholars and academics of the literary field who need the space and support to have renovated look to traditional borders of literature and other forms of artistic expression. Movies, games apps, social media posts, blogs, Youtube productions are all forms of literature through different coded languages; image is only one of them. To create paradigms and tools for filteration, appreciation, and evaluation of these works is an attempt into creating value and beauty in a world threatened by machinized humans and enginized art. It is an attempt into reading videos and watching novels in a digitized life.

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