



**Monsters on Screen: A Comparative Study of Branagh's Mary Shelley's
Frankenstein and Coppola's Bram Stoker's *Dracula***

Saikat Sarkar

Abstract:

In the 1831 edition of *Frankenstein* (1st published 1818) Mary Shelley bade her 'hideous progeny to go forth and prosper'. However, it is likely that she could not imagine the prolonged afterlife of her progeny who would prosper for two centuries and reach beyond the pages of books. Five years after its publication *Frankenstein* was adapted for the stage by Brinsley Peake with the title *Presumption*, an adaptation which Mary Shelley saw. Since then *Frankenstein*, to settle on a conservative number, has been adapted more than thirty times as major motion pictures. This is discounting the numerous TV adaptations and spin offs. Another popular example of adapting a monster on screen is that of *Dracula* (1897) by Bram Stoker. This cult tale of horror has also been brought to life on countless occasions beginning from the early 1920s.

This paper would study two cinematic adaptations of *Frankenstein* and *Dracula* namely Kenneth Branagh's Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1994) and Francis Ford Coppola's Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1992), both being posited as faithful adaptations to examine the departures made by the directors and what these bring to the cinematic texts. This paper would talk briefly about the horror literature and chart, briefly again, the cinematic lives of *Frankenstein* and *Dracula*. It would then take a close look at two adaptations to find how Branagh's faithful adaptation is informed by Coppola's ideas of adaptation and how both produce a more romanticized presentation of their subjects. It would also examine how these texts talk to other cinematic texts and in this create a postmodern space for the two beloved monsters.

Keywords: Adaptation, Relocation, Monstrosity, Afterlife.