

JIHOČESKÁ UNIVERZITA V ČESKÝCH BUDĚJOVICÍCH

FILOZOFICKÁ FAKULTA

ÚSTAV ANGLISTIKY

BAKALÁŘSKÁ PRÁCE

ANALYSIS OF THE NOVEL DRACULA

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Studijní obor: Anglický jazyk a literatura – Estetika

Ročník: 3.

2021

I confirm that this thesis is my work written using solely the sources and literature properly quoted and acknowledged as work cited.

10. 5. 2021 Český Krumlov

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Poděkování

Na tomto místě bych ráda poděkovala Einat Adar, M.A., Ph.D. za odborné vedení této práce, vstřícnost, trpělivost, poznámky a rady, a také její milý přístup.

Abstrakt

Cílem bakalářské práce je zaměřit se na novelu *Drákula* od významného irského gotického autora a poukázat na její přijetí Viktoriánskou společností. V teoretické části se zaměřím na autora a dobu, ve které žil a napsal své dílo, a také na nadpřirozené bytosti upíry. Dále zmíním historickou osobu Vlad Drákula a folkloru, který hrál roli v inspiraci pro postavu Drákuly.

V praktické části se potom zaměřím na interpretaci tohoto slavného Stokerovo díla.

Klíčová slova: gotická literatura, folklor, analýza, sexualita, upír

Abstract

The aim of my bachelor thesis is to focus on novel Dracula written by the famous Irish gothic author Bram Stoker and point out the reception of Victorian society. In my theoretical part I will focus on the author and the time he lived in and wrote his work, and also the supernatural creatures vampires. I will also mention the historical character of Vlad Dracula and folklore that inspired Stoker in the creation of his character Count Dracula.

In my practical part, I will focus on the interpretation of this famous gothic novel.

Key words: gothic literature, folklore, analysis, sexuality, vampire

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1. Introduction

Bram Stoker, one of the best-known writers of the Victorian period, wrote several gothic novels, but none of them exceeded the attention and quality of his novel *Dracula*. It is not uncommon for humanity to be fascinated by things that do not belong in our everyday world and cannot be explained rationally. Vampires are frightening creatures, but at the same time, we are drawn to them and fascinated by them. Stoker had managed to create the most famous vampire named Count Dracula, who has continued to haunt readers around the world into the present day.

The gothic novel *Dracula* was first published on May 26, 1897, and became a huge success, not just in literature, but even in theatre and movies. It has become a classic and influential work for other writers who take inspiration from this gothic story, mostly from Count Dracula.

In the first part of my thesis, I am going to focus on the Victorian period in which Stoker wrote and published his novel. Specifically, I will discuss the gothic of the *fin de siècle* time and the fears and anxieties that were surrounding England's society in the 19th century. I will talk about the position of women in the society, and the new movement called the New Woman that has appeared during this time. I will also mention the historical and folklore influence that could have inspired and helped to create Stoker's text.

In the second part, I will focus on *Dracula* specifically. I will look at the responses, different types of readings and criticism this novel had received by Victorian society. My thesis aims to analyse this novel and its main character Count Dracula to see why it found such popularity and became Stoker's most successful work.

2. Introduction of Bram Stoker

2.1 Life and work

Bram Stoker was a significant Irish-born novelist, writing in a period known as the Victorian era who “gave the world one of the great myths of the modern era.”¹ Today, we remember him as the author of *Dracula*, which is one of the most popular gothic novels to date and continues to gain new readers around the world.

Bram Stoker, whose full name is Abraham Stoker, was born on November 8, 1847, in Dublin, Ireland, in a suburb called Clontarf. His family was Protestant and was considered a middle-class in society.² His father was also called Abraham Stoker, and his mother was named Charlotte. His father was a civil servant, and his mother’s father was a lieutenant in the Irish army. His mother often told stories about her childhood in Sligo, where she grew up during the cholera epidemic, and her stories were a crucial influence on Stoker’s writing.³ He had six siblings, four brothers and two sisters. Stoker had a complicated childhood. He was often sick, which made him weak as a child. It took him seven years to learn how to walk. His growth was delayed, but during adolescence he started growing quickly and easily became one of the tallest and strongest students that attended his school. Stoker was also a shy student and teased by other children for his stature. Nonetheless, he was quite intelligent, and his teachers recognised that he had a photographic memory.⁴

He became a student at Trinity College Dublin when he was seventeen

¹ Lynch, Jack: “About This Volume.” *Critical Insights: Dracula: by Bram Stoker*, Salem Press, 2010, ISBN-10: 1587656124, p. 7

² Wynne, Catherine: “Introduction: Setting the scene.” *Bram Stoker, Dracula and the Victorian Gothic Stage*, Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2013, ISBN: 978-1-137-29899-7, p. 3

³ Hopkins, Lisa: “Early Life in Stoker’s Fiction.” *Bram Stoker: A Literary Life*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, ISBN 978-0-230-62641-6, p. 23

⁴ Means, Richard: “Biography of Bram Stoker.” *Critical Insights: Dracula: by Bram Stoker*, Salem Press, 2010, ISBN-10: 1587656124, p. 13

years old. He was an exceptional student who excelled at his studies, which helped him with his confidence and his social life outside school. His years at Trinity were successful, Stoker became “president of the Philosophical Society, belonged to the Historical Society, and became one of the university's best athletes.”⁵

He intended to graduate with a degree in the arts, but he graduated from Trinity College with a law degree in 1870 instead. After that, he followed his father’s footsteps when it came to his career and worked as a civil servant for several years. While working as a civil servant, he managed to write literary and theatrical criticism. During this time, he also finished his first novel called *The Primrose Path*, which was published in 1875.⁶ Stoker was a well-known figure of Dublin’s literary circles. In addition, he published short stories with supernatural and melodramatic themes. He was a frequent guest at Dublin’s theatres, because of their growing popularity in the late 19th century, and he also enjoyed Lady and Sir William Wilde’s literary salons.⁷

In 1876, the author left Ireland and moved to London. In this city, he met an important figure and influencer of his work, the actor Sir Henry Irving, who was mainly known for his performance of Shakespeare’s Hamlet. Stoker grew fond of Irving and his work, and because he was also a critic, he wrote numerous positive reviews about him and his plays. Stoker even worked at Irving’s theatre, Lyceum Theatre, in 1878. The theatre had large debts, but thanks to Irving’s growing popularity the theatre became more famous and ended up being one of the most successful theatres in London.⁸

Oscar Wilde was another good friend of Stoker and an important part of his life for several years. The writers met through Wilde’s mother - she was a writer herself writing under the pen name “Speranza” - who invited Stoker to be

⁵ Id., p. 13.

⁶ Id.

⁷ Wynne, p. 4

⁸ Means, p. 14

part of “her exclusive circle of artists and literary figures.”⁹ Their friendship continued even after Wilde’s lover, Florence Balcombe, fell in love with Stoker, but ended because of Wilde’s homosexuality scandal. Balcombe ended her relationship with Wilde and then married Stoker on December 4 in 1878. She gave birth to their only child, Noel, on December 31, a year after their wedding. Despite her marriage to another man, Wilde was writing letters to Florence confessing his love to her and claiming he would never get over her.

During this time, specifically in 1879, Stoker published the nonfiction work *The Duties of Clerks of Petty Sessions in Ireland*, a book inspired by his life and mostly his experiences when he worked as a civil servant. Other books that he published were *Under the Sunset* in 1882, which is a children’s book, and in 1890, his third novel *The Snake’s Pass*.

Back in 1883, Stoker and his friend Irving travelled to the New York City, United States for Lyceum theatre tour with their plays. Lyceum was very popular and profitable at that time. This tour had huge success, so they decided to come back on a yearly basis until the year 1904 when they parted ways. Thanks to this tour, Stoker met American writer Walt Whitman in a Philadelphia café for the first time in 1884. Stoker and Whitman met on several occasions, and developed a friendship each of them wrote about.¹⁰

Despite being busy with Lyceum Theatre, Stoker continued to study law, and in 1890 he passed his bar exam and was finished with his studies. Having a law degree did not help his writing career, but he gained his father’s respect and approval. In 1898, Stoker had to manage the Lyceum by himself because of Irving’s knee injury. After a few months Stoker closed the theatre for the season for the first time “after incurring a massive debt of more than £6,000.”¹¹

During this difficult period, Stoker has not stopped writing, and a few years later in 1897, *Dracula* was published. This novel brought him a huge

⁹ Id., p. 14

¹⁰ Id.

¹¹ Id., p. 15

success and became extremely popular. Based on this novel a dramatic version was written for Lyceum, and it was a big hit, even though its audience was mortified, and on some nights many of the theatregoers even fainted during the play.¹²

The novels that Stoker published later in life were not critically acclaimed and did not do well with the public. From 1898, he published the romances *Miss Betty*, *The Man* (1905), and *Lady Athlyne* (1908) and they were followed by horror novels including *The Lady of the Shroud* (1909) and *The Jewel of Seven Stars* (1903). In 1911, his last novel named *The Lair of the White Worm* was published.¹³

When his relationship with his wife ended in 1879 Stoker started living a different type of life, he was spending his free time with prostitutes and apparently contracted syphilis from one of them. He lived with this disease for about fifteen years, and he had to deal with other health problems such as gout and Bright's disease, which caused him kidney problems. The cause of death on April 20 in 1912 was a stroke, which he suffered because of his syphilis.¹⁴ Unfortunately, the success he gained thanks to his work, did not last until his death. Hopkins remarks that he had to beg funds from the Royal Literary Fund in 1911, and his separated wife was to spend the rest of her life fighting "against infringements of the copyright of *Dracula* in order to preserve what meagre royalties she obtained from it."¹⁵

¹² Id., p. 15

¹³ Id., p. 16

¹⁴ Id., p. 17

¹⁵ Hopkins, p. 49

3. Gothic literature

3.1 Victorian gothic

The work of Bram Stoker belongs to the Victorian era, which is a period from 1837 to 1901 covering most of the 19th century during a reign of Queen Victoria. In this period he wrote *Dracula* and published it towards the end of the 19th century in 1897 known by the French term *fin de siècle*, which means the end of the century. In this novel, he had managed to portray the fears and anxieties of Victorian English society caused by the changing times.

Andrew Smith in his book about gothic literature states that in Victorian gothic, and especially in later Victorian gothic, we see a development of a new version of ‘evil’, where the ‘evil’ or ‘monster’ are no longer considered an external sources of danger, but instead, they are highly internalised, meaning that they are part of our lives and nature. The roots of this new aspect can be seen in *Frankenstein* as well regarding the relationship between Victor and his creature, but it is given a new impetus in the mid-nineteenth century Gothic, thanks to a popularisation of the ghost story from the 1840s onwards.¹⁶

The problem with the natural and supernatural is how similar they are to one another in novels of this era and how easy it is for the latter to change into the former. It becomes hard to distinguish them and that makes you feel like they are living a double life. This can be seen in Emily Brontë’s *Wuthering Heights* from 1847, where the gothic house is compared to a vampire, because it sucks the real of any life and it is hard to resist it, just like Heathcliff’s tyranny or Catherine’s starvation in that novel.¹⁷

The apogee of this problematisation of the naturalised supernatural and

¹⁶ Smith, Andrew: “Gothic Proximities, 1865–1911.” *Gothic Literature*, Edinburgh University Press, 2007, ISBN: 9780748623709, p. 87

¹⁷ Milbank, Allison: “The Victorian Gothic in English novels and stories.” *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction*, Cambridge University Press, 2002, ISBN: 9780521794664, p. 162

questions about what is considered normal in the Victorian age is a short story written in 1859 by Edward Bulwer-Lytton called *The Haunted and the Haunters, or, the House and the Brain* (Qtd. in Milbank p. 163). It tells the story of a house in which furniture is moving by itself and other typical scary aspects of a haunted house. The cause for the haunting is discovered to be a former servant who cursed the building with his compass, and what haunts the house is a brain whose volition makes everything move in it. This story is an “extreme example of an attempt to find a medium to embody one’s mental fantasies.”¹⁸ The supernatural becomes more about one’s imagination, so the mind is what creates intrusive images that haunts us.

A common element of those ghost stories is to view the home as a dangerous space because it generates sexual anxieties typical for the Victorian era. Freud later elaborated on this topic in his essay ‘*The Uncanny*’ that works alongside his theory of the Oedipus complex. According to him, the uncanny is the opposite of German word *heimlich* that means homely. It is all that is terrible, but at the same time, feels familiar and old, but we got rid of by repression. For Freud, home is the place where Oedipal desires and anxieties are generated. He sees it as a sinister, dangerous place, for example, because a child is highly affected by feelings for their parents who influence infantile sexual development, which is why the home is described in such a negative way.

Alongside sexual anxieties there are also anxieties about middle-class society and their wealth making us ask questions who actually owns the buildings, because many people were poor and couldn’t afford such buildings and homes, or even food. On top of that, there was a fear that anyone can enter and invade their lives, like in *A Christmas Carol* (1843) written by Charles Dickens, even though it was written in the early 19th century. Smith goes on to describe how the dead ‘evil’ characters are not quite dead as a feature of those stories.¹⁹

¹⁸ Id., p. 163

¹⁹ Smith, p. 89

Another typical preoccupation of Victorian gothic is the main heroine and the relation to the past. It was impossible to separate these two things, because of some people's, mostly the working class, view on monarchy and Queen Victoria, who was unpopular because of her gender and marriage to a foreign prince. Alison Milbank remarks how in the early Victorian gothic, it was impossible to have an entrapped heroine freed from the past. Instead, the heroine is lost in her tale's story, imprisoned by her fate, just like Queen Victoria was, and the liberation from the past that is holding her back is replaced in those works "by a repositioning of the woman to fix her in an architectural and political space."²⁰ It was popular writing about Queen Victoria as a gothic character, after the year 1837, and Robert Miles used the phrase "Gothic cusp" for this time in 19th century.²¹ In later Victorian Gothic they continued to evoke the past, and the point was to "speak of the present as if it were already the vanquished past."²²

A popular feature was to create a localised setting, which is very important for gothic literature, in Britain of their own century. The setting is usually described as eerie and dark, profane, and demonised place. Another typical feature for this period is the representation of "all the main events of the Victorian life-narrative - birth, marriage, death,"²³ which we can find in Stoker's novel too.

3.1.1 Vampires

One of the main protagonists of Victorian gothic is the popular vampire who is associated with sexuality. Even though Bram Stoker's *Dracula* is one of the most famous vampires created in this period and maybe ever, he was not the first author to write about them.

In 1819, John William Polidori wrote a short story called *The Vampyre*

²⁰ Milbank, p. 146

²¹ Id., p. 147

²² Id.

²³ Hopkins, p. 76

and as stated before, the *Wuthering Heights*' character Heathcliff has vampire references. Thomas Preskett's *Varney the Vampire* (1845) received enormous success followed by another very famous vampire novel called *Carmilla* (1872), a female Vampire, written by Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu (another Irish writer whom Stoker knew personally) and many more. The vampire, an undead "creature" that needs human blood for survival, is the ultimate figure, the epithet of a negative natural supernatural that the Victorian-era fears the most, vampires became the ultimate threat for them.²⁴ Robert Mighall shows how vampires can be seen as a representation of sexuality, which was something Victorian society tried to deny. He continues, that not only were they dangerous for being supernatural beings sucking humans' blood and damning their souls, but in some interpretations, vampires could be seen as an embodiment of sexuality, because they were eroticised by people.²⁵ Their nature is sexual, in the sense that they are night creatures that make their way into sleeping people's beds to attack them.²⁶ Milbank agrees and discusses how vampires are the ultimate figures of a negative natural supernatural that are seen as an ultimate threat.²⁷ David Punter is mentioned by Matthew Gibson in his book *Dracula and the Eastern Question* (2006), describes a vampire as a specific Romantic Gothic type when it comes to literature, and in a political way, he sees it "as a bourgeois anxiety about the resurgence of the old aristocratic class"²⁸ whom the ones who is now in power would like to thwart. For Victorian Gothic, someone, or something, like a vampire is seen as a parasite - the impossibility that exists thanks to other real

²⁴ Milbank, p. 163

²⁵ Mighall, Robert: "Sex, history and the Vampire." *Bram Stoker: History, Psychoanalysis and the Gothic*, MacMillan Press LTD, 1998, ISBN 978-1-349-26838-2, p. 63

²⁶ Bolton, Matthew J.: "Victorian Anxieties." *Critical Insights: Dracula: by Bram Stoker*, Salem Press, 2010, ISBN-10: 1587656124, p. 55

²⁷ Milbank, p. 163

²⁸ Gibson, Matthew: "Interpretations of the vampire." *Dracula and the Eastern Question: British and French Vampire Narratives of the Nineteenth-Century Near East*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2006, ISBN-10: 1-4039-9477-3, p. 7

human beings. A vampire is a piece of the past that can continue existing between life and death by feeding upon the present.²⁹

3.1.1.1 Irish Famine

Ian Duncan points out that Ireland became the nation of the undead after being struck by disastrous famine, so there is a possibility to associate *Dracula* and vampires metaphorically to this Irish tragedy.³⁰ The famine is known as The Great Hunger (An Gorta Mhór) and also as the Irish Potato Famine, which took place from 1845 until the year 1852 when people still had to deal with its aftermath.

From that period we have horrific stories that occurred during those dark times that could have inspired Stoker and other writers in their novels and narratives. People were telling stories about the most affected areas of County Clare and County Galway, where people mixed blood with oatmeal and baked them as cakes to feed themselves. Other stories were about hungry villagers who may have drunk blood from the veins of their cattle and horses or bit the heads off other animals like chickens to gain some of the energy they were lacking. Many more people from other rural areas have made drinking blood part of their lives in order to survive this darkness.

After the Potato Famine had passed, the struggle still continued, especially when it came to people's mental health. There were some Irish people who were not able to come back to ordinary life because they had become addicted to the taste of blood, so to that ironically, they had become living vampires themselves.³¹

Christine Kinealy remarks how many people wanted a way out of Ireland

²⁹ Schmitt, Cannon: "The Gothic Romance in the Victorian Period." *A Companion to The Victorian Novel*, Blackwell Publishing, 2002, ISBN: 1405132914, p. 315

³⁰ Duncan, Ian: "The Provincial or Regional Novel." *A Companion to The Victorian Novel*, Blackwell Publishing, 2002, ISBN: 1405132914, p. 328

³¹ Curran, Bob: "The Dearg-Dul." *Vampires: A Field Guide To The Creatures That Stalk The Night*, The Career Press, 2005, ISBN: 1564148076, p. 56

too. Even though the emigration was always high - during and after the famine, it was even higher, approximately over one and a half million Irish people emigrated from Ireland. The urge to leave Ireland behind was so high, they had to use vessels that had been unsafe for the sea, which led to them being referred to as 'coffin ships'. Unfortunately, it did not mean a happy-ending for those fortunate enough to leave, since many people suffered some disease and died on board, mostly on their way to America or Australia.³²

To conclude, in literature, many authors then described the famine as “an unrepresentable trauma, a black figure for the impossibility of modern Irish history.”³³

3.2 Victorian society

To understand the novel *Dracula*, it is essential to know more about the Victorian society, that was divided into classes, and whose gender roles were not equal throughout the 19th century, but started to change towards the end.

It was not easy being a woman in the Victorian era. The society made it clear that only men were supposed to enter the working world, while women of the middle class had to stay at home taking care of their children if they have them, and homes, depending economically on their husbands. Even though they were dependent and good wives, women were not cherished by their husbands. It was more likely for them to be abused by them than being praised.

Women of working-class were not paid the same amount of money as men in the same position. Most of the time, they took care of rich people houses too. Women who had no husband and no employment were left in poverty with no support, and most of the time turned to prostitution, which was a big problem at that time.

³² Kinealy, Christine: “The end of Famine?” *The Great Irish Famine: Impact, Ideology and Rebellion*, Palgrave, 2002, ISBN: 0333677722, p. 58

³³ Duncan, p. 328

Moreover, men were described as strong, courageous, masterful and resourceful, while women were described as ethereal, almost like embodied angels. On top of that, women were belittled and believed not to be able to think rationally and often described as hysterical when they decided to raise their voices. Women's sexuality was also an issue in their society. Regarding their sexuality, any other sexual behaviour that was not pure, meaning no activity before marriage and extra-marital relations, was harshly censored. This was not the only challenge women of *fin de siècle* era had to deal with, they were seen as dangerous creatures, who were damaged by the nature of puberty, menstruation, childbirth and menopause.³⁴

The Victorian era was full of anxieties and fears of the unknown, fears about changes in society, technology, and sexual aspects. Those anxieties affected even science, that was concerned about uncanny human metamorphoses in terms of evolution. The society was even convinced that certain disorders that abounded in their modern industrial and urban life could be spread by human contact or a child could inherit them from their parents in a more aggressive form, so there was a lot of fear among them.³⁵

This era was not openminded and mostly not about sexuality, it was something that was supposed to be hidden and not talked about. Women were supposed to be prude, but, there was an especially complex issue with male homosexuality, and "Victorian sexology identified the homosexual as a perverse aberration and a degenerate."³⁶ Homosexuality was seen as monstrous, and any abnormality like that must have been banished from their society. The result towards their attitudes towards sex could be their prime minister William Gladstone, who went to see prostitutes after he was done with his work at the Houses of Parliament during the night to confront them about their lives, trying

³⁴ Hurley, Kelly: "British Gothic fiction, 1885–1930." *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction*, Cambridge University Press, 2002, ISBN: 9780521794664, p. 200

³⁵ Id., p. 196

³⁶ Id., p. 199

to make them live differently. However, his diaries showed he himself had sexual desires and was reading illicit texts, making him a hypocrite.³⁷

3.2.1 The New Woman

Victorian society was against all things new, they liked things the way they were and what was considered normal and traditional. Bram Stoker introduces us to his main female characters called Mina and Lucy, who both at some point in the story went against Victorian values and what it meant to be a woman in that period.

The New Woman is what was known as the *fin de siècle* feminist going against the gender ideology of the Victorian era. This movement was inspired by ideas from Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* published in 1792, who was also the mother of Mary Shelley. The women wanted their freedom, regarding education and getting married whenever they wanted and to whom they wanted. They basically asked to be independent just like men.³⁸

The New Woman is the opposite of the asexual domestic woman dependent on her husband, viewed as an angel of the house. Instead, she is rebellious, says what is on her mind, is independent and has a "masculine" behaviour, which makes society see her as a monster because she is strong and not innocent, she is a freethinker, and has no trouble expressing her sexuality.³⁹ Kelly Hurley continues to elaborate on how *fin de siècle* monster women are not only threatening with their sexuality but also portray unwomanly lust for power.⁴⁰ What makes The New Woman different is how her personal life is fulfilled even without marriage and children because she is happier being

³⁷ Bolton, p. 57

³⁸ Welsch, Camille-Yvette: "A Look at the Critical Reception" *Critical Insights: Dracula: by Bram Stoker*, Salem Press, 2010, ISBN-10: 1587656124, p. 41

³⁹ Hurley, p. 199

⁴⁰ Id., p. 201

financially independent, but even if she becomes a mother, it still raises questions of how it happened without her being married, so she is still judged.⁴¹

This movement managed to achieve many important changes regarding social issues when it came to women. The New Woman movement shed a light on women writers and helped them to be more recognised and most importantly, it helped to change the view on women and their roles in society, which was one of the main aims of this feminist movement.⁴²

However, Stoker's view on The New Woman was mixed, because he grew up in a close relationship with a mother who believed women deserved rights, but he also believed women who did not need men for protection, because they had no fears, were not feminine.⁴³

⁴¹ Hopkins, p. 36

⁴² Childers, Joseph W.: "Victorian Theories of the Novel." *A Companion to the Victorian Novel*, Blackwell Publishing, 2002, ISBN 0-631-22064-X, p. 419

⁴³ Welsch, p. 42

4. Historical background

4.1 England vs Russia

Before Stoker delved into writing *Dracula*, he did a lot of research. One essential resource for his novel was the work of Scottish novelist, Emily Gerard, who wrote about Transylvania, because he never visited the place, and he was inspired by her description of the region.⁴⁴

In 1895, two years before publishing the novel, Russia and England were fighting over Turkey, because of Turkish atrocities against the Armenians, who lived “on the border of the Ottoman and Russian empires.”⁴⁵ Lord Salisbury, who was Prime Minister at the time, had the idea of how to resolve this problem, by partitioning the Ottoman Empire between England and Russia. However, Russia refused to do so, because it would interfere with her plans to control the Black Sea and Dardanelles. Russia was threatened by England’s fleet coming back to the Black Sea, but nothing came out of it. Instead, a diplomatic argument between Russia and England ensued. The war never happened, but the hatred and rivalries between the two countries lived on.⁴⁶ Russia was always seen as a rival, alongside her Slavic client states in the Balkans, argues Cain, when Stoker published *Dracula*. His argument continues, that the reason was the threat they were for Victorian middle-class when it came to their stability of politics, economics, society, military and even racial views. The middle-class portrayed in *Dracula* fears the social and political changes, which appeared in England after the Crimean War between the years 1854 and 1856 as well.⁴⁷ Cain points out, how the Crimean War changed English society and left permanent scars on their

⁴⁴ Marshall, Bridget M.: “The Vampire’s Literary History.” *Critical Insights: Dracula: by Bram Stoker*, Salem Press, 2010, ISBN-10: 1587656124, p. 23

⁴⁵ Cain, Jr., Jimmie E.: “Righting Old Wrongs.” *Critical Insights: Dracula: by Bram Stoker*, Salem Press, 2010, ISBN-10: 1587656124, p. 168

⁴⁶ Id.

⁴⁷ Id., p. 169

psyche.⁴⁸ Because of the war, England felt hatred and fear towards the East, especially the Balkans, who they saw as a threat to their Empire. English society felt humiliated because of the war.

On top of that, Stoker spent almost four decades living in an environment surrounded by negative stories and attitudes towards Russians. His parents had open jingoistic conversations about Russia when he was a child, and as he got older, his father-in-law told him stories from when he was fighting in the Crimean War. Whilst he was still an acting manager in the Lyceum Theatre, he learned more about the war and policies from Prime Minister William Ewart Gladstone. He also worked with George Stoker on *With the Unspeakables* (1878), which was a derogatory polemic aimed at Slavic people, especially the Bulgarians.⁴⁹

4.1.1 Russia and the Slavs

Stoker was highly invested in the culture of Eastern Europe, in the people, geography and customs. It was William Wilkinson's *An Account of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia: with various Political Observations Relating to Them* (1820) (Qtd. in Cain, Jr., p. 170), that provided the material for Dracula's racial and ethnic identity, more specifically a mixed heritage with Russian and Slavic antecedents. The count describes himself that in his veins flows the blood of many brave races.

Wilkinson wrote that Slavs and Bulgarians came from Russia, to a part of the world called Maesia, now Bulgaria, and then Slavs settled in Dacia, and since then they are known as Wallachs. Cain elaborates that the Wallachians, as well as Moldavians, "descended from Slavic peoples immigrating to the region from Russia and sharing close blood relations with the Bulgarians."⁵⁰ Dracula's castle

⁴⁸ Id., p. 178

⁴⁹ Id., p. 169

⁵⁰ Id., p. 170

is located on the borders of Transylvania, Moldavia, Bukovina, and according to Cain, it is another allusion to Russia, because Stoker describes it as a disputed area at the border of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Bessarabia, which is a territory Russia won from Turkey in 1812. However, Russia was forced to give it back to Turkey, but they recovered it in 1878 only to lose it again the same year to give it to the newly independent Romania.⁵¹

4.2 Postcolonialism

In the 19th century Britain was at its peak of power and “taking pride in the British Empire was a major aspect of Victorian patriotism and was often indistinguishable from racial chauvinism”- which means that the Anglo-Saxon race, they thought of themselves as a superior race and their main mission was to rule other races around the world seen as supposedly lesser, inferior.⁵²

During the Empire, British society still suffered from poverty, because of unemployment, and famine, which led to criticism and emigration - Britons mostly found a new home in the United States. Other issues were also with the relationship between white colonisers and indigenous people that was causing anxiety. People from colonised countries were promised civilisation or Western commerce, but there was possibility the colonised could be even exterminated. In literature, native people were highly stereotyped or only casually described, and the difference between the West and the East, and the people from those areas, was also made clear by imperialistic writers.

The Victorian era is also known for its many expeditions that helped to shape the world, which made society feel proud. Therefore, it is not surprising that journals written by explores were interesting to the public, who were interested to read about discoveries found in the world, for example about the Arctic. These journals inspired many writers to write exploration novels, mostly

⁵¹ Id., p. 172

⁵² Brantlinger, Patrick: “Exploring the Terrain.” *Victorian Literature and Postcolonial Studies*, Edinburgh University Press, 2009, ISBN 978 0 7486 3304 3, p. 25

for boys, and patriotic poetry.⁵³ Jonathan Harker's journal belongs to this type of literature since he is travelling to an unknown nation and describes his journey from the West to the East, and he describes the land and people as well.

The British empire was getting richer on daily basis by receiving products from the colonies like tea, sugar, cotton, spices and much more. Thanks to the industry, trade and liberty, many Victorian Britons felt their nation and its Empire "were in the vanguard of world progress." And thanks to The Royal Geographical Society and their founding, by the year 1900 the expeditions helped to create the map of almost the whole world.⁵⁴

4.3 Eastern Europe

When reading *Dracula*, it is impossible to not see the connection to Eastern Europe, where Jonathan Harker finds himself travelling at the beginning of the story and where the infamous Count Dracula lives.

In the 19th century, this part of Europe was referred to as 'Oriental'. Some even questioned whether the Balkans, especially European Turkey, is the danger zone of Europe. Back then, it was harder to define what is the Orient and South-Eastern Europe was labelled by the Western people, for example as 'le Monde Slave', or 'not Europe', in fact, it was seen as a part of 'The Near East' until the year 1912.⁵⁵

Gibson writes how people from the Orient were stereotyped in media and the reasons were mostly political.⁵⁶ In his study, he mentions Maria Todorova who points out, that attitudes towards Ottoman rulers and customs were most of the time positive, however, the opposite was felt for the Greek and Slavic peasants, who were under their control.⁵⁷ Todorova says 'the Balkans' were seen

⁵³ Id.

⁵⁴ Id. p. 26

⁵⁵ Gibson, p. 2

⁵⁶ Id., p. 6

⁵⁷ Id. p. 4

as the “other” of Europe. The common opinion was that those inhabitants did not care about behaving in a way that would be considered normal in a civilised world because they were seen as the opposite.⁵⁸ She says for the West, the ‘Orient’ was exotic and represented the past. It was also inspiration for many writers who saw it as a source of imagination.⁵⁹

Despite all this, when it came to ‘Orientalism’, it would be too simplistic to say, that it was common to label ‘Orientals’ as irrational, childlike and other negatives in comparison to European who would be labelled as ‘normal’ and mature, because that was not always the situation.⁶⁰ Turks were stereotyped, but in a good way, their rulers were seen as noble and civilised, and were respected.⁶¹

4.4 Vlad Dracula

During his thoughtful research, Stoker came across a historical man called Vlad Dracula, “a Wallachian prince whose cruelty in battle earned him the sobriquet Vlad the Impaler”⁶² known in Romania as Vlad Țepeș, who ruled Wallachia in the 1400s,⁶³ and possibly inspired the character Dracula.

Vlad's father was Vlad II Dracul, who belonged to a society called the Order Dragonis, which gave him a salutation “dragon”, and because of his membership his son Vlad was “Dracula”, meaning “son of the dragon.”⁶⁴ Apparently, Vlad Dracula was even cruel to mothers and their children.⁶⁵ John Akeroyd notes how his fearsome reputation might have been exaggerated over time and even during his lifetime.⁶⁶ He was known for his hatred towards Turks

⁵⁸ Todorova, Maria: “Introduction.” *Imagining the Balkans*, Oxford University Press, 2009, p. 3

⁵⁹ Id., p. 13

⁶⁰ Gibson, p. 4

⁶¹ Id., p. 6

⁶² Cain, Jr., p. 174

⁶³ McDonald, Beth E.: “Recreating the World.” *Critical Insights: Dracula: by Bram Stoker*, Salem Press, 2010, ISBN-10: 1587656124, p. 110

⁶⁴ Means, p. 14

⁶⁵ Hopkins, p. 31

⁶⁶ Akeroyd, John: “The Historical Dracula: Monster or Machiavellian Prince?” *History Ireland*, vol. 17, no. 2, 2009, pp. 22. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/27725972. Accessed 3 Jan. 2021.

and the use of impalement as an instrument of terror, punishment and execution, but it is important to note that he lived at a difficult time where there was political insecurity, wars, people dying of plague and other complications for a ruler of a country. Despite the fact that he was undoubtedly a tyrant and murderer, continues Akeroyd, and not opposed to use cruelty and violence, he was still a patriot and the symbol of a freedom-fighter, who wanted an independent Wallachia, and who was described by Romanians as a vigorous ruler who will one day come back when his country needs him. Even though he was respected, he was feared and not loved, especially not by the nobility.

His story continues in 1471, when he attacked Turks' territory as well as the Danube in Bulgaria. In return, a year later, in 1472, Sultan Mehmet II prepared a well-armed army, that he sent to Wallachia through the Danube, which posed a serious threat to Vlad because he did not have such an army and was easily outnumbered. He still managed to attack a Turkish camp during a night that lead to mass impalement. It is said that the sultan cried for all the losses suffered in the bloody attack.

Afterwards, Vlad travelled across the Carpathians, which was around the time his brother Radu got on the Wallachian throne, and a man called Matthias Corvinus arrived with an army to meet with the Vlad. However, it was not for Vlad's support as he anticipated, he was betrayed and arrested, and taken to Hungary instead for house arrest that lasted thirteen years. The reason why this incident happened were letters from Vlad to Turks, which were mentioning alliance against Hungary. He was released by Corvinus in 1475 under a condition to convert to Catholicism, because his faith used to be Orthodox. He got back on the Wallachian throne a year later, but not for a long time. He was apparently assassinated by Turkish troops, who were led by Besarab Laiota, the same year, and his head was sent to the sultan. The same way Jonathan Harker kills Dracula in the novel by cutting off his head while Morris stabs him in the heart to save Mina, and everyone else, for that matter. This way of killing vampires became

traditional, and it is possible to see it in other stories and movies about vampires.

Because the real Dracula lived at the same time as Johannes Gutenberg, who invented the mechanical printing press in 1440, the stories about him quickly spread and became popular and best-sellers, because the public liked scandalous publications. Therefore, he will be forever remembered as a murderous blood-thirsty Wallachian prince, even though, there is no evidence that he had drunk the blood of his victims, and his story was overshadowed by his violence.⁶⁷

However, there are debates about the true inspiration behind Dracula, and some scholars debate and believe, it could have been another infamous Impaler who inspired the iconic vampire. They assume Stoker might have combined Vlad Dracula with another historical figure, Ivan the Terrible, to create the Count. After Vlad Dracula's death, the stories that were surrounding his persona became very popular in Russia, where he was known for his violence and cruelty, which made Russians compare him to their own Ivan the Terrible, who to some extent imitated Dracula's cruelty against his enemies and impaled his victims, even just for fun. Apparently, Dracula became an excuse for Ivan the Terrible's tyranny and sadism.⁶⁸

4.5 Folklore

An important aspect of the novel *Dracula* are the oral stories passed by people through generations about vampires. This storytelling is known as folklore. Stoker read a lot of materials and it is highly possible, he came across folklore stories as well.

Cain mentions a student of Slavic folklore, Felix Oinas, who argues that vampires are a Slavic and Russian phenomenon that has deep roots among Slavs and among early Russians. Oinas elaborates that the term "vampire" (upyr) was

⁶⁷ Akeroyd, p. 22–24.

⁶⁸ Cain, Jr., p. 174

first documented in 1407 as a name of the Novgorodian prince, Upir Likhyi, and in the late fifteenth century as a peasant name.⁶⁹ It is also possible to use the term “Nosferatu”.

A typical feature of vampires is their ability to turn themselves into bats, which is a myth that also appears for the first time among the Slavs, as Oinas points out. According to them, vampires are midnight human-looking undead that lie in coffins during the day and then wake up at night when it is dark to find a way to get to people’s houses to suck the blood of those sleeping, sometimes even killing them and ripping them apart. If the grave was opened, it was possible to see them comfortably sleeping with red cheeks and warm bodies and looking beautiful, and sometimes their graves would be covered with the blood of their victims.⁷⁰

Stoker found many good materials and studies for Dracula, that would have made him aware “of the role of the Slavs and the place of Russia in the myths and folklore surrounding vampirism.”⁷¹ And since Stoker himself is from Ireland, notes Curran, it is very likely that he came across Irish folklore, legends as well, which have influenced the idea of his character Dracula.

The oldest vampire story from Western Europe, specifically from an isolated townland of Slaughtaverty near Garvagh in North Derry, is a tale about the ancient Celtic warlord called Abhartach. This king was described as quite short but despite that, he was the most powerful wizard and tyrant towards his people, who hated him to their core.⁷²

The legend says they hired another chieftain named Cathan to kill him, and bury his dead body, or at least that is what he thought. But to everyone’s surprise, Abhartach was back the next day with a horrific demand. The king wanted a bowl filled with blood from the wrists of his subjects to keep his vile

⁶⁹ Id.

⁷⁰ Id., p. 175

⁷¹ Id., p. 177

⁷² Curran, p. 64

corpse in shape and form, according to the legend. Cathan had to kill and bury him again in the same place, but Abhartach came back with the same wish.

It is believed, that Cathan then asked a local druid about this supernatural phenomenon, and he told him Abhartach was in the state of suspension thanks to his dark arts, and therefore cannot be killed, but can be prevented from rising again. Cathan was told to slay him with a yew wood sword, bury him upside down and surround the grave with thorns and most importantly, a great stone must be put on top of the grave to prevent him from coming back to life.

This popular Irish folklore story haunts Irish people to this day. It ends with the belief, that Abhartach still lays in his grave. It is even said, that local people are scared to come to his grave during the night fearing that he will rise again and takes their lives by sucking their blood.

What makes this folklore story even more interesting is the fact that the legend about Abhartach was recorded as an actual piece of Irish history by Seathrún Céitinn (in English his name is Geoffrey Keating) in his book *The History of Ireland*.⁷³ As an Irish man, Stoker could have read or heard this story from someone he knew, who understood the Irish language, and got the idea for the vicious Count from there.

⁷³ Id., p. 65

5. Count Dracula

Dracula is an influential horror and epistolary novel that uses letters, diaries, newspaper articles to tell a story about a vampire, which makes it seem more realistic. Juliet Lapidos wrote that *Dracula* was called “the sensation of the season” when it was published in 1897.⁷⁴ In the story, we follow a young English solicitor Jonathan Harker who travels to Transylvania to provide his services to Count Dracula. However, the Count is not who he seems to be, which Harker soon realises as he learns about Dracula’s vampirism. Stoker gathered many materials from folklore to real historical characters for his novel, so he could create a horror character that terrified and fascinated people in the *fin de siècle* era, because he put all their anxieties into the famous vampire. Even after over one hundred years after its publication, the novel is widely read, and Dracula and his vampires continue to scare and fascinate us even today, not just in a literary form, but in movie adaptations as well. The first part of my thesis was about the period with closer look at the society, as well as the inspiration behind the Count, and the next part will focus on the interpretation of Dracula and Transylvania drawing on criticism by scholars.

Dracula is the eponymous villain of this novel from the Orient, who haunts the poor people of Transylvania in Eastern Europe and then proceeds to haunt the streets of the late 19th century England, London, to be precise, with his look that changes during the novel from old to young, and his power and thirst for blood. The story revolves around him as the other characters are trying to defeat him and save the world from his curse.

It is unclear why Stoker named his famous vampire Dracula, but in his notebook, a note was found about Wallachia and how the word Dracula means devil in that language. According to Stoker’s research, it was common for

⁷⁴ Lapidos, Juliet: “The Paris Review Perspective.” *Critical Insights: Dracula: by Bram Stoker*, Salem Press, 2010, ISBN-10: 1587656124, p. 18

Wallachian people to give this surname to anyone who appeared suspicious due to courageous behaviour, cruelty or being cunning.⁷⁵

Moreover, Count Dracula is very unpredictable and is a mysterious and dark character, not just for his actions and nature, but for the unpredictability when it comes to what he is thinking and what are his next moves - everything known about him is through journal entries expressing other characters' perception of him because they are in control of what is revealed about the story. Maggie Kilgour points out, that human identity is created and expressed by text - writing. Being a human is to write, that is our nature, and writing is a major part of this novel. Thus Dracula's unnaturalness is shown by the fact that Stoker did not provide his point of view, but instead the Count is written about. Writing is what helps the characters to remain sane in a world that seems to go insane. Without a doubt, Dracula is different from human beings. What he does is to drain others of their individuality, and making them into the same vampires he understands.⁷⁶

Dracula is a cruel, but also fascinating character, who is nicknamed the "King-Vampire" in the novel. He is a monster, and the task of monsters, according to Lynch, is to embody our fears and make us see what we are deeply frightened of.⁷⁷ Dracula is said to represent what can happen to humanity, if they lose their faith in God or stop taking it seriously.⁷⁸ As a gothic monster, Dracula belongs to the category of 'others'. He aggregates all kinds of races, gender, sexual and social stereotypes that were considered foreign by the middle-class of Victorian society, and Stoker combined them to create this one gothic character, who is against everything that was considered ideal at that time. According to Hogle, it is not surprising that many scholars compare Dracula to Julia Kristeva's

⁷⁵ Bierman, Joseph S.: "A crucial Stage in the Writing of Dracula." *Bram Stoker: History, Psychoanalysis and the Gothic*, MacMillan Press LTD, 1998, ISBN 978-1-349-26838-2, p. 155

⁷⁶ Kilgour, Maggie: "Stoker's Defense of Poetry." *Bram Stoker: History, Psychoanalysis and the Gothic*, MacMillan Press LTD, 1998, ISBN 978-1-349-26838-2, p. 54

⁷⁷ Lynch, Jack: "On Dracula." *Critical Insights: Dracula: by Bram Stoker*, Salem Press, 2010, ISBN-10: 1587656124, p. 12

⁷⁸ McDonald, p. 134

‘abject’. Kristeva’s ‘abject’, just like a vampire has an anomaly, and the ‘other’ is part of it. Therefore, it can be a human or animal looking, alive or dead, but has that ‘something’ that sets it apart from a normal human being.⁷⁹ Ertugrul Koç and Yagmur Demir mention in their study a quote from David Punter, who points out the different representations of Dracula compared to the other characters. He wrote: “Dracula stands for lineage, the principle group of characters for family; Dracula for the wildness of the night, they for the security of day; [...] Dracula for the physical and erotic, they for repressed and etherealised love.”⁸⁰

The first things we learn about Dracula are his features, when Harker finally gets to his destination, and we meet the strange Count for the first time. He is described by Harker in his ethnographic journal as having a prominent, distinctive physiognomy and his features are described in detail. Thus, we learn about his strong expression and pale-looking body and face - he reminded Harker of a statue, with a messy hair that has a tendency to curl. He has bushy eyebrows and thin nose with big nostrils too. At first, the Count is described as a man of an old age who, however, has a strong personality. A distinct feature of Dracula’s face is his mouth which is hidden under a bushy moustache, which to Harker was cruel-looking, mainly because of the sharp white teeth that were sticking out of his reddish lips. Harker also noticed the broad hairy hands and fingers with sharp, long nails that made him shudder and feel nausea when Dracula touched him. He also noticed a strong odour when he was near him.⁸¹ This description of Dracula is quite similar to the features Vlad Dracula apparently had, when one compares it to pictures of him.

However, those features and how Dracula represents himself could be also referring to Jews, who came to England from the East as well. During the time

⁷⁹ Hogle, Jerrold E.: “Stoker’s Counterfeit Gothic.” *Bram Stoker: History, Psychoanalysis and the Gothic*, MacMillan Press LTD, 1998, ISBN 978-1-349-26838-2, p. 206

⁸⁰ Koç Ertugrul and Yagmur Demir: “Vampire versus the empire: Bram Stoker’s reproach of fin-de-sièclé Britan in Dracula.” *Victorian Literature and Culture*, vol. 46, no. 2, 2018, pp. 428., doi:10.1017/S1060150317000481.

⁸¹ Stoker, Bram: *Dracula*, Chuck Greif, Grosset & Dunlap, 1995, p. 37

Stoker was writing his novel, anti-Semitism was a popular topic in literature, and it is possible that he was xenophobic. Jews were targets of stereotypes and described in similar ways to Dracula in the novel. They were also believed to lack hygiene, spread illnesses and be contaminated as part of anti-Semitic stereotypes, which in Dracula's case is his vampirism, hence Dracula could be interpreted as a Jew, who was frowned upon by the Victorian society that was feeling invaded. This is mostly a view of New Historicism.⁸²

Harker finds himself in a scary situation with Dracula, alone in a massive castle and in a foreign country, where nothing makes sense to him. He soon realises that there is something suspicious about Dracula's character and behaviour. He never saw him eat in front of him and he only stayed during the evening and night, leaving Harker on his own during the day, but forcing him to stay with him during the night to keep him a company, which could be read as a bonding time between two men, if Dracula's intentions were not dark and twisted. It does not take long for Harker to see the Count for who he really is, which is not a human, but a supernatural un-dead creature in a form of a man.

Dracula's condition is better known in later entries in Harker's journal, where the Count can enter a room without making a sound, and to Jonathan's horror, does not have a reflection in a mirror, not even makes a shadow, which is something that becomes a standard for vampires in other writers' novels about these undead folklore creatures. On top of that, he reacts aggressively when he sees that Harker has cut himself and gives him a warning about his dripping blood: "Take care of how you cut yourself. It is more dangerous than you think in this country."⁸³ He is hinting at his vampirism in a calm manner that is very chilling and makes readers realise that he is very dangerous because he could attack Harker whenever he wanted to, so he is in control of Harker's life, and not just his. Moreover, his words can be interpreted in a sense of his own life, since he needs blood to stay alive and sees it as a precious thing.

⁸² Cain, Jr., p. 197

⁸³ Stoker, p. 51

Another interesting thing about Dracula is his heritage. Cain mentions his heritage saying it is pour Slavic and Russian antecedents, which is shown in the story.⁸⁴ The Count's heritage is revealed when he confesses to Harker about the brave and proud races that are part of his and the other Szekelys' blood, who fought for sovereignty with everything they had. The Szekelys' people origin is unclear, points out Gibson, who elaborates that they were probably a Hungarian tribe, but Stoker described them incorrectly in the novel as people who came from Iceland and settled in the Carpathians.⁸⁵ The meaning of this tribal group is "at the frontier or beyond."⁸⁶ In Dracula's blood runs the evil for generations, because the Szekelys are believed to be descendants of Scythian witches who apparently mated with devils and have Berserkers' blood.⁸⁷ Then the Count mentions his family member, Dracula, who kept coming back and fighting again for his people against the Turk, which was the Count himself, and it proves that he must have been living for a long time.⁸⁸

Additional information about him regarding vampirism is revealed when Harker discovers him laying with his eyes open during the day, in one of many wooden boxes filled with Transylvanian earth that brings him strength and without which he cannot live, even in England, making it clear that he will never fit in with the local people for this reason and for having a different look than those without his curse, like sharp teeth, so he will always be a foreigner. The Count was not dead when Harker found him, even though he looked like he was, and his heart was not beating, according to Harker. It is a state, in which he is resting and waiting for the night to come to attack again and feed himself.⁸⁹ Just like the soil from his homeland's cemetery, the war material that brings many memories is his safe place and what gives him strength, it is also his weakness,

⁸⁴ Cain, Jr., p. 170

⁸⁵ Gibson, p. 75

⁸⁶ Hopkins, p. 76

⁸⁷ McDonald, p. 130

⁸⁸ Stoker, p. 58

⁸⁹ Id. p. 39

since he cannot function without it, just like without blood. Dracula's life is therefore limited when it comes to moving freely, which cannot be said about an Englishman. Because of his native soil, he lacks adaptability, for his power is in a strong connection with the soil, which is something locals from England do not have to worry about. On top of that, the boxes of Transylvanian earth represent diseases and filth people from other countries could bring to England and endanger its health and society.⁹⁰

A possible inspiration behind the Count coming to life during the night and not the day, is not only the knowledge from folklore stories, but the historical Vlad Dracula was famous for his night attacks on his enemies when it was dark, and he was still powerful and aware of his surroundings during the night, just like Dracula is the strongest when the sun is no longer in sight.⁹¹

Overall, Stoker created a convincing and interesting vampire with many details about his condition, about which we learn from Van Helsing, who names Dracula's abilities and features, such as being stronger than the strength of twenty men combined, saying how he has been alive for a long time, so he is not human but more cunning, and is in control of all the dead who must listen to him when he gives them orders. He is described as cruel, brutal and as a dragon and devil himself. He can control the weather to his liking, and fears the crucifix and everything related to religion. One must also invite him into their place, so he could move freely. Last but not least, he has the ability of shape shifting - to appear whenever he wants in whatever shape and form, even as fog or an animal of some kind, like a bat or a wolf,⁹² which proves he is a divine character with numinous qualities. This makes Dracula a dangerous gothic character, because it shows his power, since he can at his own will change his form and create chaos. His ability to change into some substance or disperse is showing what will happen to those unlucky ones if they are turned into a vampire. It indicates that

⁹⁰ Bolton, p. 65

⁹¹ Koç and Demir, p. 433

⁹² Stoker, p. 422

they will become the primitive chaos themselves.⁹³

Dracula represents the fear of Victorian society of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution and the unknown changes which it brings. The reason for that is his vampirism that makes him different from others, mainly biologically. He cannot hide his true nature from others. Scientifically, a shared opinion among the naturalists was that any individual or species struggle for existence and there is always a competition to survive, which is the heart of Darwin's theory as well, whose Darwinism is about natural selection too. What caught the attention of Victorians as being part of evolution was atavism, meaning that certain species could regress, which is represented by Dracula as a vampire in this novel.⁹⁴

The Count cannot be stopped through science and medicine, the only way how to stop him is through believing in God. There are many references to God/Him in the journals of the characters who doubt God before they find their belief again because of what Dracula made them go through.⁹⁵ Harker is given a crucifix for protection from a local woman who knows who the Count is, because God's symbols and faith can protect one from the evil Count, and other vampires, who fear holy things. The peasants are aware of that, as they still live according to their superstitions and in the past, compared to the rational characters from 'modern' England. All the characters fighting against Dracula are trying to use logic to make sense of all that is happening around them and to them, before they accept reality. It is easier for the characters to face Dracula if they believe God will save them at the end when the time is right, despite their faith being tested with the horrors they keep experiencing, but they need to trust God, because without faith they are powerless. Just like Harker prays that God will keep him sane and have mercy on him. Moreover, Van Helsing makes it clear, that it is important to believe in things that are hard to believe in, so to believe in God, they must accept the true nature of the Count as well. It is Harker who writes in

⁹³ McDonald, p. 114

⁹⁴ Bolton, p. 67

⁹⁵ Id., p. 68

his journal, that God would not allowed world to end in the hands of such creature and that it is his only hope. And that faith is their only anchor, because they believe their lives are in God's hands.⁹⁶

According to Robert Edwards, another perspective on Dracula is to see him as a representation of the past, since he is "alive" and thanks to some forces was able to continue living into the present time.⁹⁷ He describes his pastness as an embodiment of a natural flow of time that for him started in the antiquity, and his power to control it as well, since it is not affecting him as it naturally should. He is representing a European tradition, as "the fight against the infidel and civilising progress."⁹⁸ Clare A. Simmons shares the same view point, and describes Dracula as a survivor from Middle Ages that is threatening the English present. She says Dracula is able to continue living because he is connected with the physical past, since as a vampire he portrays "a medievalist preoccupation with architecture as being representative of the spirit of an age."⁹⁹ He can only be killed for good when the places he calls home are destroyed, because they represent his continuity with the past.¹⁰⁰ However, Maggie Kilgour remarks, that thanks to Stoker's interest in science and technology, Dracula is also a representation of a modern man, and not just the past, since the other characters use modern science and progressed technology to defeat him.¹⁰¹ They use electric telegraph to communicate quicker about the Count, which could be compared to the Dracula's own ability to transmit his thoughts to his victims from afar.¹⁰²

Relatedly, Koç and Demir remark in their study, that in the novel Dracula represents the bloody "dark ages" that are affecting the present, as he is the only

⁹⁶ Stoker, p. 552

⁹⁷ Edwards, Robert: "The Alien and the Familiar." *Bram Stoker: History, Psychoanalysis and the Gothic*, MacMillan Press LTD, 1998, ISBN 978-1-349-26838-2, p. 99

⁹⁸ Id., p. 96

⁹⁹ Simmons, Clare: "Bram Stoker and Medievalism." *Bram Stoker: History, Psychoanalysis and the Gothic*, MacMillan Press LTD, 1998, ISBN 978-1-349-26838-2, p. 32

¹⁰⁰ Id., p. 34

¹⁰¹ Kilgour, p. 54

¹⁰² Galvan, Jill: "Occult Networks and the Legacy of the Indian Rebellion in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*." *History of Religions*, vol. 54, no. 4, 2015, pp. 435. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/680178. Accessed 15 Apr. 2021.

true aristocrat in the present world, and with his travelling abroad to London, he wants to conquer them and is trying to bring back the world he knew - honourable, courageous and venturesome. He considers himself better than the others, thanks to the noble blood that runs through his veins, and he wants to continue its legacy.¹⁰³

Finally, Dracula is abruptly defeated towards the end of the story, when the group followed him back to Transylvania. Since he repeats his actions, it was not that hard for the characters, so they found him being carried by the gypsies back to his castle, sleeping in a coffin. After a fight with his loyal gypsy helpers, gypsies, who just like him are rejected the people of that land, Dracula is killed as a typical vampire - Harker stabs him in his throat, and his head is cut off by Morris before he could wake up at sunset to take revenge or run away to continue spreading his curse. Before their eyes, his body turned into dust and disappeared into the earth of Transylvania, so in the end, he became part of the beloved homeland he fought for, and the soil that was so important for him, that he could not live without it.

5.1 Sexuality

Dracula and what the character himself might represent throughout the years have been read and interpreted in various ways. An interesting aspect of Count Dracula is from the point of view of sexuality. The reason why he could have been a shocking and fascinating character to the people of the *fin de siècle* era is his openness when it comes to his desires and a certain femininity, for example his red lips which was something the Victorian society in general was against, especially regarding men.

Since *Dracula* was published two years after Stoker's friend Oscar Wilde was scrutinised in a public trial for his homosexuality, the attention of the society

¹⁰³ Koç and Demir, p. 428.

was focused on the idea that certain behaviours and sexual desires are evil and must be stopped. Wilde's trial could have influenced Stoker's writing, points out Matthew J. Bolton. Despite Dracula being for the most part analysed in terms of illicit sexualities, Bolton makes a point by stating that all the encounters with vampires happened with the opposite sex, where Dracula attacks Mina and her friend Lucy, and Harker is attacked by three vampire women. He said it would have been too shocking for the Victorian society if there were scenes with vampires sucking blood from a person of the same sex. But still, Dracula symbolises sexuality, which was a taboo in Victorian Britain.¹⁰⁴

Koç and Demir have a different view point. According to them, other hints of Dracula's sexual identity are seen in his interactions with Harker. Mainly in a scene towards the end of Harker's stay in Transylvania, when he is attacked by three vampire women, who want to seduce him and suck his blood, which is a very Gothic scene, because of its setting and circumstances. However, he is "saved" by furious Dracula, who claims Harker to be his and his only and is upset that the three she-vampires even dared to touch him and looked at him when he had forbidden it. He is then accused by them of never feeling love, but he refused this idea, because he loved in the past, according to him.¹⁰⁵ This is a part that makes it clear that no one, men nor women, are safe from his clutches because he does not care about gender, but Koç and Demir continue to elaborate that it could also be interpreted in a context of his own gender identity, that according to Koç and Demir is androgynous. Still, Dracula is probably a 'he', but is referred to as 'it' as well in the novel by the rest of the characters.¹⁰⁶

Victorian society was thought of as prudish, even though there were some secret underground places for people to come and enjoy themselves, and for them, it was mostly about propriety. But those were the 'other Victorians' who were hypocritically not accepted by the rest of the society and must have hid in

¹⁰⁴ Bolton, p. 62

¹⁰⁵ Stoker, p. 78

¹⁰⁶ Koç and Demir, p. 428.

distinct areas. Koç and Demir compare the way vampires spread their curse through exchanging their blood, biting, sucking to syphilis. In the novel we even see blood transfusions, when the characters are trying to save Lucy. They see them also as metaphors for activities among the queer part of society, that were highly illicit during that time, which makes Dracula a representation of them, a threat to society as a symbol of the sexuality Victorians tried to deny.¹⁰⁷ All this makes him a perfect Victorian monster, because he is perverse and fascinating for bringing back repressed sexual desire.¹⁰⁸ Moreover, Marie Mulvey-Roberts remarks how Dracula's three she-vampires living in his castle with him could be interpreted as prostitutes representing deviancy and dangerous sexualities because women who made money by prostitution were seen as a degeneration of society.¹⁰⁹ Mighall further argues, that Dracula as a vampire is fearsome to Victorian society, because in general they were bourgeois, mostly heterosexual and proud of their country, and anything that is opposed to the life they were used to is a threat to them. Many critics agree with each other that vampires represent the fear of homosexual desire and women being sexual.¹¹⁰

The most shocking scene in the novel is when Dracula visits Mina during the night to get his revenge on the men who are trying to stop him from finishing his evil plan. He lets Mina drink his own blood from his chest to make her into a vampire and create a bond between them, so he could read her thoughts and control her, even from a far¹¹¹. This incident left her feeling paralysed and unable to defend herself from his force. However, even though the scene can be interpreted as a sexual assault because of how it is described by Dr Seward in his journal, who writes about the terror and Mina's white nightgown being smeared with blood.¹¹² He still might have described it in a sexual way to make sense of

¹⁰⁷ Id.

¹⁰⁸ Lynch, p. 6

¹⁰⁹ Mulvey-Roberts, Marie: "Dracula and the Doctors." *Bram Stoker: History, Psychoanalysis and the Gothic*, MacMillan Press LTD, 1998, ISBN 978-1-349-26838-2, p. 89

¹¹⁰ Mighall., p. 62

¹¹¹ Stoker, p. 503

¹¹² Id.

the fear and of it all, when the reality could have been different, because Mina herself felt unclean by the incident that left her with a mark on her forehead, but confessed to others, how to her surprise, she did not want to stop him when he touched her and it made her feel guilty for finding him irresistible. She came to the realisation he makes all his victims feel that way when he touches them because it is part of his horrible curse.¹¹³

The mark on her forehead could be, once again, a reference to syphilis, which is a sexually transmitted disease that infected the bodies of many people, especially in the big cities, during the 19th century, including Stoker. It would explain why Mina referred to herself as unclean. Her whole explanation of this incident shows the power vampires have over the normal living people they are persuading. To conclude, Dracula creates a sexual union with Mina in this scene. As a male from the Victorian era in the 19th century, Stoker's intentions might have been different as a male with a patriarchal attitude towards female desire, but it is possible to interpret this scene as someone giving a woman an orgasm, which in that time must have been a shocking scene for the readers.¹¹⁴

The character itself is of a sexual nature and does not hide his desires towards men and women, which makes him interesting and appealing to readers. It is in our nature to be drawn to people or things that seem dangerous or forbidden, like forbidden fruit. Mighall clarifies, that there is the unknown something that makes vampires erotic, but regarding their monstrous nature, it creates specific sexual anxieties. When it comes to criticism of *Dracula*, vampire is hardly ever a vampire, he says.¹¹⁵ In criticism, especially modern criticism, it is a common opinion, that the readers do not fear the vampires or other monsters, but they fear what they are symbolising. In Dracula's case it is subversive sexuality, however, it is important to see vampires also as gothic supernatural

¹¹³ Id. p. 232

¹¹⁴ Bolton, p. 60

¹¹⁵ Mighall, p. 63

beings, who are fearsome too.¹¹⁶

5.2 Empire

The reason why Dracula is a perfect monster for the Victorian era is also how he represents invasion by with his migration from Eastern Europe, Transylvania to England, London, which was something this society feared the most, mainly after the Crimean war when they became protective over their empire. Therefore, the novel becomes somehow political as Dracula represents England's enemy as someone from Eastern Europe with Slavic origin.¹¹⁷

The aftermath of Crimean war was damaging for Victorian society because they had to face the reality that the power of their military has limitations and they also had doubts about their nation's political ambitions, which is why the country felt the need to isolate and heal its wounds after the war.¹¹⁸ English society had a fear that the foreigners, referred to as 'others', in their country would devalue them and their country if British people started to mingle with people from colonised cultures. Races from those cultures were referred to as "childlike", and Van Helsing, at some point in the novel describes Dracula as having a child brain (Stoker, p. 606), making it even clear from what place he comes from and where he stands in comparison to Englishmen.¹¹⁹ Society had this fear because of Darwinism, for they were scared of changes in their "race" and empire, meaning the society feared foreigners and how they could affect or degenerate British society and the empire they treasured. Not only is Dracula threatening to invade their country as a dangerous foreigner, but also their health and humanity with his vampirism, that could spread widely across the nation if he will not be stopped. The Count brought a chaos with him into the seemingly peaceful England.

¹¹⁶ Id. p. 67

¹¹⁷ Lynch, p. 9

¹¹⁸ Cain, Jr., p. 179

¹¹⁹ Bolton, p. 64

Once he got to England, the novel focused on architecture as Dracula was able to buy many houses without any issues, like Carfax provided by England's own Harker and fill them with his boxes/coffins filled with soil from his native country. Dracula liked this house for having a feel of old times and did not mind that it was not luxurious. He intended to "infiltrate English society by acquiring London property and perfecting his spoken English"¹²⁰ with the help of Harker, but he was forced to change his plans and fled back to his home country because he was no longer welcome in London due to his sinister plan. As said in the novel: "So he came to London to invade a new land. He was beaten, and when all hope of success was lost, and his existence in danger, he fled back over the sea to his home."¹²¹

Dracula, as a boyar, meaning Russian aristocrat, threatens to replace the democracy in England and replace it with the oriental aristocratic power in the country. He also threatens capitalism of middle-class who suddenly had more opportunities, because the aristocracy he knew was discredited by them after the Crimean war, which made them an easy target for him. As Dracula spent most of his long life fighting the Turks and Hungarians, it is not surprising he wanted to bring this brutal attitude into a different country, considering the life he was used to.¹²²

Interestingly enough, scholars like Gregory Castle whom Welsch mentions in her essay, compare the novel to the situation of Anglo-Irish living in England, and Castle even points out that Dracula could be read as Stoker himself, who was an Irishman trying to live in London, but not feeling at home. He also suggests that Dracula represents both the British power of ruling class and the Catholics, which the Anglo-Irish people feared, so Dracula represents threats to them. Welsch also mentions Terry Eagleton who suggests that Dracula is a

¹²⁰ Johnson, Allan: "Modernity and Anxiety." *Critical Insights: Dracula: by Bram Stoker*, Salem Press, 2010, ISBN-10: 1587656124, p. 83

¹²¹ Stoker, p. 607

¹²² Cain, Jr., p. 180

characterisation of the Ascendancy landlord that is being criticised.¹²³

To conclude this subchapter, according to Jill Galvan, Dracula can represent two opposite things - Britain's imperial practises concerning their Empire, since it was important to them, or their anxieties about racial and imperial decline in connection to theories about degeneration and developments in geopolitics.¹²⁴

¹²³ Welsch, p. 51

¹²⁴ Galvan, p. 435.

6. Transylvania

For gothic novels, the place or setting plays a major role. The unknown, chilling Transylvania located in Eastern Europe is the place Stoker studied prior and reimagined to his liking for his novel, because historically the Count's castle should have been located in Wallachia. Even though most of the plot takes place in London, England, the location of Transylvania is an important part of the story, because the story starts and ends there, but mainly it is the home of the dark Count Dracula, who lives hidden in his castle in that mysterious environment visited by the Englishman Harker.

From the first sentences of Harker arriving in the East and then getting to Transylvania, it becomes clear Transylvania is not England. An obvious feature is that the land will not be surrounded by a lot of light, but rather with a lot of darkness, which is fitting, considering that Stoker was aware that in Latin the word Transylvania meant 'beyond the forest', and another possibility for translation was 'the land beyond the forest'.¹²⁵ The place is described by Harker as a land surrounded by lot of trees, forests and woods, with some hills being seen every now and then, surrounded by the vast Carpathians. When entering the Borgo Pass, the clouds grew darker and the weather had a feeling of thunder in it. To Harker, it felt like the mountains had separated two atmospheres¹²⁶, as if he was coming from the civilised to the primeval, barbaric place, from a familiar world into a dangerous, chaotic and unknown one. Transylvania is representing the past compared to the revolutionary England. It is the underworld of superstition and death.¹²⁷ The land does not seem friendly and it will be later referred to by Harker, after his horrendous experiences, as cursed: "This cursed land, where the devil and his children still walk with earthly feet!"¹²⁸ Eastern

¹²⁵ Bierman, p. 161

¹²⁶ Stoker, p. 22

¹²⁷ McDonald, p. 95

¹²⁸ Stoker, p. 100

Europe in *Dracula*, according to Gibson, is described as shambolic, wild and Gibson even uses the word primitive for its description. On top of that, he then continues, it hides a sinister and threatening side “which argues not for control so much as for exclusion.”¹²⁹

When it comes to describing Transylvania, another word that comes up is profane. According to Beth E. McDonald, Transylvania is a profane space. The profane exists alongside the sacred and means something evil that causes chaos. The sacred is bound with belief in God, which is the opposite aspect the characters in this novel are forced to feel closer to by questioning their faith. In *Dracula* the profane and sacred spaces are symbolised by Transylvania and England, or the East and the West, for that matter, and everyone who is associated with the places by living there, including the characters of this novel, meaning that Dracula as the definition of evil is a profane character who will never find mercy at the hands of God.

England itself, thanks to its people belief, could be seen as the sacred centre of the British Empire. The places change their features depending on Dracula and where he is living at that time, which means even Transylvania can become both a sacred and profane space. McDonald mentions in her essay a historian Mircea Eliade who says that every religious individual believe that their world they know is sacred while the rest of the world is the opposite.¹³⁰

The chaos of the profane in Transylvania is characterised by circular images when Harker described it for the first time as a whirlpool, as he wrote that “every known superstition in the world is gathered into [...] the Carpathians, as if it were the centre of some sort of imaginative whirlpool”,¹³¹ moreover indicating that the East in the mind of an Englishman is still hanging onto the past with its superstitions and are not as civilised as the West. Then we have wolves who gather in circle around the carriage to intimidate Harker and the chaos of stormy

¹²⁹ Gibson, p. 86

¹³⁰ McDonald, p. 93

¹³¹ Stoker, p. 10

weather which is fearsome belongs to this category (Qtd. in McDonald). On a different note, the profane is challenged by the sacred when Mina has a mark on her forehead and later on Van Helsing protects her by creating a holy circle around her, which illustrates the reversibility of the profane and the sacred.¹³²

As we know, the novel starts from Harker's point of view as documented in his journal. The first entry is about Bistritz, and how he thought Budapest was a wonderful place from the little he saw of it, but he was pretty much aware that he was leaving the West and entering the East, during his train journey. He learnt about Transylvania prior his traveling. According to Harker's description, part of Transylvania's population are four major nationalities - in the South, there are Saxons, mixed with Wallachs, in the West are Magyars, and the North and East, where Harker is headed, are occupied by Szekelys, who are descendants of Atilla and the Hun, which is the Count Dracula himself.¹³³

It was already mentioned, that Dracula's castle is located on the borders of Transylvania, Moldavia, and Bukovina. Stoker created a fake faux-medieval setting by putting Transylvania in Romania, which represents the past. We learn about the spacious residence where Count Dracula lives from Harker, who is the only one of the characters who experienced the fear and horrors hidden between its gothic walls. The place where he stays is an enormous foreign ruined castle with broken battlements, that used to be the target of many enemies. The castle, from the look of it, portrays darkness, loneliness, and isolation, because despite its tall windows, there is no light coming out of the medieval castle, as if no one living does not even lives there. Koç and Demir remark, how the ruin where the undead Dracula from the Middle Ages lives, is the evocative allusions to geography and history used by Stoker to make it clear that, even though discarded, the past, in which rational and irrational are combined together, still holds power and dominates over the present time. For Stoker, Dracula in his medieval abode is a metaphor for "lost bodily freedoms, and for chivalry and

¹³² McDonald, p. 95

¹³³ Stoker, p. 9

wisdom".¹³⁴ McDonald points out, that Dracula's castle could be a symbol for the underworld, despite it not being actually under ground, but positioned on a hill. The reason she suggested it is that the castle itself is not the real place where the Count rests and dwells. In reality he rests in the burial crypts hidden below the ground, away from the public eye where it is dark and not at all sacred-looking.¹³⁵

Transylvania as the origin and representation of a profane place can only mean that Dracula's castle is the vortex of chaos, according to McDonald. For someone like Harker, who has never been to such a place, the castle with its many halls, rooms - some of which were forbidden and even locked, staircases and numerous floors, can easily create a feeling of isolation, anxiety and unease, so it is not surprising he felt like a prisoner without any power once he recognised the truth about Dracula and found himself in danger from the three vampire ladies after all. For him, his own room becomes a safe place, even though in reality he is not safe when he is in the castle where the only one in control, who power and knowledge of the place is none other than Dracula.¹³⁶

According to Milbank, Transylvania can also be a representation of Stoker's homeland, Ireland, because of its similarities in terms of culture, especially regarding religion, beliefs, and piety. Transylvania's Catholic Szekelys and Protestant Saxons were forced to unite, because of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which makes scholars compare the situation to Irish and Scottish people, who are superstitious as well. Transylvania and Ireland are both lands controlled by their past with native people struggling against modernity, because they are afraid of the unknown.¹³⁷

The novel ends with an epilogue taking place seven year later, when the characters, including Mina and Harker's son, to their own surprise return to the

¹³⁴ Koç and Demir, p. 427.

¹³⁵ McDonald, p. 96

¹³⁶ Id., p. 97

¹³⁷ Milbank, p. 20

Transylvania, Eastern Europe, after all the true horrors they saw with their own eyes. Everything looked just like all those years before. However, this time, it was a safe place to visit, where one can enjoy its picturesque scenery. Transylvania and the Count's castle became open to tourists, who can make their own mind about its authenticity, which also applies to the readers of *Dracula* whether they decide to believe the characters of Stoker's novel or not. Mina and Harker are curious whether they will be believed or not, but it is not that important to them, since they know the truth and that is all that matters to them.¹³⁸

Lastly, Mina and Harker's son, nicknamed Quincey, represents the opposite of Dracula, since the Count was referred to as a demonic child in the novel. As the name of Mina and Harker's son is formed from all the members of their group as a tribute to each member individually, their son is a physical form of corporate society. Quincey is a text embodied in a human form. He is a nominal, symbolic fulfilment of self-transcendence and Dracula as the evil character, is a perverse literalisation.¹³⁹

¹³⁸ McKee, Patricia: "Racialization, Capitalism, and Aesthetics." *Critical Insights: Dracula: by Bram Stoker*, Salem Press, 2010, ISBN-10: 1587656124, p. 288

¹³⁹ Kilgour, p. 57

7. Conclusion

My thesis aimed to analyse the novel *Dracula* written by the Irish writer Bram Stoker, with a closer look at the main character Count Dracula and what he represents, as well as the setting of this novel, to find out what made *Dracula* endearing for the reading public back in the 19th century. In conclusion, I would like to summarise my findings and share what I have learnt whilst writing about this topic.

Bram Stoker wrote *Dracula* during the 19th century in Victorian England, which was a period still affected by the Crimean War that threatened England's Empire and led to hatred towards Russia. On top of that, the society was insecure and feeling anxious about all things new and was not open-minded when it came to expressing sexuality, regarding both men and women, but mostly homosexual men. Since Stoker was part of this society, it is evident in his work that he tried to portray their fears and what they believed in his work, and make Count Dracula a representation of those things along with his homeland Transylvania, that Stoker located in Eastern Europe and described as the opposite of the modern Britain to show the contrast of the two countries. He made the novel relatable to the readers of the *fin de siècle* era, who could have felt the connection with the other characters fighting against the Count who wanted to invade their country and spread his curse.

In my thesis, I tried to highlight the interesting points of views that scholars provided, in their readings and criticism of *Dracula*, to learn what was and I believe still is, so appealing and horrifying about this gothic vampire, who is not just a vampire. Stoker's supernatural creature is not just a scary monster with a thirst for blood and abnormal abilities - Dracula is so much more, and that is what makes him fascinating. As stated before, the character of Dracula is read as a representation of all the things Victorian society felt anxious about and what they found uncomfortable. Meaning that Dracula is read as a dangerous foreigner, who threatens their Empire and society by bringing possible disease

into their country, which in the novel is both Dracula's vampirism and his boxes filled with soil. Moreover, the criticism commonly views the character as a symbol for the illicit sexualities and sexuality in general, for Victorians were more often than not thought of as prude. In their view, sexuality was something that should have stayed hidden and not talked about, especially homosexuality, which is connected to the character of Dracula as well because of his interactions with Jonathan Harker in his castle. Mainly in a scene when Harker is attacked by Dracula's three she-vampires, which can be interpreted as a sign of jealousy. On top of that, blood and blood transfusions are metaphors for syphilis and activities among the queer community. Scholars agree that vampires, in general, are sexualised, and readers find them interesting and exciting, just like in the novel we have Mina confessing to finding Dracula irresistible when he attacked her and touched her in her room. In the same way that Dracula symbolises the taboos for Victorian society, Stoker created a fitting gothic setting, Transylvania, that sets the chilling atmosphere of the novel and expresses the hatred towards the East, because the land is portrayed as shambolic, dark and as stuck in the past with its superstitions, in contrast to revolutionary England to make it more obvious from what kind of profane place the Count comes from and why he should be feared.

To conclude all my findings, Stoker wrote a perfect gothic novel with an ideal monster for the Victorian society, therefore it is not surprising *Dracula* became a huge success when it was published, since it is in our nature to be drawn to something or someone we should not have been drawn to, and Victorians could easily fear the Count as a powerful vampire but also as an embodiment of all their fears from foreigners invading their country and empire, unknown changes connected to evolution and atavism, and most commonly sexuality and forbidden sexual desires, which they tried to deny. Count Dracula is a fully developed character that makes the story interesting with his vampirism, historical background, his homeland of Transylvania, and all the ways he can be interpreted, which is why the novel is still widely read and

analysed.

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