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CALEBE SOUSA SILVA

DRACULA: THE DICHOTOMY BETWEEN CHARACTERS AND THEIR
HISTORICAL CONTEXTS

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Advisor: Prof. Paulo Roberto Nogueira de
Andrade

Coordinator: Prof. Dr. Fábio Nunes
Assunção.

Abstract: A piece of literature is an important way to have a grasp on the values that a society deems as virtuous or wicked. This research aims to analyse the allegories to the social implications of 19th century colonialism present in *Bram Stoker's Dracula*. As a horror piece of art, the book displays elements, characters, and situations that can be perceived as an allegory and commentary regarding the British Empire's anxieties and fears. In this text, the characters are representative of the fear of immigration, what British society would consider deviant behavior and moral corruption, the constant seeking of progress, and expansionism. By using elements of postcolonial studies and the new historical criticism, this paper is a fruit of research regarding historical and dialectical analysis of the social context that gave birth to the fears presented on the pages of the novel and how they are portrayed throughout the corpus.

Keywords: Allegory, Postcolonial, expansionism, New historical criticism

INTRODUCTION

Dracula is a novel written by Irish writer Bram Stoker and published in 1897. It is a story about the vampire who gives the novel its name, trying to invade the British empire's capital and expand his power and influence by spreading his curse through fluid exchanges with British society. The novel is one of the pillars of the Gothic horror genre, the character and his mythos are referenced in many other works, and the book has a unique and terrifying atmosphere that mesmerizes its readers. With that said, some questions come to mind: What is the source of the horror found in this book? Why is it so alluring? And most importantly: What are the factors that produced this horror? These questions are important because they instigate a critical reflection on the novel, and it is important to acknowledge the dialectical relationship between our fictional stories and our society's history. A fictional world always takes elements from our own to be created, as various scholars from different periods of time have already written about it since ancient Greece with Aristotle and his concept of mimesis or Umberto Eco and his concept of "fiction being a parasite of our real world".

THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

This research uses the new historical criticism and the postcolonial studies theory as methods of analysis to see how this book reflects its time and how the novel embodies the hegemonic power structure of colonial England. This research will focus on four characters present in the book: Count Dracula, Lucy Harker, Mina Murray, and Dr. Van Helsing, and aims to analyze them as characters and how they reflect the historical and social context present in their creation and development as fictional characters, and how they mirror the anxieties and fears of English people during the 19th century.

The new historical criticism definition used in this analysis is the one provided by Michael Ryan (2017), who claims that this is a method of literature analysis that seeks firming the historical context around a text production, the “new” term derives from the rise of this method during the second half of XX century after being in a decline during the postwar period. This literary movement is the fruit of the contribution of scholars such as Stephen Greenblatt, who emphasized that literature is, among other things, a part of the collective beliefs, social practices, and cultural discourses that prevailed when it was written. This specific form of analysis also shines a light on us as the readers, making us a possible standard to measure our work against.

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And to conclude this introduction, it is crucial to understand colonialism and how it operated during Victorian era Europe. According to Frantz Fanon (1961), colonialism is more than just acquiring political control over a country and exploit their resources. Fanon defines it as a system in which violence is the default state based on dehumanization and inferiority towards the colonized, using cultural domination by deeming their lifestyle and culture as unworthy. The colonial idea is also deeply rooted in racism and xenophobia to justify their crimes against the colonized. With that in mind, we start the analysis with that lens.

ANALYSIS AND COMPARISON

CHAPTER ONE: DRACULA, THE HORROR IS FOREIGNER AND DEVIANT

According to the literature critic Stephen D. Arata (1990), Dracula could be seen as the fear of what the British population would call “reverse colonization” and cultural/racial contamination with the colonized. Similarly, Christopher Craft (1984) argued about Dracula as a creature who blurs the definitions of sexuality. In this Section, we will try to analyse how that is presented in the text using the plot points and passages from the novel to check how true those affirmations are.

“In the population of Transylvania there are four distinct nationalities: Saxons in the South, and mixed with them the Wallachs, who are the descendants of the Dacians; Magyars in the West, and Szekelys in the East and North. I am going among the latter, who claim to be descended from Attila and the Huns. This may be so, for when the Magyars conquered the country in the eleventh century they found the Huns settled in it” (Stoker, 1897, p.2)

This is the context that one of our protagonists, Jonathan Harker, gives us regarding the Transylvanian population. Jonathan is a real estate lawyer whose job is to organize and articulate a contract to count Dracula in his castle. Right at the beginning of the book, we see the reflection of the current point of view regarding the “outsiders”, Harker deems the locals superstitious and finds their fears regarding the count as nonsense, even though the atmosphere of the whole situation is quite eerie, he remains skeptical. We are reading from the perspective of an average London citizen after the Enlightenment period, the “age of reason”. According with Andrew Smith (2007) In many ways the Gothic literature is not only an aesthetic elemental but also a critical device; the Gothic can be seen as a reflex of the decay of the church as an institution and the fall of the aristocracy in contrast of the bourgeois rising as the production module changed on the 19th century so did the power structure “The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones” (Marx, 1867). With that in mind, Gothic was considered once the aesthetic and architecture

of power and dominance became a symbol of decay and Dracula's castle is also a mirror of this idea.

Suddenly, I became conscious of the fact that the driver was in the act of pulling up the horses in the courtyard of a vast ruined castle, from whose tall black windows came no ray of light, and whose broken battlements showed a jagged line against the sky. (Stoker, 1897, p.14)

Jonathan enters the castle and the idea of aristocracy as a symbol of decay can be seen already within the count's description as an old man with a white mustache and unsettling choices of words to welcome his "guest". The subtext of vampirism is already established in the two characters interactions, the count exploits the power dynamic between the two of them, According to Marx (1867) it's said that the dominant class lives like vampire-like figures that survive off sucking the blood of "living labor" the count uses his influence to coerce the lawyer to stay a whole month to learn more about England and its culture, at a given time Jonathan while wondering through the castle finds the library and notices vast collections of English books regarding various subjects such as economy, history, politics, and geography. With the knowledge of count's true intentions we can see this as a form to understand the nation that the vampire aims to conquer, as Frantz Fanon brilliantly points in "wretched from the earth" (1961) the settlers' society is in a constant paranoia thinking about the idea of the colonized conspiring, a feeling of "They want to take our place." Dracula is a mirror of that idea, a foreign menace whose ideas are to dominate and exploit a different culture for his own profit and benefits. We can also see this aspect in the way that Dracula arrives in London later in the book, the fear of foreign diseases was real during the 19th century since we had epidemics and endemics around many colonies such as cholera in India in 1817, this pandemic was aggravated by the constant flow in British routes, keep in mind that as previously mentioned, the Empire violently colonized around one quarter of the world's land area during the period, so the image of some creature replicating their practises on them was nightmarish to say the least.

The Count also could be seen as a deviant to English social standards since he has three women who are explicitly referred to as their lovers. They try to seduce Jonathan during one night in the castle to feed off his blood, but the count intervenes

How dare you touch him, any of you? How dare you cast eyes on him
when I had forbidden it? Back, I tell you all! This man belongs to me! Beware
how you meddle with him, or you'll have to deal with me.
(Stoker, 1897, p.34)

This passage of Jonathan “being his” can be interpreted either as a dehumanized object or as a sexual implication, As mentioned before the count would be considered a deviant by British standards, as Ronald Ryan (1990) wrote in “The empire and sexuality” by the 19th century the empire was already stigmatizing many sexual practices inside the country, mainly homosexuality (besides being widespread in the whole world during the period) female sexual liberation, polyamorously and divorce were reprehensible behaviours creating a sexually repressed society that needed a constant reaffirmation that any sexual behaviour that wasn't for reproduction would be condemnable and we cannot strip the vampire figure from the sexual imagery, vampirism is a curse passed by fluids exchanges and the vampires in the book are always trying to seduce their victims.

Vampirism can also be seen as a parallel between the most spread STD during the 19th century: Syphilis, in late 19th century the average of London's population were infected with syphilis were around 8% (Hall, 1991), however, this STD was the source of outbreaks since the early 14th century, this was one of the reasons why many sexual practices began to be ostracized around England and of course, Syphilis was considered a “deviant disease” (Turner, 2007) with many society members thinking of being the result of the “columbian exchange theory” (Crosby, 1972), Later in the book the symptoms of the curse are shown in the character of Lucy and how this affects the group of characters that the narrative follows. The blood transfusion between humans became a successful treatment during the same century as the book was published, and we can also see why the vampiric imagery would be popular during the period. All of these elements helped Stoker to compose a character that summarized these anxieties regarding the tensions between immigration, sexual liberation/Repression, medicine advances, and colonial paranoia.

To think of colonization is to think of exploiting people, making profit out of them, and discarding them. After the contract is settled, the count locks Jonathan in the castle and goes to the shore to put the domination plan in practice by sea. He goes to the “Demeter” ship and sets sail to the Empire’s capital.

The Demeter Incident is an interesting passage to this thesis since we can see how the sea could be dangerous to the empire, as mentioned before, the sea trades were one transmissive agent to various diseases to civilizations with next to no viable answers for some of these hazards. The colonizers brought with them Measles, mumps, chickenpox, smallpox, diphtheria, influenza, pneumonia, typhoid, etc and those pathogenic agents devastated the colonies, specially those in Latin America, as previously mentioned in the Columbian Exchange. With that knowledge in mind, the previously mentioned Fanon train of thought, and the notion of Dracula’s plan of ruling over Europe it’s possible to imagine this passage as a metaphor of a colonizer arriving by sea to transmit some disease to the “native people”. There is also the fact that the ship and all of the crew are not British; Demeter is not a British watercraft, it’s actually a Russian ship, more specifically from Varna, a foreign watercraft bringing something eerie from another society.

The count fed on the whole crew; not a single person survived. When the ship arrived at shore, the count transformed itself into a big black dog and fled on the streets, and a couple of days later started to charm and seduce two new characters, Lucy and Mina, who are here as a window for the reader to see what the British society saw as valorous in a woman at that time period.

As previously mentioned, British society deemed any sexual or romantic thoughts that drifted out of the norm as deviation, a reprehensible behaviour and since Lucy had these thoughts already, she was an “easy target” for the vampire’s allure. In comparison, Mina is quiet, calm, reserved, and rational, as the reader will notice later in the book. To compare them is to see the two ideas of what Ronald Ryan thought of the two contradictory developments in his book “Empire and sexuality”. On one hand, the empire was growing in sexual liberation in the mid-19th century, since society had seen a rise in prostitution and extramarital affairs. On the other hand, in the late 19th century, the opposite began to happen, a more sexually repressed and paranoid society began to take shape in response to STD epidemics and struggles during the colonial period.

It is also interesting to compare how the book characterizes both the English women and the “native women”, the previously mentioned Dracula’s brides. They live in a polyamorous relationship that mirrors Lucy’s train of thought and can be compared as wild animals craving their fangs on a new pray when they go after Jonathan, as if they are embodiments of the two most persistent themes in colonial imaginary (Chatterjee, 2017) The first claimed the East to be a place of ‘lascivious sexuality’ and the second claimed that it was a realm characterized by ‘inherent violence’. As if the “native” women were creatures in deep need of domestication and control. To enforce this control the Empire also categorized what would be considered “prostitution” and the definition marginalized a lot of categories of women such as concubines and dancers as an outcast group.

According to Fanon, these “deviant” behaviours and their persecution were a symptom of colonization, a western pathology (1952) that aims to subjugate any way of life that doesn’t mimic the colonizer’s way of life. One important example of this practice can be seen in the section 377 of the Indian Penal Code of 1860, a period during which their land was a British colony, the code imposed:

Section 377: Unnatural offences – Whoever voluntarily has carnal intercourse against the order of nature with any man, woman or animal shall be punished with imprisonment for life, or with imprisonment ... for a term which may extend to 10 years, and shall Be libable to fine.

Explanation – Penetration is sufficient to constitute the carnal intercourse necessary to the offence described in this Section.

INDIA. Indian Penal Code, 1860. Section 377. 1860

This code was the model for the African and Asian colonies through the colonization period and some key elements can be seen as metaphors in Stoker’s book. For instance, the vampire is an undead creature: “They cannot die, but must go on, age after age, adding new victims and multiplying the evils of the world.” Its existence in the context of the book is already “against the order of nature”. The count is a man but can also turn into an animal (he turned into a dog after the Demeter ship arrived at the coast), and his main condition to spread his curse requires penetration of his victims. By definition, the count is an offense to British society, an incarnation of all the sexual repression in the colonies. And the most

effective fuel to the British paranoia in this book is the menace that some creature such as Dracula, could infiltrate into London's high society. The count has bought a property, Carfax Abbey, and now can live in London legally, seducing the "good British women" and making them the same deviant creature as him.

We can also trace an important parallel regarding how the holy Christian symbols, since the book was published after a century of enlightenment and reason, whereas during the rise of Romanticism as a movement, more than once we see examples of how the supernatural overcomes the reason, how the only weapons that the characters can rely against Dracula are religious and mystique items and rituals.

When the Count saw my face, his eyes blazed with a sort of demoniac fury, and he suddenly made a grab at my throat. I drew away and his hand touched the string of beads which held the crucifix. It made an instant change in him, for the fury passed so quickly that I could hardly believe that it was ever there. (Stoker, 1897, p.24)

On this subject, the novel embodies another theory from Fanon (1963) regarding how the dynamics of the settlers and the colonized, the colony church is the white people's church, is a pacifier and control device to perpetrate hatred and submission over the other heritage beliefs spread amongst the colonies. The book's thesis regarding this subject is that one must rely on the church to deal with and purify themselves of the foreign influence and to keep being part of British society. On the other hand, Count Dracula still needs to be in touch with his roots to survive; he maintains fifty boxes filled with Transylvanian earth that the vampire needs to use to survive. He must be in contact with his native soil to rest and recover. This can be interpreted as the exoticism present in colonial England, the foreign land as mystical, strange, and supernatural.

During the book's climax, the characters pursue Dracula back to his original castle since he became weak and needed to fully recover on his original land's ground. and in the final confrontation Jonathan slits his throat at the same time as Quincey stabs him in the heart, killing the Count is a triumphant moment since it's the white society killing a foreigner menace getting destroyed by the average British society before it spreads across the country, keeping in mind that Quincey is actually

an American citizen but since he follows the power structure present in this historical period he passes as a peer in this context, we can see this as a colonial mimicry, meaning the practice of the colonized imitating the colonizer's culture, language, and behaviors, often to gain social acceptance or navigate power structures.

The horror that the vampire brings to British society is the foil of their questions regarding their relation with aristocracy, Christianity, the foreigner seen as a menace, the fear of sexual liberation, and the fear of outsiders infecting the Empire with their essences.

This research will keep coming back to the title character in later chapters since he is the driving force to set the events present in the plot, but it is important to focus on the other end of this dynamic, the other Characters that are in London during the Count's invasion.

CHAPTER TWO: LUCY AND MINA'S DICHOTOMY

To quote Craft's (1990) work once again: "[...] in Dracula the vampiric abrogation of gender codes inspires a defensive reinscription of the stabilizing distinctions of gender" and this reinscription shakes the roles of female characters in the novel, for instance the critic Emily Carmichael (2005) argues that Lucy personifies Stoker's commentary on the sexualized nature of the New Woman and its implications on motherhood, while Mina is representative of the New Woman's status.

To talk about the female characters in this book, we first need to understand the gender politics present in England at the time, For that, this analysis will use what we call Schema (Karch, 2017), which is the term used to describe certain conventions and mental structures that draw a line in what is appropriate and inappropriate in gender studies.

These two characters, Lucy Westenra and Mina Harker, are introduced together right after the Demeter incident. Mina is Jonathan's wife, and Lucy is her best friend. The book uses them to contrast different ideas of what could and should be expected of a woman in the Victorian Era, while Mina is depicted as self-controlled and Rational, Lucy has two Schemata merged together: "the angel in the house" and the "prostitute". The first Schema has this name because it is inspired by a poem with the same name. It consists of an ideology that the ideal British woman would be the stereotype of moral and sexual purity, domesticity, and submission; while the second

would be a cautionary tale about women who fell outside the bounds of respectable domestic femininity, being deemed less because of it. They are opposite sides of the same coin and overlap in Lucy's character as the reader can see as the book progresses.

Lucy began the book as a pure-hearted and kind woman who has three suitors in her mind and struggles with the decision about whom she is going to marry. Actually, she says that regarding the decision:

Why can't they let a girl marry three men, or as many as want her, and save all this trouble? But this is heresy, and I must not say it. I am glad to say that, though I was crying, I was able to look into Mr. Morris' brave eyes, and I told him out straight... (Stoker, 1897, p.24)

She shows the reader the concern regarding marriage that was a typical concern of upper-middle-class women during the Victorian era but she also shows traces of a behavior that would be considered "deviant" if we measure it based on the set of conventions that we previously saw in this thesis. Another instance of these two ideas clashing is the reason why she was susceptible to being the first victim of vampirism out of the two, she has poor health and a somnambulism condition which contributes to the pure and fragile imagery. Lucy's first contact with the count is in a church, which is a way to show how the count's presence violates the sacred concepts and corrupts the "weak of mind"

[...] Whatever my expectation was, it was not disappointed, for there, on our favourite seat, the silver light of the moon struck a half-reclining figure, snowy white. The coming of the cloud was too quick for me to see much, for shadow shut down on light almost immediately, but it seemed to me as though something dark stood behind the seat where the white figure shone, and bent over it. What it was, whether man or beast, I could not tell. (Stoker, 1897, p.85)

These figures are Lucy and the Count himself. The use of black and white colors shows us the idea of corruption. It is the beginning of the slow but steady descent of Lucy's character to the "Fallen Woman/Prostitute Schema". The idea of one "angel in the house" falling from purity would be such a disgrace that could be considered a "death" in British society's eyes and the novel makes a metaphor for that with Lucy's death and resurrection as a vampire after a couple more encounters with the count, the vampire here being a symbol of infidelity, keep in mind that infidelity on the part of the wife was classified as a medical disorder and the vampirism can be seen as the enabling factor for this disorder.

After becoming a fully-fledged vampire, the novel describes Lucy as changed. The sweetness was turned to adamantine, heartless cruelty, and the purity to voluptuous wantonness."

Lucy begins to allure kids near the church where her coffin is buried to feed on them, mimicking Count's attacks as previously mentioned, becoming a deviant being exactly like the foreign invader, this fall from grace can also be seen as an example of the "Madonna/Whore" dichotomy. According to Karbach, N. (2017), this dichotomy of a pure woman that is turned into a deviant creature was a huge point to structure British society, if the woman doesn't follow strictly the "angel in the house" script she cannot be part of the society and, according to the novel thesis, can only be redeemed by being punished. The characters plot to kill her once more to free her soul from the curse.

And now, my child, you may kiss her. Kiss her dead lips if you will, as she would have you to, if for her to choose. For she is not a grinning devil now, not any more a foul Thing for all eternity. No longer she is the devil's UnDead. She is God's true dead, whose soul is with Him! (Stoker, 1897, p.204)

Lucy is brutalized, and this is shown as mercy since at the first contact with the corruption vector, she was no longer pure-hearted and no longer had value. This is a contrast to Mina's character. She was the one taking care of Lucy at the night that she was attacked by Dracula, and later in the chapter, she tells us as the chapter's narrator as it follows:

Some of the 'New Women' writers will some day start an idea that men and women should be allowed to see each other asleep before proposing or accepting. But I suppose the 'New Woman' won't condescend in future to accept. She will do the proposing herself. And a nice job she will make of it too! There's some consolation in that. I am so happy tonight, because dear Lucy seems better. I really believe she has turned the corner, and that we are over her troubles with dreaming. I should be quite happy if I only knew if Jonathan... God bless and keep him (*Stoker, 1897, p.204*)

This paragraph is rich; the reader can see how Mina jockey with the concept of "new women" that was rising around England during the late 19th century, claiming and leading independent femininity and women's autonomy. It also shows Mina as a more conservative character and how her main function is to worry about her future husband above everything else. The "mother" Schema can be seen; this schema shows the woman character either as a literal or metaphorical mother, making her care, worry, and nurture the male characters. We can easily see this in practice during the moment after Mina receives news about Jonathan's whereabouts, at St. Jones hospital in Budapest, she goes to meet him, nurses him back to full health, and marries him as quickly as possible, again following the "angel in the house" trope. Mina is the perfect foil to Lucy's destiny. She is calm, reserved, already engaged in a monogamous relationship, and does not question the structure of the conventional rules. The reader can interpret these facts as the reason why she is the one the narrative decides to be worthy and stays human throughout the story, as Lucy progressively loses the purity and embraces the "whore" side of the madonna/whore complex, Mina progressively gets more of the traditional wife and "Madonna" woman, keep in mind that before Lucy's death, Mina was the one nursing

here for the most part of the time, only leaving her side to find Jonathan due to the fact that Dr. Van Helsing arrived to take care of Lucy's illness.

To reinforce the difference between the two female characters, Mina became the next victim of Dracula's attack, when it happens, the vampire invades Mina's house while she is with Jonathan and forces her to drink his blood, this is a scene of a male figure forcing a woman to trade body fluid with him, is an allegory to sexual assault and a way for the novel to show us how "fragile" the women are to the foreigner attack, keep in mind that the imagery of the foreigner as a sexual predator and the tension that mixing the "good British woman" with the foreigner (Ballantyne, 2002). And again the reader can see how this "contamination" is lifelong as the Count monologues about how Mina will be "Blood of his blood and Kin of his Kin". After surviving the attack, Dr. Van Helsing puts a sacred communion wafer on her forehead and burns her, leaving a mark that symbolizes her "unclean" and her connection to the Count.

Mina's only way to redeem herself is to help the other characters to hunt down and exterminate the vampire in his coffin, and to do that, the characters needed the help of the previously mentioned doctor Van Helsing. Which is exactly what happens by the end of the novel, she is socially validated by having a child with Jonathan, the young Quincey (named after Quincey Morris, who died by the end of Dracula's hunt), they compose a peaceful and traditional family as a reward for not having succumbed to the Vampire's curse.

The way in which women were gazed upon during the colonial period is at the same time interesting and terrifying; these two characters are major in the novel, and at the same time, they lack agency in most of it. They serve as cautionary tales to 19th-century women and how they need to follow their specific roles (which were, of course, created by men) or else they would be considered deviant creatures not worthy to live. It's an existential horror piece.

CHAPTER 3: Doctor Van Helsing, the man of science (and faith)

One interesting aspect to keep in mind when analyzing the novel is the fact that the writer himself portrays the characters as mostly British citizens, while he himself was a Foreigner, born in Ireland. This is important because it creates a certain critical distance between the portrait of foreigners as the novel goes forward.

One example of how the book has many visions of foreigners is in Van Helsing's character and arc during the course of the novel.

Doctor Abraham Van Helsing is a Dutch scholar, and Seward's (Lucy's Fiance) mentor, Seward called him to diagnose her regarding what could be her "mysterious disease"; he suspected the symptoms were more than what the medicine could comprehend, but to treat Lucy, he tried an experimental treatment: a blood transfusion to keep the patient alive. Due to several complications, Lucy was turned into a vampire spawn as mentioned previously, and Van Helsing was the one leading the expedition to free her of this undead condition. After being informed of Mina's situation, he is the one who exposes what is happening and how to prevent Mina from having the same fate as Lucy; he becomes the mentor figure for the other characters.

"Do you not think that there are things which you cannot understand, and yet which are; that some people see things that others cannot? But there are things old and new which must not be contemplated by men's eyes, because they know, or think they know, some things which other men have told them"
(*Stoker, 1897, p.180*)

Van Helsing represents something interesting in the text. He is both the "man of science" and the one specialized in supernatural events regarding occultism and mystical creatures such as vampires themselves. If Lucy is the foil for Mina, Van Helsing is Count Dracula's foil. He is also an outsider, as already mentioned, a Dutchman arriving in London. However, we can see the way he is seen in British society is different. He is a Western European, while Count Dracula is from the east, a "backward" land.

During the 19th-century England received lots of Eastern Europe and they composed a considerable part of the working class on the Empire's capital, especially Jewish in communities like White Chapel (Tananbaum, 2014) so this began to nurture the already mentioned sense of "they are taking our place and our jobs" in the average London citizen, on the other hand, the Western European immigrants in the city.

Van Helsing is also a man who studied many fields of knowledge, being a doctor of medicine, law, and philosophy much like how during the beginning of the

novel, Harker tells the reader about how the Count has a library with many diverse subjects and knowledge. But the way that the character is treated in British society is reminiscent of how the Western Europeans were seen during the period, more specifically the Dutch, they were also majoritary protestant, which reduced the religious tension present in other immigrants such as the Irish who had a majority of their people being Catholic (Gilley, 1994), It is also important to mention that relatively speaking the number of Dutch immigrants was much smaller than other peoples during the same time period such as Irish and German to mention the more common from West Europe or the Russians from Eastern Europe.

Van Helsing is also an example of how the Scientific advances in England were based of immigrants contributions, the blood transfusion treatment for instance was one fairly recent medicine advance created in the early 19th century and it's also another parallel between the doctor and the count, they essentially are proposing the same concept thematically: body fluids trade, but when it comes from a place of science and social acceptance it's a noble sacrifice, when it comes from a place of the unwanted immigrant is an almost unredeemable curse.

The character also externalizes the conflict between science and faith, keep in mind that we are talking about a book that has elements from romanticism, an element that raise in response to the Late 18thl and early 19th century enlightenment's emphasis on the rational and logical point of view regarding arts and philosophy, that is what makes characters such as Van Helsing so interesting, he is an embodiment of this dialectical dynamic: *"It is the fault of our science that it wants to explain all; and if it explain not, then it says there is nothing to explain."* (Stoker, 1897, p.180)

Another example of how interesting these contradictions that form the character are:

The way he sees gender roles in the book. Notice these two instances::

"Ah, that wonderful Madam Mina! She has man's brain—a brain that a man should have were he much gifted—and woman's heart.

[...]It is too great a cost for us to lose her (Mina) . We men are

strong in will, but weak in action when the woman we love is in danger.” (Stoker, 1897, p.221)

Here we have another example of how the way for an immigrant to be accepted was to merge and enforce the already established norms and behaviours during their time in the empire's capital. If they see strict and pre-established gender roles for men and women, the first being responsible for protection while the second as a role for care and guidance, that is the norm. The only way that he sees worth beyond this specific and strict roles is comparing them to the other gender, as Mina's "man's brain" and to follow these roles is necessary to take care of the ones who break them, the count is not protecting the "good women of london" he is using them and exploiting them so he needs to be stopped and that is why Van Helsing is the one who proposes to form a group and hunt the boxes that Dracula uses to recover himself during the day and after that, the one who is more apt to hunt the Count down in Transylvania. To reinforce the gender roles present in the novel we can also interpret this whole ending as an male bonding story (Rosenberg, 2000) Van Helsing is the older and wiser man who bring all the other male characters together, even the ones who were rivals competing for Lucy's affection, after all we are talking about a male-centric structure in the core of Europe, It's important to keep in mind that England did not have one singular model of what being a man meant to British society, It all depended of social ranks and status, at this point the other male characters in Van Helsing "hunting squad" are one Aristocrat, a Doctor who is also an asylum administrator, a real estate Lawyer and one wealthy adventurer from America. All of them come from at the very least middle to upper class and to this group in specific, to be a man would mean honor, independence and political responsibility.

"We are trying to do our duty in a very sad and terrible case, we can only do as we deem best" (Stoker, 1897, p.233)

The good Doctor is always talking about male valors and virtues to motivate the characters when they are doing this considered holy task. This can be interpreted as a parallel to the religious tension present in England, as mentioned before the

Gothic aesthetic is reminiscent of church's decay as an institution during the enlightenment and Van Helsing as a response to this decay, being the man whose answers to the vampirism are derived to Holy catholic symbols such as holy water and crucifixes as well as Eastern European superstitions like garlic flowers to keep the vampire away from Lucy before her transformation. This reflects the complex and intricate relation that British society had with Anglicanism (Bowles, 2009) and its symbols, practices and philosophies and also the gradual lifting of Catholic suppression that started early in 19th century, such as the Catholic Emancipation Act (1829).

Thus are we ministers of God's own wish" (Stoker, 1897, p.299)

These three aspects: the immigrant, the male role model, and the Anglican collide in the Van Helsing character and make him such a rich character to analyse. His contradictions and ideologies are such a great contrast to the title character and how their dynamic affects the narrative, and show the reader glimpses of the many contrasting ideologies of the society which was the prime material to this novel.

CONCLUSION

With these chapters together, we can begin to understand how the historical and social context can affect the author's worldview and how it reflects on the corpus. If the author is part of a society whose progress is paved on paranoia and anxiety towards a determined group, these concepts tend to remain in the subtext of a piece of art

The British society saw foreigners as sick people who tried to mimic their own colonial behavior and dominate, and had a disdain for the aristocracy as the bourgeoisie was rising as the dominant class, and to reflect that the count is a foreign Aristocrat with an infectious curse who wants to conquer England and spread his curse on the land.

Additionally, British society saw sexuality through dichotomic lenses. On one hand, it was a society with strict rules regarding how sexual practices should be conducted and deemed everything that drifted out of the norm as wicked; on the

other hand, it was the same society that would secretly consume and produce pornography and obsessively write about “deviant behaviors”. In this sense, this study pointed out that the novel addresses these tensions in characters such as the Count’s mistress in his castle, the way he tries to have Jonathan as “his”, and his seductive *modus operandi* towards the female characters. Moreover, Lucy and Mina’s characters are written with the society’s gender rules in mind, the Madonna/Whore complex is key to understanding these characters and how their worth as individuals was measured by how they maintained their “purity” as the novel progresses. Lucy, presented as more open to her feelings and desire to explore her sexuality, was the thematic reason why the count succeeded in turning her into a Vampire Spawn, whereas Mina was the rational and conservative woman, and that was the reason why the narrative chooses to spare her. Both characters are the result of schemata and narrative tropes that were common in modern literature and how important it was for British society to maintain restrictive and well-determined gender roles for women to follow.

Also, the Van Helsing character is a foil to Dracula. If the Vampire is a symbol of everything considered wicked to British society, The Doctor is everything that the said society deemed Holy and Respectful. Van Helsing’s existence is an excellent example of the difference between Western and Eastern European immigrants. While the people in Transylvania were always considered “silly superstitious people”, the doctor’s opinion on the supernatural is respectful and the characters never had doubts about it. He also showed us how the society was at the same time, following and contesting the Enlightenment philosophy while using the scientific progress achieved early in the 19th century. The relation of both Wicked and Holy characters, the Count and the Doctor respectively, with blood is also a way to show this contrast, one uses the blood as a supernatural way to exert control and fear in the heart of his victims, while the other uses the blood as a thematic symbol of scientific progress tandem with the christian values against one unholy creature.

As an answer the questions that started this article, the main source of the horror present on the novel is the paranoia enrooted in British society, a society born out of colonial crimes and prejudice who exploited many countries around the globe, xenophobia, racism and misogyny were prevalent in all classes in this society and the horrors in the novel are a distorted mirror of these characteristics. The horror is

alluring because we are talking about a deeply repressed society, both sexually and culturally, living off deep contradictions and struggles.

These findings are only possible with an Historical perspective that the “new historical criticism” provides the tools and it shines as a way to critically think about the context and what can be extracted from the text and analyzed and as a form to show which themes present in the corpus are still relevant to our society even after two centuries since the novel was first published.

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