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**From Hideous Monsters to Sexual Seducers: Textual
Representations of Sexual Thrill and Erotic Power from Stoker's
Dracula to Meyer's *Twilight***

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Dedication

To my husband, Dominik Puritscher and my parents, Ayse & Suleyman Koc.

Abstract

This study has been written in an attempt to present a coherent and historically grounded theory of power and eroticism in vampire literature. The main thrust of this work examines the ambiguity of who or what vampires really are, is a constitutive feature of the phenomenon. Although it is difficult to pin down the sensual nature of the vampire, this paper seeks to explore his/her transformation from the sexual and evil monster to the romantic and good lover.

Above all, it explains how representations of vampirism begin in the eighteenth century, flourish in the nineteenth, and eclipse most other forms of monstrosity in the twentieth. Although the study's aims are theoretical, the discussion is formally grounded in the analysis of particular works. By means of comparative analysis, this paper seeks to account for the logic underlying the vampire's many and conflicting forms, including the themes of bodily difference, active/passive gender roles, sexual desire and passion.

As a rule, this study quotes primary works both in the original and in translation; commentary from secondary sources is also provided in some parts. Finally, it strives for objectivity while exploring the categories established by the works themselves and relating them to other texts.

INTRODUCTION

Something stalks us in the shadows, it haunts us, it is like us, and yet not us. It lives in the periphery of our understanding and preys on our weaknesses. The coding of the story is an old one and explicit: the vampire represents a violent threat while humans are the target of this threat. Interestingly though, the fatal attraction of the vampire beguiles us into the arms of this violent stranger.

This paper first proposes how to theorize and understand eroticism and its relationship to vampire sexuality. The term eroticism is used in this study in order to describe sexual pleasure that combines sex, bodies and desire through illusions of disguise and distance. By sexuality, I refer to the nature and the object of sexual desire and the emotional and physical aspects of this sexual appetite. Using a multi-dimensional approach, I have tracked down the concepts of eroticism employed in the works of these writers and explored the constructed and fluid nature of sexual identities, placing emphasis on the erotic elements of love. My initial research question, particularly, is, to what degree vampires are used to problematize gender issues and the expression of erotic power. What might the answer to this question tell us about the writer's attitudes toward sex and sex roles? My hypothesis is that sexuality is expressed through the craving for blood and the act of acquiring it, which blur traditional gender roles. This also results in the legitimization of 'sexual power', particularly worth noting in the form of male domination and patriarchy.

The vampire became a very popular literary figure in the 19th century and is still a very successful character today. The thesis at hand highlights the reasons behind the popularization of vampire stories. Regarding this, my second research question, which focuses on the development of the vampire archetype, is what these anxieties are that draw us into their world. My first explanation for the success of vampire fiction is the lure of the sexual Other that may attract reader attention. My second explanation suggests that romantic feelings are not restricted to the two protagonists of the narrative, but also include the female readers who may develop romantic feelings for the vampire.

Roland Barthes (1972) claims that myths are actually messages. According to Barthes, every myth tends to expose ideological and cultural meanings.¹ The issue that concerns me here is the relationship between vampire fiction and the period of his time. In

¹ cf. Click, Steven Aubrey and Behm-Morawitz, 121.

other words, every century has its own vampire, who tells us who we actually are. The vampire myth has appeared in almost every culture over the centuries. Each generation has created its own vampire and reflected the fears, anxieties and fantasies of its own time. Generally, everything white, western, patriarchal, and heterosexual is considered the 'correct/ideal' standard in society. Many writers' aim to interrogate cultural attitudes toward vampire, negotiating the distinction between the dominant value system and that which threatens it. My third and final question is, how, then, are those writers using the vampire as a symbol for their own experiences of how the world works? Drawing on theorists, I use the trope of the vampire to unravel the characteristics of that period, the way in which the period deals with their particular anxieties in society and literature.

Those questions which describe the development of vampire myth will be used to address the larger question of how literature may provide erotic power and sexual model through its characterizations of the construction of individual subjectivity. It is important to underline that the depiction of the vampire varies from author to author and from period to period. The four novels under consideration were written at different times in the past, two of them stem from the 19th century, one of them was composed in the 20th and the last in the 21st century. Consequently, we can observe different types of vampires who "embody" their era. I will start with the deconstruction of a traditional vampire, Le Fanu's *Carmilla* (1872), then I will move to the Victorian vampire, the Dracula archetype (1897) who was literally a monster, represented chiefly by Bram Stoker. For the 20th century, a number of works are taken into consideration, starting with Richard Matheson's *I Am Legend*, which is partly referred to, but not thoroughly analyzed, and the well known vampire fiction series of Anne Rice's popular *The Vampire Chronicles*, especially *Interview with the Vampire*. The first decade of the 21st century has experienced a new blossoming of the vampire figure, which is important for the development of the contemporary construction of a cultural Other. As a representation of the erotic vampire in the 21st century, I have examined Stephenie Meyer's *The Twilight Saga*, particularly the first part of the series, *Twilight*, which aspires to establish a conservative textual ideology.

In this diploma thesis, those works are compared to each other in order to find out how the figure of the sexual seducer has changed over the course of time. All of the chosen novels provide a useful space to analyze the fictionalized constructs of eroticism, gender and sexuality, and to see how themes and storylines are presented to different audiences.

In order to examine the representation of the vampire, the first chapter of the thesis discusses the origin of the vampire myth and explores its gradual development along with its power of transformation. The second chapter profiles the erotic nature of the vampire and debates some erotic stimulations as they represent a source for the emotions evoked in the readership. Using those erotic situations as examples, the chapter aims to analyze the construction of erotic power in the selected novels. Moreover, it tries to frame the act of blood drinking into the discourses of sexuality, particularly vampire sex. As the vampire archetype has developed over the years, the sucking of blood has also gained different perspectives. The shift is mainly characterized as a movement away from the infection of the Other towards transformation. Chapter three provides a discussion of vampire sexuality and identifies manifestations of sexual power, suggesting that gender roles are challenged and shifted in those works of vampire literature. In particular, male vampires are examined in respect to the ways in which they challenge or reflect cultural constructs of masculinity. Chapter four relates the vampire's nature of Otherness to the politics of power and displays different reviews about its function. This chapter is particularly worth noting in the light of Freud's concept of the Uncanny, since Otherness reflects the underlying cultural values of society. The subsequent two chapters represent four vampire fictions, divided into mainstream and young adult vampire narratives. Through the comparative analysis of texts, the data provides a tool for evaluating the discussed themes in order to identify particular patterns. Analyzing the different target groups of those texts, the following chapter highlights reader response, particularly, the reaction of female readers towards sexual seducers. The final section of the thesis reviews important findings and discusses the significant shifts in vampire fiction. It also outlines the results of this research process.

1. THE VAMPIRE ORIGIN STORY

Robert Neville: [...] no one had believed in [vampires], and how could they fight something they didn't even believe in? (Matheson, 135)

This chapter will examine the historical roots of the sympathetic vampire and will explore various reasons, which surprisingly provide the interesting development of the vampire figure. Since there is an *ambiguous* origin to the vampire narrative genre, this lack of a clear beginning creates a mysterious atmosphere which haunts us and sets question about many aspects of the vampire.

There are many views that underline the fact that a vampire should be distinguished from any supernatural creature such as witch, ghost and werewolf due to the need for blood, the state of being undead and sexuality. During the 18th century, many believed that a vampire came into being when a demon entered into a dead body, consequently borrowing the body in order to perform unholy activities. This corpse was likely to be that of a man or a woman who could not find peace in the dead body. (Bartlett, 10) However, Christian ideology which underlines the distinctions of good or evil, began to disappear and vampires eluded their folklore connections with famous superstitions as garlic and crucifixes. Rather than being the work of the devil, the image of the vampire figure was related to a kind of viral infection in the eighteenth century. As a result, vampires were regarded as scapegoats and held responsible for epidemics such as the plague. (Punter, 2004:270)

In demonology the vampire is associated with the incubus, a male demon who visits women during the night, especially during sleep, and commits unspeakable sexual acts with them. Similar to the incubus, after the attack of a vampire, the victim becomes weak and passive. (Bartlett, 175) Taking on many different shapes and guises, the vampire figure moved away from its connotation with the incubus and first made its appearance in print in the eighteenth century. His fictional manifestation develops from Gothic poetry. At first, the vampire was represented as a manifestation of pure evil due to the folk vampire, and was portrayed as a monster and a decaying corpse, inspired by the horror genre. Later, gaining an aesthetic veneer, the vampire figure has turned into a sophisticated monster.

One of the first references to vampirism in English literature occurs in Byron's epic poem, *The Giaour* (1813).¹ In addition to *The Giaour*, Byron tells the story of a vampire, the mysterious Augustus Darvell who falls ill and dies under strange circumstances while travelling in Turkey. He specifically chooses this oriental setting in order to add mystery to the vampire's character, as men who know the strange, foreign places well. The word 'vampire', which is originated from Slavic language, entered English language in the middle of the 18th century. Therefore, it is no surprise that the first vampires in English literature were strongly associated with Eastern Europe and the orient.

Vampire literature, as a branch of Gothic fiction, has been one of the most popular fields of English popular fiction and the vampire itself, has become a very deceptive literary character. There are some common attributes and rumors that try to portray this monster, yet cannot surpass the clichés: first, the vampire is neither wholly dead nor entirely alive. Indeed, it is in between, passes from one realm to another, violating all the laws of mankind. Second, it is likely that vampire fiction portrays the monster as a bloodsucker. Blood is very significant, since it flows through the body and represents strength and life. When violence comes into existence, then blood dramatically changes perspective and becomes a sign of both weakness and death. Third, when a vampire draws life from his victim by sucking his blood, he infuses the victim with death and consequently, makes the living resemble him. Finally, the vampire seeks to spread terror actively, which is sometimes carried out by a group of vampires. Therefore, the existence of a single vampire often poses the threat that more vampires will soon arrive. Those clichés travelled orally and contributed to the post-modern vampire. What makes the post-modern sexual seducers distinct is the fact that they neither live in grandiose Gothic castles and fly away, nor uniformly expose the powers of sexual seduction. Although they still prey on humans, their world is surprisingly parallel to ours.

At the very beginning, the first vampire who was living in Transylvania seemed to be *polymorphously* perverse and endlessly resourceful in its adaptability to new situations. Spreading horror, the vampire of the eighteenth century was a faceless, featureless, anonymous and terrific monster without a body or identity. Its evil reputation grew strong whenever and wherever traditions weaken, depending on political, economic, and social revolutions from the eighteenth century on.

¹ Lord Byron. *The Giaour*. Retrieved from: www.readytogobooks.com.

The question at stake, in general, is the identity of this *foreigner*. The vampire fulfills Freud's profound definition of the uncanny (das Unheimliche): "the vampire combines the known and the unknown, the home and the world outside and the familiar and the strange. „ (Butler, 2) In *Fantasy: the Literature of Subversion*, Rosemary Jackson comments on Freud's essay *The Uncanny*:

The uncanny expresses drives which have to be repressed for the sake of cultural continuity. Freud regards anything uncanny, or anything provoking dread as being subject to cultural taboo. A resurfacing of long familiar anxieties/desires in uncanny incidents constitutes 'a return of the repressed. (Jackson, 70)

The Uncanny therefore deals with the sexually, culturally, socially repressed feelings and the vampire can be seen as an incarnation of the uncanny. In literature, the uncanny often manifests itself as the 'Other', considered threatening. According to German poet and dramatist Friedrich Hebbel (1813-63) the vampire has another perspective. It lies deep down in human soul, waiting to come to the surface. He writes "Jeder Tote ist ein Vampir, die ungeliebten ausgenommen.,¹ (qtd. in Butler, 2) According to Hebbel, the vampire is defined as a post-human supernatural being.

In order to understand vampires in general it is also better to see the description of the Benedictine monk, Dom Augustin Calmet (1672-1757) who was one of the earliest writers on the topic of vampirism. In the middle of the eighteenth century, he commented:

Chaque siècle, chaque nation, chaque oays a ...ses maladies, ses modes, ses penchants, qui les caractérisent...;souvent ce qui a paru admirable en un temps, devient pitoyable et ridicule dans un autre...

Dans ce siècle, une nouvelle scène s'offre á nos yeux...: on voit, dit-on, des hommes morts...revenir, parler, infester les villages, ...sucrer le sang de leurs proches, les rendre malades, et enfin leir causer la mort. (qtd. in Butler, 4)

[Each century, each people, each country has ...its own maladies, its own fashions, [and] its own inclinations, which characterize them..., often, what seemed admirable at one time becomes piteous and ridiculous at another... In this century, a new scene has presented itself to our eyes...: people see, they say, dead men...come back, speak, plague villages,...suck the blood of their intimates, make them sick, and finally cause their death.]²

¹ All the dead are vampires, except the unloved ones. [my translation]

Furthermore, Webster's Online Dictionary defines vampire as "A blood-sucking ghost; a soul of a dead person superstitiously believed to come from the grave and wander about by night sucking the blood of persons asleep, thus causing their death.,"¹ It emphasizes the two basic elements, immortality and the need for a diet of blood, which are the core features in order to define what it is to be called *vampire*. Many scholars, such as Gordon and Hollinger, describe vampire as an "[u]n ambiguously coded figure", "a source of both erotic anxiety" and "corrupt desire", therefore, the vampire figure is one of "the most powerful archetypes bequeathed to us from the imagination of the nineteenth century." (qtd. in Brandstätter, 37) No matter if it is an ambiguous creature, a graveyard figure, an immortal bloodsucker or the representation of repressed fears, the vampire succeeds to draw us under his spell.

What clear from those definitions is that early vampires do not have much personality. Serbian Hajduks claims that in the early eighteenth century, "the vampire was a deceased member of the community who impersonated life and spread death." (qtd. in Butler, 107) By the end of the 18th century, more flexible and fuller picture of the vampire emerged due to *Romanticism*. The power of imagination in the individual was related to the vampire figure. Many literary works such as *Fortunio* by Gautier (1836) associate vampires with the imagination of faraway lands or times. As Punter argues, in the 18th century "the vampire applied in ridicule, turned into a literary personhood who possessed an identity and became more complex." (Punter, 2004: 268) For example, after Goethe's *The Bride of Corinth* (1797), the vampire appears as a literary figure in John Polidori's *The Vampyre* (1819) in which he is represented as a complex and interesting character rather than being a mindless demonic force.

According to Butler, the complex structure of the vampire might be due to the effect of the shift in European societies, which changed from hierarchical order to a form of organization that featured movement between social stations in the nineteenth century. (Butler, 76) One of the most significant shifts in this movement is the vampire's rise from peasant to aristocrat. In the early nineteenth century his status was affected by this hierarchical change and the vampire turned into a paramour aristocrat, a traveler and a seducer, which is also displayed in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. In the novel the vampire is

² Translation made by Butler, 2010:4.

¹ "Vampire", Webster's Online Dictionary. Retrieved from: www.websters-dictionary-online.com.

depicted as a tyrannical aristocrat who seeks to preserve his house by threatening the bourgeois society.

Moreover, the vampire literature of the nineteenth century was influenced by the sexual revolution and in the twentieth century by the second wave of feminism. During the nineteenth century, sexual freedom was represented as desirable. As a result, focusing mainly on the future position of women in society and her sexual role, the vampire of the 19th century offered unconventional sexuality such as promiscuity, extra-marital sex and same-sex desire. The first wave feminism influenced many important literary works such as *Carmilla* and *Dracula*. Those changes reached their peak in the twentieth century due to the second wave of feminism which was accompanied by Anne Rice's *Interview with the Vampire*.¹

The first wave of feminism mainly interrogates the middle-class female who is a chaste, refined, pure and modest wifely figure. She is the weaker sex who obeys her husband. The perfect example of this stereotype is obviously Mina Harker who is prudish and very passive. She might be viewed as a product of the industrial development of the 19th century which had an important effect on traditional gender roles and the position of women, who gained status through increasing access to education and professional life. During the 19th century women challenged their male counterparts and grew stronger, as in the case of Mina Harker.²

At the end of the 19th century, the emergence of a new vampire breed diminished the status of *Dracula*. These were young, very attractive and full of life. It seems that they wanted to stay forever young and handsome. Celebrating diverse sexuality, *Interview with the Vampire* portrays this new breed with personality as socially constructed vampires. Another significant difference between the 19th and the 20th century vampire fiction is the shift of the point of view from the victim to the vampire. Displaying the perspective of the vampire, the new narrative form of the 20th century invites empathy with the outsider. However, the representation of the vampire in the 19th century was monstrous and evil which obviously ensure the existence of good structures of belief; yet they start to crumble under the impact of an increasingly secular and scientific world of the 20th century. Vampire

¹ cf. Melanie Walser, 51.

² see Margaret George. *From 'Goodwife' to 'Mistress': The Transformation of the Female in Bourgeois Culture*, *Science and Society* 37, 1973; Nancy Armstrong. *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1987.

fiction of the twentieth century becomes increasingly skeptical which can be seen in Matheson's novel *I Am Legend*.¹ The novel explores the cultural systems of the twentieth century that had given meaning to the lives of humans due to the rapid increases in technological and scientific developments. The technological advances isolate us from personal contact and increase our fears and anxieties about the future. The novel, reflecting this view, roots the vampire in science and displays the vampirism not as a supernatural curse, but as the result of biological warfare. Attributing vampirism to natural and scientific causes, the film equates it with any epidemic which threatens humanity in a more complex way. Those new perspectives have ensured the survival of the vampire as an icon of popular culture.

21st century vampire literature, which seems to be unsuitable for adult literature, is forced into the corners of juvenile literature and pop culture. One of the most popular representatives of this period is definitely Meyer's *The Twilight Saga*. It exposes a trend towards a return to traditional conservative values, gender roles, heterosexual monogamy, paralleling the increasingly conservative sexual politics in the USA. The important characteristic of this breed is that contemporary vampires are not exactly revolutionary yet supernaturally beautiful, wise lovers with high moral standards and promising romance. This is mainly due to the youth-obsessed culture of the entertainment industry, which was formed in the early twentieth century. Consequently, focusing on the youth culture recent literary works have depicted the vampire as a medium which brings the common problems of adolescence such as early pregnancy and emotional conflicts onto the surface. Especially for young women, the boyfriend-vampire combination has become very attractive.² It also seems that this new vampire tends to be in need of a group defined identity. Particularly, literary works like *Twilight* and *Interview* represent the idea of what it means to be a vampire who is the member of a family.

At the end of the 21st century we observe another kind of vampire, called *mind vampires*, who drain their victims of energy, rather than physically sucking their blood. Similar to the previous breed, those vampires of the 21st century have been depicted not as hideous monsters, but as creatures of supernatural beauty. The bookstores display this

¹ *I Am Legend* expresses the treatment of human beings as alien and explores constructed society in which all humanity is infected with vampirism.

² see *Twilight*.

latest version of vampires under many titles such as: *Energy Vampires: A Practical Guide for Psychic Self-Protection*, *Unholy Hungers: Encountering the Psychic Vampire in Ourselves and Others*, *The Psychic Vampire Codex: A Manual of Magick and Energy Work*. Butler briefly summarizes the contemporary vampire by stating “Vampires contaminate and confuse what surrounds them. [...] Vampires steal and redistribute energy – be it blood, money, sentiment, or ‘nerve’..” (Butler, 188)

Although many definitions of the vampire in this chapter has been examined, the most worthy might be the description of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari who introduce the vampire as “not a state of being but rather one of becoming.”¹(qtd. in Butler, 47) It is indeed the fact that thorough the centuries, the vampire has gradually mutated and adapted itself to any number of new environments. He has tried to meet the expectations of human beings, disguising himself under many layers and in various ways. Each period and culture embracing its own vampire and has manifested different perspectives and the image of the vampire continues to remain as the *Other*. His power of transformation obviously makes him a unique creature, providing a site where the innocent becomes corrupted, while the deviant is destructed. As Bartlett briefly suggests, the vampire has broken moral and social taboos, projecting the fears of the society in which he/she lives. (Bartlett, 3)

¹ see Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus*. Minneapolis, Minneapolis UP, 1987.

2. THE CONSUMMATION OF EROTIC LOVE

Lestat: No one could resist me, not even you, Louis.

Louis: I tried.

Lestat (*smiles*): And the more you tried, the more I wanted you.

Interview, the movie, 1994)

What is it that makes the vampire a vampire? One of the common features is the drinking of blood. It is generally believed that blood in vampire literature provides a “demonic link” between the undead and the world of the living. (Bartlett, 47) It is the nutrition of the vampire. The vampire who refuses to obey the society’s rules, is only motivated by a physical need: his thirst for blood. However, in exchange for the blood that vampire takes, he offers his victims some rather good sex.

Many scholars suggest that the sucking of blood has very sexual overtones and thus, it is highly sexualized in vampire literature and popular culture. Put it simply, penetration is maintained by biting into the body rather than sexual intercourse and the ultimate pleasure has become the drawing of blood. For example, *Twilight* highlights the attractiveness of blood by Edward asserting that “more bearable than smelling her and not sinking my teeth through that fine, thin, see-through skin to the hot, wet, pulsing...” (Twilight, 14)

In early vampire literature, virgins who were very valuable victims, were under threat since their blood was depicted as pure and free of sin. Blood was usually associated with innocence and to acquire it was regarded as a crime. Another aspect to consider that blood was something holy and associated with spirituality rather than physical life; even some victims who give importance to spirituality offer their blood. This emphasized sacrifice is also an important motif in Christianity. As Bartlett expresses “The example of Christ inspires others to give freely of themselves...” (Bartlett, 55-56)

Moreover, the vampire as a bloodsucker, transfers an illicit and disapproved material by transforming his ‘victims’ from the living to the undead and giving birth without sex. However, early vampire literature displays the fear of infected blood as a nightmare of society, raising sexed cultural anxieties around AIDS through the mixing of fluids. Thus, the vampire is accused of polluting all systems of kinship, all systems of race, sex and desire that

in fact, must be straight¹. Winnubst briefly puts forward that the vampire infects the body and thereby *alters* the spirit that “nobody can transcend the metamorphoses of his bite. „ (Winnubst, 2003:8)

Not only the fear of infected blood, but also the fear of sexual perversion is a crucial theme in vampire fiction. The vampire as a creature of mixed genders is capable of penetrating both sexes, attractive and often attracted to both men and women. It is most active at night, during the time of darkness and shadow when distinctions are blurred. Penetrating and drinking blood symbolically refer to the sexual moment which literally transforms the individual whom the vampire bites. Through this oral penetration the vampire enacts a form of transgressive sexuality which includes homosexuality, incest, sado-masochism, and pedophilia by breaking lots of sexual taboos. (Davis, 18) Ernest Jones claims “blood is commonly an equivalent for semen.,, Therefore, vampire indicates kinds of sexual perversion. (qtd. in Punter, 2004:269) Like semen, blood also provides reproduction. Gomez locates the gift of immortality in mixing blood. Vampires reproduce themselves through the sharing of their blood, infecting of another’s blood without their permission. Blood is the only vehicle for the transfer of eternal life. However, transferring immortality through fluids, reproduction without a phallus indicates that something ‘unnatural’.² As Case argues, the greatest fear of the straight white male is the fact that immortality has nothing to do with the phallus. (Case, 4)

As it has been claimed before, the act of blood drinking is regarded as a perfect experience and more satisfying than sex. When Claudia asks Louis, “What was it like...making love?,, Louis responds, “It was something hurried. And...it was seldom savored...something acute that was quickly lost. I think that it was the pale shadow of killing.,, (Interview, 210) Being penetrated by sucking or being sucked creates an ambiguous sexuality. This ambiguity which is represented in previous works as pollution or perversion,³ is replaced by a sign of transformation in Rice’s *Interview*. In other words, as Davis argues the drinking of blood represents “ecstasy”, “intimacy”, through “transformation.” (Davis,

¹ Mein Kampf (1971) by Adolf Hitler draws attention on these popularized ideologies to construct Jews as a threat to the national body because of their assumed connections to the spread of syphilis by which they have been represented as the nation who pollutes the national blood. See Sander L. Gilman. *I’m Down on Whores: Race and Gender in Victorian London*. p. 163-164.

² cf. Case, 4.

³ see *Carmilla* for perversion and *Dracula* for pollution.

162,169) We need a multiplicity of perspectives in order to grasp the complexity of this transformation which should be considered *mutual*. On one hand, it provides immortality and transforms its victims into an immortal, powerful race. On the other hand, it gives the vampire the feeling of what is to be human. In *Interview*, Lestat asks frequently about his role as a vampire and his spiritual fate. It seems that his hunger is far beyond blood, it is something more than mere survival. Blood is the symbol of life, especially for humans. As Lestat says "I wanted to be human, and feel human,"¹ he actually misses the goodness and love he used to feel when he was a human being. Therefore, he needs blood in order to feel himself a human through the act of drinking blood.

Furthermore, during the twenty-first century, vampires have started to offer different lines and regions of kinship in our cultural fascination. The traditional criterion of human blood to determine who is related to whom no longer functions in the world of vampires. As vampires teach us, blood is not what is trapped in a metaphysical dimension and obviously, through the blood criterion we can no longer draw clear boundaries between what resembles us and what does not resemble us. Although the vampire reshapes the boundaries of such a kinship system, the need for blood results in establishing a close relationship with human beings. This relationship seems to be superficial, but sometimes it is possible to see lasting, intimate relationships. In *Dracula*, victims serve as a blood bank for the Count; he is interested in Lucy and uses her for satisfying his appetite, yet ignores her practically. This kind of relationship resembles one of slave and master. Unlike *Dracula*, the vampires in *Interview* are communal and social; they are the member of a patchwork family, the example of the humanization and socialization of the undead. Moreover, it is possible to find different varieties of relations in those novels such as teacher and student represented by Louis and Lestat, master and slave illustrated by Dracula and Jonathan, lover and mistress expressed by Laura and Carmilla, parent and child displayed by Lestat and Claudia, husband and wife reflected by Bella and Edward.

What the most striking common feature of all those relationships is the consummation of erotic love which entails a breaking down of established patterns. In detail, the vampire myth, developed in the literature of the Christian era, was perceived as an extension of the image of the Devil and eroticism was condemned by the Church as the work of Satan. Ornella Volta in *Il Vampiro* discusses Christianity, vampirism and sexuality:

¹ cf. *Interview*, 23

[...] to paraphrase Kierkegaard, who accused Christianity of having introduced sexuality into the world by the simple fact of having isolated it under the label of `sin`, we might say that vampirism can also be attributed to Christianity. (qtd. in Bartlett, 167)

It is difficult to pin down whether eroticism is the work of Satan, but we can clearly claim that the concept is definitely stuck to vampires. Eroticism is all about the writing of sex within the context of love and affection, it arouses sexual feelings which are represented explicitly or in some cases through metaphors. For Harvey, "An erotic narrative teases the reader with a series of attempts at seduction which are repeatedly thwarted., (Harvey, 28) What can be called erotic, in other words, are the techniques that "created an illusion of distance" between the reader and the body of the protagonist engaged in sexual action. This illusion of concealment is represented through metaphors and depictions of sexual activity which are defined by deferment and silence.(p. 33) Put it briefly, sex might be delayed until the narrative closes or it might be hidden by a metaphor, yet the reader is in little doubt that something has already taken place or will take place. At this point, it is logical to ask what is regarded as erotic about vampires. The vampire has two sexual features: the first is the complete control over his victims, which he exercises by a combination of concealed sexuality and his magnetism. The second is the noble blood of the vampire, which indicates he is the pure race. This combination of sex and class attracts his victims. As Lee claims, this combination of sexual domination and supernatural power provides an "erotic imagery" and turns the vampire into "a magnet" that is almost impossible to resist. (qtd. in Bartlett, 169)

On the other hand, one might also come to the conclusion that vampires cannot give sexual pleasure at all. Since they are no longer human, it is logical that their bodies do not function, hormones are not produced and their physical responses to arousal stimulation are actually dead in erotically relevant terms. This view has to be taken with a grain of salt due to their need for blood, which urges vampires to prepare themselves for sexual intercourse and perform it through an act of free will. Biting as an ecstasy is vividly depicted through the kiss of a vampire:

[...] drinking the finest champagne and the sensation of the most sensual lovemaking you've ever experienced. Overlay that with the rush the opium fiend feels as he takes that first breath on the pipe. (Achili, prologue,5)

This fatal kiss continues with feeding, which might be expressed as the climax of physical pleasure for the undead. However, it is very important to point out that the mind and emotions play the biggest part in eroticism.

Moreover, there are many ways that eroticism can be manifested and there are several ways for vampires to be erotically active beings. If we can find ways to follow the vampire through his erotic acts, those acts expose some of the fundamental key features of sex in our society. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries focused on passionless woman, the passive Victorian female. This situation dramatically changed at the first half of the eighteenth century which offered transgressive, sexual, independent and threatening women compared to the restrained, sexually passive and conquered female body. (Harvey, 102-103) *Dracula* is a perfect example of this dilemma. On one hand there is Lucy who is sexually aggressive, on the other hand, the innocent housewife, Mina Harker. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, eroticism gave more literary space to the descriptions of women. From the very beginning, women have always been represented as the image of duality, good and evil, life and death, heaven and hell. Even in some cultures, she is the cause of man's fall from grace, her earthy sexuality distracting him from the pursuit of nirvana. This might be the reason that sexually aggressive females like Lucy and Carmilla are punished or even destroyed in those vampire fictions. Although they are sexual seducers, the female orgasm is not depicted very *explicitly* either in *Carmilla* or *Dracula*. However, the orgasm is not the only motif of sexuality, therefore the lack of female orgasm in eroticism does not deny the passions of women.

Another important development of the end of 18th century is the anatomical differences of men and women, which became clear as their bodies were seen as two distinct spheres, relevant as both different and the same. Thaddeus comments on this development:

In the 1700s and before, women were assumed to resemble men. Even their bodies though of course less perfect -were thought to resemble men's. Hence, women were assumed to be sensual and strong, to be nearly as independent after marriage as before. By 1788 this female being who had

been defined chiefly as a lesser man had been redefined as a separate and oppositional being, by 'nature' chaste and domestic.[sic] (Thaddeus, 113)

This development inspired heterosexual desire, which resulted in the depiction of heterosexuality through clear statements of stark sexual differences by many authors. Sexual differences in the eighteenth century were often associated with gender roles, focusing on behavior, pose and activity. Therefore, bodily distinctions that illustrate masculine superiority and feminine inferiority became very functional. For example, the erect penis symbolized masculine superiority whereas the hidden female genitalia had been perceived as "inferior" and "impotent." (Hendershot, 373) Harvey further discusses that eighteenth century erotic culture represented male bodies as "violent" and "powerful", but at the same time "soft" and "vulnerable", whereas female bodies as both "passive" and "devouring."¹ (Harvey, 8) It is likely that man expressed his honor and exercised patriarchal authority through violence, turning women into domesticated and sexually passive figures. In other words, males were in control of the sexuality of their wives, which stressed the social restraints of the eighteenth century .

The binary opposition of this period such as bodies as two distinct spheres depends very much on the popular phenomena, *The Gothic Sublime* by drawing on the philosopher, Edmund Burke's eighteenth century aesthetic theory represented in *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origins of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*. (1756) In Aesthetic Theory, beauty has always been female, pleasing to look at and provided viewers with legitimate pleasure. In contrast to femaleness, maleness has been associated with the sublime, the powerful and the awe-inspiring. (Harvey, 115-114) According to Burke, an object or a person of superior strength is regarded as dangerous by those who are weaker, since they are afraid of this power, which can be used against them or those they love. Burke further submits that beauty, size and vigor are important qualities of admirable, attractive male bodies, but the key characteristic of male genitalia has always been fertility, in this case, transforming the human into a vampire. From this perspective, it is possible to claim that the majesty and reproductive capacity of Edward draws more attention than Dracula's. (McDonald, 19)

Due to the ideas of sublime, erotic culture of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries focused preferably on male sexuality, which is powerful, fundamentally aggressive

¹ see also McGowan, Anthony J. *The Sublime Machine: Conceptions of Masculine Beauty*. p.204-52.

and unpredictable but at the same time irresistible. Especially foreign men were more in the foreground, since they could be more desiring, more vigorous, yet very often despicable. (Harvey, 127) *Dracula*, being the perfect example, represents eroticism with masculine themes, privileging male pleasure and power, suggesting insidious violence towards women. The center of power is phallic, linked with aggressive male sexuality and his erotic advancement. Consequently, his supernatural power within the dominant society poses a threat. Mighall relates *Dracula's* supernatural power to the sexual symbolism in the novel and asserts that eroticism exists only in order to mask the 'real' fear of Victorian culture, the fear of the supernatural itself. (Mighall, 247) This might be the reason why we are scared of him, but at the same time derive great thrills from the rush of adrenalin. All we know is that he is powerful, he has lived more than a thousand years, has great knowledge about the world and, of course, immortal yet a sexual seducer who conveys power through male superiority.

The power of sexual seduction does not only depend on illustrations of masculinity but is also related to fantasy and imagination. Therefore, the ideal settings of vampire fictions reflect more "lush, outdoor, rural settings and calm, tranquil spots" which are "common locations in eroticism until the nineteenth century". (qtd. in Harvey, 148-149) Many writers such as Le Fanu and Bram Stoker are in favor of the innocence of the pastoral, in contrast to the city where it is possible to find anxieties, corruption, lust and luxury. The gloomy atmosphere of those books increases the power of eroticism through sublime settings.

While *Dracula* is infused with heterosexual desire, *Interview* and *Carmilla* seem to display not inward but explicit eroticism through homosexual relationships.¹ In eroticism anal sex is strongly forbidden due to its absurd and dangerous reputation, whereas vaginal, penetrative, heterosexual and productive sex is esteemed. (p. 121) This might be a reason why homosexuality in vampire literature is not easily celebrated. Mark Breitenberg claims: "the female body itself became a contested site of collective and individual masculine identities; anxieties about masculinity were projected onto female bodies and sexualities. „ (Breitenberg, 73). This anxiety is especially reflected through homosexuality and

¹ *The Southern Vampire Mysteries* by Charlaine Harris would be another example of a print vampire narrative that is filled with homosexuality. Alan Ball's popular HBO television series *True Blood* based on this series.

masculinity due to “a homoerotic longing for the buddy.”¹ However, homoeroticism, not even homosexuality, was confronted with increasingly harsh reception in the eighteenth century, yet with more equanimity in *Interview*.²

The consummation of erotic love in *Interview* is characterized by diversity in representations of sexual difference. It is possible to find diverse manifestations of eroticism through both homosexual and heterosexual desires. The homosexual relationship between Louis and Lestat *feminizes* both males during the experience.³ Louis recalls Lestat’s “lips moving against [his] neck” and that “the movement of his lips raised the hair all over [his] body, sent a shock of sensation through [his] body that was not unlike the pleasure of passion.” (Interview, 18) On the other hand, heterosexuality in the novel suggests violation of the female body through an animal-like desire. The memorable point in the novel is the violence against women, which is highly eroticized. During the visit of Louis to the Théâtre des Vampires, Armand feeds on a beautiful young woman, which suggests female bodies are a synonym for food. As for teenage readers, this domestic violence is romanticized:

[...]he [Armand] was lifting her, her back arching as her naked breasts touched his buttons, her pale arms enfolded his neck. She stiffened, cried out as he sank his teeth, and her face was still as the dark theater reverberated with shared passion. His white hand shone on her florid buttocks, her hair dusting it, stroking it. He lifted her off the boards as he drank, her throat gleaming against his white cheek. (Interview, 225-26)

Bataille suggests that domestic violence is indeed the essence of eroticism. It is a necessary substance for *dissolution*. He further argues that in the process of erotic activity, the male has an active role, whereas the female partner carries a passive role. The two spheres strive for dissolution in the ecstasy of union. Bataille actually means disintegration, which is the rejection of being in control. In other words, instead of being in possession of ourselves to command and control our behaviors, we turn into an *Other* than what we think we really are through eroticism.⁴

¹ cf. Harvey, 145.

² see also Alan Bray, *The Body of the Friend* and Hitchcock, *English Sexualities*.

³ Jonathan Harker, in *Dracula* is also feminized during the first half of the novel when Dracula is in control. (see *Dracula*)

⁴ George Bataille. *Eroticism*. Retrieved from: pers-www.wlv.ac.uk/~fa1871/batttext.html

Furthermore, while discussing eroticism and sexual pleasure, it is important to ask what the cause of sexual desire is and through which senses desire is aroused. The physical and sensual experience of desire play a crucial role in the cause and the effect of pleasure. In other words, each of the five different sense plays a part in creating pleasure. It can be provided by an external object such as having a relationship with a lover, or by imagination and fantasy. Those two distinct ways are generally believed to follow gendered lines. Put briefly, women's desires are usually aroused by thinking about men who often react to the physical body before them. In this sense, *Twilight* is an example of an erotic relationship that stems from arousal of the senses. It is likely that the bite functions clearly as a metaphor for sexual intercourse, whereas an innocent kiss might be perceived as a metaphor of taste. The open-mouthed kisses between Edward and Bella might be used to represent Bella's experience of penetration and as for Edward, the taste of blood. Another important sense might be the smell of Bella, which obviously receives the most attention. For example, Edward smells the body of Bella when she comes to the school in the new town, which conveys that Bella is defined through scent more than sight, especially when the wind blows through her hair. Her breath is frequently portrayed as having a pleasant smell. Likewise, sound can also arouse desire. Women are particularly vulnerable to those sounds. Thus, it is necessary for the contemporary vampire to have an attractive voice. Bella describes Edward, stating: "His voice was like melting honey. I could imagine how much more overwhelming his eyes would be." (*Twilight*, 102) Additionally, sight provides pleasure, since it literally carries desire into the body. (Harvey, 212) It is generally believed that the main purpose of the eyes are to signal willingness and attractiveness. *Twilight* suggests gazing into one another's eyes is one of the most sublime joys. Both genders receive and at the same time, transmit desire through the eyes. Therefore, it is possible to observe that the main focus of contemporary vampire literature has become the eyes of vampire instead of lips. Bella emphasizes Edward's golden eyes:

I vividly remembered the flat black color of his eyes the last time he'd glared at me [...] the color was striking against the background of his pale skin and his auburn hair. Today, his eyes were a completely different color: a strange ocher, darker than butterscotch, but with the same golden tone. (*Twilight*, 46)

All in all, in an erotic relationship, touch is the most crucial moment in which lovers experienced each other. Touch is usually combined with other senses together and when concluded with the bite, it demonstrates the peak of desire and sexual thrill. Bella's description of the sense of touch as an inaccessible way to reach Edward indicates that it is the most important sense among the others. "As always, I was electrically aware of Edward sitting close enough to touch, as distant as if he were merely an invention of my imagination." (Twilight, 72) Electricity as a metaphor for desire is illustrated through the sense of touch. "When he [Edward] touched me [Bella], it was as if an electric current had passed through us.,, (Twilight, 38) It seems that touch is displayed less than the other senses in the novel yet it is still very powerful. This can be observed when Edward touches and kisses Bella who consequently faints, creating an almost orgasmic reaction. In the novel any kind of intimacy beyond kissing and hugging is forbidden for Bella's safety. On the surface, this might be considered romantic. However, this conditioned forced chastity is not really romantic. Not only touching and feeling of each other but also talking about sex explicitly are not possible. The only time references to sex occur is when Bella's father Charlie decides to inform his daughter about sexual intercourse.¹ Unspoken sexual desires combined with the lack of touch result in eroticism. The way Edward repeatedly distanced from sex and desire submits power in the hand of him by which he easily takes control of sexual advancement. Moreover, the erotic depictions of male bodies also signify male power. In the novel the male bodies illustrate considerable mastery, authority, and command. This mastery is achieved not simply by exercising power over women, but by men's self-control over themselves and the assertion of some men over others.²

In conclusion, the act of drinking blood has gained erotic overtones and become extremely sexualized in the representations of vampires in literature. Infecting blood is depicted no longer as a threat but a transformation, an erotic act which constitutes the only common feature of all vampires, the rule of being immortal. Desire playing an increasingly essential role in producing people, has become the essence of eroticism. The constitutive character of sexual love and the practice of it are mainly based on two elements: care and the erotic or ecstatic element, which together comprise what is called erotic love, human sexual practice. (Jónasdóttir, 255) However, eroticism is not simply about pleasures of the

¹ see *Eclipse*, 58.

² i.e. Edward versus Jacob.

flesh and carnal desires but also gratification. This is manifested in erotic situations between humans and vampires in order to access to one another's body and mind. From the observations and the analyses made with regard to the discussed literary works, men tend to be in the position of control which allow them access to sexual empowerment, while women's pursuit of sexual pleasure is heavily linked to their subordination.

3. POWERS OF SEXUAL SEDUCTION

Sexuality is an identifiable, analytically distinct dimension of human experience and behavior linked to the notions of desire, particularly shaped by social relationships and activities. As Hennesy (2000) argues, it is about “meanings, practices” and “desires.” (qtd. in Jónasdóttir, 15) Foucault’s analyses of *Technologies of the Self* (1988) promotes the idea that the Self is flexible to attend to culturally, historically, and contextually variable forms. According to Mead (Mead, 175) it is a fluid process, both produced within and bounded by its social context. In other words, gendered sexuality emerges through interaction with others, builds a sense of who is s/he and how s/he is located in relations to others. Therefore, *othering* plays an important part in the constructions of sexuality. In this sense, vampire literature presents new opportunities for sexual experimentation and for developing a more independent sense of sexual subjectivity.

Anthony Giddens mentions a new form of “plastic sexuality”, as he states sexuality is “freed from the needs of reproduction ...[which in turn] frees sexuality from the rule of the phallus, from the overweening importance of male sexual experience.,” (Giddens, 2) In this regard, vampire narratives deal with the form of plastic sexuality, fictionalized constructs and gender roles to see how those are represented to different audiences of different periods and how they result in storylines and themes that may produce troubling gender analyses. Auerbach (1995), Doane and Hodges (1990) claim that vampire narratives are the products of their own time period, while Moretti introduces the concept *Zeitgeist Fallacy* (Moretti, 25) as a tendency to generalize the period in which a work was produced, and the work itself. Therefore, the point of this chapter is to explore if and how those narratives represent their cultural period and interpret sexuality.

The term sexual is particularly *ambiguous* in vampire literature, since it can refer to difference in gender identity, to sexual activity or orientation and to biological difference. This is due to the vampire race which are defined as non-genital creatures and congenitally lack biological markers of sex. They do not possess or use genitals. The ambiguous gender of the vampire makes it precarious to locate the stable female or male features. (Walser, 48) Christopher Craft argues that vampires can socially be both men and women and possess the same body: only one sex organ, *the mouth*. The sexuality of the vampire is thus,

expressed orally through penetration of the fangs which symbolise both male and female genitals:

with its soft flesh barred by hard bone, its red crossed by white, this mouth compels opposites and contrasts into a frightening unity, and it asks some disturbing questions. Are we male or are we female? Do we have penetrators or orifices? And if both, what does that mean? And what about our bodily fluids, the red and the white? What are the relations between blood and semen, milk and blood? Furthermore, this mouth, bespeaking the subversion of the stable and lucid distinctions of gender, is the mouth of all vampires, male and female.
(Craft, 1984:109)

It seems that there is no physical difference between the male and female vampires. Social difference, however, the masculine is depicted as socially superior. Therefore, vampires challenge any traditional classification as male or female; they uncannily live in the human body and provide assumed genital differences between men and women. This situation actually fits the nature of the vampire very well. On one hand, they can easily change their shape to animals, smoke or dust. On the other hand, they are not restricted to only one gender due to their sexual powers. In other words, vampire must have a body to exist psychically, but at the same time he must get rid of it, transcend it. To be a body-in-control makes it necessary that the vampire must have a fluidity in their sexualized forms.

(Winnubst, 6)

As a result of it, one might argue that vampire sexuality begins to lose its specificity. Since *the Self* has been destabilized, gender and sexual identity have been increasingly seen as multiple, fluid and fragmented. (Jónasdóttir, 2) It has become an optional site from which a vampire can choose who s/he wants to be. Another point that it does not matter which gender s/he chooses, unable to use genitals, s/he can reproduce and even give birth. Therefore, it might be logical to claim that in a genderless world the vampire becomes homosexual.

Carmilla echoes the taboo status of homosexuality in Victorian society, yet it does not talk about it explicitly. Interestingly, Showalter asserts that by the 1880s lesbianism was not known officially in public or medical discourse. By 1884, only four cases of lesbian homosexuality had occurred in European and American medical literature, and interestingly they all were transvestites. (Showalter, 23) By the mid-1880s, this new concept drew the

attraction of sexologists and they began to pay more attention to lesbianism. This new pattern, homosexuality which is reflected both in Victorian society and vampire literature can be regarded as the symbol of *sexual anarchy* and indicates clearly the part of a new sexual system.

Many historians such as Michel Foucault argue that male homosexuality and the male homosexual role are actually “the inventions of the late nineteenth century.” (qtd. in Showalter, 14) His arguments might stem from the period of sexual anarchy. Patriarchy explained by Heidi Hartmann as “the causes of sexual inequality between women and men, of male dominance over women.” (Hartmann 5) The term was attacked by not only women but also male artists and intellectuals during the 1890s. Sexual roles and their cultural authority were challenged through this new sexual system. Sexuality was not included within the permanent borderlines of gender categories anymore, since men and women were not as clearly identified and sexually separated as they had been. Many critics describe this period as a battle between the sexes, a period of sexual hostility. (Showalter, 9-11)

George Gissing describes the decades of sexual anarchy: “all the laws that governed sexual identity and behavior seemed to be breaking down.,, Karl Miller further submits that “Men became women. Women became men. Gender and country were put in doubt. The single life was found to harbour two sexes and two nations.,, (qtd. in Showalter, 3) Briefly, the final decades of the nineteenth century can be viewed as a crucial period in the development of modern sexual gender identities and norms, as the 1880s and 1890s witnessed gender struggles to elaborate ‘heterosexual’ and ‘homosexual’ identities.

Eventually, *Fin-de-siècle* Britain redefined masculinity and femininity through the aesthetic movement and the emergence of the New Woman. However, the Aesthete and the New Woman take vampirism as a threat to normality since they view it as a transformation into the unstable ideological reality. According to Hendershot, vampirism maintains new perspectives regarding sexual difference. It has been generally believed that sexual difference is not a biological fact anymore but a conceptual category. For example, women may be able to perform masculine tasks, whereas men can expand the definition of masculinity through feminine attributions which is demonstrated by the Aesthete. (Hendershot, 375) *Fin-de-siècle* attribution of gender roles can be found in Stoker’s *Dracula* in which the vampire serves to secure the boundaries between normal and deviant sexuality. As Bentley puts it, deviant sexual behavior is expressed through the incestuous

relationship that Dracula has with his three daughter figures. Likewise, Demetrakopoulos detects “the suggestion of group sex,, when the three vampire women approach Harker. (Demetrakopoulos, 105) Those relations explicitly display a non-normative sexuality.

Moreover, Bram Stoker draws attention to the distinction between the real womanhood and manhood. By doing so, he actually portrays the gender perception of Victorian culture which tends to meet the standard of ideal masculinity and femininity:

the ideal man is entirely or almost entirely masculine and the ideal women is entirely or almost entirely feminine. Each individual must have a preponderance, be it ever so little, of the cells of its own sex, and the attraction of each individual to the other sex depends upon its place on the scale between the highest and lowest grade of sex. The most masculine man draws the most feminine woman, and vice versa; and so down the scale till close to the borderline in the great mass of persons, who, having only developed a few of the qualities of sex, are easily satisfied to mate with anyone. (Showalter, 8)

Christopher Craft claims that there is an inversion of Victorian gender norms in *Dracula*. (Craft, 1990:169-170) Breaking the traditional stereotypes, the novel centers around the adoption of masculine traits of the female subject which contradicted her biological “womanliness.” (Hendershot, 378) In this sense, Dracula poses an obvious threat as he transforms Lucy and Mina into aggressive, masculine figures. Lucy’s rejection of maternal instincts, her feeding on babies rather than herself feeding them combined with her aggressive sexuality represent her as a demonic version of the New Woman. This description of Lucy resembles very much to the character of Carmilla: both very beautiful and aggressive seducers in vampire stories. However, Lucy as an active female in her sexuality is perceived as a threat to male power position in the novel, which consequently brings her death in the end. In contrast to the powerful female, maleness is drawn into feminization. For instance, the male desire to be penetrated which is enacted in *Dracula*, demonstrates one of the greatest anxieties in the novel.¹

Anne Rice argues that the feminization process of vampire is unavoidable in traditional vampire fictions as vampire is seen as a “metaphorical rapist.”² Indeed, vampire

¹ According to Moretti, *Dracula* tries to impose the reader normality through fear. The social function of the book is to scare its readers in order to make liable to cultural taboos. This is the basic problem of the *Zeitgeist Fallacy* that Moretti elaborates.

² cf. Hollinger, 1989:155.

functions within the framework of the conventional horror story or film, threatens its victims, whether male or female, with a kind of violation, particularly, in the act of physical rape. It is not therefore surprising when the vampire or potential victim is male; he is demasculinized through the bite of the vampire. Hollinger claims that his castration of the antagonist results in feminization. (Hollinger,1989:155) One of the memorable scenes from *Interview* expresses this view through a public exposition. Sex can be either watched or experienced in a different type of erotic penetration: teeth into the flesh. Louis recalls a willing human who derives sexual pleasure from the giving of blood:

Never had I felt this, never had I experienced it, this yielding of a conscious mortal. But before I could push him away for his own sake, I saw the bluish bruise on his tender neck. He was offering it to me now, and I felt the hard strength of his sex beneath his clothes pressing against my leg. A wretched gasp escaped my lips, but he bent close, his lips on what must have been so cold, so lifeless for him; and I sank my teeth into his skin, my body rigid, that hard sex driving against me, and I lifted him in passion off the floor. Wave after wave of his beating heart passed into me as weightless, I rocked with him, devouring him, his ecstasy, his conscious pleasure. (Interview, 230)

Instead of killing his prey, Louis prefers to suck the blood of the victim which probably results in the increase of his sex drive. Cordes discusses: “(v)ampire sex functions slightly different (!) from human sex. Vampire sex is non-tenital. Since vampires do not procreate genitally, these parts of their body are dysfunctional [...].”, (Cordes, 39) The blood exchange between Louis and his male victim in this scene is a perfect example of the vampire version of sex in which the male victim is feminized. The vampire’s attacks on humans might wake associations not only with rape but also “fetish sex, and sadism.” (Walser, 50) For example, an attack on young children by a vampire suggests pedophilia or sucking the blood of its own kind can be perceived as incest. Those sexual deviance breaks society’s sexual norms and taboos, defining any erotic movement potentially either homosexual or bisexual.

Moreover, this combination of deviance from sexual norms is quite unusual in young adult literature. In contrast to the New Woman and the feminized masculinity, *Twilight* represents traditional gender portrayals of strong male characters such as Edward Cullen and Jacob Black who are muscular and extremely brave, whereas Bella and the other girls are depicted weak and mainly under the control of men. Particularly, young adult narratives focus more often on the sexuality of the female characters that they are portrayed as the

more sexually aggressive gender or the more persistent sexual pursuers. Sexualized characters have often been demonized and resulted in the punishment of the female character in narratives like *Dracula* and *Interview with the Vampire*. Although sex as a standard sexual intercourse and sexualized blood exchanges bring a punishable act in all of the selected works, reading sexuality is regarded something positive rather than negative in the young adult narratives. In *Twilight*, Bella receives a painful punishment through pregnancy and childbirth. This underlying motif is not as obvious and fatal in the mainstream vampire texts like *Dracula* and *Interview*, but it is implied and still a strong theme. Displaying the sexual attraction to the Other of gender, *Twilight* emphasizes heterosexual love relations which need to be institutionalized in contemporary society. It is likely that in a heterosexual relationship women are *forced* to commit themselves to loving care so that men can be able to experience ecstasy. (Jónasdóttir, 55) Therefore, male views sex in terms of conquest whereas female is expected to be less experienced. (Giddens, 10, 199) The heterosexual love relationship between the two protagonists of *Twilight* indicates that the postmodern vampire is still innately superior to human beings and is capable of falling love with them.

The unbalanced power in vampire fictions is very often related to the idea of force, or violence and has been identified as a capacity of an individual to control the others or the outcome of a situation. (Jónasdóttir, 109) Therefore, in most cases, sexual power is violently expressed, particularly towards women. According to Jónasdóttir, such violence is not inevitable and often remains as the part of the social construction of masculine desire. (p. 5) The concept of *love power* in this chapter attempts to explain why men are still perceived superior and consequently dominate the weaker gender. In a broader sense, why vampire so powerful is and constructs a sexual threat to both genders in literature.

First of all, this is due to patriarchal organization of heterosexuality which assigns the dominant form of sexual organization. Accordingly, gender relations basically deal with love practices and the struggle, and control over the use of love power in the process of reproduction. (p. 45-46) Since the usual sexual penetration in traditional vampire literature tends to include the typical male vampire and female victim, it is likely that female is more open to be penetrated and controlled by the male counterpart. Nevertheless, it is possible to find many sexually active females in vampire fictions. Lucy, Carmilla, Claudia might be regarded as powerful vamps. The term *vamp* indicates strong-willed, sexual female

character in literature. It also displays “a hyperbolic version of femininity that was self-confident and threatening to a male-dominated society.” (Butler, 180) Those vamps upturn the traditional love power and consequently are punished in most of the literary works.

The power struggle between the two genders dramatically changes when the male vampire starts to threaten the male victim as well. Homosexuality or bisexuality reflected in vampire fictions such as *Carmilla* and *Interview* indicate that both genders are indeed in danger. However, this danger exposes not only subordination but something broader. Bryson draws attention on the importance of generational reproduction in order to provide maintenance of the population and the care of those unable to look after themselves.¹ As discussed before, the sexual penetration very often results in transformation. As a result of this transformation, an individual becomes a vampire which means he or she can no longer produce children. Therefore, the individual’s race is threatened. This is due to the fact that sex is celebrated not simply as a source of simple pleasure, but as a way to repopulation, which indicates that not only the specific gender but also human nature is in danger. Accordingly, the troubled kin relations disappear and sexuality no longer moves in the linear paths of identities and reproductions.

In conclusion, the vampire in a beautiful human form actually interrogates the body politics of its culture. The gendering of the bodies of those monsters as sexually male or female depends on their emotions and actions persistently moves between masculine and feminine ways. Interestingly, they are incapable of sexual intercourse since they have dead bodies, but still possess a *culturally* symbolic phallus which is automatically endowed. (Davis, 158) *Carmilla* and *Dracula* exposing the era of sexual inequality, prey on women who are depicted naturally weaker. With the progress of the sexual politics between men and women, sex has become enjoyable for both partners and thus, engaged in between two equals. With the emergence of homosexuality, which threatens the traditional norm in the 20th and 21st century fiction, the vampire has become a significant stand for queer and lesbian theory. Homosexuality still continues to signify deviant sexuality with penetrating teeth in the softness of the mouth and problematizes any easy distinctions between the masculine and the feminine in vampire literature. In addition to the problematic sexuality, most of the vampire fictions empower masculinity and expose violence towards sexually active women, indicating the power of the vampire can never be underestimated. For

¹ cf. Jónasdóttir, 61.

instance, in *Twilight* Bella exclusively acts as a minion or underling to the powerful vampire, Edward. Meyer's depictions of traditional female identity largely prevent Bella from playing a dominant role in the novel. Prevalent to the genre, she is described as absolutely powerless. However, in the course of the series, she defies traditional feminine roles once she is bitten, and finally becomes a powerful and an active woman by turning into a vampire.

4. VAMPIRE FUNCTIONS AS OTHER

Through the comparative analysis of texts, this chapter has sought to explore the concept of the Other and represent how the notion functions in different ways. Alterity, or otherness, is a notion defining that “which is other than the originator.” (Walser, 3) In *The Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807) Hegel asserts that every human being is actually come to an existence by what is outside of himself: “Das Selbstbewusstsein ist an und für sich, indem und dadurch dass es für ein Anderes an und für sich ist; d.h. es ist nur als ein Anerkanntes. „ (Hegel, 11-19) ¹ Thus, societies can only exist through their recognition by an Other. In other words, the subject needs the recognition of another subject in order to affirm his place in the world as a subject who is perceived but not as an object who is looked upon. Consequently, otherness plays a significant role in the construction of subject formation.

Winnubst finds the vampire insufficient in regard to the subject formation. According to her, otherness is that which we white, rational, upstanding subjects depend on and simultaneously reject. In other words, we disavow our dependence by announcing ourselves as freely created individuals and freely chosen subjects (Winnubst, 3) She further asserts that the vampire in this sense cannot be the Other since it isn't “straight, white, male body-in-control: it has no mirror reflection.” (p.8) Particularly, in Christianity, the lack of a mirror reflection is usually associated with the lack of a soul. The vampire, lacking a mirror reflection and literally a soul, does not provide the necessary identity formation. In other words, he does not have the necessary condition in order to become a subject. Consequently, he can neither be fully categorized nor expelled as the Other. However, the vampire's inability to reflect himself in the mirror does not indicate that he cannot manifest the necessary visual image to be coded. Although Gomez claims that the vampire “floats” and it is a “slippery” term therefore, cannot be neatly categorized as the Other,² This view has to be taken with a grain of salt because the understanding of both Self and Other are always *culturally* relative, and subject to shifting criteria of identification.³

¹ online source: www.zeno.org/Philosophie.

² cf. Gomez, 154.

³ see Homi Bhabha (1990) for further discussions of the positions of otherness.

David Punter defines the Gothic as the “literature of alienation.” (Punter, 1996:197) Expressing our alienation from our humanness, the vampire suggests an illusionary transcendence to culturally imposed restraints on the body and the self. Particularly, in Gothic fiction, the assertion of an Other is inevitable. Judith Halberstam claims:

The Gothic novel...establishes the terms of monstrosity that were to be, and indeed were in the process of being, projected onto all who threatened the interests of a dwindling English nationalism. As the English empire stretched over oceans and continents, the need to define an essential English character became more and more pressing. Non-nationals, like Jews, for example, but also like the Irish or Gypsies, came to be increasingly identified by their alien natures and the concept of ‘foreign’ became ever more closely associated with a kind of parasitical monstrosity, a non-reproductive sexuality, and an anti-English character. (Halberstam, 16)

First of all, as Foust argues that the Other is created through the projection of undesirable, unspeakable material which embodied the form of *vampire-aliens*.¹ The depiction of this undesirable material is expressed through binary oppositions such as inside versus outside, human versus alien, masculine versus feminine. Binary thinking should also provide hierarchy since one of the terms is always privileged over the other such as inside over outside, human over alien, masculine over feminine. The confrontation between those opposite spheres has become the typical storyline of the genre and dominated vampire literature.

Secondly, vampires have been attributed the power to alter their shape at will, taking the form of animals, plants and even the inanimate objects. Thus, the vampire functions as the Other of its time. As Mladan Dolar puts forward: “The monster can stand for anything our culture has to repress; the proletariat, sexuality, other cultures, alternative ways of living, heterogeneity, the Other.” (qtd. in Walser, 2) Moreover, Freud’s theory of the uncanny is mainly based on the repressions of fears and ideas which are considered taboo within the cultural norms of society. Gothic literature provides the reader with the uncanny through the visions of the unacceptable aspects of human experience, reflecting the ideas behind the social systems. In this sense, the human fear of otherness can be regarded as a narcissistic fear that what we see, reflected in the Other might be what we really are. According to Freud, the likeness of Other and Self causes a terror to arise of a

¹ cf. Hollinger, 1989:154.

blurring of boundaries, which is overcome by presenting the Other as radically different. Therefore, the notion might be perceived as comfortingly distant and negative. (p. 4)

In the *Historie de la folie á Páge classique*¹ Michael Foucault discusses that “every society, in each historical epoch has something against which it defines itself negatively. „ (qtd. in Butler, 9) In regard to vampire fiction, his works suggest different ways to think about those monsters, whose opposite is humanity. It is likely that mankind tends to “reject monsters’ existence in order to set apart a safe place for itself.„ (Butler, 9-10) This is exactly the case in *Dracula*. At the end of the eighteenth century, the industrial revolution had weakened the prestige and political power of the aristocrats. The rising middle class felt threatened by the growing working class and aristocrats. The Victorian vampire became a threateningly foreign Other due to the political unrest of the time. Dracula’s lack of Christianity, sexuality and supernatural powers define him as an alien and Other. Another feature which supports the idea of otherness in the novel would be the mirror-effect. As discussed before, vampires have no reflection and cast no shadow. The Count is a perfect example for this and thus, the perfect embodiment of the foreigner. Additionally, his godlike supernatural powers and his alterity are the stock features of the typical undead and they differentiate Dracula from those features of human beings, which supports the idea of his Otherness.

Furthermore, cultural studies mainly deals with the construction of a cultural Other in order to establish a cultural identity. Edward Said, one of the most influential scholars in cultural studies, argues in his work *Orientalism* (1978) “The orient, rather than an actual place, is a construction of ideologically charged Western discourse in order to establish a difference and inferiority to the colonizing occident.„ (qtd. in Walser, 5) Therefore, the Other as in case of Stoker’s *Dracula* is depicted as unfamiliar and foreign, but at the same time something constructed and artificial, *radically* different. Consequently, this difference of Other and Self bring the instinctive fear of the Other which is a key factor in horror and fantasy literature. It is likely that the sense of otherness is evoked by the horror of the uncanny due to its mysterious power, which is the part of its qualities of secretness and of hiddenness from public knowledge. Gomez puts forward, “horror stories have always lived in the dark, in those fearsome places we’ve been taught to hate. Yet writers are continually

¹ see *Madness and Civilization*, 1965.

drawn to them,, (qtd. in McDonald, 174) In order to overcome the instinctive fear of the unknown, the Other has to be more familiar.

By the end of the 19th century, the vampire became more familiar and turned into a likeable outsider. One of the representatives of the sympathetic vampire is *Interview with the Vampire*. In order to provide a different kind of Otherness, *Interview* takes place in a multicultural, exotic setting:

It was filled not only with the French and Spanish of all classes,...but with immigrants of all kinds, the Irish, the German...There were not only the black slaves,...but the great growing class of the free people of colour, those marvellous people of our mixed blood...And then there were the Indians,...selling herbs and crafted wares. (Interview, 32)

In this exotic world within diverse ethnicity, the vampires in *Interview* stand for the Other concerning their undead position and their blood-drinking. They even hint that the terror of the Other is already over in this new world. Describing the Eastern vampire old fashioned, Louis states: "We had met the European vampire, the creature of the Old World. He was dead.,, (Interview, 153) This statement can be interpreted as "Americanization or the occidentalization of the vampire ." (Walser, 30) Thus, it is possible to conclude that the Other is no longer threatening the society. The concept is even celebrated and has become fashionable. The main reason of it might be the shift of the reader's perspectives. It is likely that readers of that time seek to be different from the rest of society, to be an Outsider; therefore, they want to attract the attention of people. Carter supports this idea, asserting: "Where the vampire's otherness posed a terrifying threat for the original readers of *Dracula*, however, today that same alien quality is often perceived as an attraction.,, (qtd. in Bentley, 29)

The vampire in contemporary literature is no longer an expression of terror but a useful medium to recreate ourselves, which may help to explain its enormous popularity and the existence of a large vampire fan culture. Hollinger expresses that vampires have become "the monster-of-choice since it is, itself a deconstructive figure." As she further elaborates, "It is the monster that *looks like us*.,, (Hollinger, 201) Many scholars believed that due to the mirror effect, vampires actually represent society, the culture of its time period. That is why the vampire has been depicted as the monster in literature that is

closest to us, seducing us into its erotically charged feeding frenzies. It is a fact that the vampire is influenced by the set of values which dominate cultural production. For example, *Twilight* produces both seductive and conservative representations of the vampire as an Outsider and functions as the critiques of social marginalization in the United States.

To sum up, the concept of the Other in vampire fiction has become a key point in regard to understanding the politics of power displayed in those texts. The authors have used many literary devices in order to intensify the vampire's nature of Otherness. For example, due to the radical alterity of the persecutory vampire Dracula, readers set themselves apart from him, whereas they embrace otherness of the vampires from *Interview* as a source of empathy and identification. Being Other, in most cases is attributed to the lure of the Gothic vampire whose abilities are both to represent what is unaccepted and to speak about anxieties of his period. Particularly, the sexuality of the vampire allows him to free himself from acting properly according to the norms of the dominant culture. With the emergence of the contemporary vampire, the terrorizing effect of otherness is reduced and the vampire has become a likeable outsider, a concept widely celebrated in the twenty-first century.

5. MAINSTREAM VAMPIRE NARRATIVES

5.1. Celebrating Lesbian Sexuality in *Carmilla*

It is generally believed that vampires come from Central Europe, where the borders of Europe and the Orient become intertwined. It is the reason that many vampire stories are set in Austrian, German or Hungarian territories which include lands historically in Ottoman possession. This Gothic villainy is called *Oriental* and wields terror in those stories. The novel of Sheridan Le Fanu, *Carmilla* (1872) introduces the monster as a threat to European homelands.

Carmilla might be regarded as a post-colonial narrative. First of all, Laura, the young protagonist of the novel, bears “an English name.” (*Carmilla*, 72) and speaks English with her father, although she “never saw England.” (*Carmilla*, 72) Her mother is a Styrian lady and her father an Englishman who serves in the Austrian Service. Laura grows up calling England her home to where she has never set foot. On the other hand, she refers to the place where she has grown up at as primitive while celebrating national identity over an identification with her native country, England. All those points remark that Laura, herself is actually colonized. What we know about her home is that it “lays in the direction of the west.” (*Carmilla*, 89) In the light of a post-colonial reading, the vampire’s execution at the end of the novel might be understood as symbolizing the colonizers fear of the colonized people. Colonialization through location, particularly, setting the story in an isolated castle is very significant. Laura who lives with her father in a grandiose castle, is not formally introduced into society. This might be considered as an attempt to protect her from male influence. It seems that the house represents the traditional sphere of the Victorian female ideal of the *Angel in the House*.¹ It is interesting that men are able to protect their daughters, sisters, and wives from other men, yet they cannot shield them from other women. Wales puts forward that “The particular threat of the lesbian Other consist in the perceived powerlessness of the patriarchal system against it.,, [sic] (*Walser*, 56) Due to the lack of a social environment, Laura has had no chance to acquire a sexual identity for herself. The

¹ cf. wikipedia. *The Angel in the House* is a title of a 1854 poem by Coventry Patmore.

only person who provides her with the heterosexual role is her mother. Therefore, Laura's reaction to Carmilla offers a lack of focus on sexual orientation, which makes her a vulnerable target to the female vampire's seduction. Carmilla's lesbian advancement becomes a threat to Laura's underdeveloped heterosexual identity. Laura's first encounter with Carmilla occurs when she is six years old. She describes this moment:

Very pretty face looking at me from the side of the bed. It was that of a young lady who was kneeling, with her hands under the coverlet. I looked at her with a kind of pleased wonder, and ceased whimpering. She caressed me with her hands, and lay down beside me on the bed, and drew me towards her smiling; I felt immediately delightfully soothed, and fell asleep again.
(Carmilla,75)

Carmilla appears often in Laura's dreams. Sleep is mainly associated with physical and mental vulnerability, both in the realm of the vampire and in medieval demonology. (Bartlett, 162) In *Carmilla*, the vampire attacks when sleep leaves her victim defenseless and her senses numbed. The terror and tension reach their peak when the victim cannot do anything against the enemy which attacks. It is likely that Carmilla tends to impose on Laura through a voyeuristic pleasure as she often visits Laura in her dreams. In one of Laura's nightmares, she is bitten by a cat-like beast which later takes the form of a female figure. Carmilla uses her supernatural powers in order to reach Laura. It seems that she gains pleasure from watching the effect of her touch. Carmilla's sexual advancement is very powerful and effective:

There came a sensation as if a hand was drawn softly along my cheek and neck. Sometimes it was as if warm lips kissed me, and longer and more lovingly as they reached my throat, but there the caress fixed itself. My heart beat faster, my breathing rose and fell rapidly and full drawn; a sobbing, that rose into a sense of strangulation, supervened, and turned into a dreadful convulsion, in which my senses left me, and I became unconscious.
(Carmilla, 106)

This scene might be regarded as the moment of orgasm caused not by a man but by another woman. Through this homoerotic relationship, she undermines patriarchal privileging of heterosexual relations. One might also conclude that the vampire manifests her time's perceptions of culture and nature; emphasizes the latter's superiority over the former. The

victims of the Romantic vampire are the vivid representations of their time's child-like female ideal, reflect the fear of a corruption of innocence, a distorted female Other. The homoerotic attraction of Carmilla seems to be a secret desire in order to shatter culturally imposed taboos of that time and simply follow one's nature. Thus, Carmilla can be viewed as the original prototype of lesbian vampires. She seduces Laura in such highly erotic terms that at one point the reader might wonder whether Carmilla is a young man in disguise. Ernest Jones comments in *On the Nightmare*: "one of the most important discoveries was that morbid dread always signifies repressed sexual wishes.,, (qtd. in Punter, 2004:269)

Furthermore, the main point of the story, as it can be observed, is the sexual maturation of Laura from an innocent naive girl into a sexually conscious woman. This transformation is briefly illustrated by Carmilla: "Girls are caterpillars" and have to "die as lover's may-to die together so that they may live together" in order to become "butterflies" (Carmilla, 95) At first, Laura seems sexually unconscious and innocent like a typical Victorian lady, whereas Carmilla tends to be sexually aggressive and very dangerous. She sometimes makes romantic advances towards Laura, but does not divulge anything about herself or her background. Her secrecy lends her yet more mystery, drawing Laura into her. She apparently takes advantage of Laura's innocence:

Sometimes, after a hour of apathy, my strange and beautiful companion would take my hand and hold it with a fond of pressure, renewed again and again; blushing softly, gazing in my face with languid and burning eyes, and breathing so fast that her dress rose and fell with the tumultuous respiration. [...] And with gloating eyes she drew me to her, and her hot lips travelled along my cheek in kisses. (Carmilla, 90)

Carmilla's success as a prominent seducer is combined with her physical beauty and a captivating voice. Her advances are obviously both attractive and repulsive:

The truth is, I felt rather unaccountably towards the beautiful stranger. I did feel, as she said, drawn towards her but there was also something of repulsion. In this ambiguous feeling, however, the sense of attraction immensely prevailed. She interested and won me; she was so beautiful and so indescribably engaging. (Carmilla, 87)

Walser submits that those encounters between Laura and Carmilla explicitly wake association with “a lesbian liaison.” (Walser, 55) Laura confesses that the main reason of this attraction is the appearance of Carmilla. She is charming, sexually conscious and very beautiful. Ken Gelder points out that Carmilla definitely produces an uncanny effect in Laura who recognizes her from a dream she had in childhood. It seems that there is a blending between the two females such that “ultimately, it is difficult to tell who had been haunting who.” (Gelder, 1994:45) Although Carmilla is the initiator of this homoerotic relationship, after her destruction, Laura seems to continue to have sexual relationship *only* with women since it is impossible for Laura to think about a male lover.

Carmilla, an earlier vampire to Dracula, projects his antithesis. She is not remote and solitary like Dracula, but more intimate and connected by suggesting a sharing and a blending that can only occur outside of patriarchal sexual influence. Positioning the narrative voice on the human side, *Carmilla* is narrated by the victim, Laura, while she is both repelled and thrilled by the vampire’s advances. Providing an alternative image of romantic female eroticism by creating the marginal self as a lesbian vampire, Carmilla turns into a threat to patriarchal heterosexual relations in which men are in control. Therefore, Carmilla, just like Stoker’s Lucy, is executed in an act of putting down the female sexuality in order to restore the patriarchal order. As Davis states, the sexual overtones of her death can be regarded as the “assertion of ‘rightful’ supremacy of men over the bodies of women.” (Davis, 46) The novel was probably considered shockingly perverse for the time the book was written; however, it has managed to become one of the classics of the vampire genre. *Carmilla* has been the inspiration for countless movies. For example, *The Vampire Lovers* (1970), *Lust for a Vampire* (1971) and *Twins of Evil* (1971) are the fairly faithful adaptations of *Carmilla*, produced by the British Hammer Film Productions.

5.2 *Dracula*: Victorian Society's Fear of the Unknown

Jonathan Harker: But there was no reflection of him in the mirror! (*Dracula*, 30)

Stoker's *Dracula* is a combination of fact and fiction. The word, *Dracula*¹ has two meanings: firstly, Latin word *Draco* meaning serpent or dragon, indicates the Romanian prince Vlad Tepes (1431-76) who was the member of the Order Of the dragon, especially famous among Turks. Secondly, in medieval Christian belief, the dragon was the symbol of Devil which represents Tepes as an evil doer. (Butler, 108)

The novel starts with a journey to the East. According to Edward Said, Harker's journey is to the East or Orient, predominantly depicted like a quest for the heart of darkness.² It is a move from civilization to barbarism. For example, the Slovaks are described through Harker's British sensibilities as "more barbarian than the rest." (Stoker, 11) However, Harker's knowledge of Transylvania comes only from the books he has read, as does Dracula's knowledge of England, yet Dracula is more competent. He also has a good knowledge of English and British customs. In that sense, he is the perfect Other. Harker asserts "For a man who was never in the country, and who did not evidently do much in the way of business, his knowledge and acumen were wonderful.,, (Stoker, 35) According to Carol A. Senf and Stephen D. Arata, as a foreigner, *Dracula* may present the British fears of colonization by other countries and cultures. (McDonald, 107) It is easy to relate this fear particularly to Stoker's period, during which invasion literature was at a peak. Many tales with terrific creatures threatening the British Empire emerged during the late 19th century.³

One might also conclude that the setting represents the polarity of the East and the West; England and Transylvania as the novel suggests "distinctly political overtones" (Arata, 87) In that sense, *Dracula* questions the power of the East due to the decay of the Ottoman Empire which was the focus of British foreign policy during the 19th century. *Dracula* is

¹ Dracula is a cultural outsider who does not represent Western values. Any stranger or outside influences would be inevitably repressive. (see Fatuus, 2009).

² cf. Showalter, 180.

³ cf. wikipedia, *Dracula*.

therefore a political enemy, a sexual deviant and the “foreign Other” with his eastern blood. He is obviously an open threat who tries to “colonize” Western society. (p. 88) On the other hand, as Walser offers, the polarity of “the East and the West, Dracula and Harker, Other and Self are not actually all that different from each other and seem to literally merge at times.” This is due to the mirror effect; when Harker wants to see Dracula in the mirror, he cannot see him but his own reflection, literally the reflection of imperialism. (Walser, 17) Arata comments on it:

Stoker continuously draws our attention onto the affinities between Harker and Dracula, as in the often cited scene where Harker looks for Dracula in the mirror, but only sees himself. [...] In the Gothic mirror that Stoker holds up to Victorian culture, that culture, like Harker peering into the glass at Castle Dracula, cannot see, but it is nevertheless aware of, its monstrous double peering over its shoulder. (Arata, 94)

The merging of the two becomes more apparent when Harker arrives at the castle of Dracula and subsequently, turning into a feminized man: he becomes the part of Dracula’s harem.¹ Edward Said puts forward that the metonymic decrease of power between feminine and Eastern was very common in the nineteenth century. He further submits that “the Oriental was linked thus to elements in Western society, having in common an identity best described as lamentably alien.” (Said, 207) Consequently, the vampire changes the ideal male subject who can no longer base his authority.

Moreover, this Gothic setting where the story takes place, increases its embodiment of the Other. Wood comments on the choice of this particular setting and suggests that the “gloomy atmosphere” (Wood, 65) of the setting displays the difference between the vampires and their human antagonists. At the same time this technique or distancing effect helps the idea that “the story was actually true.”²

¹ According to Said, the Eastern male subjects threatens with his powerful sexuality yet this threat seems to be a superficial. (Said, p.311) The Eastern sultan, Dracula takes Jonathan’s masculinity from him, turns him into a Harem woman, but the eventual destruction of Dracula apparently reveals that his threat has been exaggerated.

² cf. Ibid., p.65.

When a monster already removed from the reader spatially and psychologically becomes removed narratively as well, becomes a creature accessible only through several layers of narrative filtering, that monster more than ever becomes something outside the reader's experience. (Wood, 67)

Another point which ensures the position of the vampire as the Other is the epistolary narrative technique which includes a compendium of diaries, journals, letters, newspaper articles, and the other forms of eyewitness reports. The main writers of those techniques are the novel's protagonists since Dracula has no voice, no point of view. This situation maintains his position as the most terrifying creature because he is an almost completely unknown and mysterious figure. It keeps the outsider on the outside.

The introduction of the vampire, Dracula is delayed which functions to create the suspense of the moment. According to Gelder, this delaying information is actually a typical method for this genre. (Gelder, 1994:2) The Count enters the scene very late, although the reader gets the idea that the story is about a vampire who is disguised as a human being at the very beginning. Unlike Carmilla, Dracula is described as very disgusting, animal-like. As Harker notes:

His face was a strong [...] aquiline, with high bridge of the thin nose and peculiarly arched nostrils; with lofty domed forehead, and hair growing scantily round the temples, but profusely elsewhere. His eyebrows were very massive, almost meeting over the nose, with bushy hair [...]. The mouth, so far as I could see it under the heavy moustache, was fixed and rather cruel-looking with peculiarly sharp white teeth; these protruded over the lips, whose remarkable ruddiness showed astonishing vitality. [...] [...] his ears were pale and at the tops extremely pointed; the chin was broad and strong [...]. The general effect was one of the extraordinary pallor. [...] Strange to say, there were hairs in the centre of the palm. The nails were long and fine, and cut to a sharp point. [...] his breath was rank. (Dracula, 23)

He tends to be a flat character with only few fully developed traits of personality. He does not display any particular features other than evilness and an ugly appearance. In the same vein, Auerbach (1995) identifies the Count as "aloof, alien, cold and impersonal." (qtd. in Punter, 2004:271) Furthermore, Dracula is very powerful; he is not a seductive creature but still possesses a controlling influence. For example, he can transform himself into animals or dust, intrudes insidiously into the minds of his victims like Mina and Lucy. Those features

give him godlike powers and make him a supernatural creature. The radical alterity of Dracula attacks the order of society in a visible manner. However, he still has limits:

He may not enter anywhere at the first, unless there be someone of the household who bid him to come. [...] His power ceases, as does that of all evil things, at the coming of the day. Only at certain times can he have limited freedom. [...], he can only change himself at noon or at exact sunrise or sunset. [...], he can only pass running water at the slack or the flood of the tide. Then there are things which so afflict him that he has no power, as the garlic [...] and as for things sacred, as this symbol, my crucifix [...] (Dracula, 215)

Additionally, narrative voice constitutes the fictive universe, and accordingly, conceals or reveals the character's thoughts and actions in order to move the story along the path which leads, in the end, to its unavoidable climax. Despite Dracula's divine status -he is obviously a godlike figure- interestingly, human characters seem to be in power since they control the narrative. Therefore, Dracula is not the hero of his tale. The fatal silence of Dracula might be regarded as the threat of the unknown, and proves deadly to the one who is silenced or whose desires are interpreted only by outsiders. Especially, the diaries are very effective and helpful, since they describe the events as they happen. At a first level of reading they are a useful auctorial device which consequently provides a gloomy and an oppressive atmosphere. (Bartlett, 162)

The sexual aspect of *Dracula* has been the focal point in the novel. In the 19th century, writing about homosexuality was a taboo. On the surface, *Dracula* seems to be a heterosexual man's tale; however, there are several implications which might prove the opposite. Harker writes in his diary: "As the Count leaned over me and his hands touched me, I could not repress a shudder." (Dracula, 23-24) In Transylvania, sexuality is fluid, Dracula desires men as well as women, and men like Harker can also become passive victims of vampire seductresses. Harker closes his eyes, waits with beating heart to be penetrated by the female vampire, but Dracula flings her away, exclaiming "This man belongs to me!" (p. 42) This scene displays inwardly strong hints of homoeroticism. Although it might seem that Dracula will seduce another male, he never drains or penetrates explicitly in the novel. Theoretically, he has already drunk men's blood due to Van Helsing's infusions of their

blood into Lucy's veins. Those encounters bring some speculations into mind that Dracula can also be regarded as homosexual, yet it is not explicitly displayed.

Furthermore, many critics have detected in the novel "seduction, rape, necrophilia, pedophilia, incest, adultery, oral sex, group sex, menstruation, venereal disease, voyeurism – enough to titillate the most avid sexual appetite."¹ (Leatherdale, 155-156) Although sex plays an essential role in the novel, there is no direct mention of it. However, it is easy to track its implications. The first sexually loaded scene in the novel portrays Jonathan Harker while being seduced by three female vampires. He feels both terror and thrill at the same time:

There was something about them that made me uneasy, some longing and at the same time some deadly fear. I felt in my heart a wicked, burning desire that they would kiss me with those red lips...I lay quiet, looking out under my lashes in an agony of delightful anticipation. [...] I could feel the soft shivering touch of the lips on the super-sensitive skin of my throat, and the hard dents of two sharp teeth, just touching and pausing there. I closed my eyes in a languorous ecstasy and waited- waited with beating heart. (Stoker, 40-41)

The vampire's mouth in general is an important contributing factor in vampires' performance of several distinct sexual functions. According to Craft, the mouth of the vampire is the primary site of erotic experience in *Dracula*: "luring at first with an inviting orifice, a promise of red softness, but delivering instead a piercing bone, the vampire mouth fuses and confuses." (qtd. in Davis, 164) The scene above displays that Harker is deeply aroused by the female vampires and focuses on the mouth of the female vampire. The act of feeding thus becomes a metaphor for oral sex. It can be clearly observed that in this sex scene the female is the aggressor and the male is more passive, lying, waiting and also wanting to be penetrated by her bite. Gail Griffin puts forward: "The vampire women in *Dracula* represent the worst nightmare and dearest fantasy of the Victorian male: the pure girl turned sexually ravenous beast." (qtd. in Davis, 53) Indeed, it is very clear that when the first woman tries to penetrate him with her teeth, she inverts traditional female/male sex roles. Their ability to feed on children particularly results in the rejection of what seems to be the most important gender role for a Victorian woman, *motherhood*. In that sense, Ken

¹ For an informative discussion of the sexual politics in *Dracula*, see Gail B. Griffin's essay: "Your Girls That You All Love Are Mine": *Dracula* and the Victorian Male Sexual Imagination."

Gelder suggests that the novel can be read as “acting out a hatred towards sexually independent women typical of misogynous fin-de-siècle culture.” (Gelder, 1994:77) The monster as a female vampire is more threatening to Harker as he puts forward “nothing can be more dreadful than those awful women.” (Dracula, 43)

It seems that the fear of a sexually aggressive female ¹ reappears in *Dracula*. This fear can be explained in regard to the feminization of men as a reaction to dominant, masculine women who are taking over control. Walser submits “Where the female vampire reflects male fear of the sexual female, the male vampire represents a primal and instinctive form of virility challenging the domesticated masculinity of ‘civilized’ society.” (Walser, 82) Jonathan Harker is a perfect example of repressed sexuality. Although he is supposed to be sexually conscious, he is quite passive while the three female vampires are, in contrast, aggressively sexual. His feminization reaches its climax when he faints and carried to his bed in Dracula’s arms. After this encounter, he can clearly be categorized as a sexually impotent man. His wife Mina worries about him but at the same time questions her husband’s lack of masculinity in a letter to Lucy: “Jonathan wants looking after still.[...] He was terribly weakened by the long illness. [...] However, thank God, these occasions grow less frequent as the days go on, and they will in time pass away altogether, I trust.” (Dracula, 141)

Furthermore, Dematrakopoulos (1977) argues that “the novel embodies a collective dream reflecting Victorian sex roles and repression” focusing on “different types of women.” (qtd. in Click, 44) On one hand, there is a “villainous portrayal of Lucy”, “aggressive, wildly erotic” and “inhuman.” (Senf, 1982:34) On the other hand, Mina Harker “[...] is the antithesis of these destructive creatures” and a perfect example of “the late Victorian New Woman.” (p.34) Senf further comments on a fictionalized depiction of the Victorian age’s New Woman of the 1890s, and describes her as more frank and open about sex, comfortable in initiating sexual relationships, intellectual, independent and open to exploring alternatives to the expected life choices of marriage and motherhood.² Although Mina does not pose a sexual threat to men, she challenges traditional gender roles. Politically, she is an anarchic figure who threatens to turn the world upside down. (Showalter, 39) For example, she is an economically independent woman whose intellectual capacities are appreciated by her male counterparts. She acts sometimes independently

¹ i.e. *Carmilla*.

² cf. Click, 43.

without taking permission of her husband and, therefore, seems to be surprisingly fearless. All those features provide her to be the New Woman.

Although Keesey alleges an implied homosexual relationship between the two women in *Dracula*, by claiming the relationship is “castrated with the staking of the vampire by Victorian social forces”¹, the explicit female homoerotic relationship displayed in Le Fanu’s *Carmilla* cannot be detected in Stoker’s *Dracula*. It is likely that female desire focuses on men, or in their absence on children. It can also be understood from the dialog between Lucy and Mina that heterosexual marriage is always favored and approved of by the two young women. Lucy often writes to her best friend Mina and talks with her about clothes, marriage and social visits. All the single men court Lucy and she seems to be happy about it. Although she has a fiancé, Arthur Holmwood, she loves the interest of the other men around her. She writes to her friend: “why can’t they let a girl marry three men, or as many as want her, and save all this trouble?” (*Dracula*, 59) She also writes about her fiancé: “Oh, Mina, I love him; I love him; I love him! [...] I do not know how I am writing this even to you. I am afraid to stop...and I don’t want to stop.” (*Dracula*, 56) It is likely that Lucy’s extreme sexual energy tends to assert sexual promiscuity, an underlying vulnerability to sexual temptation. In other words, it reflects openness toward sexual relations.

Showalter comments that Lucy² represents “the sexual daring” of the New Woman. (Showalter, 181-182) Lucy rejects her mother role which is the most important function of a Victorian wife. Instead of feeding a child and being a mother, she turns into a vampire and might feed on children. This lack of maternal feeling displays the female vampire’s perverted femininity. Women who are sexually open were depicted as immoral during the Victorian era. Therefore, she is rightfully destructed at the end of the novel, which is reflected as an exorcism of the power of patriarchy.

The thing in the coffin writhed; and a hideous, blood curdling screech came from the opened red lips. The body shook and quivered and twisted in wild contortions; the sharp white teeth champed together till the lips were cut, and the mouth was smeared with a crimson foam. But Arthur never faltered. He looked like a figure of Thor as his untrembling arm rose and fell, driving deeper and deeper the mercy-bearing stake. (*Dracula*, 194)

¹ qtd. in McDonald, 176.

² Her name might be also interpreted as a derivative of *Lucifer*.

Freud resembles this scene to the castration anxieties in *Medusa's Head*.¹ The severed head also seems to be a way to control the New Woman by separating the mind from the body. (Showalter, 182) In other words, *Dracula* identifies with the body of the white female and thereby controls her. Another interpretation is that this scene wakes associations with both "rape" and "violent orgasm." (Davis, 58) First of all, the opened red lips illustrate Lucy while performing sexually, and the twisted, shivered body depicts the moment in which Lucy reaches a climax. Burton Hatlen submits that "Sexual intercourse is here seen as an act of brutal aggression which results in death." (qtd. in Davis, 86) After she is staked by Arthur, she finds redemption. This kind of violence towards Lucy is applied by Dracula who uses his fangs, and Arthur who prefers to use a stake. Both penetrate Lucy, yet it is open to discussion of who is worse in his treatment of the female body. According to Victorian sexual discourses, the violent staking of Lucy can be read as an erotically charged corpse mutilation which may have produced terror amongst many readers.

Mina Harker, unlike her friend Lucy, seems to be an ideal Victorian wife. When her husband holds her by the arm in public, she considers it inappropriate. Woolf briefly comments on Mina and puts forward "She was intensely sympathetic. She was immensely charming. She was utterly unselfish. She excelled in the difficult arts of family life. She sacrificed daily. If there was a chicken, she took the leg; if there was a draught she sat in it[...]Above all, she was pure."² (Wood, 2, 285) As Woolf argues, Mina is an ideal family woman: she is willing to sacrifice herself for her husband, relieve her man of worries, and obediently accept every decision made by him, especially by patriarchal power. The modest woman, Mina Harker can only be co-operative in sex and seduced in her marital bed:

Kneeling on the near edge of the bed facing outwards was the white-clad figure of his wife, By her side stood a tall, thin man, clad in black [...] With his left hand he held both Mrs. Harker's hands, keeping them away with her arms at full tension. His right hand gripped her by the back of the neck, forcing her face down on his bosom. Her white nightdress was smeared with blood, and a thin stream trickled down the man's bare chest which was shown by his torn-open dress. The attitude of the two had a terrible resemblance to a child forcing a kitten's nose into a saucer of milk to compel it to drink.(Dracula, 251-252)

¹ The same castration anxieties can also be seen in *The Man Who Would be King* by Rudyard Kipling.

² Woolf, *Professions for Women*. 1996.

Additionally, what makes Mina special is her intelligence. Van Helsing claims that she has a “man’s brain, -a brain that a man should have were he much gifted.” (Dracula, 210-211) The important question here is why the brain of Mina is gendered. Although she has *the brain of a man*, she has also *the heart* and *the body of a woman* which make her weak. The patriarchal status of Stoker’s time period suggests that women reconfirm their lower cultural status in society. Therefore, they need men in order to be sheltered and protected. It is the duty of their male companions to protect them and obviously it is not an easy task. In Gothic fiction, domestic space “becomes a prison rather than a refuge, a restricted space confined by a system of values that privileges the male and active world beyond the family” (Botting, 58) The men around Mina try to protect her in domestic space which results in failure, as in vampire fiction domestic space is usually unsafe. This view is clearly observed when Mina Harker is left in the asylum by her husband and the other men go to look for Dracula in order to protect her. Like Harker in the castle of Dracula previously, Mina is also isolated from the outside world. According to McDonald, her isolation might be interpreted as a lack of control in space. In a more detailed look, Mina has been placed in a vulnerable position in relation to Dracula’s great power. The asylum obviously offers her no sanctuary, no safety while the men are out, searching for his hiding place, and it clearly proves that there is no one to stop Dracula making Mina one of his vampire women. (McDonald, 106-108) Like Laura in *Carmilla*, Mina’s isolation from other men finally enables the vampire to gain access to her. However, Mina’s survival is predictable in the text because she is, unlike Lucy, a less sexualized heroine.

When Dracula grabs Mina’s neck and presses her mouth to the wound, she obviously understands it as a sexual experience: “Oh, my God, my God! What I have done?” (Dracula, 257) In the scene, “Mina is drinking from the Count’s breast and the blood she is drinking is compare to milk by Dr. Seward” (qtd. in Walser, 67) is alternatively claimed by Elke Klemens as representing a “distortion of the image of breast -feeding,” since “milk is also a frequent metaphor for semen.”¹ Mina’s inability to name the liquid substance she has swallowed certainly suggests that she perceives it as more than blood. In that sense, Barbara Creed puts forward that the vampire is an abject due to “the act of vampirism mixes the idea of blood, semen and milk.” (Creed, 70) After exchanging blood with Dracula, Mina starts to

¹ cf. Ibid., p.68.

change as well. She seems to lose her intellect and independence of action. She draws back into feminine passivity:

At first, some effort was needed, and he [Van Helsing] had to make many passes. But now, she seems to yield at once, as if by habit, scarcely any action is needed. He seems to have power at these particular moments to simply will, and her thoughts obey him. He always asks her what she can see and hear. (*Dracula*, 296)

By the end of the novel, Mina totally loses her voice. Marie Kiraly comments on this situation:

Mina's first-person accounts are abandoned and her feelings about her ravishment by the vampire never described save by men. Perhaps Stoker was uncomfortable dealing with the musings of the damned. Perhaps he was attempting to convey the notion that Mina was being lost to the men as Lucy had been earlier in the story. In any case, Mina's voice, so strong through the early parts of the novel, is abruptly silent. (Davis, 12-13)

As discussed before, the ideal British womanhood by patriarchal standards includes childbirth and child-rearing through which a woman fulfills her responsibilities to society and her family. (Davis, 72) The birth of Mina's son displays her role as a Victorian wife and mother. This could be an "attempt to render Mina asexual." (Walser, 69) At the end of the novel, after Harker's attempts to kill the sexually aggressive Lucy and powerful Dracula, his masculinity is restored. Additionally, the birth of his son reinforces *normality*, stable gender distinctions and makes heterosexuality possible again.¹

In conclusion, threatening the patriarchal status quo, *Dracula* reflects a host of cultural anxieties. The novel represents the ruling white Western patriarchy as living in the terror of being racially *Othered* by vampire contamination. Especially the sexual repression of the Victorian society manifests the human characters are able to enjoy the desired but repressed through interaction with vampires. Gail Griffin suggests that the representation of the Other is not the only horror element in *Dracula*. According to her, the most terrific part is to "transform the sexuality of the Good woman." (qtd. in Davis, 148) After this transformation, unconventional females are demonized and the female sexuality is

¹ Craft's reading suggests a different perspective. According to him, heterosexuality and stable gender roles are not restored by the novel's end. It seems that "Stoker suggests the child is the product of an asexual union rather than the result of a sexual union between one man and one woman." (qtd. in Senf, 1982:46).

constructed as a deviant Other. Therefore, not only Dracula but also Lucy are rendered as the Other and as a result of their destruction, patriarchal order is re-established.

5.3 The Manifestation of Sexual Taboos in *Interview with the Vampire*

The development of the literary vampire takes a significant turn with *The Vampire Chronicles* in which the American author Anne Rice depicts the vampire characters as narrators. Initiating a new breed, she puts into question traditional family patterns and the notions of sexuality. The first volume, *Interview With The Vampire* reveals totally different vampires in contrast to Stoker's *Dracula*. The first and the most obvious shift might be the transformation of the vampire figure from a lonely creature into a civilized vampire that lives in groups, has a family and a distinct subculture. Developing socially, the vampires in the novel gain human traits. This is obvious when Louis states, "I see..." said the vampire thoughtfully. (Interview, 5) The adverb, *thoughtfully* gives us the hint that the vampire actually has human feelings and a *conscience*, but it is still a vampire. Claiming that her vampire characters have soul and depth, Rice puts forward:

I gave them [vampires] conscience and intelligence and wisdom so they could see things that humans aren't able to see. They are tragic heroes and heroines who suffer. They are not pure evil. They have hearts and souls. They have a conscience; they suffer loneliness. They know what they're doing but they're trapped by their nature. (qtd. in Ingrebretsen, 20)

Another human trait is Rice's vampires can be seen in mirrors, and the characters themselves also confess that they enjoy looking at their own reflections. Additionally, they have limited powers, but human abilities: "[...] I wish I could," laughed the vampire. "How positively delightful. I should like to pass through all manner of different keyholes and feel the tickle of their peculiar shapes. No." He shook his head. "That is, how would you say today...bullshit. [...] No magical power whatsoever." (Interview, 27) The only supernatural power seems to be their way of reproduction by giving their own blood to their victims.

The other important shift is the choice of the autobiographical technique to provide an individual experience through the eyes of the vampire. The choice of the first-person voice for her protagonists displays an intensity of feeling. It enables readers to experience the world through the eyes of the vampire as well as through his other senses. Thus, sensuality and the individual self's physical experience of the world are crucial points in the novel. As a result, the expression of the voice of the Other in the voice of the Self maintains clear sympathy. In other words, it leads readers to conceive vampire subjectivity very impressively and therefore, intensely attractive. Desiring for self-knowledge and expressing their own stories to an attentive audience certainly distinguish them from their ancestors, because traditionally the vampire had been represented as an outsider. He was evil and had never been permitted to tell his story. Rice's re-characterization of vampires within the perspective of a melancholic vampire, Louis clearly offers us *otherness* from the inside. That is why the vampire is no longer pure evil, yet a likeable, individualized and a rounded character who evolves emotionally throughout the story. Unlike their ancestors, they are handsome and eternally young which people nowadays certainly sympathize with. The look of the vampire indicates that the conception of beauty has changed. *Interview* brings Western European and American beauty ideals to the surface. Louis is described as a human-like:

The vampire was utterly white and smooth, as if he were sculptured from bleached bone, and his face was as seemingly inanimate as a statue, except for two brilliant green eyes that looked down at the boy intently like flames in a skull. But then the vampire smiled almost wistfully, and the smooth white substance of his face moved with the infinitely flexible but minimal lines of a cartoon. (Interview, 2)

He begins his narrative with the words: "I would like to tell you the story of my life, then. I would like to do that very much." (Interview, 5) A male narrator tells the story of his life to another male. The subjective story of the protagonist creates tension through the fragmentation of the point of view. (Bartlett, 163) In this sense, Wood submits that Louis functions "as the single consciousness through whom the third -person narrative is focalized." (qtd. in Click, 45) Indeed, the title *Interview with the Vampire*, displays from the beginning that the vampire has a voice and will tell his own story. Rice, giving the Other a voice, leaves it to the reader to question his reliability as a narrator.

In a more detailed look, the narrative focuses on the conflicted relationship of Louis with his father figure Lestat. Unlike *Carmilla* and *Dracula*, which display the older generations of the undead who are European in origin; the narrative of Louis is set in New Orleans, a city with different cultures: English, French and African/Caribbean. (Butler, 183) Living in a city rather than in the countryside proves that Rice's vampires are domesticated.

One of the main protagonists, Lestat can be described as a hero, rebel and loner. He is a vicious killer who takes pleasure in bringing death, yet he possesses a conscience. While Dracula never questions his role as a vampire, Lestat insists on finding answers about his existence. By doing so, he brings attention to the modern American position of individual choice and free will. For Lestat the hunt becomes an intense moment of pursuit. At first, he chooses his potential victims, lusting after them, he builds an exhilarated desire. Finally, he drags them into a viciously sensual coupling that is ecstatic and erotic for the vampire. On the other hand, Louis does not kill indiscriminately, but looks for victims who are evil. Thinking that way by doing so he may possibly abolish his own evil desires in some way. This actually indicates that he is a moral character and increasingly repelled by Lestat's lack of compassion for the humans he preys upon.

The only major female character in the book is the child vampire Claudia who remains static throughout the novel. The other female characters are all underdeveloped, and mainly depicted as weak or crazy. (Click, 45) They raise questions concerning the position of women in society and their subordination. According to Antoni, they are demonized, dehumanized and represent "the stereotype of the man-hating feminist." (qtd. in Click, 46) This statement is particularly worth noting because the female vampire stands for a weak and powerless woman in a male dominated environment. Louis describes Claudia as being very attractive:

She was the most beautiful child I'd ever seen, and now she glowed with the cold fire of a vampire. Her eyes were a woman's eyes I could see it already. [...] I was mesmerized by her, by the transformed, by her every gesture. She was not a child any longer, she was a vampire child. (Interview, 10)

Thais E. Morgan argues that the Aesthete very often uses the image of an androgyne female to imagine a different masculinity morally, aesthetically, erotically and sexually. (cf.

Hendershot, 323-24) It is possible to claim that the androgynous figure of Claudia resembles the 1960s Twiggy model with a skinny body, which is also regarded as beautiful nowadays. As Walser suggests, she can be perceived as “a continuation of the 19th century female vampire as something unnaturally sexual.” (Walser, 73) On the other hand, she resembles the ideal Victorian female, innocent and angelic.

In a more detailed look, Claudia, the vampire child is transformed into a vampire at the age of five. Her mind grows up to both sexual and intellectual adulthood, yet she is unable to mature physically. She feels desperate when she states: “Which of you made me into what I am?” (Interview, 86) She seems to be obsessed with women; she likes dressing, walking and talking like a woman. However, she can never manage to be perceived as a woman by those in her environment. It might be the reason why Claudia is so obsessed with the feminine body, which she can never have. Unlike Madeleine who seduce Louis successfully with the “round, plump curve of her breasts,” (Interview, 215), she can only gain attraction of her victims through her child-like appearance: “Her jaunty, straight-backed walk was not a child’s [...] She had always been the ‘lost child’ to her victims, the ‘orphan’, and now it seemed she would become something else, something wicked and shocking to the passengers who succumbed to her.” (Interview, 166) Claudia’s body literally becomes a trap. It seems that her gendered body as a child and female do not provide her any option in the power struggle between Lestat and Louis. It is only after the assassination of Lestat by Claudia and Louis, she tries to be superior and asserts that it is her turn to be the dominant member of their little family. She tells Louis: “Would that I had your size...And would that you had my heart.” (Interview, 186) This scene obviously indicates that Claudia dares to assume a patriarchal status quo. Therefore, she is burned to death as a vengeful punishment by the rising sun. Like Lucy, she is also pushed back into social norms and destroyed viciously at the end. One of the most crucial results of her destruction is that her death constitutes a liberation from male control.

Interview with the Vampire displays various sexual manifestations and thus, breaks many taboos through the themes such as rape, incest, pedophilia and homosexuality. Among the others, rape seems to be the weakest taboo in *Interview*, since it stems from the vital need of the vampire. Accordingly, vampire males distinguish from their human counterparts: the human male desires only sex, whereas the vampire male *instinctively* desires blood. Another shattered sexual taboo represented in *Interview* is the intense

relationship between Louis and the child vampire Claudia, indicating both a fatherly affection and pedophilia. When Claudia asks Louis “What was it like...making love,” Louis describes it as “the pale shadow of killing.” (Interview, 168) It can be understood clearly that Louis has killed and at the same time made love with Claudia who was so young at that time and has no memory of it. Louis remembers the years when they shared the same coffin:

She lay with me, her heart beating against my heart...I thought of that singular experience I'd had with her and no other, that I had killed her. But she lived, she lived to put her arms around my neck and press her tiny cupid's bow to my lips and put her gleaming eye to my eye until our lashes touched and , laughing, we reeled about the room as if to the wildest waltz. Father and Daughter. Lover and Lover.
(Interview, 101-102)

It is possible to conclude that Lestat has a double character. On one hand, he is represented as caring and maternal; on the other hand, he is a child-molester and monster. This pedophilic relationship is at the same time regarded as incestuous, because they are parent and daughter. Although Claudia has the emotions of a woman, she is just a child vampire in the body of a girl. The other sexual taboo is homosexuality. Although there are several explicit scenes in which Louis and Lestat display a homoerotic relationship, many scholars do not agree on the homosexuality of the vampires in *Interview*. For instance, Wood proposes that none of the main characters of *Interview* has functioning sexual organs, since they are vampires and thus, the concept of homosexuality here is “slightly absurd.” (Wood, 1999:75) One of the explicit homosexual encounters between the two male vampires takes place through the extreme feminization of Louis: “[T]he movement of his lips raised the hair all over my body. Sent a shock through me that was not unlike the pleasure of passion... [He] said firmly, a little impatiently, ‘Louis, drink.’ ...I drank sucking the blood out of the holes.” (Interview, 16) Keller explains this process “Lestat possesses traditional male attributes, such as aggression, bluntness, insensitivity and practicality. Louis is feminized, manifesting traits such as passivity, sensitivity, compunction, compassion, and resentment.” (Keller, 12) Ingebretsen comments on the relationship of the two male vampires and notes that Louis is passive, weak and gives importance to words and feelings, thus, embodies the female part, whereas Lestat represents the dominant male part. (Ingebretsen, 97) While Lestat is depicted as a masculine tyrant, the feminine features of

Louis become more obvious especially when he gives Claudia motherly affection and care. All those implications suggest that both characters break culturally imposed taboos about homosexuality. However, they cannot find any sexual satisfaction in the end. In that sense, *Interview with the Vampire* might be regarded as a conservative novel. Homosexuality as a cultural taboo is also the reason why the very explicit homosexual scenes in the novel *Interview with the Vampire* are removed from the popular movie version of the nineties.¹

In conclusion, *Interview* introduces a new breed of vampire and embraces diversity through various sexual manifestations of the vampire. Sexual taboos in the novel portray a deviant perversion which indicates the vampire's evil threat to the patriarchal status quo. Using a different narrative technique, the vampires of *Interview* develop both socially and emotionally. Their gradual developments affect the gender roles in which they assert power. As the story unfolds, the reader becomes more aware of the external and internal conflicts of the characters which actually bestow the vampire human-like qualities. Consequently, readers perceive them as a likeable outsider and empathize with the vampires.

¹ A film adaptation was released in 1994, starring Brad Pitt, Kirsten Dunst, Antonio Banderas, Christian Slater, and Tom Cruise, yet the concept of homosexuality does not reflected explicitly.

6. YOUNG ADULT VAMPIRE NARRATIVES

6.1 The Expression of Female Sexuality in *The Twilight Saga*

“Every age embraces the vampire it needs.” (Auerbach, 145)

Many vampire characters in the works of women writers tend to be quite attractive creatures. Beauty and power allow vampires to move easily and often without getting any punishment from society. Women authors also tend to romanticize their characters. This is an expected pattern of behavior in patriarchal societies, which has emerged from fairy tales. When we look at the popular fairy tales such as *Snow White*, *Rapunzel* and *Sleeping Beauty*, we find women who are weak by nature and thus, in need of a powerful male in order to be saved from a perceived evil threat. Exploiting a similar construction, Meyer introduces us to *The Twilight Saga* which becomes very popular in the second half of the 20th century.

Although vampires seem to be the archetype of undead monsters, it is still open to interpretation whether they are emotionally dead creatures. Their bodies might be not function properly, but the vampire still feels as clearly as ever. Meyer at this point, dramatically shifts the undead monster into a passionate lover whose feelings reflect not only love but also anger, hatred and pleasure. This shift is not only about the change of the horrible monster into a prince but also some clichés that have evolved such as representing piercing teeth rather than fangs, and glittering in sunlight rather than burning.

Another shift considered important is the emphasis of sexual appeal to different body parts. As discussed before, in *Dracula*, the physical attributes associated with the vampires revolve around the teeth and the lips. Craft draws attraction to the vampire's lips and notes that “[...] the vampiric kiss, finds its most sensational representation in the image of the Vampire Mouth, the central and recurring image of the novel, [Dracula].” (Craft, 1988:196) As the vampire develops characteristically, the sexual appeal of the vampire has taken a new form. For example, Meyer does not focus on the vampire mouth or lips, but the eyes of the vampire. The golden eyes of the vampires in *Twilight* reflect the thought and the

soul of the undead. Interestingly, the vampire's diet is revealed by the color of his eyes. The Cullens only eat animal blood and therefore have golden eyes, whereas the vampires that drink human blood have red eyes. (Click, 107) In that sense, Edward's golden eyes represent rationality and morality in contrast to the red eyes of Dracula who prefers to drink human blood and refuse to control his desires. Edward, unlike Dracula, tries to control his own nature by finding synthetic substances for blood instead of that from a human.

Those contrasts suggest that the American author, Stephenie Meyer breaks the traditional conventions of vampire fiction and revives the genre. As discussed before, the first vampires are depicted as ruthless and powerful through rejection of moral codes. They are portrayed powerful because they can steal other men's women. However, in *Twilight*, Edward leaves the decision in the hands of Bella, which might be interpreted as an ideal manifestation of cultural norms. Women, on the other hand, have also undergone significant changes. For example, Bella is described as the physically weakest character in the novel by rejecting her restriction to traditional feminine spaces and roles, but at the end she becomes the strongest by turning into an active female. After her transformation into a vampire, she acquires the ability to protect both herself and her loved ones from the mental harm of the other vampires.

The series is written in a first-person narrative and told primarily from Bella's point of view and in some final instances from the viewpoint of the character, Jacob Black. Focusing on intertwined romance, fantasy and suspense, the aim of the narrative is to communicate messages about love, family and morality. Everything starts with the story of Bella Swan, a teenager who moves to Washington after her mother's remarriage. Her interest is particularly drawn by fascinating Edward Cullen who encounters Bella for the first time in a biology class. He is so affected by Bella that he almost loses control for the first time in decades. He describes the moment:

To me, it was like you were some kind of demon, summoned straight from my own personal hell to ruin me. The fragrance coming off your skin...I thought it would make me deranged that first day. In that one hour, I thought of a hundred different ways to lure you from the room, to get you alone. And I fought them each back, thinking of my family, what I could do to them. I had to run out, to get away before I could speak the words that would make you follow. (Twilight, 102)

By the time, the feelings of Bella grow stronger but always with the attempts of Edward who controls the relationship as his love endangers Bella. The only way which will improve their relationship seems to be the transformation of Bella into a vampire. Thus, she has to come to a decision which later results in an inevitable chain of events.

In addition to Edward's unflappable ability to stay rational, he is a perfect romantic hero: protective, charming and kind. He uses his supernatural powers to help his woman to be safe when human males try to rape Bella, which implies that not all dangers come from the supernatural. His voice including his pronunciation combined with his appeal, musculature, lips, chest, teeth and his nose are not only good, but *perfect*.¹ He is depicted as a godlike figure with extremely good character qualities, surpassing most saints. His perfection is supplied by the wealth of his family. His physical strength and his ability to save Bella from any danger that she might be confronted with, can be considered as the central features of masculinity. Furthermore, Edward builds himself into an icon of sensuality and passion in the eyes of Bella. She seems to be enslaved to those grand seductions, passions and desires of Edward since she becomes so intensely focused on him and consequently, offers to give up her whole life.

Meyer asserts that her books are all based on the choice of Bella: "I really think that's the underlying metaphor of my vampires. It doesn't matter where you're stuck in life or what you think you have to do; you can always choose something else. There's always a different path."² In the novel Bella is aware of the fact that the hardest part is making a decision, yet once the decision is made, she easily follows it.³ Although she can decide for her own life, Bella seems to be too weak and dependent on men for her worth and existence. Unlike Bella, Edward leads the relationship and controls the level of the intimacy of their courtship: when, where and how often they see each other. The self-control of Edward can actually be regarded as a metaphor for sexual frustration during adolescence.⁴

¹ For further example of Edward's sexy appeal, please see the parenthetical references are given here: voice (395); articulation (247); face (70,192,397); musculature (224,229); lips (18); chest (173); teeth (43, 301); nose (242); politeness (37); sincerity (299); perfection (184,199,225).

² cf. Wikipedia, *Twilight*.

³ Bella decides to marry Edward. Although Jacob is also fell in love with Bella, he is not successful in his quest, while Bella does successfully gain Edward.

⁴ cf. Wikipedia, *Twilight*.

The Twilight Saga appears to be written specifically for teenage girls. It revolves around the adolescent themes such as interpersonal relationships, self-exploration, teen angst and teen sex through romance which are particularly aimed at the young adult market. The series never mentions about “provocative sex,” “drugs” or “harsh swearing,” as Meyer puts it: “I don’t think teens need to read about gratuitous sex.”¹ Although teen sexual desire is in the foreground of discussion, the underlying message presented is that sex is sinful and off limits. (Click, 40) This is very clear when Edward wishes to preserve the virtue of Bella until their marriage in order to have their first sexual intercourse. Elizabeth Hand (2008) states in a book review for *The Washington Times*: “He sounds far more like a father than a boy,” since he “talks and acts like an obsessively controlling adult male.” (qtd. in Click, 71) Creating tension for readers, sexual desire between Bella and Edward brings them into a dangerous physical proximity, continually testing Edward’s self-control. (p. 72) This feature portrays Edward growing up in the Victorian age, but living in the 21st century. Taking into consideration the readers of young adult literature that the author tries to reach, Christian-Smith claims that those conventions perfectly fit with the genre. He further argues that “young adult fiction generally promotes dominant ideologies of femininity and masculinity through the archetype of the ‘good girl’ and the normalization of male control of romantic interactions.” (qtd. in Click, 73) Rafferty, Siering and Spillar further claim that sex advocates abstinence and having it might cause a variety of abusive situations. For instances, in *Twilight*, the body of Bella is covered in bruises after their wedding night when they have sex. Subsequently, she blames herself for the injuries Edward accidentally inflicts. It proves that despite their marital status, sexual intercourse is still dangerous and can result in physical punishment. (p. 41) In the novel the romantic idea of love equates to death shifts to sex equating to death and the vampire, in this sense, symbolizes disavowed sexual boundaries. (Backstein, 38) The imbalance of power between Edward and Bella, combining with his vampire ability to shelter her, results in Bella’s extreme dependence on Edward. Therefore, it is possible to define the novel as inherently anti-feminist through the problematic representation of female sexuality. Many female oriented media outlets such as *Jezebel*, *The Frisky* and *Salon.com* have declared *Twilight* as promoting an anti-woman message. *Bitch* magazine writes:

¹ cf. Wikipedia, *Twilight*.

[...] Bella losing her virginity with the loss of other things, including her sense of self and her very life. Such a high-stakes treatment of abstinence reinforces the idea that Bella is powerless, an object, a fact that is highlighted when we get to the sex scenes in *Breaking Dawn*. (Seifert, 2008)

Covering the views of *Jezebel*, *The Frisky* and *Salon.com*, the film critic Kim Voynar also claims that the series is basically anti-feminist, because Bella is willing to give up her life, her family and wants to become a vampire in order to stay forever with Edward. Throughout the whole series, it is difficult to see Bella's firm struggle over a decision or a choice she has to make. This is due to the presence of Edward which weakens her strength of will and even of body, causing her to faint at one point. As Bella describes:

I didn't know if there ever was a choice, really. I was already in too deep. Now that I knew — if I knew — I could do nothing about my frightening secret. Because when I thought of him, of his voice, his hypnotic eyes, the magnetic force of his personality, I wanted nothing more than to be with him right now. (*Twilight*, 139)

His mouth was on mine then, and I couldn't fight him. Not because he was so many thousand times stronger than me, but because my will crumbled into dust the second our lips met. (*New Moon*, 512)

Another reason why the text has been regarded anti-feminist is the pregnancy of Bella. She refuses to have an abortion, even though the pregnancy and birth may kill her. She never gives up and would willingly sacrifice herself to protect her child. The anti-message expressed here is the character, *Bella exists* in order to fall in love with a super seductive and powerful man, as a result, is defined by her lover and get pregnant in a marital status. All those scenarios, heterosexuality and a monogamous relationship, combining with motherhood obviously reflect the traditional view of the patriarchal society in *Twilight*.

As it can be observed, female sexuality is an important theme in young adult literature. Ames states that the main character, Isabella Swan, is not in control of her own sexual awakening. (Ames, 37) According to Hendrickson (1994), it is likely that her sexuality is depicted as "something that must be suppressed," otherwise, as Altmann and Banker claim, it is "punished with unwanted pregnancy." (qtd. in Click, 76) This kind of punishment

through unwanted pregnancy is also represented in *Breaking Dawn*: the human-vampire fetus breaks the pelvis and spine of Bella, leaves no choice to Edward but to turn her into a vampire before the birth kills Bella's human body. The pregnancy of Bella might promote motherhood, which is the traditional result of this patriarchal union. Anne Williams comments on one of the most important functions of womanhood:

Motherhood is an anomalous condition (like the vampire's 'Un-death'), a state not accounted for by the patriarchal definition of women as either 'virgins' or 'whores' according to their sexual experience. Giving birth is the one female function which society cannot entirely sublimate or deny, though patriarchies have traditionally repressed this truth by strict regulation of the conditions under which women have access to maternity. (Williams, 128)

Consequently, motherhood in a patriarchal marriage maintains the prestige of females, marking them *good* women. Love as a transformative power and sexual intimacy as a particular kind of love practice are the fundamental elements of the process of reproduction. It is very clear that in *Twilight* sex is represented totally different than those in *Interview*, *Carmilla* and *Dracula*. The former concludes that sexual consummation can only exist within the marital status of the characters. Therefore, sexual intimacy or eroticism is characterized as a metaphor for abstinence in order to avoid sexual denouncement. The pregnancy of Bella is even criticized due to the grotesque birth scene which suggests that the novel may promote lifelong abstinence.

To sum up, *Twilight* is a vampire fiction which promotes conservative social values such as the policing of female desire, the protection of female virtue from corruption and the importance of marriage, creating a world in which vulnerable women need to be protected both from external forces and their own desires with the help of masculine power. (Click, 73) The hierarchic sexual relationship ensures the creation of the *good* vampire. Unlike the monstrous vampire, Edward applies a different way in order to create his child through *legitimate* sexual intercourse within marriage. The author Stephenie Meyer admits that she is a Mormon. (Bardola, 16-17) Therefore, the cardinal virtue of Edward might be related to the Mormon faith of Meyer, since Mormons have a strict law of chastity. In other words, chastity is a significant factor for Meyer as she is against sexual intercourse before marriage due to her religion. Thus, representing the relationship of

Edward and Bella as virginal, Meyer might want to impose premarital chastity to her readers. It is possible to observe that if someone in *Twilight* does want sex and cannot control his/her desires, this person is depicted as pure evil. Particularly, the conflict between female sexuality and desire reflects that American culture still remains uneasy about the expression of female sexuality. Establishing a desirable morality and supporting patriarchal family values, *Twilight* situates the American teenager in a conservative ideology based on the power and superiority of the white male.

7. READER RESPONSE: A PERILOUS ATTRACTION

We love vampire stories and we long for them. The vampire grips the reader with its seductive ways, good looking prey and our curiosity, but the most important is with the fear of the great Unknown. The vampire is horrifying but at the same time can be very attractive. There is something that undoubtedly draws us to the vampire. The question is why we have such a desire to associate with those creatures. On one hand, we are fascinated with the idea that people may be “something” other than what they appear to be. On the other hand, it could also be a repressed fear, particularly, the fear of the Other, patriarchy, femininity and homoeroticism. Although, fear is a universal emotion, this monster especially applies those which we do not want to be faced with: the fear of alienation, of abandonment, of death et cetera. We fear the undead, because we perceive him as different, the Foreigner, the one who comes from afar and seduces us, draws our attraction. (Bartlett, 153)

Although the vampire lures us into temptation due to the fear of the Other, there are many reasons account for it. First of all, the vampire being a mysterious figure has great powers to hypnotize and to seduce its victims. It is likely that the readers are often affected by the appearance of the vampire, recognizing their own lack of power in relation to the power of the vampire. Especially the female characters in the selected novels feel that way; they perceive the danger, but still are drawn to the vampire. Secondly, they offer diverse relationships and a close intimacy. Auerbach describes the vampires before *Dracula* as not being isolated from humanity, but just as “singular friends.” (Auerbach, 13) According to her “nineteenth century vampires offer more social interaction, intimacy, a homoerotic sharing” that “threaten the traditional patterns of approved relationship.” (p. 60) Changing perspectives, they challenge the social constraints of their period and consequently have been considered to be rebellious and domesticated. Carol A. Senf observes that “vampires in the twentieth century have been perceived as more or less attractive rebel figures, ones who choose to live outside society.” (qtd. in Williamson, 30) Therefore, they are admired and even sometimes turned into icons of desire. Gordon and Hollinger believe that the sympathy for the vampire is a sign of its “domestication.” (p. 31) After domestication, he has appeared with diverse ethnicity in the movies of the twentieth century such as *Blacula*

(1972), *Vampire in Brooklyn* (1995) and *Blade* (1998). Those new vampires have brought different perspectives into the genre, enriching post-race discourses in vampire literature.

Moreover, the vampire offers a way of imagining the past which poses a desire for alternative ways. Especially women feel that the vampire provides different possibilities to “the way things are.” (p. 60) They find themselves while trying out alternative selves through an ideal Other. In other words, readers match themselves to the favored versions of the sympathetic vampire. On one hand, they might see themselves as similar to a particular vampire. On the other hand, they recognize the difference and generate a gap between the self and the imagined self. (p. 162) Imagining the past and searching for alternative ways also inspire the American author, Anne Rice. She confesses that she had an extreme fear of death earlier in her life. When her mother and her young daughter Michelle die, she can do nothing to save them, loses her faith and begins to wonder if there is an afterlife, which brings her the idea of vampires. Indeed, her vampire books suggest a possibility that there can be an afterlife or a kind of higher power.

Furthermore, the vampires who are struggling to be moral, tend to be more attractive and more believable. Therefore, the readers embrace and identify with those vampires. For instances, in *Interview*, we learn from the story of Louis that he is a reluctant vampire. His unwillingness to turn into a vampire is actually not a sign of evil, but a sign of victimhood. He is the hapless prey of an evil doer, Lestat who, in contrast to Louis, is entirely a villain. His delight in drinking human blood and his destruction of human life are symbolic of his villainy. While Louis rejects drinking human blood, Lestat prefers to toy with his victims. The refusal to feed and reluctance become the apparent signs of innocence that gain popularity in the conventions of vampire fiction. (p. 43) The same feature can also be detected in *The Twilight Saga*. This moral distress distinguishes both Louis and Edward from other vampires, and as a result, demands the sympathy of the reader.

Finally, serialization as a narrative form maintains the interest of the reader due to increasing suspense and thrill. However, it fails to provide the clear categorization of the moral universe through the ambiguous depiction of good and evil due to shifting perspectives and extended narrative. Creating suspense through serialization, the narrative indicates that the story is not over yet. Especially in the series of *The Twilight Saga*, the reader wonders whether Edward will stay with Bella when she remains human or he will turn her into a vampire. The reader’s thirst for knowledge is not satisfied, as he wants to

have certainty about the fate of his favorite character. Succinctly, suspense intertwined with love and romance through serialization raises the popularity of the vampire.

However, the vampire is not the only one who influences the success of the genre. Freud discusses that people are naturally passive and uninterested in the real experiences of their lives and “are subject to influence of [their] physical environment.” (The Uncanny, 250) In this sense, the narrator has a “peculiarly directive power” over the readers and thus, she can create strong emotions that lead them toward the uncanny. (p. 251) It is in fact true that we are driven into the territory of the vampire through the guidance of the narrator. She chooses cleverly her characters, dresses them with metaphors and renders exotic settings. The Norton Anthology states: “Oriental tales feature exotic settings, supernatural happenings [...] It is as though the `otherness` of Oriental settings and characters gives the staid British temperament a holiday.” [sic]¹ Those mysterious atmospheres are wisely chosen by the narrator in order to gain the attention of the reader.

Another successful feature that the author applies is a specific narrative technique. Early vampire fictions displaying the vampire as male and the Other, place the reader constantly in the role of victim. For example, the Victorian society of England might identify themselves with the female victim taken by the vampiric powers of Dracula. Many scholars such as Freud ² and James B. Twitchell apply the active-male/passive-female traditional gender binary positions into the vampire fiction, suggesting that the “vampire is a projection of the self for the male and the victim is a projection of the self for the female.” (Twitchell, 137) However, this situation dramatically changes, as Punter and Byron argue that the sexual transformation of the vampire creates a shift in narrative perspective. According to them, the formerly silent center of the vampire story has a voice in contemporary vampire literature. Telling his own stories and positioning himself closer to the reader, the vampire has become more sympathetic and much less radically the Other. From the metaphorical to the metonymical, from the subject to the object of the narrative³, the modern vampire has established an insidious intimacy with humans. (Punter, 2004:271)

¹ cf. The Norton Anthology, *The Romantic Period: Romantic Orientalism*. Retrieved from www.norton.com.

² for Freud see Williamson, 2005:12.

³ i.e. Bella is the narrator and the main protagonist of *The Twilight Saga*, whereas Edward is the object of the narrative.

The development of the narrative technique and the characteristics of the vampire have affected the type of audience. Basically two different types of audience have emerged. Mainstream vampire narratives are intended to be read by a wide and predominantly adult readership such as *Dracula* and *The Vampire Chronicles*, whereas young adult vampire narratives are marketed directly to a narrower, usually female, teen audience. The young adult narratives tend to display heteronormative relationships supported by traditional family values, while the adult vampire narratives do not limit their relationships in that way. A good example would be *The Interview with the Vampire* by Anne Rice which includes non-traditional family structures, focusing merely on homosexual relationships and classifying characters as asexual or bisexual rather than heterosexual. Not only readers but also scholars have embraced *Interview* for its Gothic feminism, claiming the novel transcends gender boundaries and questions compulsory heterosexuality. The ideal reader or viewer of horror in the 20th century might be regarded as male, particularly the middle-class male reader. Centering the novel on a taboo theme, homosexuality, the narrator implies that actually she knows her readers very well and thus, represents their inward desires.

However, it is very difficult to say whether the reader who belongs to the prior category will not read the books targeted at the latter. Carter explains even the monster, *Dracula* is admired by the readers of the 21st century and become very popular:

Although the vampire in a Victorian novel might exercise a magnetic attraction or even inspire sympathy, the implied author of such a novel always took it for granted that vampirism as such was evil. A fictional vampire aroused positive emotions in spite of, not because of, his or her `curse`. (Carter, 27)

Literary scholars such as Nina Auerbach and David Skal in the *Norton Critical Edition* series put forward that *Dracula*, indeed, has drawn more attention of modern readers than it did of Victorian readers.¹ The Victorian readership obviously pondered *Dracula* as not something that might be integrated into their lives, but as something that must be destroyed to maintain order. Therefore, supporting the previously constructed Victorian reality represented by their society, they chose to destroy the vampire in order to conquer their anxieties and fears. However, the modern readers of the 21st century, either adult or

¹ cf. Wikipedia, *Dracula*.

young, accept him into their lives and *Dracula* has enjoyed enormous popularity. Alan Gibson's 1972 movie version of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* as a monster is later followed by other films such as *Dracula 2000* and *Dracula 3D*. In those film adaptations, women are seduced not by his supernatural powers but by the appeal of Dracula. Instead of using horror elements in order to threaten his victims, he seduces them with sensuality. The vampire is represented not as an object of horror anymore, but a romantic lover who is desired by many women. Portraying the vampire attractive and alluring, the vampire literature of the 21st century, tends to display romantic themes as the main focus of its narrative. The evolution of the vampire in contemporary literature has also shifted the reader's point of view. It is likely that female fans do not identify with the female victims of the vampire anymore, but rather, empathize with the vampire figure itself.

Transformation into something that we desire puts an enormous focus on the contemporary vampire of the 21st century through which readers reach their imagined self. A good example of it would be *The Twilight Saga* by Stephenie Meyer. Meyer definitely knows that her young readers want to be filled with thrills and a lot of romance. She uncannily writes for the teenage mind and paints a good emotional image of the vampires through *Twilight*. As it can be observed from *Twilight*, when it comes to being seduced and bitten by the vampires, women are usually asking for it, since they possess a disturbing degree of sympathy for their handsome attackers. Davis has argued that this is due to the women's desire of releasing their inner strength. By transforming into a vampire, they will gain power by breaking the patriarchal codes of cultural norms such as marriage, virginity, and motherhood. (Davis, 10) Additionally, turning into a vampire also helps them to abandon passivity and become sexually aggressive, powerful and demanding.

In conclusion, otherness that provoked fear in the 19th century, returns in the vampire fictions of the 21st century as a source of empathy and identification. The vampire is no longer a figure of fear in Western popular culture, yet a figure of sympathy. Not only the concept of otherness and the transformation of the vampire but also the guiding feature of the narrator create different types of readers. As Fred Botting suggests, in recent years, vampire fiction has depended more on women readers and writers who seem to be excluded from the dominant ideology of patriarchy.¹ Those developments briefly explain

¹ cf. Williamson, 53.

why the sympathetic vampire of today produces a large fan culture, especially among female readers.

CONCLUSION

Throughout history, the figure of the vampire has both derived from and resulted in different cultural traits. As my study has shown, the image of the vampire reflects the ideologies and social constraints of its time. The vampire is redefined and erotically charged through a dramatic shift away from the monstrous and towards the sexually desirable, which turned him¹ into a powerful fantasy object.

At first, the original vampire folklore represented the first vampire as an immortal *monster*. He/she appeared fundamentally as a European creature who looked like Nosferatu, *simply horrific*: looking awful and providing terror with its nails, long hair and spectacular teeth. He was seductive yet slightly effeminate. Interestingly, he was alone and never befriended another vampire, except the submissive human under his control. Moreover, he had supernatural powers such as the ability to transform himself and super-human sight and hearing; but at the same time weaknesses like the lack of an identity. Particularly, he had a weakness for garlic, crucifixes and sunlight. This deadly creature's only function was to illustrate the repressed feelings and the concerns of its own period.

One of the earliest examples of repressed sexuality in vampire fiction emerges in Le Fanu's novel *Carmilla*. Breaking sexual boundaries in her homoerotic pursuit of Laura, Carmilla is depicted according to the Romantic idea of vampirism: the outsider, the fatal and destructive woman and sexual deviant who threatened white patriarchy. Thus, she is viciously executed in order to restore patriarchal heterosexual relations in which men are in control. Seizing sexual control over women, *Dracula* by Bram Stoker also supports conventional patriarchal attitudes against a late Victorian mindset, including the importance of social advancement, the significance of their own culture in the minds of Britons, particularly their concerns of foreign influences on British culture. The fears of the individuals become the fears of society; and, if society needs to be protected, the individuals, thus, must use their powers to destroy the threat of the Other, Dracula and his

¹ The gender of the vampire in traditional narratives is *very often* male. As Auerbach puts forward, female vampires do not appear in Victorian Literature until the 1890s, and in film, do not really emerge until 1970. (1995:3-6) Therefore, the vampire is generalized as a male character in this study.

women. In the end, Dracula is sacrificed so that society may continue on its already established course and cultural norms.

In those fictions the victims of the vampire are displayed as women due to their vulnerable status to the sexual temptation. They are easily impressed mediators through which the Other penetrates into human territory. The women in *Dracula* are represented as either pure Victorian maidens or sexual monsters, whereas Carmilla, the sexually active woman is linked somehow to the Other which threatens from outside. The sexual politics of both fictions separate the good woman from the sexual woman. At the end of the novels the good woman submits herself to the values of the patriarchal world which forbids any contact with the Other.

Furthermore, the early vampire with his supernatural powers transcends the question of how there can be a self without a body. He suggests the idea of identity is no longer stable and natural; rather it is the fabrication of nodes of connection via tastes, distastes, labors, pleasures and chemical responses. It is perceived as both products of cultural, social and political debate. Given the rapidly increasing popularity of horror literature and film over the last few years, it is not surprising that the vampire serves in order to develop explorations and deconstructions of conventionalized binary opposition which are crossed through the undead: human/non-human, chemical/mechanical, male/female, white/black, and straight/queer. Not only identity but also gender is problematized by the vampires' *polymorphous* expressions of sexuality and desire. This is due to the fact that the vampire has both a female and male body. Therefore, eroticism and sexual desire are very often charged in a homoerotic fashion.

From a narrative perspective, the process of identity construction is maintained by first person point of view which results in feeling sympathy for vampires. The narrative worlds of *Carmilla* and *Dracula* are sharply divided into humans versus vampires. Thus, these works are granted as conservative texts. On the other hand, Rice's *Interview* provides vampires an opportunity to speak for themselves which aroused sympathy in the reader through this exposition. Although *The Twilight Saga* portrays vampires through a human character, Bella provides sympathy since the reader does not ask for a destruction of the vampire anymore, but wants to be one of them.

Having survived the new millennium, we humans have been transformed, renewed, and resurrected. Similarly, the use of the vampire figure in literature has continued to

display new functions in our search for meaning. First of all the contemporary vampire has taken on a new form. He is no longer merely a monster, but a sex symbol with a very provocative appearance such as marble skin, high cheekbones, a straight nose, full lips and a perfect body. He is no longer effeminate yet very masculine. Secondly, the narrative focuses on the importance of binding love and consequently romanticizes the vampire genre. As a result, vampire fans see in the vampire not “deathly terror” but associate the figure with satisfaction in personal relationships. Thirdly, postmodern vampire fiction, represented both in *Interview* and *Twilight*, includes female and male vampires who are locals not outsiders. Acquiring more human traits, they have developed and finally, gained a personality. All those developments create the archetype of the *good* vampire.

Rice and Meyer introduce positive vampire figures in the shape of gentle and seductive males who hardly bear any resemblance to Stoker’s character. They are mysteriously handsome and romantic rather than gruesome monsters. However, their beauty alone is not satisfying since they desire intimacy. It is likely that they attempt to overcome their loneliness by taking a human companion, sometimes transforming their victims into creatures like themselves. The sociable vampire in *Interview* gives way to a community whereas the handsome vampire in *Twilight* chooses a human wife for himself. This process of socialization humanizes vampires who are no longer motivated by hunger or the desire of power alone, but also by such feelings as jealousy or love.

The postmodern vampire is no longer an older man who wants to control a young woman and takes her virtue away by polluting his victim, but a Prince Charming who genuinely loves her and can risk anything to protect her. *Twilight* is, in this sense, represented in the service of a more conservative moral agenda that aims to reinforce threatened values. Unlike its literary predecessors, the novel puts the human voice a privileged position at the center of the text. Addressing young adult readers, *Twilight* follows a different narrative than those since it displays primarily a heteronormative relationship supported by traditional family values. Instead of the rejection of motherhood in *Dracula* through Lucy’s acts of child abuse, the reader in *Twilight* confronts Bella’s refusal to abort. Moreover, all the couples in *Twilight* are heterosexual and prefer to enter into lifelong commitments. However, *Carmilla*, *Dracula* and *Interview* do not limit their relationship in this way and often include non-traditional family structure such as homosexual relationship which is implied in the romantic relationships between Louis and

Lestat in *Interview with a Vampire*, Carmilla and Laura in *Carmilla* or in the power struggle between Dracula and Harker. Those are likely to be perceived as homosexual, bi or asexual rather than heterosexual characters. Therefore, *Carmilla*, *Dracula* and *Interview* very often leave room for more interesting analyses in terms of sexuality.

In conclusion, no matter the vampire figure is attributed to the Devil or a romantic lover, it is impossible to predict in which form he/she will seduce us next. What certain is, as a shape shifter in contemporary literature, the vampire will continue to mirror society and represent the sexual, economic, political or religious mindset of his/her period. Put it briefly, he/she will be forever haunting and continue to achieve the power to expose his concept.

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screenplay by Joan Torres and Raymond Koenig. Cast: William Crain (Blacula),
Vonetta McGee (Tina), Denise Nicholas (Michelle). American International Pictures,
August, 1972.

Blade. Produced by Robert Engelman and Peter Franfurkt; directed by Stephen Norrington;
screenplay by David S. Goyer. Cast: Wesley Snipes (Blade), Kris Kristofferson
(Whistler), Stephen Dorff (Deacon Frost). New Line Cinema, August, 1998.

Dracula A. D. 1972. Produced by Josephine Douglas; directed by Alan Gibson; screenplay by
Don Houghton, based on the 1897 novel *Dracula* by Bram Stoker. Cast: Christopher
Lee (Count Dracula), Peter Cushing (Professor Van Helsing), Stephanie Beacham
(Jessica Van Helsing). The Hammer Film Production, September. 1972.

Dracula 2000. Produced by W.K. Border; directed by Patrick Lussier; screenplay by Joel
Soisson and Patrick Lussier, based on the 1897 novel *Dracula* by Bram Stoker. Cast:

Gerard Butler (Dracula). Christopher Plummer (Abraham Van Helsing), Colleen Fitzpatrick (Lucy Westerman). Dimension Films, December, 2000.

Dracula 3D. Produced by Enrique Cerezo; directed by Dario Argento; screenplay by Dario Argento and Enrique Cerezo, based on the 1897 novel *Dracula* by Bram Stoker. Cast: Thomas Kretschmann (Dracula), Asia Argento (Lucy), Unax Ugalde (Jonathan Harker). Film Export Group, May, 2012.

Interview with the Vampire: The Vampire Chronicles. Produced by David Geffen and Stephen Woolley; directed by Neil Jordan; screenplay by Anne Rice, based on the 1976 novel *Interview with the Vampire* by [Anne Rice](#). Cast: Tom Cruise (Lestat), Brad Pitt (Louis), Kirsten Dunst (Claudia). Warner Bros Entertainment, Inc. November, 1994.

Lust for a Vampire. Produced Harry Fine and Michael Style; directed by Jimmy Sangster; screenplay by Tudor Gates, based on the novel *Carmilla* by J. Sheridan Le Fanu. Cast: Ralph Bates (Giles Barton), Barbara Jefford (Countess Heritzen), Suzanna Leigh (Janet Playfair). The Hammer Film Production, September, 1971.

The Vampire Lovers. Produced by Harry Fine and Michael Style; directed by Roy Ward Baker; screenplay by Tudor Gates, based on the novel *Carmilla* by J. Sheridan Le Fanu. Cast: Ingrid Pitt (Carmilla/Marcilla), George Cole (Roger Morton), Kate O'Mara (The Governess). The Hammer Films Production, October, 1970.

Twins of Evil. Produced by Harry Fine and Michael Style; directed by John Hough; screenplay by Tudor Gates, based on the novel *Carmilla* by J. Sheridan Le Fanu. Cast: Inigo Jackson (Woodman), Judy Matheson (Woodman's daughter), Peter Cushing (Gustav Weil). The Hammer Films Production, June, 1971.

Vampire in Brooklyn. Produced by Stuart M. Besser and Eddie Murphy; directed by Wes Craven; screenplay by Eddie Murphy and Vernon Lynch. Cast: Eddie Murphy (Maximillian), Angela Bassett (Det. Rita Veder), Allan Payne (Detective Justice). Paramount Pictures, October, 1995.

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DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Diese Studie ist der Versuch, eine kohärente und historisch fundierte Theorie über Macht und Erotik in der Vampir-Literatur aufzustellen. Der Schwerpunkt dieser Arbeit liegt auf der Untersuchung der Frage, wer oder was Vampire wirklich sind. Obwohl es schwierig ist, die sinnliche Natur des Vampirs fest zu machen, wird versucht dessen Transformation vom ehemals bösen Monster zum romantischen Liebhaber von heute, nachzuvollziehen.

Darüber hinaus wird erklärt, wie die Darstellungen des Vampirismus im 18. Jahrhundert ihren Anfang nahmen, im 19. Jahrhundert aufblühten und schließlich im 20. Jahrhundert alle anderen Formen der Monstrosität fast gänzlich in den Schatten stellten. Obwohl die Ziele dieser Studie theoretischer Natur sind, ist die Abhandlung förmlich in der Untersuchung von bestimmten Werken begründet. Durch vergleichende Analyse, wird die zugrunde liegende Logik der verschiedenen, teilweise widersprüchlichen Verkörperungen des Vampirs erörtert. Dazu werden unter anderem die körperlichen Unterschiede der aktiven und passiven Geschlechterrollen, sowie sexuelle Lust und Leidenschaft in der Vampir-Literatur, herangezogen.

In der Regel zitiert diese Studie Werke in Original beziehungsweise Übersetzung; Kommentare aus sekundären Quellen sind jedoch ebenfalls an einigen Stellen vorzufinden. Schließlich wird bei der Untersuchung der von den Werken selbst etablierten Kategorien und der Zusammenhänge zwischen den einzelnen Texten, Objektivität angestrebt.



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