# Dracula as the Persecuted Outsider in B. Stoker's "Dracula"

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# Abstract

*Dracula* is a Gothic novel written by the Irish author Bram Stoker and published in 1897. Although it is not the first vampire novel, with his work, Bram Stoker sets the foundations for future vampire narratives, since many vampire features stem from the novel itself. Additionally, the novel uses the well-established Gothic features, such as the gloomy and sublime atmosphere, the mysterious and inexplicable occurrences covered by the veil of night, the encounters with unknown creatures, with which Stoker manages to awaken both horror and beauty in his readers. The plot revolves around the idea that the two worlds, the old, mysterious East driven by superstition and represented by Dracula, and the new world of the West which is marked by technological and scientific advancements, are going to clash with one another. Count Dracula's arrival in England endangers Victorian customs and beliefs. With the appearance of an outsider, a foreigner whose capabilities are unknown and inexplicable through science or reason, the idea of English superiority is threatened. This paper will focus on Dracula as the incomprehensible outsider who is persecuted because of the inability of the society to understand him. This paper is going to take a deeper look into the conflict between Dracula and the British society of the Victorian era.

**Keywords**: Dracula, vampire, gothic fiction, outsider, Victorian society.

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# Introduction

        The Gothic horror novel *Dracula* was written in 1897 by the Irish author Bram Stoker who took central European folk stories and turned them into one of the most famous horror books of all time. Introducing vampire stereotypes, Dracula became a cultural touchstone for vampire fantasy in general. The story is introduced through Jonathan Harker's point of view. He is a young solicitor who travels to Transylvania to help a rich nobleman, count Dracula, to purchase an estate in England. At the time when the novel was written, England was at the peak of the industrial revolution and a strong imperial power. Having many colonies, England came in touch with various nations and cultures which brought into question not only the superiority of the white race but also England's position in the world. While England was dealing with those insecurities, Dracula has been perceived as a metaphorical threat, because he does not fit into the conventions of the society and is, therefore, an outsider who threatens to expose the English society's weaknesses. Literally, Dracula intends moving to England to find new blood and to spread the curse of the undead in the civilized world, of the west.

        This paper aims to examine Dracula as the persecuted outsider of the nineteenth century English society and to clarify the reasons why he is perceived as a threat. The first chapter of this paper offers a brief look into the conventions of the Victorian era, focusing on Gothic elements and the morality of the time. The second chapter introduces the vampires in myth and their outbreak as literary heroes (or antiheroes). Also, the second chapter brings to light one historical forerunner of the character of Dracula, namely, Vlad the Impaler. The third chapter analyses the role of count Dracula in the novel and Dracula as the outsider, reflecting on the conflicts between the East and the West, and the overwhelming fear of the foreign, which greatly influenced the society of the era.

# 1 The Victorian Era

The Victorian era is the 63-year period from 1837-1901, marked by the reign of England's Queen Victoria. It was the time of the world's first Industrial revolution, demise of rural life, migrations to the cities followed by political reforms and enormous social changes. The social development ultimately led to a technological boom, major advances in healthcare and science, including, most famously – but not only, Charles Darwin's controversial theory of natural selection. These transformations altogether forced people to leave behind their old ways and question their beliefs. As Hennessy suggests, "never before had men thought of their own time as an era of change from the past to the future" (1).

## 2.1 Victorian Gothic: Gothic Fiction

Gothic fiction is a literary genre that appeared in the late eighteenth century, during the period of Romanticism. Gothic literature combines horror fiction and the romantic thought, which encompasses awe towards nature. With vampires, gloomy old castles, supernatural occurrences, darkness and murder, Gothic fiction conveys both terror and thrill. The origin of Gothic fiction is attributed to Horace Walpole and his novel *The Castle of Otranto* written in 1764. and subtitled "A Gothic Story" and the features of the first gothic novel became the general features of the genre. Later on, the genre was further developed by writers such as Clara Reeve, Ann Radcliffe and William Thomas Beckford. In the nineteenth century, Gothic fiction reached its peak through Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Edgar Allan Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher", Charles Dicken's novella *A Christmas Carol*, and in poetry through the works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and Lord Byron. Another important Gothic novel, dating from the late Victorian era, is Bram Stoker's *Dracula*.

The Gothic appeared in literature as a reaction against rationalism and realism and as a response to the changes in all spheres of life: social, political, scientific, industrial, and urban. The most important and distinguishable feature of Gothic fiction is the sublime atmosphere, awakened by the untamed nature, beautiful and terrifying at the same time. Writing about controversial themes and taboos, supernatural occurrences, medieval superstitions and mysticism, the author's goal is to explore what it actually means to be human, exposing "contemporary anxieties connected with complex issues such as sexuality, gender, race and class as well as a means to cope with continuous social distress and fluctuations caused by urbanization and scientific, technological and industrial progress" (Lukić and Matek 80-81). In

Gothic fiction, this anxiety will be represented in the form of a monster, something terrifying and unknown that threatens the well-known routine of human existence. The main feature of conveying the element of the supernatural is exploiting the story using realist strategies, which makes the Gothic story even more believable and terrifying: "This focus on the contemporary world does not mean that Gothic relinquishes its interest in the past. At the same time as it is appropriated to represent new social problems, it also offers a space in which the past can persist in a modified form" (Punter and Byron 28).

## 2.2 Dracula versus the Morality of the Victorian Era

Bram Stoker's *Dracula* is not only a Gothic horror story, but it also depicts the ideas and beliefs of the Victorian period. In order to understand how the character of Dracula came to represent the monster that intends to expose the weaknesses of the English society and destroy it, the moral qualities of the era should be examined to explain how and why Count Dracula deviates from them. The Victorian era can be described as a strongly conservative era. Conversely, Dracula embodies the concept of lust, sex, and evil and therefore he endangers those long preserved virtues.

The patriarchal tendencies and views of the Victorian society enforced male superiority and dominance over women who were expected to represent chastity, innocence, and purity. In *Dracula,* the complete counterpart of that ideal of the proper woman is represented, especially through the characters of the three female vampires in Romania, and later through the character of Lucy:

> The fair girl went on her knees and bent over me, fairly gloating. There was a deliberate voluptuousness which was both thrilling and repulsive, and as she arched her neck, she actually licked her lips like an animal, till I could see in the moonlight the moisture shining on the scarlet lips and on the red tongue as it lapped the white, sharp, teeth. (Stoker 50)

The three vampire mistresses encountered in Dracula's castle and described in the passage above represent what a Victorian woman should not be: lustful and sexually aggressive. This also becomes clear later on in the novel, when Lucy, after she was bitten by Dracula and tainted with his evil, transforms from a chaste and virtuous lady into a cold-blooded, lustful vampire: "There was something diabolically sweet in her tones- something of the tingling of glass when

struck-which rang through the brains even of us who heard the words addressed to another. As for Arthur, he seemed under a spell…" (Stoker 240).

Another Victorian virtue that is endangered through the character of Count Dracula is a distaste towards homosexuality. According to Pektas, the count violates men "by penetrating and sucking the blood" which is viewed as "a coding of homosexual acts" (2). Not only was the society threatened by an "abnormal" stranger who wants to intrude their "normal" society, but he also threatens to destroy some of the elementary conventions of the Victorian period by fostering immorality, sexual desire and homosexuality.

When comparing Dracula and the morality of the Victorian age, what becomes clear is that Dracula does not possess, or even opposes to the moral qualities of the era, and that is why he is being hunted like a beast and what makes him a persecuted outsider of the Victorian society.

# 2 The Vampire

There is no doubt that the vampire is a popular character in literature, just as it was in myth. In spite of the different characteristics given by various authors, all vampire characters across the genre share some basic features which originated from myth, such as the state of being "undead", the drinking of blood, possessing supernatural strength, as well as maintaining that the typical (or only) method to kill it is by driving a wooden stake through the vampire's heart. Starting with the first mention of the term "vampire" in the eleventh century, this chapter will briefly show the development of the vampire character from Slavic folklore to the canonisation of the literary vampire motif with the mention of some of most important literary works, one of the being Bram Stoker's *Dracula*.

## 2.1 The Vampire in Myth

The Western literary vampire is based on the vampire myth in Slavic folklore, which started to develop around the time the Slavic kingdoms officially abolished their pagan beliefs in favour of Christianity in the ninth and tenth century (Perkowski 37). Since pagan traditions and rituals, such as blood sacrifices, became a part of the everyday life, people failed to abolish those instantly, although they have converted to Christianity. Thus, a mixing or overlapping of pagan and Christian beliefs occurred. The word "vampire" first appeared in a Slavic manuscript from the eleventh century, describing someone belonging to a religious group that practiced those rituals. The Church condemned the practices of the newly-converted people as unnatural, which soon after gained the connotation of the "supernatural." The vampire superstition thrived in the Middle Ages, mostly because of the plague that caused deaths of thousands of people. The victims of the disease would often bleed out of their mouth, which was seen as a sure sign of vampirism to uneducated, superstitious people. Another disease that helped the vampire legend to spread out was porphyria, a blood disorder that causes blisters if the patient's skin was exposed to the sun ("Vampire History").

After centuries of "supernaturalization" of the vampire, a real-life inspiration for Bram Stoker's Dracula appears, Vlad the Impaler. Vlad II was born in Transylvania, Romania and ruled from 1456-1462. His reign was marked by torture, mutilation and mass murder of his enemies. His victims were disembowelled, beheaded or skinned alive, but his favourite way to kill was to impale the prisoner on a wooden stake. According to legend,

Vlad Dracula enjoyed dining amidst his dying victims and dipping his bread in to their blood (Klein).

In the late seventeenth and eighteenth century, the vampire frenzy expanded throughout Eastern Europe and formed tales which later on served as a basis of the vampire myth. One of the earliest recordings of vampire activity came from the region of Istria, today's Croatia, in 1672. Local reports cited the local vampire Jure Grando as the cause of panic among the villagers. The story begins with Jure's death in 1656. The villagers claimed to have seen Jure who returned from the dead and began drinking people's blood. The village leader ordered a stake to be driven through his heart, but when this failed to kill him, he was beheaded (Barber 5). During the Age of the Enlightenment, in spite of the name, most vampire legends quelled and the belief in vampires increased drastically. In the 1700, there was a panic outbreak due to alleged vampire attacks in East Prussia and in the Habsburg Monarchy. During that time, two famous vampire cases have been reported in Serbia (Barber 9).

Furthermore, in the late 1800 in the United States, there is record of one of the most notorious vampire Mercy Brown. After the death of many of her family members, including Mercy, due to tuberculosis, people blamed the misfortune of the family on Mercy, the "undead". To prove their theory, they exhumed her body and realized that it did not show any signs of decay. Now sure that she is a vampire, they cut out her heart and burned it. The hysteria, commonly referred to as the eighteenth Century Controversy was raging throughout the continent for decades ("Vampire History").

## 2.2 Vlad the Impaler

Now, this paper is going to pursue the history of Vlad the Impaler or Vlad Dracula, since it is known that he was Stoker's inspiration for his vampire and Stoker himself refers to Vlad in his novel. Firstly, there will be a brief overview of the history of Vlad the Impaler and of how he came to be connected to our count Dracula. Secondly some of the similarities and differences between the historical Dracula figure and Stoker's vampire character will be examined.

### 2.2.1 The Historical Dracula

As already mentioned, the history of Vlad Dracula, a fifteenth-century Romanian ruler has greatly influenced the vampire myth and in the novel, Stoker makes direct references to him (291).

Vlad the Impaler was descended from Basarab the Great, a prince whose reign was marked by the founding of the state of Wallachia, part of present-day Romania. As an indication of his pride in the Order of the Dragon, into which he inherited his position after the death of his father, Vlad took on the nickname Dracula. The Wallachian name "dracula" was derived from Latin "draco" which means "son of the dragon". Even though Vlad was to reign for less than seven years, his reputation was widely spread throughout Europe. German sources dating as early as 1463 were most influential in establishing his notoriety. The most popular were pamphlets which were widely circulated because of the recent invention of the printing press. Some of the earliest texts to roll off the presses were indeed the horror stories of Vlad Dracula, written and published in German at major centres such as Nurmberg, Bamberg and Strassburg with titles such as *The Frightening and Truly Extraordinary Story of a Wicked Blood-drinking Tyrant Called Prince Dracula.* Although he was never considered to be a vampire, the atrocities he committed gave him a quite similar connotation to that of the vampire Dracula (Miller, "Vlad the Impaler: Brief History").

In 1456, as Vlad began his rule, Constantinople was under the Turks, who continued onwards reaching Wallachia. Drawing the enemy deep into his territory, Vlad burned villages, poisoned wells along the route and infected Turkish camps with diseases in order to gain advantage. On the outskirts of Vlad's capital, "there were large stakes on which they [the Sultan's army] could see the impaled bodies of men, women and children, about twenty thousand of them" (Wilkinson 29). In the end, Vlad freed his land from the Turks but he continued to use his cruel measures to achieve his political and economic goals.

After the Turks were beaten, he turned against the nobles whom he held responsible for the deaths of his father and brother. According to an early Romanian chronicle, he invited them to an Easter feast. After his guests have finished their meals, he took them captive, forced them to build him a fortress and impaled them after they finished it. Although impalement was his favourite way of execution, Vlad also used other equally tortuous ways of dealing with his opponents. German pamphlets note that he had funeral services held to Christian custom and then buried people alive, boiled or roasted few out of a group, who then had to eat them, he had

mothers and children impaled together and burned the poor and crippled (Miller, "Filing for Divorce: Count Dracula vs Vlad Tepes").

Some of the early reports called Vlad 'the devil' but the word 'vampire' was never used in connection with Vlad the Impaler until long after Bram Stoker's *Dracula* appeared ("Vampire History").

## 2.2.2 Count Dracula versus Vlad the Impaler

Interestingly, on one occasion Van Helsing says this about the count: "He must, indeed, have been that Voivode Dracula who won his name against the Turk, over the great river on the very frontier of Turkey-land" (Stoker 291). In 1972, 85 years after Bram Stoker's *Dracula* was published, Radu Florescu and Raymond T. McNally published their work *In Search of Dracula*, making the first connection between count Dracula and Vlad the Impaler. Since then, the Dracula studies have not been the same. Many enthusiasts have drawn vivid connections between the literary Count Dracula and the historical Vlad Dracula, making it sometimes difficult to distinguish reality from fiction. This paper will rely on two sources: Stoker's Notes, whose reliability cannot be questioned and the novel itself, since it is the ultimate authority for the character of Count Dracula.

It is often assumed that Stoker was inspired by the monstrous atrocities of Vlad the Impaler and modelled his Dracula based on the life of the historical Dracula. The strongest bond and maybe the most questionable connection between those two figures lies in them both being vampires. Since Bram Stoker's Dracula surely is one, the ambiguity remains in whether Vlad Dracula, a Wallachian Voivode who reigned in the fifteenth century, really could have been a vampire. Because of the way he threated his enemies and killed them in torturous ways, Vlad the Impaler became subject to punishment by Orthodox priests who "publicly laid the curse of vampirism" on him (Hillyer 17). Also, some of the fifteenth-century manuscripts that spoke of the cruel ways of Vlad the Impaler, spoke of him as 'wampyr' (Miller, "Vlad the Impaler: Brief History"). This could be connected to the previously mentioned derogative name for pagans who practiced rituals using blood, or connected to Vlad Dracula's habit of eating in front of his dying enemies and soaking bread into their blood.

From Stoker's notes it is clear that when he decided to write a vampire novel, he had already selected a name for his vampire and that was count Wampyr ("Bram Stoker's Original Foundation Notes"). Then, he came to change his previously picked name after he read the book

*An Account of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia* (1820) by William Wilkinson who wrote

> Their Voivode, named Dracula, did not remain satisfied with mere prudent measures of defence: with an army he crossed the Danube and attacked few Turkish troops that were stationed in his neighbourhood; but this attempt, like those of his predecessors, was only attended with momentary success. (Wilkinson 17)

What actually drew Stoker's attention was a footnote attached to the occurrence of the name Dracula, which said "Dracula in the Wallachian language means Devil. The Wallachians were, at that time, as they are at present, used to give this as a surname to any person rendered himself conspicuous either by courage, cruel actions or cunning" (Wilkinson 19). Proof that this had great influence on Bram Stoker, resides in the fact that he himself copied into his own notes these words: "DRACULA in Wallachian language means DEVIL" (Ludlam 51). Another interesting fact comes out of Stoker's friendship with Vambery, a Hungarian professor. Supposedly, they dined together and during the course of their conversation, Bram was impressed by the professor's stories about Dracula the Impaler (Ludlam 115).

Weather these instances are true or a mere fruit of exaggeration that somehow correspond one to another, a clear parallel between Bram's count Dracula and the historical Vlad Dracula can be made based on their physical description. Namely, some of the previously mentioned German pamphlets which spread the news about the tyrant Vlad the Impaler contain portraits which are pretty similar to Stoker's description of his count Dracula: "He was not very tall, but very stocky and strong, with a cold and terrible appearance, a strong and aquiline nose, swollen nostrils, a thin and reddish face in which the very long eyelashes framed large wide-open green eyes; the bushy black eyebrows made them appear threatening" (Stoker 32). However, anyone familiar with the nineteenth century Gothic literature knows that many of the features of count Dracula, such as the bushy eyebrows and the aquiline nose had already become some of the common conventions in Gothic fiction. So, we cannot be sure if the physical appearance of Stoker's Dracula really was inspired by that of Vlad Dracula, or if it is another coincidence:

> After all, Stoker was writing a Gothic novel, not a historical treatise. And he was writing *Dracula* in his spare time, of which I doubt he had much. He may very well have found more material about the historical Dracula, had he had the time to look for it. But in the absence of proof to the contrary, I am not convinced that he did.

There is no conclusive evidence that he gleaned any information on Vlad from Vambery, from material at the British Museum, or from anywhere else except the one book he found in Whitby – by William Wilkinson. (Wilkinson 126)

As for the theories about connections between count Dracula and voivode Vlad Dracula, they are mostly based on circumstantial evidence, some of which are closer to fantasy and exaggeration than reality and acceptable proof. Since there are some corresponding facts, we cannot fully discard the possibility that Bram Stoker used some instances from the life and character of Vlad the Impaler in the creation of count Dracula. But to claim that he relied only on historical accounts and not on his imagination which stems from as far as the first myths and legends about vampires, would be single-sided and simply disparaging.

## 2.3 The Vampire in Literature

In literature, the vampire firstly appeared in the German writer Heinrich August Ossenfelder's poem "The Vampire" from 1784: "And as softly thou art sleeping/ To thee shall I come creeping/ And thy life's blood drain away" (Ossenfelder). The first appearance of a vampire in English literature is marked in the epic poem of Robert Southey "Thalaba the Destroyer" (1801). Another work with great contribution to the development of the vampire literature was certainly John Polidori's short story "The Vampyre" (1816). His story introduces the character of the aristocrat, gentleman vampire, whereas up to that point, vampires were described as beasts. Fifty years later, in 1872, Sheridan Le Fanu published *Carmilla*, a novel about a female vampire. Bram Stoker's vampire masterpiece was published twenty-five years later and set the founding features for the vampire in literature. Later on, as the portrayal of vampires in literature continued to evolve, with her *Interview with a Vampire* (1994), Anne Rice gave vampires the ability to feel and made them more human.

As a character in literary works, the vampire embodies the uncanny spheres of life. Driven to explore and explain inexplicable phenomena, people seem to have sublimated them into the character of the vampire. Terrifying and alluring at the same time, the vampire becomes a representative of human innermost fears and fantasies. From undead peasants to powerful aristocrats to paperback heartthrobs of our time, it seems that the vampire concept satisfies human hunger for the sublime. "There are

mysteries which men can only guess at, which age by age they may solve only in part. Believe me, we are now on the verge of one" (Stoker 239).

# 3 Dracula

Without a doubt, Bram Stoker's *Dracula* can be marked as a milestone in vampire fiction. Bringing together the themes of the battle between good and evil, the familiar and the unknown, bringing to light the fears of the human soul and the questioning of long preserved conventions of the era, *Dracula* is a unique masterpiece that changed the course of not only vampire fiction, but Gothic fiction in general. In order to explain the novelties that Stoker introduced to literature, this chapter will try to explain the three most important topics which shaped this literary work into what it is. Firstly, the focus will be on the conflict between the East and the West, which in *Dracula* is presented through the conflict between Transylvania and England. Secondly, count Dracula's role as a persecuted outsider will be explained to show how he represents 'the other'. Last but not least, the chapter will focus on the specific feature that gives insight into the society of the time, namely the fear of the foreign.

## 3.1 Conflict between the East and the West

The focus of *Dracula* is the tension between the familiar Western culture and the faraway, exotic East, which is indicated in the very beginning of the book: "the impression I had was of leaving the West and entering the East" (Stoker 9). At the time, Transylvania represented an irrational world governed largely by the laws of nature and superstition and marked by superstitious beliefs, the old world of magic and Darwinist survival. On the other hand, England represents the rationality of the manmade world that is governed by the rules and regulations set up by mankind. It is the new world of logic, reason and science. As Jonathan Harker travels towards Transylvania, he notices that "the shadows of the evening began to creep round…it began to get very cold…the growing twilight seemed to merge into one dark mistiness" (Stoker 8). By confronting the two characters, Dracula and Jonathan Harker, two opposite worlds clash. The most noticeable contrast is seen in the setting of the plot. Firstly, the reader is introduced to a traditional Gothic setting, namely, an old, creepy castle in the middle of the woods. Later on, the action moves to Victorian London, where Count Dracula preys upon English society easily, for they believed in logic and the advancements of the man-made world. On the contrary, the modern English society seems to know nothing about the East: "I was not able to light on any map or giving the exact locality of the Castle Dracula, as there are no maps of this country as yet to compare with our own Ordnance Survey maps" (Stoker 34). According to Joe Spillane, "[h]ere Stoker is pointing out how the new world relies on the documentation

of all knowledge and the old world still maintains a mystery. The old world is undocumented and therefore unconquered by the modern man. This would also suggest that Harker has left what is known to him and ventured to a place foreign to his rational mind" ("Embracing the Irrational Mind").

The conflict between the East and the West dominates the story, confronting Dracula as the representative of the East and the hunting party under the leadership of doctor Van Helsing as representatives of the West. In her article, Nicole Smith argues that "Dracula presents a threat to the orderly Western-oriented Victorian world not only because of his hideous vampirism, but also because of the challenge he represents to an accepted notion of geography, culture, and history" (Smith). His behaviour is a perversion of British notions of good taste, therefore, the hunt for him is a part of mission to keep England pure and their Victorian society intact. Dracula's foreign presence threatens to overturn the whole of Western culture by subverting carefully constructed morals and by allowing superstition to trump logic.

One of the central concerns of the Victorian era is the failing of science and modern tools to explain the unnatural, since they relied heavily on those to distinguish themselves from the primitivism of the East: "Unless my senses deceive me, the old centuries had, and have, powers of their own which mere 'modernity' cannot kill" (Stoker 170). For example, after Dracula has fed on Lucy, Dr. Seward could not help her or cure her, although he strongly believed and relied on modern medicine. Furthermore, it is tempting to think that the greatest danger consists in Dracula's damaging of the pure English blood, when he exchanges blood with Lucy, such that "the blood of four strong English men" is not enough to save her (Stoker 138).

## 3.2 Dracula as an Outsider

*Dracula* is not only a story about a blood-sucking vampire, but it goes much deeper as it deals with the universal concept of identity. The thing that makes count Dracula even scarier than the fact that he is a vampire, is that he is a foreigner coming from an unfamiliar place and having plans to intrude the everyday placid existence of the Victorians. This is what the Victorian society feared the most, not that they could fall victim to a vampire who would feed on their blood and leave them to die afterwards, but the fact that he would force them to question their long preserved beliefs and their faith in logic. As one reads the novel, one realises that the count is therefore not perceived as a monster, but as an outsider.

If we take a closer look to those who pursue count Dracula, we realise that the group contains a doctor, an aristocrat and a lawyer, and as a whole, they represent the middle- and upper-class English society. Interestingly, the reader is allowed to know Dracula only through the eyes of the English who cannot understand him simply because he is *different*, a vampire. The English society expels the outsider due to their own anxieties and weaknesses that they are more and more conscious of. Having been an imperialistic power for decades, the English have formed an attitude of superiority over others: "The strangest figures we saw were the Slovaks, who are more barbarian than the rest" (Stoker 3). But, as they came across new cultures, different people, their ways and costumes, unfamiliar occurrences and inexplicable events, England was forced to question some of the founding values of their society. According to this, they feared to become colonized by something (or someone) different. Now, with the appearance of an intruder, they instantly look down on him, although they actually fear him because they know that their weaknesses will be exposed through that foreigner.

Despite the scientific development and the growing belief in technology and logic, the Victorians still respected the boundaries of religion. The fact that Dracula is an unholy creature, contributes to the hatred and fear that the society feels towards him. Moreover, his physical appearance is designed to see him as inhuman:

> The count turned his face, and the hellish look that I had heard described seemed to leap into it. His eyes flamed red with devilish passion. The great nostrils and the white aquiline nose opened wide with quivered at the edge, and the white sharp teeth, behind the full lips of blood dripping mouth, clamped together like those of a wild beast. With wrench, which threw his victim back upon the bed as though hurled from height, he turned and sprang at us. (Stoker 248)

Dracula's appearance, together with the unholy deeds he is driven by, makes us understand and sympathize with the Victorian society which frightens to stand at the edge of their own existence and their well-known Western world. Also, the count's "otherness" seems to stem from the fact that he is an immigrant from a foreign land. This first starts out as basic hatred, but later on turns into a fear for existence, as Dracula attempts to conquer England and infect the population with his plague of vampirism, as Harker suggests: "This was the being I was helping to transfer to London, where, perhaps, for centuries to come he might, amongst its teeming millions, satiate his lust for blood, and create a new and ever-widening circle of semi-demons to batten on the helpless. The very thought drove me mad" (Stoker 262).

The character of count Dracula has features of both, human and monster, and that is why he is considered an outsider. Dracula is rejected by the society he wants to merge with, so he attempts to spread the curse of the undead among the civilized world in order not to be alone. The society ultimately triumphs over the persecuted outsider, expelling and killing him. Not only did they not accept the outsider, but they killed him and then refused to acknowledge his existence.

## 3.3 Fear of the Foreign

Apart from dealing with the conflict between the East and the West, and Dracula as a persecuted outsider, Bram Stoker also manages to intertwine the concept of foreign invasion. Count Dracula, as the representative of everything that is unknown, foreign to the Victorian world, threatens to overthrow their belief in supremacy and self-sufficiency.

The foreign intruder Dracula mirrors certain Victorian anxieties of degeneration and invasion leading to a general fear of a possible collapse of the British Empire and society. These anxieties were symptomatic for the late Victorian culture, which is also often called a "culture of crisis" (Spencer 20). The threat to the British supremacy and imperial power on the global perspective, Charles Darwin's theory of natural selection and "the survival of the fittest", and the rise of the New Woman, challenged the social order of the British society, destabilizing the Empire within, causing anxiety and fear of the future. "This corruption of society and the individual is personified by Dracula; he embodies Victorian anxieties of a collapse of the Empire" (Metzdorf). His ultimate target is thus the collapse of the British Empire and maybe even human civilization.

The intrusion into the British society already starts in Dracula's castle in Transylvania, where he studies English language and attempts to acquire the knowledge of the West. Count Dracula intends to move to London, making the English capital his first target in transforming the world order. Since London was the most important and most populated city in the British Empire, and, at that time, in the world too, it seems logical that Dracula wants to start by feeding on them. Firstly, targets pure and chaste Victorian women in order to turn them into his vampire brides. This would probably lead to expanding of the vampire curse on decent British gentlemen too, who would then resemble Dracula himself. Thereby, Dracula inverts not only the Victorian gender code, but every moral virtue that they have managed to preserve

for decades. They fear the Foreigner and the still unfamiliar consequences of his unholy, inhuman intentions.

# Conclusion

A close examination of vampires from myth till the Victorian era and Bram Stoker's *Dracula* shows that since their appearance in the eleventh century, vampires embody some of the greatest fears of individuals as well as those of societies in general. Although vampires have been a product of superstitious beliefs at first, tracking the vampire from the earliest legends and accounts of vampirism which were recorded mostly in Europe, to Vlad the Impaler, a real-life Dracula, this paper reveals some really convincing facts about the existence of these blood-sucking creatures. Even though their existence cannot be logically described and accepted through reason, the possibility cannot be fully discard. As those who are described as the "undead", they threaten the society of a man made, reason governed and through moral virtues defined world. This threat is fully embodied in Bram Stoker's vampire character - Count Dracula.

The English society of the Victorian era does not fear Dracula because he is a monster and he may feed on them and let them die, or even worse, turn them into vampires too. Their greatest fear lies in the fact that he is an outsider, a stranger, someone who does not fit in, but on the contrary, exposes the weaknesses and fears which they have been hiding successfully for decades. The fact that count Dracula comes from the East, and wants to intrude the superior and self-sufficient society of the West awakens not only fear but revolt. Furthermore, the vampire threatens to destroy some of the founding principles of the era, such as the gender code and the ideals of proper women and men. Finally, the fact that science and logic fail to explain Dracula forces the entire Victorian world to question not only individual principles and ideas, but also those of their society. Dracula as the outsider must be destroyed, or they would have to reconsider their old beliefs and change their ways which would be the final defeat of a powerful empire.

As a result, Dracula is persecuted by a group of individuals, each and every one of them having their own anxieties and fears that are brought to light through the encounter with the threatening vampire. But they unite, symbolically embodying civilization, and eventually destroy the threat in order to preserve the British Empire and their well-known world.

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