CULTURAL TRANSLATION OF HORROR IN *DRACULA* AND ITS ADAPTATIONS

DIGANTA ROY

THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN ARTS AT
JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY, KOLKATA.

2025

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY
KOLKATA

Certified that the Thesis Entitled

CULTURAL TRANSLATION OF HORROR IN *DRACULA* AND ITS ADAPTATIONS submitted by me for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Arts at Jadavpur University is based upon my work carried out under the Supervision of Professor Prodosh Bhattacharya of the Department of English, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, and that neither this thesis nor any part of it has been submitted before for any degree or diploma anywhere/elsewhere.

Countersigned by the

Supervisor: Prodosh Bhattacharya

Dated: 17/2/25

Candidate: Diganta Roy

Dated: 17/2/25

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my thanks and sincere gratitude to my supervisor Professor Prodosh Bhattacharya for providing his guidance at every step of writing my thesis. His detailed suggestions and commentary on the different aspects of *Dracula* and its adaptations have helped me form the arguments of my thesis. I would also like to thank Dr Abhirup Mascharak, who, along with my supervisor, played a great role in developing my interest and ideas about horror literature through their lectures, when I was pursuing my Masters in English in Jadavpur University.

I would also like to thank Dr Ramit Samaddar, Assistant Professor, Jadavpur University, who has provided his useful insights regarding my thesis and acted as an external for my RAC meetings. His expertise on Victorian literature has helped me contextualise my thesis arguments in a better manner.

I express my thanks to my parents Indrajit Ray and Susmita Ray, and my sister Moushakhi Ray, who have supported me throughout the process. Their interest in my progress, and enthusiasm towards my research have been a constant source of encouragement for me. I am also deeply grateful towards Mr Tapan Singha Ray and Mrs Jayashree Singha Ray who have taken care of me whenever I was working on my thesis in Kolkata. I would also like to thank Ms Swagata Singha Ray and Mr Arnab Dasgupta for always showing their academic support towards my work. Their constant help and support, right from the time I was doing my Ph. D. course work, has made it possible for me to reach this stage.

Contents

Preface

The figure of the vampire has been a part of literary and film texts, serving a variety of narrative, cultural, and historical functions over the years. Out of all those reiterations of the vampire figure, Bram Stoker's Count Dracula has played a significant role in branding and marketing this horror icon across different media. The rise of Dracula as the ultimate vampire figure is founded on Stoker's ability to create a vampire that is simultaneously a brutal predator and a genteel host. Furthermore, the incorporation of Victorian fin de siècle anxieties within the narrative of *Dracula* opened the possibility of imagining the vampire as a carrier of socio-cultural fears, while maintaining the intensity of horror through the depiction of the monstrosity of blood-drinking. All these factors led to the emergence of Dracula as a popular horror icon that was repeatedly adapted, translated, and pirated across different languages and cultural contexts.

At the beginning of my thesis, I dealt with the visual narrative of Stoker's novel, and how the visual cues and symbols were borrowed, altered, and expanded in the adaptations. While studying these adaptations I noted that the aesthetic presentation of the horror evoked by Dracula played an important part in the process of cultural translation. This broadened the scope of my thesis allowing me to study elements like the construction of the vampire's lair/castle, the physical appearance of Count Dracula, or the dress he is seen wearing, all of which contributed to the effect of horror. The next stage of the development of my research was based on recognising the presence of Dracula in the popular imagination, and on identifying the causes which might have contributed to this popularity. The question of why Bram Stoker's Dracula became synonymous with the word vampire in popular literature and films could not be answered without contextualising it within the network of vampire literature and proto-vampire texts which narrated stories about some form of the undead in religious and non-religious contexts. This thesis therefore focuses on *Dracula* while acknowledging its links

to other canonical vampire texts like Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla*, Polidori's *The Vampyre*, James Malcolm Rymer's *Varney the Vampire*, and also to several medieval texts which deal with the idea of the undead.

The study of the rise of *Dracula* as a seminal vampire text gave way to the central research idea of identifying and analysing the translations and adaptations of Stoker's novel in other cultures and languages. If the text of *Dracula* was being translated into and adapted to other linguistic, cultural, and historical setups, it meant that the emotion of horror created in Stoker's novel was also being translated successfully. This helped me explore the main research question of my thesis focusing on the way in which the translation of the horror in *Dracula* was taking place, and on identifying the factors which aided this translation. As a result, I began comparing Stoker's *Dracula* to texts which were sometimes direct translations of the novel, or at times featured narrative and character elements from Stoker, and used it to create a completely different text. While studying these adaptations and translations I observed that resituating the figure of Dracula to different geographical and historical setups led to the addition of new cultural meanings to the text, further expanding the myth of the vampiric Count. The new meanings added to the novel meant that the text of *Dracula* had successfully implanted itself in the popular imagination of other cultures to which it was translated. These translations/adaptations used new symbolisms, historical markers, and geographical details of the region where the Count was resituated. This in turn led to the increase in popularity of Dracula across regional literature and films, creating a cycle of translation and adaptation which has been the focus of this thesis.

The final step of framing my thesis structure was to collate these visual narratives, historical contexts, and cultural symbolisms, and to develop a methodology to study the effect of changing these factors in the adaptations of *Dracula.* This allowed me to form an argument

about the translation of horror that could be used to study the adaptations of vampire narratives across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

List of Figures **Page Nos**

List of Tables **Page Nos**

Chapter 1: Introduction — The Evolution of Vampire Narratives from the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century: A Critical Review of Literature

The history of the evolution of vampires in literature is a complex one. This is because any attempt to trace the origins of the vampire as we know it today, will lead us to a complex and elaborate network of folklore, social history, cultural systems, and religious beliefs that are not stagnant but change over time, and across societies. For example, the romantic, sentimental vampires caught amidst teenage drama in works of young adult fantasy fiction, like *The Vampire Diaries* by L.J. Smith, or *Twilight* by Stephanie Meyer, cannot be placed in the same historical lineage as the cunningly evil Count in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* or Elizabeth Kostova's *The Historian*. Despite the scholarly interest in subsuming all blood-thirsty monsters under a single history of vampirism, the origin of every vampire has a different cultural and sociological context. Secondly, the history of vampirism is transformative in the sense that it is a study of the changing physical form of the vampire figure across time. This change in the literary and artistic depiction of the way the vampire looks and behaves is not arbitrary. Rather, it is tied to the idea of monstrosity in the specific culture in which it was created and to the nature of the demography reacting to the vampire figure. For example, one of the statistics published by *Nielsen* analyses the viewership of the *Twilight* film in June 2009, and observes that most people visiting the official website of the film are in the age group 25-34.[1] Therefore, before analysing why Bram Stoker's Count Dracula becomes the most important cultural icon of vampirism, it is essential to trace the historical lineage of the vampire, and to identify the transformations in the depiction of the vampire in literature, leading up to Stoker's *Dracula*.

One of the most important developments in the depiction of vampires in English literature before Stoker is the transition from a rural, folkloric tradition to a popular, urban

[1] 'Vampire Fan Base Runs Thicker Than Blood Online,' *Nielsen*, 22 July, 2009, www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/article/2009/vampire-fan-base-runs-thicker-than-blood-online, accessed on 10 Oct. 2021.

mythological tradition. Although we will be studying this transition focusing on nineteenth-century England and Gothic Romanticism, it is essential to understand that the issue of vampirism was being widely written about and discussed across Western Europe during the eighteenth century. The purpose of this chapter is not to study the factors which led to this widespread interest in vampirism, but to observe how the English Romantics adopted or subverted these ideas, and how they in turn influenced the literary creation of Stoker's Count Dracula. Therefore, my aim will be to establish a specifically Romantic heritage for the Count, and to study the ways in which Byron, Polidori, and others revolutionised the way vampires were depicted in the nineteenth century. Prior to the Romantics the figure of the vampire in English literature was deeply intertwined with that of the revenant — undead corpses who returned from the graves to haunt the living and cause death wherever they went. These revenants, as we will observe, are different from ghosts because, unlike ghosts, it is not the spirit of the deceased which comes to haunt but the body in flesh and blood. In William of Newburg's twelfth-century chronicle titled *Historia Rerum Anglicarum* (*The History of English Affairs*), for example, we find several references to revenants.[2] In one such story in the chronicle, a priest, who did not show much respect towards the holy order to which he belonged, passes away and is then seen to rise from the grave and terrorise his former mistress. When the mistress seeks help from one of the friars at the convent, he enlists the help of another friar and two young men who watch over the cemetery where the undead priest lies buried. As it strikes midnight, three of them go over to a house nearby to warm themselves, leaving the first friar alone. At this point, the undead priest rises from his grave and charges towards the friar. When the friar valiantly attacks him with an axe, wounds it, and the monster returns to its tomb. When the other friar and the young men return, they dig up the grave, find the corpse

[2] William of Newburg, *The History of English Affairs, Book V*, translated by Joseph Stevenson, edited by Paul Halsall, Internet History Sourcebooks Project, Fordham University, 2000.

with the wound, and 'a great quantity of gore which had flowed from it in the sepulchre.'[3] The corpse is finally taken to the monastery and burnt, and its ashes scattered in the wind. In yet another story in Newburg's chronicle, there is a similar man of 'evil propensities' whose living corpse returns at night-time, and destroys 'every house with disease and death by its pestiferous breath.'[4] Two young men who lose their father to this 'plague' spread by the undead corpse, dig up its grave to burn it once and for all. When they find the corpse, they notice that it has:

> …swollen to an enormous corpulence, with its countenance beyond measure turgid and suffused with blood; while the napkin in which it had been wrapped appeared nearly torn to pieces. The young men, however, spurred on by wrath, feared not, and inflicted a wound upon the senseless carcass, out of which incontinently flowed such a stream of blood, that it might have been taken for a leech filled with the blood of many persons.[5]

When the heart of the corpse was torn out and the body burned, the pestilence that was infecting the people ended. Similar to Newburg's account of reanimated corpses, there is another reference to the undead in Geoffrey of Burton's hagiography *Life and Miracles of Virgin Saint Modwenna*.[6] In this account, two peasants who experienced sudden death and were buried in a churchyard at Stapenhill, were seen to be carrying around their own coffins in the evening. Soon after their reanimation, these undead peasants, like the one in Newburg's account, began spreading a plague among the inhabitants of Drakelow, leading to a large number of deaths. When their bodies were dug up, they were seen not to have decayed, and the cloth on their face was covered with blood. Once their heads were cut off and placed between their legs, their hearts torn out, and the bodies burnt, the plague that had troubled the inhabitants stopped.[7]

---

[3] Newburg, Book V, Chapter 24.

[4] Newburg, Book V, Chapter 24.

[5] Newburg, Book V, Chapter 24.

[6] Geoffrey of Burton, *Life and Miracles of Saint Modwenna*, translated by Robert Bartlett (New York: Oxford UP, 2002).

[7] Geoffrey of Burton, tr. Bartlett, pp. xxix.

The record of such revenants returning from the grave, found in these twelfth-century works written in England, is often considered to be the formative influence on vampire literature. However, G. David Keyworth, in his article 'Was the Vampire of the Eighteenth Century a Unique Type of Undead-Corpse?' makes a distinction between the undead corpses appearing in chronicles and literature prior to the 1700s, and the records of the vampires in the literature of the eighteenth century.[8] Citing the above-mentioned episodes of revenants, Keyworth argues that although the revenants in Newburg's account are compared to leeches swollen with the blood of other people, or are shown to bleed profusely when struck, they are not explicitly shown to prey on the blood of the living. The death of the people caused by these revenants is said to be a result of a plague which is spreading because of these reanimated corpses.[9] Comparing these records with the account of vampirism in the eighteenth century, he comes to the conclusion that the eighteenth-century vampires in England and other parts of the Western Europe are unique. This is because they are explicitly shown to be thirsty for blood, a feature absent, according to Keyworth, in previous depictions of the vampire in Western Europe, but present for long in accounts of East European or Slavic vampires.[10] The problem with Keyworth's argument is that in most of these accounts, although the revenant is not actually shown to be drinking the blood of its victims, the corpse which is bloated with blood, or the cloth on the face stained with blood, hints at it. Although, in Slavic or East European folklore regarding vampirism, the element of blood-sucking was more pronounced and dealt with in detail,[11] we cannot deny the fact that even in Western Europe and England before the

[8] G. David Keyworth. 2006. 'Was the Vampire of the Eighteenth Century a Unique Type of Undead-Corpse?' *Folklore* 117, no. 3: 241-260, https://www.jstor.org/stable/30035373. Accessed on 18th March 2022.

[9] Keyworth, 243-244.

[10] Keyworth, 241, 253.

[11] Dudley Wright for example writes, 'In Poland and Russia, vampires […] come and suck the blood of living men and animals in such abundance that sometimes it flows from them at the nose and ears, and occasionally in such profusion that the corpse swims in the blood thus oozing from it as it lies in the coffin. One may become immune from the attacks of vampires by mixing this blood with flour and making bread from the mixture, a

eighteenth century, some such association between reanimated corpses and a lust for blood was there, no matter how subtle. The blood-sucking vampire, as we see it in *Dracula*, seems to be an amalgamation of two cultural and historical beliefs — the revenant found in the twelfth-century texts, and the bloodthirsty undead of Eastern Europe. This is because *Dracula* combines the medieval connection of vampirism with some form of moral decay and the motif of blood-drinking prominent in East European folklore.

Keyworth identifies a significant change in the portrayal of the vampire in the eighteenth century. Although he studies this change in terms of the depiction of bloodlust in vampires, I argue that the source of this change has more to do with the onset of Enlightenment culture. If we look at the accounts of undead revenants in twelfth-century works, we observe that, apart from those who were believed to be reanimated by divine grace, the people who come back from the dead as revenants were, in their lifetimes, almost invariably described in some way or the other to have been sinful. For example, the peasants in Geoffrey of Burton's book who turn into undead corpses had abandoned and deceived the Abbot of Burton in Stapenhill when they were alive. Moreover, the reanimation of these corpses was, in many instances, said to have been facilitated by the Devil himself, thus giving a decidedly religious origin to the monster. For example, in the story about the undead priest in Newburg's chronicle, the author writes, '…the *devil*, imagining that he had found the right moment for breaking his [the friar keeping watch over the cemetery] courage, incontinently roused up his own chosen *vessel*, who appeared to have reposed longer than usual' (my emphasis).[12] Similarly, in yet another account of the undead in Newburg's chronicle, the coming of the revenant is said to be

portion of which must be eaten; otherwise, the charm will not work.' Dudley Wright, 'Introduction,' *Vampires and Vampirism* (1914. Reprint. London: William Rider and Son, 1924), 13. It is interesting to note, that since the blood oozing out of the vampire is that of the people it fed on, the charm against vampirism involves consuming the blood, not of the vampire, but of its victims, thus symbolically turning the people, using the charm, into vampires themselves.

[12] Newburg, Book V, Chapter 24.

a 'handiwork of Satan.'[13] Either as puppets at the hands of the Devil himself, or as the monstrous version of people who were evil in their lifetimes, the undead revenants of the twelfth century were part of a greater Christian theology, which had blended in with the local folklore. Winston Black in 'Animated Corpses and Bodies with Power in the Scholastic Age' observes that revenants who were physically reanimated corpses became a problematic issue with theologians because, at that time, the soul was believed to immediately proceed to Heaven, Hell, or Purgatory after death, leaving the body completely lifeless.[14] Therefore, it was difficult to explain a physical return of the dead within this theological framework, and the only way to do so was to call it a demonic intervention.[15] In case of the non-corporeal revenants however, the return of the spirit could easily be explained as the soul trapped in Purgatory, trying to contact the living in order to make atonement or to ask for pardon.[16] However, I argue that despite their apparent incompatibility with the Christian vision of a linear afterlife, ending decisively in Heaven or Hell, the accounts of corporeal revenants too served as didactic, moralising tales which encouraged one to follow the dictates of religion, by showing the horrors of the undead state. The concept of Purgatory as a transitional phase between death and Heaven/Hell offered a more flexible, accommodative view of morality wherein one's sins could be atoned for even in the afterlife, by going through a temporary period of suffering. On the other hand, the idea of the corporeal revenant as being in a monstrous state between life

[13] Newburg, Book V, Chapter 24.

[14] Winston Black, 'Animated Corpses and Bodies with Power in the Scholastic Age,' *Death in Medieval Europe: Death Scripted and Death Choreographed*, edited by Joëlle Rollo-Koster (New York: Routledge, 2017), pp. 71-92.

[15] Black, 72.

[16] For an account of the non-corporeal revenants, follow Andrew Joynes' compilation *Medieval Ghost Stories.* Andrew Joynes, editor*, Medieval Ghost Stories – An Anthology of Miracles, Marvels and Prodigies.* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006). It includes stories of spirits who come back to enlist the help of the living, to reduce their suffering through prayers. These accounts show, as C.S. Watkins observes that there was a 'deepening anxiety that no amount of penance would ever be fully satisfactory and, most importantly, suggested that the business of amendment was pushed increasingly on to the other side of the grave.' Carl S. Watkins, *History and the Supernatural in Medieval England* (United Kingdom: Cambridge UP, 2007), 173.

and death followed a more punitive and stricter approach to morality, wherein one's evil deeds doomed one to live like a vampire until one's head is mercilessly chopped off, the heart torn out, and the body burnt in a gruesome ritual act. Interestingly, in the accounts of the undead mentioned above, there is no mention of what happens to the soul of the person once this ritual beheading is done. The village is said to be cured of the plague that was spreading because of the undead, but there is no discussion on what happens to the corporeal revenants after their beheading. Do they return to the Christian structure of the afterlife involving Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory, or do they face total annihilation after the ritual? Whatever the case may be, the medieval undead can be said to have introduced a deeply religious overtone to the figure of the vampire, a trope which will be invoked by Stoker centuries later in the Victorian period.

During the Enlightenment period, especially in the eighteenth century, vampires undergo a thorough medicalisation. Increasingly, the body of the vampire, during this period, is not seen as a spiritual testimony of evil but as a curious specimen which could be dissected, studied, analysed, and documented for further research. For example, Johann Flückinger, an Austro-Hungarian military surgeon, in his 1732 study titled 'Visum et Repertum', gives the following account of a woman named Stana, who had died giving birth to a child and had apparently become a vampire:

> She was quite complete and undecayed. After the opening of the body there was found in the cavitate pectoris a quantity of fresh extravascular blood. The vasa [vessels] of the arteriae and venae, like the ventriculis cordis, were not, as is usual, filled with coagulated blood, and the whole viscera, that is, the pulmo [lung], hepar [liver], stomachus, lien [spleen], et intestina were quite fresh as they would be in a healthy person. The uterus was however quite enlarged and very inflamed externally, for the placenta and lochia had remained in place, wherefore the same was in complete putredine. The skin on her hands and feet, along with the old nails, fell away on their own, but on the other hand completely new nails were evident, along with a fresh and vivid skin.[17]

[17] Johann Flückinger, 'Visum et Repertum,' in *Vampires, Burial, and Death: Folklore and Reality*, edited by Paul Barber (London: Yale UP, 1988), 17.

Similarly, in another important treatise on vampirism by Don Calmet, we find an anatomical description of the vampire's body:

> Next they proceeded to draw him out from his grave, the body in truth not being flexible, but wanting neither flesh nor bone. Then they pierced his heart with a sort of round, pointed, iron lance; there came out a whitish and fluid matter mixed with blood, but the blood prevailing more than the matter, and all without any bad smell. After that they cut off his head with a hatchet […] there came out also a matter and blood like what I have just described, but more abundantly in proportion to what had flowed from the heart.[18]

Such anatomical records of the vampires from across Western Europe were widely translated, read, and discussed in eighteenth-century England. As a result, the previous idea of the undead as a spiritual curse gradually faded, to give way to a more scientific, research-oriented, and tangible conception of vampirism. The fact that two of the vampire hunters in Stoker's *Dracula*, Van Helsing and Doctor Seward, work in the field of medicine, shows Stoker's debt to this anatomical idea of eighteenth-century vampirism. As Nick Groom observes, in the eighteenth-century vampires were recognised as an extreme natural phenomenon. They 'were identified less as supernatural bloodsuckers and more as nocturnal asphyxiators and/or as vectors for contagious diseases, and they were a notably physical phenomenon: corporeal, tangible, of flesh and blood, and exhibiting particular dietary requirements.'[19] It is because of this medicalisation of the vampire that the narratives of the undead become more visceral and gorier. Therefore, Keyworth's argument that the eighteenth-century undead were unique is true; not because we encounter bloodsucking undead for the first time, but because of the focus on the corporeality of these blood-drinking vampires caused by their medicalisation. The second implication of this forensic perspective of vampirism is that, divorced from the medieval concept of revenants, these vampires began to be seen as bloodsucking *creatures*,

[18] Augustine Calmet, *The Phantom World, Or, the Philosophy of Spirits, Apparitions, &c. Volume II* (London: Richard Bentley, 1850), 58.

[19] Nick Groom, *The Vampire: A New History* (London: Yale UP, 2018), 24.

almost like a species which existed alongside other animals and human beings. They were no longer seen as dark, otherworldly shadows of sinful men who had died and returned, and who were caught in a spiritual limbo. The idea of the vampire as a *creature* ushered in the concept of a predatory, bloodsucking monster which deliberately seeks out and hunts down its prey. In many ways, the animalistic qualities that we find in Stoker's Count Dracula and other depictions of the vampire in the nineteenth century could be introduced because of this medicalisation, and subsequent animalisation, of the vampire figure. In case of the medieval revenants, the aspect of turning into an undead was part of a spiritual curse. In the eighteenth century and after, the undead became explicitly associated with the act of blood-drinking, which was seen as an instinctive, animalistic thirst which could be slaked only by preying on humans.

If the eighteenth century gave vampirism its characteristic visceral quality, the nineteenth century added finesse to the bloodsucking monster. Although Robert Southey's *Thalaba the Destroyer* and Lord Byron's *The Giaour* contain references to the vampire, it is John Polidori who creates a fully-drawn character out of the trope in his 1819 novella *The Vampyre*. There are two significant developments to note here — one relates to the conception of the vampire in the minds of the people during this period, and the second relates to its portrayal. The previous references to these undead monsters were mostly localised, regional accounts of people returning from the dead; these accounts were almost akin to historical documents, recording the real fears and anxieties of the people, about people coming back from the grave to haunt and trouble the living. But in the nineteenth century, we find the proliferation of vampires in a *fictional* context. The act of drinking blood becomes a recurring *literary* motif, aimed at instigating the very particular aesthetic emotion of fear in the minds of people reading such stories for entertainment. Secondly, with respect to the portrayal, instead of grotesque, dirty vampires oozing blood from the different orifices in the body, we find for the first time,

a refined, suave gentleman who is as much a man of culture as he is a blood-drinking monster. Both developments highlight a profound shift from a folkloric myth of vampirism, centred on the religious anxieties of a society about its dead, to a much more popular, fictional rendition of the same, with heightened sensationalism and gore. In the Romantic period, the vampire is not only made more adaptable to human society, but its body is also increasingly sexualised. Both Lord Ruthven in Polidori's *The Vampyre*, or Sir Francis Varney in James Malcolm Rhymer's *Varney the Vampire*, possess an aristocratic charm which they use to seduce and prey upon women. However, the seductive character of their evil nature is not interpreted in a religious, cautionary context but in explicitly erotic terms. Moreover, the vampire in Rhymer's text, and in Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla*, is often presented as a tormented being, who, in addition to all the evil s/he has committed, is simultaneously suffering from a profound psychological agony. As Varney tells the witness before committing suicide, 'You will say that you accompanied Varney, the Vampyre to the crater of Mount Vesuvius and that, tired and disgusted with a life of horror, he flung himself in to prevent the possibility of a reanimation of his remains.'[20] Therefore, instead of a mindless, bloodsucking monster, we have, in the nineteenth century, a vampire with thought and feeling, a vampire in the throes of violent, emotional turbulence, and, as we will see especially in *Carmilla*, sexual passion.

This radical transformation of the vampire figure in the nineteenth century is to a great extent influenced by the German Romantic philosophy, which, incidentally, also contributed to the rise of Gothic fiction. In his detailed study on what later came to be known as 'Dark Romanticism.' Mario Praz observes that there is a deep-rooted connection between what is horrific and what is beautiful in the Romantic period.[21] Quoting Novalis, an early German

[20] James Malcolm Rymer, *Varney the Vampire, or, The Feast of Blood*, *Volume 3*. 1845. Reprint, edited by Devendra P. Varma (New York: Arno Press, 1970), 868.

[21] According to G.R Thomson, Dark Romanticism is like a drama of the mind which is engaged in a quest for the metaphysical truths of the universe. Texts belonging to this genre, feature stories about the supernatural realm, which the hero tries to comprehend, but is constantly perplexed by its inexplicable nature. G.R. Thomson,

Romantic philosopher, who believed that the real source of cruelty was desire, Praz notices an interesting association between pleasure and pain in the literature and philosophy of the time. This 'inseparability of pleasure and pain,' he comments, is manifested in Romantic literature as 'a search for themes of tormented, contaminated beauty.'[22] The association of beauty with death, which Praz talks about,[23] is very clearly shown in Coleridge's 'Christabel,' and Keats's 'La Belle Dame sans Merci.' Although not vampire fiction per se, both these poems feature women characters whose beauty is not only presented as having a melancholic quality but also as being fatal. The knight in Keats's poem appears pale, and dreams of 'pale kings' and 'pale warriors,' which hints that he has been drained of his life force by the woman.[24] Geraldine in Coleridge's poem, when she sinks down, is lifted by Christabel across the threshold, just like a vampire which must be allowed or assisted to enter the house. More importantly, when Christabel looks at the body of Geraldine who has undressed herself, the narrator exclaims, that it is 'A sight to dream of, not to tell!'[25] Although the scene is intended to arouse a sense of horror, there is also an element of sexual intimacy between the two of them. Geraldine's relationship to Christabel simultaneously includes a strange sense of attachment, and an unexplained feeling of repulsion. Geraldine's victimisation of Christabel, like Dracula's victimisation of Harker, therefore, has possible sexual connotations.[26] Therefore, the deliberate

'Romanticism and the Gothic Tradition,' *The Gothic Imagination: Essays in Dark Romanticism* (United States: Washington State University Press, 1974), 5-6.

[22] Mario Praz, *The Romantic Agony*. 1933. Reprint, translated by Angus Davidson (New York: Oxford UP, 1951), 27-28.

[23] Praz, 31.

[24] John Keats, 'La Belle Dame sans Merci.' 1819. Reprint. *The Penguin Book of Romantic Poetry*, edited by Jonathan Wordsworth (London: Penguin, 2005), p. 517, line 37-38.

[25] Samuel Taylor Coleridge. 'Christabel,' *The Penguin Book of Romantic Poetry*, edited by Jonathan Wordsworth (London: Penguin, 2005), p. 487, line 245.

.

[26] When the spirit of Christabel's mother appears before Geraldine (possibly to protect the former), Geraldine says:

omission of the details of what Christabel saw once again establishes that same Romantic equation of beauty with horror; what is exceedingly beautiful can become so unbearable that it borders on the horrific, and what is excessively frightful can have a strange power of attraction which is impossible to resist. The vampire became the perfect embodiment of this curious interrelationship between beauty and horror, pleasure and pain, or, in Novalis's words, desire and cruelty. As someone who is himself/herself tormented, and who, in turn, is doomed to torment others, the vampire is romanticised as a figure of passion and erotic sensibilities

Carmilla, in Le Fanu's eponymous novella, is a perfect example of this romanticisation of the vampire. Just like Christabel is enchanted with Geraldine, despite feeling a latent sense of threat in her presence, in Le Fanu's text, Laura feels a deep connection with Carmilla because of a dream she had of her as a child, while simultaneously feeling repelled by her at times. As Laura says about the 'beautiful stranger,' 'I did feel, as she said 'drawn towards her,' but there was also something of repulsion.'[27] Despite the overpowering emotion of attraction, the feeling, as Laura admits, is an ambiguous one. Similarly, when Carmilla mysteriously proclaims her love for Laura she says, '…love is always selfish; the more ardent the more selfish […] You must come with me, loving me, to death; or else hate me and still come with me, and *hating* me through death and after.'[28] Here, Carmilla is cryptically anticipating the death of Laura at her hands. However, there is a potent agony in her words, which show that willingly or unwillingly, desire and death have become one and the same for the vampire. Unlike the undead

'Off, woman, off! this hour is *mine*—
Though thou her guardian spirit be,
Off, woman, off! 'tis *given to me*.' [my emphasis] Coleridge. 'Christabel,' Part I, p. 486, line 204.

This anticipates the part in Stoker's *Dracula* where the Count prevents the vampire women from preying on Harker claiming, 'This man *belongs to me*' [my emphasis]. Bram Stoker, *Dracula*, in *Dracula: A Norton Critical Edition*, edited by Nina Auerbach and David J. Skal, 1-327. (London: Archibald Constable and Company, 1897; New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997), p. 43, line 24-25.

[27] Sheridan Le Fanu, *Carmilla*, 1872, reprint (London: Pushkin Press, 2020), 41.

[28] *Carmilla*, 71. Speaker's emphasis.

of the Enlightenment culture, where blood-drinking was seen as a predatory act, in the Romantic period and after, vampirism is seen as a deadly act of passion.[29] I am by no means implying here that the animalistic nature of the vampires was done away with; rather, I am suggesting that the curious intermingling of the predatory nature of the undead with these new romantic conceptions lead to the creation of a sympathetic vampire in the popular imagination. As Arthur H. Nethercot comments in his comparative analysis of 'Christabel' and *Carmilla,* both Geraldine and Carmilla, despite the horrible acts they commit, are not portrayed as absolute villainesses. There are repeated hints throughout the text that they are not wholly responsible for the way they act, which arouses in the readers an element of pity.[30] The blood-drinking undead in the nineteenth century is still no doubt evil, as it was in the Medieval period or even in the eighteenth century; but it is a form of evil which has been humanised and imbued with affective qualities, making it much more adaptable, and even desirable, to popular taste.

The emergence of the vampire as a popular figure in the Romantic period, also meant that the undead were no longer restricted to discussions about the supernatural and the spiritual planes. Rather, we find that it gradually enters the everyday parlance of the people, wherein blood-drinking is understood both literally as a monstrous act, and figuratively, as the oppressive draining out of vital resources. The vampire, then, in the nineteenth century, becomes a symbol and a carrier of diverse social meanings, and not just a fossilised monster belonging to one particular, regional culture. Already in the eighteenth century, Voltaire commented, 'We never heard a word of vampires in London, nor even at Paris. I confess that in both these cities there were stock-jobbers, brokers, and men of business, who sucked the

[29] The narrator in *Carmilla* says that while the vampire in most cases overpowers its victims by violent force and drains them of blood, in some cases, they are 'fascinated with an engrossing vehemence, resembling the passion of love' (153). Interestingly, this emotional turbulence which the vampire is said to feel for some persons, only *resembles* love. This presentation of the vampire as a creature almost capable of experiencing human emotions, but not fully, reinforces the idea of the tormented, sympathetic undead.

[30] Arthur H. Nethercot. 1949. 'Coleridge's 'Christabel' and Le Fanu's 'Carmilla''. *Modern Philology* 47, no. 1: p. 35.

blood of the people in broad daylight; but they were not dead, though corrupted.' [31] In the nineteenth century, as James B. Twitchell argues, the vampire myth was more than a literal, religious belief in the undead; it was used as an analogy to explain societal relationships and human interactions, and the psychological complexity of individuals engaged in such interactions.[32] Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, published in 1897, is one of the seminal texts of the nineteenth century which treats the vampire, not just as a literal undead, but as a carrier of social anxieties and fears of Victorian society. The vampire, as we have discussed, has been treated both as a creature with an animalistic thirst, and elsewhere, as a humanised monster with thought and feeling. What Stoker did was to combine both these elements, so that we have a jarring contrast between animality and humanity fused in a single character. It is important to note here that already in 1859, Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* had been published, which had proved to people that human beings were not made in the image of a morally perfect God but had evolved from apes. This led to the realisation that there was an inherent duality in human beings between the animal instincts trying to break free, and the mask of culture which suppressed such instincts to create the image of a civilised self.

Time and again, we find the expression of this duality in different human interactions in Victorian literature, be it in R.L. Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde,* or in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Dracula's embodiment of this duality can best be understood if we look at the 1901 edition of Stoker's novel published by Archibald Constable and Company.

[31] Voltaire. *A Philosophical Dictionary, Vol. VII, Part I.* 1764. Reprint, translated by William F. Fleming. The Hubert Guild, 1901, 143-144.

[32] James B. Twitchell, *The Living Dead: A Study of the Vampire in Romantic Literature* (Durham, N.C.: Duke UP, 1981), 4-5.

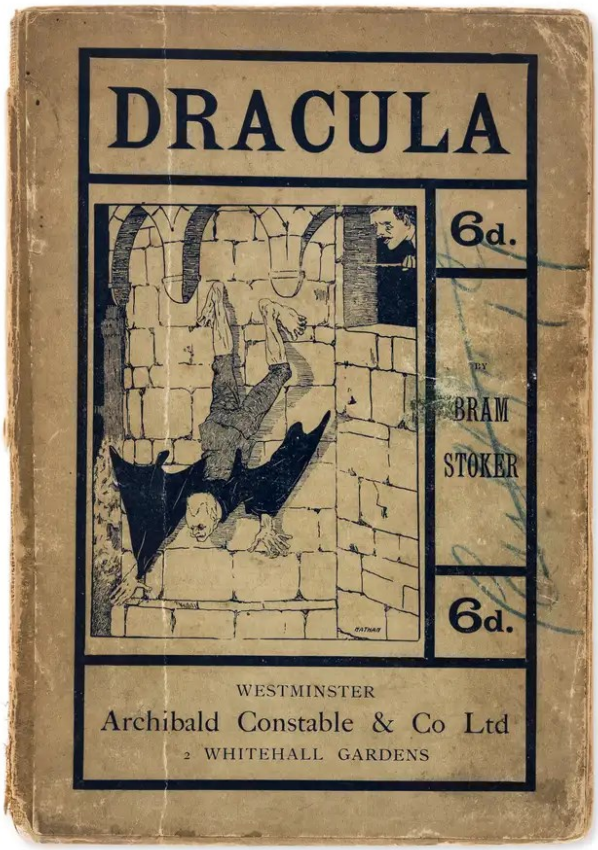

Figure 1.1: Cover Page of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* 1901 Edition

The cover page of this edition depicts the scene wherein Harker watches in horror as Dracula crawls down the side of the castle. The portrayal of the Count here, on the one hand, is extremely animalistic — the image of a creature stealthily creeping down the walls, almost in a reptilian motion. The calves of his legs are toned and muscular, while the fingers of his hands and feet are long and thin as if for better grip; the overall physique is one suggesting both strength and agility. On the other hand, the Count is also shown to be extremely well-dressed, with proper trousers and what appears to be a coat; he wears a cape and sports a widow's peak (a portrayal which would later be immortalised in Bela Lugosi's and Christopher Lee's depictions of the vampire). What contributes to the horrific nature of this imagery is that it suggests that the Victorian civilised self of decorum and respectability, and the monstrous, vampiric, animalistic self, could coexist within a single body. Dracula is an apex predator. The relationship between the vampire and the people he feeds on is based on a predator-prey

dynamic. For example, Van Helsing refers to Dracula's 'hunting ground [which] is more full of game than the churchyard.'[33] Even the vampire hunters talk about eliminating the monster using the metaphor of the hunt; Van Helsing for example, plans to 'hunt out all his lairs and sterilise them.'[34] But at the same time, Dracula is also a man of culture; the precise nature of his monstrosity lies in his ability to blend in with human beings, and to use their knowledge against them. When Harker first enters the Count's library, he finds several books on English customs and manners, history, geography, politics, law, and other subjects.[35] It is interesting to note here that in 1818, Frankenstein's monster, despite reading through a lot of books, including Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, and Plutarch's *Lives of Ancient Greek and Romans*, fails to integrate into human society. The monster in Shelley's story was doomed to be an Other to civilised society; in Stoker, the vampire as a monster generates fear by perfectly blending into the society he preys on.

The location where Jonathan Harker first sees Dracula in London is Hyde Park — the same place where the Great Exhibition was held in 1851 to establish Britain as the centre of culture and civilisation. The footnote to this appearance of Dracula in London in the Norton edition of *Dracula* reads: 'Like the Regent's Park Zoo, where Dracula released the wolf, these are among the best-known sites of central London […] From the mountains of Transylvania, Dracula has penetrated the well-regulated centre of English civilisation.'[36] Stoker deliberately emphasises the physical appearance of the Count at this point once again — with his pointed, animal-like white teeth — to show how easily the bloodthirsty monster has blended into the civilised society of London. There are two important observations to make here regarding the

[33] Stoker, *Dracula*, 181.

[34] Stoker, 255.

[35] Stoker, 25.

[36] Stoker, 155.

footnote. Firstly, the Norton edition's footnote interprets the appearance of Dracula in Hyde Park as an intrusion of the monster from outside; the vampire, in this analysis, becomes a specifically Romanian threat, looming over London. However, I argue that more than the idea of the vampire as the cultural Other, Stoker here is interested in shocking the readers with the monstrous duality which is inherent *in* Victorian society. For the first time, Stoker creates a vampire who is deliberately a figure of disharmonious contrasts — in his castle, a perfect host in appearance, and a deadly predator in reality. His appearance in Hyde Park is therefore a comment on the deceptive nature of Victorian respectable society, as much as it as a reflection of the Victorian fear of Eastern Europe, as a source of threat and concern. The latter is embodied in Harker's 'impression … that we were leaving the West and entering the East….' [37] Secondly, the appearance of Dracula, a Transylvanian monster, in London, hints at the existence of a subtext regarding the cultural transmission — and possibly translation — of horror which is already embedded in Stoker's text, in instances like Dracula learning the English language and customs, or in the way he seamlessly blends in with the London crowd. In the next section, we will see how such cultural translation of the vampiric folklore takes place across a geographical divide. We will also investigate how this transmission and translation of horror contributed to the immense popularity of *Dracula*, to the extent that the vampire became synonymous with the Count, despite the existence of Polidori's *The Vampyre*, Rhymer's *Varney the Vampire*, or Le Fanu's *Carmilla*.

Existing research on *Dracula* has often focused on the journey of an East European Count to London in terms of the context of reverse colonisation. Stephen D. Arata, for example, identifies Dracula as a racial Other, analysing his entry into London as reflecting the fin de siècle anxiety about the reversal of imperialist power politics.[38] This contextualises *Dracula* as

[37] Stoker, 9.

[38] Stephen D. Arata, 'The Occidental Tourist: 'Dracula' and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonization,' *Victorian Studies* 33, no. 4 (Summer, 1990): 632, https://www.jstor.org/stable/3827794. Accessed on 4th January 2022.

invasion literature, framing the idea of vampirism within the political context. The idea of Dracula as the racial Other, threatening the 'purity' of the British race, is also found in critical works dealing with the Victorian fear of degeneration in Stoker's novel. Judith Halberstam, for example, contextualises *Dracula* within the pseudo-scientific discourses of the nineteenth century that linked degeneration and criminality with a particular sort of physiognomy.[39] Similarly, Carol Margaret Davidson argues that Count Dracula shares 'Jewish semiotic markers' which highlight the anti-Semitic fears of an alien invasion during the nineteenth century.[40] Even Malchow frames the threat of Dracula as the threat of the 'racial' Other that Gothicised the fears of immigration of East European Jews towards the end of the nineteenth century.[41] Although these critical studies on *Dracula* analyse the racial politics involved in the narrative of the vampire's journey to London, they do not sufficiently uncover the mechanism of cultural translation operating behind it. There have been critical studies of the novel that have focused on the translational dimensions of the text. Brundan, Jones, and Mier-Cruz talk about Stoker's use of a translated text titled 'The Mysterious Stranger' (1854) in creating his aristocratic vampire.[42] The use of this pirated, anonymous text — which was originally a German story written by Karl von Wachsmann — by Stoker to give a new textual life to the vampire, brings in the question of authenticity and legitimacy. As we will discuss in the thesis, many of the adaptations of *Dracula* in other cultural contexts imitate, plagiarise, and re-

---

[39] Judith Halberstam, 'Technologies of Monstrosity: Bram Stoker's 'Dracula,' *Victorian Studies* 36, no. 3 (1993): 338. http://www.jstor.org/stable/3828327.338 Accessed on 10th January 2022.

[40] Carol Margaret Davidson, introduction, *Bram Stoker's Dracula: Sucking Through the Century, 1897-1997,* edited by Carol Margaret Davidson and Paul Simpson-Housley (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1997), 30.

[41] Howard L. Malchow, *Gothic Images of Race in Nineteenth-century Britain* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 162.

[42] Katy Brundan, Melanie Jones, and Benjamin Mier-Cruz, 'Dracula or Draculitz?: Translational Forgery and Bram Stoker's 'Lost Version' of Dracula,' *Victorian Review* 45, no. 2 (2019): 297. https://doi.org/10.1353/vcr.2019.0060. Accessed on 11th February 2022.

contextualise the narrative of Stoker's novel to create a version of *Dracula* totally different from the original. Whether such adaptations are 'authentic' or not, they significantly help in expanding the mythos of the vampiric Count. The question of translation in the novel has also been highlighted by Katy Brundan who argues that Harker faces a sort of linguistic isolation in the multicultural European world.[43] The culturally-hybrid nature of Dracula is evident from the fact that the polyglot dictionary carried by Harker introduces the word 'vampire' for the first time in the novel.[44] Brundan's article goes on to show how the use of translated phrases in the novel constructs the relationship between the Englishman's monolingual self and its linguistic Other, represented by Dracula. Similarly, scholars like Ferguson have read the weakness of the vampire in linguistic terms, arguing that one of the major causes of Dracula's defeat is his failure to navigate through the different non-standardised and diversified forms of the English language in London.[45] Ferguson pits Dracula's attempt to speak a syntactically correct and standardised form of English against Morris, Holmwood, Seward, and Van Helsing's use of a 'bastardized' English.[46] Ferguson too, therefore, frames the horror of Dracula within the linguistic matrix, and emphasises the role played by translation and adaptation of a foreign language in the meanings generated within the text. The use of language by Dracula and the members of the Crew of Light therefore define the relationship between the vampire and the protagonists, influencing the way monstrosity is constructed within the text. Existing research on *Dracula* focuses on the dynamics of linguistic translation found in the text. When Stoker's

[43] Katy Brundan, 'The Polyglot Vampire: The Politics of Translation in Bram Stoker's *Dracula,*' *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 52, no. 1 (January 2016): pp. 4. https://doi.org/10.1093/fmls/cqv094. Accessed on 14th April 2022.

[44] Brundan, 5.

[45] Christine Ferguson, 'Nonstandard Language and the Cultural Stakes of Stoker's *Dracula*,' *ELH* 71, no. 1 (Spring 2004): pp. 230. doi: 10.1353/elh.2004.0015230. Accessed on 22nd April 2022.

[46] Ferguson, 239.

novel is translated and adapted into other languages, there is also a cultural translation involved, which determines the way the horror of the original text is transmitted, altered, and received. Although language is born out of the cultural milieu it is used in, and is thus inseparable from it, my thesis will focus on the cultural translation of the horror of *Dracula* rather than the linguistic aspects of translation.

The idea of cultural transmission of knowledge is ingrained within the narrative of *Dracula*, as we have already discussed. One of the important critical discussions on this cross-cultural nature of the Count is found in Radu Florescu and Raymond T. McNally's book *In Search of Dracula*, where they discuss how the character of the vampire was only partly manufactured by western literature, and how belief in vampires formed a part of world folklore.[47] They document the universality of the belief, identifying its presence of the undead in Babylon, Egypt, Greece, Rome, China, and other separate civilisations where there was no possibility of direct borrowing.[48] Florescu and McNally's work therefore, construct the character of the vampire, and by extension of Dracula, as a culturally hybrid figure, formed through an amalgamation of different cultural beliefs about the idea of the dead/undead. The evidence of the world folklore of vampirism is also found in the introduction written by Devendra P. Varma, to the 1845 text *Varney the Vampire, or, The Feast of Blood* . Varma's critical stance is unique because it traces the origin of the western vampire to the blood-drinking deities found in Eastern religious mythologies.[49] He also cites the story of Princess Pedi Wangmo, the half-sister of a Sikkimese monarch, Chador Namgyal, who plots with a Tibetan doctor to assassinate the monarch by opening his veins, and drinking his blood.[50] The princess

[47] Radu Florescu and Raymond T. McNally, *In Search of Dracula: The History of Dracula and Vampires* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1994), 116.

[48] Florescu and McNally, 117.

[49] Devendra P. Varma, Introduction, 'The Vampire in Legend, Lore, Literature,' *Varney the Vampire, or, The Feast of Blood*, Volume 3. 1845. Reprint (New York: Arno Press, 1970), pp. xiv-xvi.

[50] Varma, pp. xxii.

is later is said to have returned as a vampire. Varma uses such regional anecdotes, and other iconographies from Tibetan, Nepalese, and Eastern lore, to establish the existence of vampire narratives outside the European context. Although Florescu and McNally, and Varma, construct the idea of the vampire itself as a global cultural hybrid, the true horror of *Dracula* lies in the fear of a localised threat spreading across the world and becoming a globalised menace. This dynamic between the local and the global, between the Transylvanian lair of the Count and his London hideout at Carfax from where he preys on the public effectively, forms the crux of Stoker's narrative. As a result, when the Transylvania-London dynamic of Stoker's novel is changed and re-contextualised within other geographical, social, and cultural contexts, the nature of the horror generated by the text is also changed. The impact of this change in the cultural and geographical context of *Dracula* on the adaptations of the novel, and the effect it produces on the construction of horror in the text, has not received much attention in critical discussions of the text.

One of the most important works on the cultural translation of horror in Dracula has been done by Hans Corneel De Roos, who noticed in 2014 that the Icelandic version of the novel had new characters added to it. Noticing some differences between the narrative of the Icelandic version of Dracula and Stoker's novel, Roos tries to uncover the source of these variations.[51] In the introduction to the English translation of the Icelandic version, Roos notes that one of the most important changes in the translated version is the change in the narrative proportions. In the Icelandic edition, the portion of Harker's trip to Transylvania is increased, while the latter portions of Stoker's novel are shortened. Roos argues that one of the possible reasons for this difference may be that the Icelandic version could have been based on an earlier version of *Dracula* by Stoker which was never completed. The second important work on the

[51] Hans de Roos, translated, *Powers of Darkness*, Bram Stoker and Valdimar Asmundsson (New York: Overlook Duckworth, Peter Mayer Publishers, 2017).

translation of horror in *Dracula* was done by Richard Berghorn, who discovered in 2017 that there was a Swedish version of *Dracula* which was almost double the length of Stoker's novel, with new characters, plotlines, and a totally different ending.[52] It was on this Swedish version that the Icelandic translation was based. These two adaptations of Stoker's novel highlight how the act of translation leads to the creation of new texts that are not merely bootleg versions of the 'original' but rather serve to widen the mythology of Dracula across historical and cultural spaces.

The cultural shift that accompanies the translation of the vampire narrative to other regional mythologies has also been studied by Tabish Khair in his work on the vampire in South Asia. Khair observes that there is a lack of the vampire figure per se in the literature of South Asia.[53] However, he identifies other non-human and para-normal creatures who share certain features with the vampire of western mythology. Khair equates the figure of the vampire with the man-eating tiger of South Asian narratives showing how both 'monsters' are used in similar discourses about modernism and capitalism.[54] Khair's work thus plays a crucial role in understanding how characters belonging to different cultural mythologies share a commonality with respect to the specific meanings they carry. This plays a significant role in translating the horror of Dracula from one region to the other.

[52] Bram Stoker and A-e, *Powers of Darkness*: *The Unique Version of Dracula*, serialised in the newspaper from 1899-1900; trans. Rickard Berghorn (Sweden: Timaios Press, 2022).

[53] Tabish Khair, 'The Man- Eating Tiger and the Vampire in South Asia,' in *Transnational and Postcolonial Vampires: Dark Blood*, ed. Tabish Khair and Johan Höglund (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 105-106.

[54] Khair, 113-115.

Cultural Translation of Horror in *Dracula*: Identifying the Research Gap and Framing the Methodology

Existing research on Dracula, as we have noted, does not adequately address the issue of the cultural translation of the horror of the vampire narrative, when it is shifted to a different historical, geographical, or social context. Even studies conducted on the different regional adaptations of *Dracula* do not explain the mechanism behind this cultural translation which takes place when the narrative is shifted to other geographical locations. This thesis will try to address this research gap by answering the following questions:

- In what ways does a spatial displacement of Dracula from the isolated Transylvanian mountains contribute to narrative alterations in Stoker's depiction of the vampire?
- In the different adaptations of Dracula set in locales other than Transylvania, how is the element of horror culturally translated?

I will try to identify the factors which contribute to the successful translation of horror in the adaptations of *Dracula*, despite fear being a subjective emotion across cultures.

The second part of my research question analyses how changing these factors alters the narrative of the horror in *Dracula*. I will also try to identify if there are any core elements in the narrative structure and thematic constitution of Stoker's novel which remain constant through the adaptations. My thesis will thus focus on both the cultural variability of horror narratives, and the similarities which exist between them.

I will design a comparative model for analysis in this study. I will try to isolate the factors which contribute to the Romanian nature of Stoker's *Dracula*. This will include topographical markers, highlighting the use of Romanian geography in the novel; historical markers that contextualise the narrative within the period of Victorian modernity; and cultural markers which focus on specific practices and ideas about the dead/undead body. I will then study the adaptations or re-workings of Stoker's novel and see the narrative variations which

are caused as a result of changing the above markers. I will then identify the thematic patterns which exist across cultural translations, and how changing one or more of these markers modifies the nature of the horror in these texts. An inductive approach will be followed in this research, using these narrative and cultural variations across *Dracula*-adaptations to identify and study broader elements of horror literature, and their successful transmission across geographical and historical contexts.

It is important to note that my thesis will focus on the cultural aspects of translating the horror of Stoker's novel rather than the linguistic aspects. Although language too forms an important part of the cultural discourse, I will focus more on the aspects of the idea of dead/undead in the popular imagination. The portrayal of Dracula in the popular media has shaped the way the figure of the vampire has been perceived in literatures across the world. My thesis will address the issue of how the status of Dracula as a figure of popular culture influences the act of translation of horror. I will try to show how different aspects of Dracula, as stored in the popular consciousness, are retrieved, used, subverted, and altered every time the text is translated into a different cultural setup. The act of transporting Dracula from his Romanian setup to other historical and regional settings leads to a cross-pollination of cultures. In my thesis, I will show how the translation of horror in the adaptations of Stoker's novel is mediated by the way Dracula is represented and remembered as part of popular fiction and media that is consumed globally. Certain key aspects of the character, and certain tropes from Stoker's novel, have repeatedly been borrowed and used, thus constructing a particular image of the vampiric Count in the minds of the people. For example, the appearance of Dracula as a well-dressed gentleman in his castle, his animalistic nature, the entrapment of an unsuspecting individual in the house of the vampire, the use of certain religious icons to ward off/kill the vampire — these are a few of the tropes which have made their mark on the popular imagination. Any translation or adaptation of the horror of Stoker's novel thus uses these

common tropes embedded in the minds of the people across cultures to recontextualise itself in a new setting with ease. By studying the way in which popular imagination remembers, shapes, and influences the depiction of Dracula, I will analyse how the horror of Stoker's novel is translated across cultures.

Structure of Research

In order to study the role of popular culture in the translation of horror, I have divided my study into four sections. These four sections will deal with the visual narrative, the historical narrative, the narrative of popular literature, and the narrative of ritual practices respectively. The texts chosen in this thesis are either direct adaptations of Stoker's *Dracula*, or utilise the thematic and narrative plot points of the novel in their own way. I have avoided texts which have the figure of the vampire but have not borrowed any narrative or character references from Stoker's *Dracula* in any noticeable way.

In the first section (Chapter II), I will focus on how the visual depiction of the home of Dracula through geographical and architectural details affects the cultural translation of horror. Understanding the way Dracula's home is pictured in popular media will help us gain a better knowledge of the effect of shifting the vampiric Count from Romania to a different setting. In this chapter, I will also analyse the physical revulsion caused by the dead/undead body in the vampire narrative, and the role played by the materiality of the body in creating the horror narrative. I will consider this visual narrative under two heads — the use of iconographies, religious or otherwise, in developing the horror aesthetic in popular fiction, and the architectural construction of Dracula's lair, both in the original novel and in the adaptations. In both these sections I will establish the fact that the perception of Dracula's horror across cultures depends on the way we visually perceive the text. Using texts like Himadrikishore Dasgupta's 'Mosmai Orchid,' Hemendra Kumar Roy's 'Mrs Kumudini Choudhury' (which is an adaptation of E. F. Benson's 'Mrs Amworth'), Md. Alamgir Taimur's *Kantajew-er Pishach*

(*The Vampire of Kantajew*), and two film adaptations of the vampire narrative, *Zinda Laash* (*The Living Corpse*) and *Veerana* (*The Ruins*), I will establish the importance of the visual narrative in the cultural translations of horror.

In the second section (Chapter III), I will study how popular fiction uses historical narratives to resituate the figure of Dracula in different political contexts, thus infusing the vampire with new cultural meanings. In this chapter, I will study the 1899 Swedish version of Dracula translated by Rickard Berghorn as *Powers of Darkness*. I will then examine the 1928 novel *Dracula in Istanbul* by Ali Rıza Seyfioglu that reimagines Stoker's novel in the context of modern-day Istanbul. Although both adaptations have hitherto been considered bootleg novels, recent scholarship has shown that both these texts are more than mere pirated copies of Stoker's work. Following this new line of analysis, I have tried to formulate how the change in fictive histories in these two adaptations is a deliberate creative intervention meant to interpolate Stoker's narrative with new political tensions and social drama, which change the nature of the horror itself.

In the third section (Chapter IV), I will study two popular formats in which *Dracula* has been adapted. The first is the format of popular Bengali fiction which reduces the physical size of the book, thus forcing the authors to shorten the narrative length of the story. The second is the format of the graphic novel, which uses the clothing of Dracula, as seen in popular Hollywood renderings of the character, to import and expand the mythology of the vampiric Count. The use of Dracula's dress thus also forms a part of this material culture which leads to a change in the horror narrative. This chapter will be divided into two parts. The first part will deal with the adaptation of *Dracula* in Bengali popular horror fiction. I have chosen texts like Prithviraj Sen's 'Roktochoshar Hahakar' ('The Blood-sucker's Howl'), in which the Dracula-figure is situated in the hills of Darjeeling, Manojit Dey's 'Roktolobhi Pishach,' ('The Bloodthirsty Vampire'), where a prince mysteriously falls ill after being attacked by a vampire

(much like Lucy Westenra), Debajyoti Bhattacharya's 'Mrityuheen' ('Undead'), a reworking of the vampire story with Dracula being a victim of an ancient evil, Shouvik Chakraborty's 'Kuashar Rong Laal' ('The Fog's Colour is Red'), and Souren Dutta's 'Roktopishach' ('The Vampire'). The second part of the chapter deals with the way the mythology of Stoker's *Dracula* is used, altered, and combined with other quasi-historical and mythological narratives in the Indian comic book adaptations of the text. I will focus on Sudeep Menon's *Dracula*, which relocates the Count from Transylvania to India, blending horror with historical fantasy, and reimagining Dracula's role in the fight between Alexander the Great and King Porus. I will also deal with Manoj Gupta's *Dracula* series that relocates the Count to the fictional world of Raj Comics, and analyse how objects of clothing and the use of colour determines the way the horror of Dracula is translated.

In the fourth section (Chapter V), I will study how popular fiction deals with the symbolism of blood in ritualistic practices, and the role it plays in the translation of horror. The most obvious part of Dracula's narrative which has remained in the popular imagination is that of the vampire drinking the blood of its victims. The use of blood rituals in horror fiction thus adds both to the symbolism and visual effect of gore, which once again is crucial to the translation/adaptation of Dracula. In this chapter, I will work on a radio adaptation of *Dracula* titled *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula* released in 2017 which relocates Dracula to a different cultural setup, and a Bengali film adaptation titled *Nishi Trishna* (*Night-Thirst*) released in 1989, which features a vampire-like creature in Bengal, using several tropes found in Stoker's *Dracula*. In both the radio-play and the film, the symbolism of blood generates a multiplicity of meanings across the geographical and cultural divide. The act of vampirism in both the narratives is also associated with regional cults of blood. The introduction of the narrative of these blood cults changes the essence of the horror found in Stoker's novel. By studying the use of blood as a magic material, I will also raise the issue of the narrative of

purity which is found in the two texts to be studied. The question of the purity of blood affects its consumption, circulation, and distribution within the horror narrative of these adaptations.

The texts selected in each of the sections are not always direct adaptations of Stoker's novel. Some of these texts like Hemendra Kumar Roy's 'Mrs Kumudini Chowdhury,' Md. Alamgir Taimur's '*Kantajew-er Pishach*' (*The Vampire of Kantajew*), Parimal Bhattacharya's film *Nishi Trishna* (*Night-Thirst*), Himadrikishore Dasgupta's 'Mosmai Orchid,' Manojit Dey's 'Roktolobhi Pishach' ('The Bloodthirsty Vampire'), Prithviraj Sen's 'Roktochoshar Hahakar' ('The Blood-sucker's Howl'), Debajyoti Bhattacharya's 'Mrityuheen' ('Undead'), Shouvik Chakraborty's 'Kuashar Rong Laal' ('The Fog's Colour is Red'), and Souren Dutta's 'RoktoPishach' ('The Vampire') use familiar tropes from Stoker's *Dracula* like the entrapment of the victim in the vampire's abode, the discovery of a courteous host being a blood-thirsty monster, or the regeneration of the vampire's body through blood-drinking. By including these texts, I wish to establish how the text of *Dracula* has pervaded vampire literature across cultures, influencing the way the character of the blood-thirsty monster is written or portrayed onscreen. I have also included graphic novels written in Hindi and in English that do not follow the narrative of Stoker's novel but utilise the character of Dracula to reinvent the story of the Count. The four sections of my thesis will thus focus on different aspects of the portrayal of Dracula in the popular imagination. By isolating these factors and studying how the adaptations of *Dracula* use and alter these familiar tropes of the *Dracula*-narrative, I will be able to analyse the way in which the horror of Stoker's novel is translated. This will also help me to formulate a broader theory about the mechanism of translation involved in the process of relocating a horror narrative from one culture to another.

Chapter 2: Reimagining the Vampire's Home and the Iconography of Horror in *Dracula* and its Adaptations

Any adaptation of Dracula has to take into account the complex network of historical research, Romanian geography, cultural conceptions of the dead, and Victorian ideas about sexuality which form the backbone of Stoker's portrayal of vampirism. However, the arousal of fear across cultures also depends on the way the visual cues are arranged in the narrative, in the original text, and in the adaptations. The way the undead body is pictured, the architectural construction of Dracula's castle, or the use of visual symbolism actively influence the way the novel is read and culturally translated. This chapter will deal with two aspects of this visual narrative in *Dracula* and its adaptations — the use of iconographies, religious or otherwise, in constructing ideas about good and evil; and the architectural and graphic creation of the vampire's lair, which influences the reader's perception of the horror element. In the first section dealing with the iconographies in horror fiction, we will deal with Himadrikishore Dasgupta's 'Mosmai Orchid,' Hemendra Kumar Roy's 'Mrs Kumudini Choudhury' – which is primarily adapted from E. F. Benson's 'Mrs Amworth' – and two films, namely *Zinda Laash* ('The Living Corpse') which claims to be based on Stoker's novel, and *Veerana (*'The Ruins') which employs certain vampire tropes, alongside Stoker's novel and Stephen King's *Salem's Lot*. In the second section dealing with the architectural elements of Dracula's castle we will study the set designs of Edward Gorey for the theatrical adaptation of *Dracula* by Hamilton Deane and John L. Balderston. We will also look at the construction of the vampire's lair in Hemendra Kumar Roy's *Bishalgarh-er Duhshason* ('The Tyrant of *Bishalgarh*') and Md. Alamgir Taimur's *Kantajew-er Pishach* ('The Vampire of *Kantajew*'), analysing the influence of the castle/temple's architecture on the thematic structure of the texts. In both these sections we will try to establish that the perception of the horror Dracula evokes across cultures depends on the way we visualise the text and interpret the iconographies used in them. It is thus

important to understand the aesthetic changes in the way the horror is constructed and to contextualise the iconographies used in the text within the larger context of horror fiction.

Iconographies of Horror in *Dracula* and its Adaptations

Bram Stoker's novel, in its portrayal of the vampire and the vampire hunters, repeatedly uses the language of religion, framing the fight between them as spiritual warfare. The 'Crew of Light,' as the vampire hunters are called, are frequently seen using the Eucharist Host or the crucifix to fend off the vampire, making the novel seem decidedly Catholic. D. Bruno Starrs, for example, points out the 'pro-Catholic theme' of the novel, highlighting Van Helsing's use of the Host, and Harker's use of the crucifix given to him by the villager, as a defence against the threat of Dracula.[1] Similarly, Ann Kordas, equating the Eucharist ritual with the blood-drinking ritual of the vampire (which gives it eternal life), establishes a strong connection between vampirism and Roman Catholicism.[2] Moreover, she claims that in many ways the Roman Catholic Church contributed to the spread of belief in vampires and thus *Dracula* and other vampire texts are set in places like Transylvania, which have a predominantly Catholic population.[3] Noelle Bowles challenges the Protestant/Catholic binary used in analysing *Dracula*, but still sticks to a religious interpretation of the text by linking the use of the crucifix and Holy Communion to the panic regarding Anglican ritualism and the Oxford Movement in Victorian England.[4] Very interestingly however, in Bram Stoker's novel, when Harker and Morris finally intercept Count Dracula's coffin, they strike him not with the crucifix but with

[1] D. Bruno Starrs, 'Keeping the Faith: Catholicism in Dracula and its Adaptations,' *Journal of Dracula Studies* 6, Article 3 (2004), https://research.library.kutztown.edu/dracula-studies/vol6/iss1/3. Accessed on 15th September 2022.

[2] Ann Kordas, ''The Blood Is the Life': Roman Catholic Imagery in American Vampire Films of the 1930s,' in *Roman Catholicism in Fantastic Film Essays on Belief, Spectacle, Ritual and Imagery*, ed. Regina Hansen (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2011), 117.

[3] Kordas, 118-119.

[4] Noelle Bowles, 'Crucifix, Communion, and Convent: The Real Presence of Anglican Ritualism in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*,' *Christianity and Literature* 62, no.2 (Winter 2013): 245.

Harker's 'great knife' which is a *kukhri*, and Morris's bowie knife.[5] While the vampire hunters drive a wooden stake through Lucy Westenra's heart, behead her, and stuff her mouth with garlic,[6] Dracula is merely killed off with a blade. Not only is there an absence of the ritualised killing in case of Dracula, there is strangely no reference to the use of any holy object, which had previously served effective in neutralising the threat of the vampire. Jill Galvan interprets this use of the *kukhri* within the context of the Indian Rebellion of 1857 and the colonial relations between Britain and India in the Victorian period.[7] The *kukhri* is the signature weapon of the Gorkha regiment, who had fought dedicatedly on the side of the British during the Rebellion of 1857. According to Galvan, the use of this knife to kill off Dracula — a East-European villain disrupting the peace of London — links it to the memory of the anti-British Rebellion of 1857 which had similarly disrupted the power of British authority and was eventually subdued with the help of the Gorkhas.[8] Although the issue of the imperial anxieties hidden in *Dracula* falls outside the scope of this chapter, it can be concluded from Galvan's argument that Stoker envisioned the death of the Count as the successful elimination of an invasive, external threat to London, and not just as a spiritual victory over a Catholic villain. Despite the repeated use of religious imagery there is something markedly political about the hunting and the death of the vampire in Stoker's novel.

Hammer Productions' 1958 adaptation of Stoker's novel, titled *Horror of Dracula*, makes two significant changes to the text. Firstly, in the film Harker comes to the castle of Count Dracula not as a solicitor helping the Count to buy a house near London but as a librarian

[5] Bram Stoker, *Dracula*, in *Dracula: A Norton Critical Edition*, edited by Nina Auerbach and David J. Skal, 1-327. (London: Archibald Constable and Company, 1897; New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997), 325.

[6] Stoker, 193.

[7] Jill Galvan, 'Occult Networks and the Legacy of the Indian Rebellion in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*,' *History of Religions* 54, no. 4 (May 2015): 434-458.

[8] Galvan, 438.

with the intent of killing the vampire once and for all. After being locked in his room by Dracula, Harker writes in his journal:

> At last I have met Count Dracula. He accepts me as a man who has agreed to work among his books as I intended. It only remains for me now to await the daylight hours, when with God's help I will forever end this man's reign of terror.[9]

The tone of Harker's journal in the film is that of a determined crusader against evil, who has come with the full knowledge of the Count's true character. The confident attitude of Harker, set on defeating Dracula with God's help, is very different from that of the naïve, nervous Harker of Stoker's novel, who is shown as a helpless Londoner falling prey to the vampire's evil machinations. In the novel, therefore, Harker's fight against Dracula is more a matter of personal revenge and personal safety; it is only when Lucy Westenra is killed and when they realise that Dracula poses a real threat to them in London that they join hands to defeat the monster. Hammer Productions' Harker, on the other hand, is more akin to a selfless hero who has willingly come to kill the monster and free the people from his clutches forever, even before the Count poses a threat to his dear ones. *Horror of Dracula* therefore frames the fight between the Count and the vampire hunters as a universal, cosmic fight between good and evil, beyond the boundaries of geographical space. This change in the motivation of Harker's character for killing the Count — from one of personal concern to that of a larger social and spiritual responsibility — makes it more translatable across cultures wherein it is mapped onto similar notions of heroism and sacrifice.

In one such loose adaptation of the blood-sucking evil being in the film *Veerana* ('The Ruins'), Mahendra Pratap, the feudal lord of a village troubled by the monster, convinces the wife of his younger brother, Sameer Pratap, to let Sameer go and end the terror of the witch Nakita once and for all.[10] When the wife objects to this dangerous mission, Mahendra Pratap

[9] *Horror of Dracula*, directed by Terence Fisher (1958; Burbank, CA: Warner Home Video, 2002), DVD.

[10] *Veerana* ('The Ruins'), directed by Ramsay Brothers (1988; U.S.A.: Mondo Macabro, 2009), DVD.

says that their ancestors have always looked after the people of the village and it is their duty to ensure that their people can live safely, by killing off the bloodthirsty witch. Like Harker in the 1958 film, Sameer Pratap decides to endanger his life and defeat the witch despite there being no direct threat to their family in the beginning, since the monster only attacked outsiders who came to the village and wandered off near her lair. And in both cases, it is not the hero alone who pays the price for securing the lives of the people in the community. Dracula sees the portrait of Harker's fiancée Lucy Holmwood at the castle and sets out to prey on her, in retaliation for Harker having staked his bride; in *Veerana* ('The Ruins'), Mahendra Pratap's daughter Jasmin is possessed by the spirit of Nakita who uses her to kill Sameer's wife and proceeds to wreak havoc on the family. In both these cases, the hero and the monster are sharply distinguished by religious or animal iconographies which not only define their characters but also establishes their opposing moral standing in the narrative. In Stoker's novel, When Van Helsing first asks permission from Arthur Holmwood to open up Lucy's grave and cut off her head, Arthur is both morally and emotionally outraged at the thought of mutilating the dead body of his fiancée and dishonouring her grave.[11] He repeatedly refers to this act proposed by Van Helsing as 'desecration'.[12] In this brief instant, to Holmwood particularly, Van Helsing is as much a polluter of the dead as Dracula is because both violate the sanctity of the dead established through cultural rituals. But when Van Helsing tells Holmwood that he was using the Christian Host to seal the tomb so that the vampires cannot re-enter it, Dr Seward says, 'It was an answer that appalled the most sceptical of us, and we felt individually that in the presence of such earnest purpose as the Professor's, a purpose which could thus use the to him [*sic*] most sacred of things, it was impossible to distrust.'[13] The presence of the Host changes

[11] Stoker, 184.

[12] Stoker, 183-184.

[13] Stoker, 187.

the moral perspective of Dr Seward and the others present; Van Helsing's actions are no longer seen as a desecration of the dead but as having some honest purpose. The Host is not just a religious icon; its use by Van Helsing justifies his actions as the potential hero fighting against the monster. The Host, and more importantly the crucifix, are iconographies that define the hero and his moral purpose. Similarly, when Sameer decides to hunt for Nakita, his elder brother hands him an *Om* locket, and says that it will protect him.

While these religious icons serve as markers of the hero, conversely, the use of these objects by them converts the crucifix or the *Om* locket into a potent charm which can be used to fight evil. Once used by the hero, the crucifix or the *Om* locket is no longer a mere religious symbol embodying a specific spiritual philosophy; it becomes a universal marker of the sacred which can be visually or aesthetically pitted against a general notion of the evil. The moment the crucifix is used against the vampire is the moment in which it becomes a part of the larger iconography of horror fiction. This brings me to the second important change made by Hammer Productions in the 1958 film. While the ending of Stoker's *Dracula* has references to Britain's imperialist history, symbolised through the use of *kukhri*, the ending of *Horror of Dracula* is marked by the explicit use of religious symbolism. In this film, as the Count struggles to retreat from the sunlight which is burning him up, Van Helsing uses two candlesticks to form a cross and drives him further into the sunlight.[14] However, despite the presence of religious icons, Stoker's *Dracula* or its adaptations cannot be said to have taken a Catholic stance. Stephen Purcell argues that the novel *Dracula* makes a sharp distinction between the use of Christian sacraments in order to exterminate the vampire and the intellectual or spiritual transition, which would mark the protagonists' conversion to Catholic faith. According to Purcell, because of the sceptical nature of the protagonists, their use of the Catholic sacred objects is limited to the objects' 'instrumental usefulness' in defeating Dracula rather than to their 'inherent goodness'

[14] Fisher, *Horror of Dracula*.

as holy objects.[15] In Dracula's castle Harker keeps the crucifix over the head of his bed as a kind of protection from the vampiric Count, even though he had not believed in it earlier.[16] Similarly, when Dracula attacks Mina Harker, Arthur, Quincey, Seward, and Van Helsing lift up their crucifixes and advance to repel the Count.[17] The most common mistake while interpreting the role of the crucifix or other holy objects in *Dracula* is to consider the text from the religious viewpoint of the readers or that of the Crew of Light. Most scholars try to judge Van Helsing's or Harker's reaction towards Catholic symbols while fighting the Count in order to understand their importance. This leads to a narrative misreading of the text because *Dracula* demands to be read from the cultural perspective of the ancient Romanian Count, and not just from the Victorian standpoint of Harker and the others. In his notes on the plot of the novel, Stoker specifically mentions, with reference to Dracula's attitude to religion, 'only moved by relics older than own real date—<xxx> century.'[18] Although Stoker never provides this information about the Count's 'real date,' the Count is thus not the timeless vampire we believe him to be. His history is intricately tied to the history of the relic, which defines his origin. If the crucifix or the holy wafer repels him, he can be said to have been born sometime after these objects were turned into historical symbols of worship. The relics of religion and the relic of his undead body thus define the historical time of this mythological world. They qualify each other as objects of veneration and an object of horror within this fictional narrative. Moreover, Stoker does not particularly assign any religion to these relics Dracula is repelled by, nor does he specify the nature of these relics. In Chapter 1, p. 13, Harker's reaction to the crucifix offered

[15] Stephen Purcell, 'Not Wholly Communion: Skepticism and the Instrumentalization of Religion in Stoker's *Dracula*,' *Christianity & Literature* 67, no. 2 (2018): 295.

[16] Stoker, 38.

[17] Stoker, 247.

[18] Stoker, in *Bram Stoker's Notes for Dracula*, annotated and transcribed by Robert Eighteen-Bisang and Elizabeth Miller (London: Mcfarland & Co., 2008), 21.

to him by the old lady as something idolatrous will be dealt with in detail below. The crucifix, in Stoker's novel therefore, belongs to this fictional cultural mythology from which Dracula is born, and not to any specific religious system. It can be complemented or supplemented by other icons (religious or non-religious) within this mythology. For example, in the 1931 film adaptation of *Dracula*, wolfsbane serves as a vampire deterrent along with the cross.[19] Despite being a non-religious object, wolfsbane can repel Dracula because of the folkloric history in which the monster is situated. In Hemendra Kumar Roy's *Bishalgarh-er Duhshasan* ('The Tyrant of *Bishalgarh*'), Binoy is protected from the vampire's advances not by any relic belonging to a particular religion but by a copper *kavach* (an amulet for protection).[20] Roy avoids any mention of the specific religious system to which this protective amulet belongs. But even in the absence of any religious meaning, the amulet signifies protection and safety to Binoy. This is because, the amulet (be it the crucifix or the *kavach*) does not derive its importance from being a religious object alone; rather its significance is retroactively determined when it is seen to be useful against the vampire. That is to say, the *kavach* does not hold much importance when Binoy first wears it; it is only when it proves useful against the vampire that it is seen as a protective object. The meaning of the *kavach* or the crucifix is ironically determined when it is pitted against its obverse — the evil entity. In a 1967 Bengali adaptation of *Dracula*, called 'Bidehi Atma' ('The Disembodied Spirit'), the Harker figure, called Ashok Lahiri, similarly gets a *maduli* or amulet put around his neck by the station master of the railway station where he alights.[21] Again, like the *kavach* in Roy, apart from a vague association with the Hindu religion, no specific religious details are provided.

[19] *Dracula,* directed by Tod Browning (1931, CA: Universal Home Video, 2012), Blue-ray.

[20] Hemendra Kumar Roy, *Bishalgarh-er Duhshasan* ('The Tyrant of *Bishalgarh*'), 1949, reprinted in *Hemendra Kumar Roy Rachanabali* (*The Writings of Hemendra Kumar Roy*), Vol. 18 (Kolkata: Asia Publishing Company, 2005), 18.

[21] Sunil Kumar Gangopadhyay, *Bidehi Atma* ('The Disembodied Spirit') (Kolkata: Mandal Book House, 1967).

This justifies our previous analysis that the religious object acts as an iconography of horror fiction, providing visual cues to the audience/readers to react to its functionality as a vampire-repellent. It is important to note here that horror fiction, in any media, relies on two types of iconographies — the object of horror and the sacred object — which together generate and alleviate, respectively, the emotion of fear. In Stoker's *Dracula*, the arrival of the Count as a coach driver for Harker is soon followed by the howling of the wolves that surround the carriage, which proceed to scare the carriage horses on the way to Dracula's castle.[22] The appearance of the wolves thus accompanies the appearance of the Count who similarly has an animal-like, 'cruel-looking' appearance, with 'peculiarly sharp white teeth,' and hair growing profusely on his body as Harker later discovers.[23] Even in the short story 'Dracula's Guest' the wolf who is found lying on the Englishman's body and 'keeping his blood warm'[24] is not ultimately seen by him as a benevolent saviour but as some form of 'mysterious protection', probably portending danger.[25] If the wolves generate a sense of fear in Harker (and parallelly in the readers), the image of the crucifix balances this fear with a sense of comfort and protection in the protagonist and the readers alike. Once he finds out that he has been kept as a prisoner by the Count, Harker says,

> Bless that good, good woman who hung the crucifix round my neck! For it is a comfort and a strength to me whenever I touch it. It is odd that a thing which I have been taught to regard with disfavour and as idolatrous should in a time of loneliness and trouble be of help. Is it that there is something in the essence of the thing itself, or that it is a medium, a tangible help, in conveying memories of sympathy and comfort? Some time, if it may be, I must examine this matter and try to make up my mind about it.[26]

---

[22] Stoker, 20.

[23] Stoker, 23.

[24] Stoker, 'Dracula's Guest,' in *Dracula: A Norton Critical* Edition, ed. Nina Auerbach and David J. Skal (London: Routledge, 1914; New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997), 358.

[25] Stoker, 'Dracula's Guest,' 360.

[26] Stoker, *Dracula,* 33.

To Harker, the crucifix does not function as a Catholic symbol of sacrifice and of human redemption; rather, as the only sacred object within Dracula's world of horror, it acquires a personal meaning of comfort to him. To the audience/readers, similarly, the crucifix is divested of its Catholic signification. The appearance of the crucifix on the page, or on the screen, counterbalances the emotion of fear which the object of horror generates, by giving them a temporary feeling of relief. As long as Harker holds the crucifix, the psychological tension in the readers is relaxed. The presence of the sacred object creates these safe narrative pockets within the tale of horror, where the reader/audience can, for a brief moment, heave a sigh of relief, before being plunged into the zone of danger once again. This alternate play on the iconography of the horrific and of the sacred on the minds of the readers/audience is crucial in creating an ambience of horror. Harker's reaction to the crucifix as a source of comfort is communicated to the readers, who share his personal, emotional response to the sacred object as part of the horror narrative. None of these responses to the visual presence of the crucifix is however based on any religious, or more specifically Catholic, conviction. Noël Carroll in his book *Philosophy of Horror* challenges the argument that belief in the object of horror is required to generate fear in the audience/readers.[27] In order to be afraid of Dracula, for example, one need not believe in the reality of the monster; but the *content* of the thought of a bloodsucking monster should be fearful enough to stimulate the emotion of fear. He gives the example of a man firmly standing at the precipice of a cliff, and shuddering at the *thought* of what will happen to him if he falls off the cliff. Despite knowing that his position is secure and that there is no chance of him falling over, the thought is fearful enough to make him afraid.[28] Similarly, despite not believing in the existence of a vampire, a reader may feel afraid while reading Stoker's novel because of the thought of such a monster.

[27] Noël Carroll, 'The Nature of Horror,' in *The Philosophy of Horror or Paradoxes of the Heart* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 80.

[28] Carroll, 80.

Carroll bases his argument on Coleridge's idea of 'willing suspension of disbelief' whereby the incidents and events are planned in such a way that they invite the readers to actively perceive the supernatural as real thus generating an authentic emotional response towards it. Borrowing Carroll's argument, we can say that in the same way belief in Catholicism or Christianity is not central to the reader's/audience's sense of comfort on seeing the protagonist with the crucifix. The idea that within the universe of horror, this object has the potency to stop Dracula is sufficient to create an association between the crucifix and safety in our minds. Harker himself, in the passage quoted above, acknowledges that he has been taught to believe that the use of the crucifix in this form is idolatrous. At this point he is unable to determine whether the power of the crucifix is symbolic or literal which shows that the feeling of comfort he experiences is not based on any ideology of faith but rather on its visual power as an icon of protection in Dracula's horrific castle.

Moreover, the overt use of religious icons does not stem from a desire to impose a Catholic worldview on the genre of vampire fiction, but rather is motivated by dramatic interests. The presence of the cross/crucifix on the screen, or on the page, acts as a narrative cue for the audience/readers to make a moral judgement on the characters present and to distinguish the heroes from the monsters. In many cases, however, the sacred object is also used as a touchstone to determine the moral or spiritual standing of the characters fighting against the vampire. For example, in Stephen King's *Salem's Lot*, as Father Callahan holds the cross in front of Kurt Barlow there is a strong glow to it.[29] Barlow promises to let Mark go if Callahan drops his cross. And although Barlow releases Mark, Callahan holds on to the cross thinking that it would protect him. However, the glow of the cross starts to diminish until it proves to be totally ineffective against the vampire, who finally breaks it. Barlow tells Callahan,

[29] Stephen King, *Salem's* Lot (New York: Doubleday Publishers, 1975; London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2011), 490.

'You have forgotten the doctrine of your own church, is it not so? The cross…the bread and wine…the confessional…only symbols. Without faith, the cross is only wood, the bread baked wheat, the wine sour grapes.'[30] Similarly, in the 1985 American horror film *Fright Night*, when Peter Vincent, a television vampire hunter, is forced to confront the vampire Jerry Dandrige, he brings out the cross in front of him.[31] However, Jerry smashes the cross saying, 'You have to have faith for this to work on me, Mr. Vincent.'[32] While Vincent's cross fails to have any effect on Jerry, when Charley, who was the first one to suspect that his neighbour was a vampire, holds out the crucifix, Jerry is forced to retreat. The sacred object therefore, does not always repel the vampire because of its religious nature; it is the hero's moral conviction which grants it the power to be used against evil.[33] The crucifix therefore cannot just be labelled a Catholic symbol; it is a narrative icon of horror fiction by which the characters' ethics of heroism is established. When at the end of *Fright Night*, therefore, Vincent's use of the cross works against Jerry, it not only signals the end of Jerry's terror, but also the transformation of Vincent into a complete hero, along with Charley.[34]

Any study of the popularity of *Dracula* as a cross-cultural text must analyse the translation of these iconographies of horror and of religion into a different linguistic, geographical, and historical context. In this chapter we are specifically focusing on some of the South Asian translations and transcreations of *Dracula* in order to understand how a change in the use of such icons affects the type of horror which is generated. In my analysis, I wish to follow Tabish Khair's argument that although folkloric traditions in India have supernatural

[30] King, 495-496.

[31] *Fright* Night, directed by Thomas Lee Holland (1985; Culver City, CA: Columbia Tristar Home Video, 1999), DVD.

[32] *Fright Night*.

[33] Screenwriter John Elder introduces some spurious business about Dracula being able to pull a stake out of his heart unless it is hammered in by somebody with faith. *Dracula Has Risen from the Grave* (1968).

[34] *Fright Night*.

characters who feed upon the human flesh, like *dynes* or *churails*, there is a lack of an exact cultural equivalent of vampires in Indian literatures in particular, and in South Asian English Literatures in general.[35] Therefore, Khair argues, when vampires appear in these literatures, they mainly do so in the light of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*.[36] His thesis is justified in so far as it hints towards a transnational relevance of Stoker's novel across South Asian countries. However, this leads Khair to suggest that most vampire narratives in Indian media are 'highly derivative from Western vampire narratives.'[37] It is at this point that I diverge from Khair's thesis because I argue that the literary influence that Stoker's vampire had on Indian and South Asian vampire narratives does not necessarily lead to a blind duplication of the same western motifs and themes. As we will see, many of these texts, in an attempt to recreate the horror of Stoker's *Dracula* in a different cultural context, introduce a totally different set of belief systems, social taboos, geographical setups or historical contexts. And in doing so, they not only radically alter the structure and nature of the original novel, but also create a very different (and unique) type of vampire narrative. Therefore, the transnational relevance of *Dracula* is not limited to an unimaginative translation of the vampire genre into regional languages; rather, *Dracula* created a literary and cultural space within India, Pakistan, and other South Asian countries for the introduction of a new type of monster — the vampire — which was hitherto absent. The question of translating the horror of *Dracula*, therefore, is also a question of accommodating and mapping these new religious iconographies and meanings onto the existing cultural text. In light of this argument, I also wish to challenge Khair's observation

[35] Tabish Khair, 'The Man- Eating Tiger and the Vampire in South Asia,' in *Transnational and Postcolonial Vampires: Dark Blood*, ed. Tabish Khair and Johan Höglund (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 105-106.

[36] Khair, 106.

[37] Khair, 107. Khair argues that the shape-shifting, cannibalistic tiger is the closest parallel of the vampire in the South Asian context. However, the lore of the man-eating, shape-shifting tigers in India is more akin to the werewolf than the vampire. Although Dracula has been portrayed with animalistic features, the vampire is based on the motif of the returning dead. The man-eating tiger, on the other hand, features an actual *living* creature who is a hybrid between a human and an animal.

that a 'deeply internalised Christian background…is essential to the writing of the vampire qua vampire.'[38] As we will show in this chapter, some of the adaptations of *Dracula* replace the Christian symbolism with other religious subtexts, adding new meanings to the vampire. Sometimes the religious symbolism is removed altogether, to offer a much more secular portrayal of the vampire.

Himadrikishore Dasgupta's short story 'Mosmai Orchid' is one such text which totally dispenses with the religious symbolism of *Dracula*, and reimagines the bloodthirsty monster in a totally different light.[39] Quite interestingly, throughout the story there is no direct mention of the word 'vampire.' However, a close analysis of the text will reveal how the character of the Count shapes Dasgupta's villain, and yet, how the author breaks free from the conventional tropes of vampire fiction to create a different narrative of horror. 'Mosmai Orchid' tells the story of Nakurbabu, a collector of orchids and medicinal plants, who comes to visit Shillong once every year. There he meets Matta-kaba, an old man selling orchids, two of which have a deep blood-red colour and attract his attention. Matta-kaba tells him that it is a special kind of orchid which grows in the Mosmai caves of Shillong once in every 20 years, and can reduce the age of people when consumed. Although sceptical about its age-reducing properties, Nakurbabu agrees to meet Matta-kaba at the cave where it grows. Nakurbabu is surprised to find the orchids there all white. To his horror, however, he notices that the two tubular extensions in front of the orchids have penetrated his skin, and are sucking blood from his arteries, and turning red in colour. With several such orchids attached to his body and draining out his blood, Nakurbabu cries for Matta-kaba's help. However, instead of helping him the latter picks up the orchids, filled with Nakurbabu's blood, and starts chewing them. Nakurbabu

[38] Khair, 112.

[39] Himadrikishore Dasgupta, 'Mosmai Orchid,' in *Gaa Chhamchhame Bhoot (The Body-trembling Ghosts)* (Kolkata: Mitra & Ghosh Publishers, 2010), 226-239.

runs away and is rescued by the ghost of Matta-kaba's previous victims, who reveal that this blood-filled orchid has kept Matta-kaba alive for several years. Like Dracula, then, Matta-kaba draws sustenance from the blood of his human preys. Although he does not directly bite into his victims, the author clearly tells us that Matta-kaba is far from being human. His undead state is revealed to us through the ghost of one his victims, William Spencer, who tells Nakurbabu:

> ও আমার আর এই বাচ্চাটার মতো। তবে ওর দেহ আছে। লাল মসমাই অর্কিড ওর দেহকে যুগযুগ ধরে বাঁচিয়ে রেখেছে। এই অর্কিড ওকে বৃদ্ধ থেকে যুবক করে তোলে। সে জীবন-মৃত্যুর মাঝামাঝি থাকা ভয়ঙ্কর কেউ।
>
> (He is like me and this child. But he has a body. The red Mosmai orchid has kept his body alive for ages. This orchid makes this old man young. He is a fearful one existing between life and death.)[40]

The ghost of Spencer begins by acknowledging Matta-kaba to be somewhat like other ghosts — supernatural entities existing in the realm of the dead. But immediately he establishes the distinction of Matta-kaba from the spirit world by noting that unlike them, he has a body, and therefore, exists in a realm between the living and the dead, or, as we have been calling it, that of the undead. On the one hand, the fact that the author has to describe the monstrosity of Matta-kaba in this roundabout way indicates the lack of the exact cultural parallel of vampires in the South Asian context. But on the other hand, Dasgupta also shows how Dracula has led to the creative recreation of the blood-drinking vampire in the popular imagination of Bengal. While the benevolent ghosts of Spencer and the child are portrayed as harmless, in fact benignant figures who aid Nakurbabu in his escape, Matta-kaba, whose body has been kept alive by the orchid for ages is seen as a source of horror. This portrayal of Matta-kaba as an aberrant, who neither inhabits the realm of the living nor the realm of the benignant ghosts is what makes him '**ভয়ঙ্কর**' or 'fearful.' The source of horror in 'Mosmai Orchid' therefore, is not

[40] Dasgupta, 'Mosmai Orchid,' 238.

just Matta-kaba's vampiric nature but the fact that he lies outside the cultural conceptions of the living and the dead, of the humans and the ghosts of Bengal. He is neither a *bhoot* nor a *pishach*, but a new kind of monster in Bengali literature that even the ghost of Spencer is afraid to conceptualise.

Although the scene of Matta-kaba chewing on the orchids, with the blood of Nakurbabu dripping from his mouth, is fearful in itself, Dasgupta adds a second layer of shock which once again closely parallels Stoker's *Dracula*. When Nakurbabu finally escapes from the Mosmai caves and is about to leave Shillong by train, he sees Matta-kaba again on the platform with his orchids. However, his age has drastically reduced from the time he first saw him:

> মুহূর্তের মধ্যে নকুড়বাবু চিনতে পারলেন তাকে মত্ত-কাবা!! যদিও তার বয়স এখন আরও কমে গেছে, প্রায় যুবকই বলা যায় তাকে। রাতের প্ল্যাটফর্মে শিকার ধরতে এসেছে সে'!
>
> (In a moment Nakurbabu could recognise Matta-kaba! However, his age has reduced now even more, he may almost be called a young man. He has come to catch his prey at night on the platform!)[41]

In *Dracula* similarly, when Harker had first met the Count, he was described as a 'tall, old man,'[42] but when Harker sees him later in London he is portrayed with a black moustache; Harker himself observes that 'he [Dracula] has grown young.'[43]

This brings us to yet another important icon used in horror literature — the iconography of the body, dead/undead. The dead body, according to Jonathan L. Crane, is the 'most menacing piece of waste.' Despite being a potent (and tangible) reminder of the life of the person who has passed away, it becomes an object of disgust as it rots and putrefies, and thus has to be boxed up, interred or burnt away.[44] Crane observes that horror films repeatedly deal

[41] Dasgupta, 'Mosmai Orchid,' 239.

[42] Stoker, 21.

[43] Stoker, 251.

[44] Jonathan Lake Crane, *Terror and Everyday Life: Singular Moments in the History of the Horror Film* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1994), 31.

with the 'grotesque return' of these dead bodies. Barbara Creed similarly discusses how the horror film abounds in images of the 'corpse, whole and mutilated, followed by an array of bodily wastes such as blood, vomit, saliva, sweat, tears and putrefying flesh.'[45] In vampire fiction however, this icon of the dead body is totally inversed, wherein the monster's undead body not only escapes natural decay but is also found in the prime of youth. Contrary to other types of horror fiction like zombie literature, decomposition of the body is welcomed rather than frowned at because it signals a return to the natural order of things. On the other hand, the dead body which does not decay, and which appears youthful and full of health, ironically becomes an icon of evil. In Hemendra Kumar Roy's short story 'Mrs Kumudini Choudhury', an Indianised take on E. F. Benson's 'Mrs Amworth', when the protagonist and Amulyababu open the coffin of Mrs Kumudini, the vampire, there is no mark of the train accident, which they had thought had killed her recently.[46] There is no mark of decay, and the narrator describes her body as being whole, that is without any mutilation.[47] But the phrase 'পরিপূর্ণ দেহ' ('perfect body'), which the narrator uses, can also refer to a sign of vitality and fullness, similar to how Lucy's undead body is described as having a 'voluptuous mouth' and a 'carnal' appearance.[48] When Amulyababu opens the coffin there is no mark of the accident on the dead body:

> সে দেহ দেখলে মনে হয় না তা কোন দিন ট্রেনে কাটা পড়েছিল! সেটা একমাস আগে কবর দেওয়া কোন গলিত মৃতদেহও নয়! তার তাজা মুখ অত্যন্ত প্রফুল্ল, তার ওষ্ঠাধরের চারপাশে তরল রক্তধারা লেগে রয়েছে এবং তার জীবন্ত চোখ দুটো সহাস্য দৃষ্টিতে আমার মুখের পানে তাকিয়ে আছে!

[45] Barbara Creed, *The Monstrous-Feminine: Film, Feminism, Psychoanalysis* (New York: Routledge, 1993; 2015), 10.

[46] Hemendra Kumar Roy, 'Mrs Kumudini Choudhury,' in *Hemendra Kumar Roy Rachanabali* (*The Writings of Hemendra Kumar Roy*), Vol. 3 (Kolkata: Asia Publishing Company, 1943), 360.

[47] Roy, 260.

[48] Stoker, 190.

(Looking at the dead body you could not believe that it was hit by a train! It was not a decaying dead body that had been buried a month ago! Her face looked extremely fresh, with blood around her lips and her lively eyes staring at me with a smile!)[49]

In Roy's story the vampiric body has not only been spared decay and dissolution but has somehow been left without any mark of the accident. In Benson's story, when the coffin is opened, 'The eyes, once closed in death, were open, the cheeks were flushed with colour, the red, full-lipped mouth seemed to smile.'[50] Although the vampiric body does not show any symptoms of decay in Benson's story, Roy's details about the absence of any mark of the accident is absent here. If horror fiction capitalises on the fear of the familiar body putrefying after death, vampire fiction combines this revulsion with a hidden fantasy of a prolonged, eternal life of the body that escapes the natural processes of decay. Harker, for example, acknowledges that the female vampires excite in him the contrasting feeling of longing and deadly fear;[51] Nakurbabu, despite not believing in the age-reducing properties of the vampiric orchids, claims to be increasingly attracted towards them.[52] In Roy's story similarly, when Amulyababu opens the coffin of Mrs Kumudini, the narrator is awed by the state of her body, which has not decayed even a little. As noted above, Roy's description of the vampiric body not only makes it immune to physical decay but also removes any sign of hurt or damage which it might have suffered when the person was alive. For a moment, therefore, in all these cases, the protagonist, and the readers along with them, are overwhelmed with the romantic fantasy of the body's ability to escape death and remain in its prime. However, this momentary fantasy of the ever-youthful body, which is often presented in sexual terms, is soon broken, in Harker's case by the arrival of the furious Count, and in Roy's story by the sharp cry of the vampire,

[49] Roy, 360.

[50] E.F. Benson, 'Mrs Amworth', in *Night Terrors: The Ghost Stories of E.F. Benson*, edited by David Stuart Davies, (London: Wordsworth Editions, 2012), 339.

[51] Stoker, 42.

[52] Dasgupta, 'Mosmai Orchid ', 229.

when Amulyababu plunges the spade into her heart; so also, in 'Mrs Amworth', where Urcombe tells the narrator to look away just after the narrator notices the vampire's colour-flushed cheeks and red, full-lipped mouth. This contradiction between the desire to stare at the perfect, unblemished dead body and the injunction to look away from its horrific mutilation defines the moment of anxiety about the dead in vampire fiction.

The idea of vampirism as a combination of the fear of the putrefying body and a fantasy of immortality is best explored in the 1967 Pakistani film *Zinda Laash* ('The Living Corpse') directed by Khwaja Sarfraz.[53] Professor Tabani is turned into a vampire not because he is evil but because of his desire to immortalise his existence. At the beginning of the film, the voiceover says that every mortal has to face death, and only Allah has the power to control life and death. No power in the world can challenge His authority over such matters, out of either good or bad intentions. Professor Tabani is said to have experimented on life and death with the best of intentions.[54] Despite the explicit reference to Allah, this film therefore initially situates vampirism beyond the ethical structures of good and evil. However, when Dr Aqil, the Harker figure, comes to his mansion, he says he has heard that this place is infested with evil spirits, to which Tabani replies, that he is one them.[55] Although Aqil ignores Tabani's statement thinking it to be a joke, it is interesting to note that the professor, who was said to have acted out of the best of intentions while trying to invent the potion of immortality, is now seen as overtly evil. His desire to transgress the natural boundaries of life and death, therefore, has inadvertently led to the corruption of his soul. Ironically, the very potion which the professor invents to make himself immortal causes his apparent demise and turns him into an undead.

[53] *Zinda Laash* ('The Living Corpse'), directed by Khwaja Sarfraz (1967; U.S.A.: Mondo Macabro, 2003), DVD.

[54] *Zinda Laash* ('The Living Corpse'), Khwaja Sarfraz.

[55] *Zinda Laash* ('The Living Corpse'), Khwaja Sarfraz.

This conversion of the professor from a scientific-minded individual trying to cheat death into an evil predator, sucking the lifeblood of those living, can however be understood in the context of a very specific religious iconography. When Tabani first creates the portion, he says that he has created '*Aab-e hayat*'.[56] The '*Aab-e hayat*', as Poonawala tells us, means the 'fountain of life', and is generally associated with Ḵeżr, the companion and spiritual guide of Moses in the Koran.[57] He is said to be immortal because he drank from the fountain of life.[58] The conflation of vampirism with the Islamic iconography of the fountain of life shows that the horror of *Zinda Laash* ('The Living Corpse') is not just based on a perverted fantasy of an immortal body, but also on the fearful consequences of recreating the miracles of divinity using scientific methods. Unlike Dracula, Tabani's immortality is not shrouded in a distant historical past; it is the product of a researched advancement in the medical field, although a failed one. *Zinda Laash* ('The Living Corpse') breaks the stereotype of the 'demi-immortal Oriental,' as J. Jeffrey Franklin calls it.[59] According to Franklin, Dracula belongs to this host of other semi-immortal Orientals, who drew their powers from an archaic, tradition-burdened past. They are associated with a previous age, pitted against scientific advancement, and are ultimately defeated by 'technologies of progress.'[60] Subverting this trope of the archaic Oriental villain, *Zinda Laash*

[56] *Zinda Laash* ('The Living Corpse'), Khwaja Sarfraz.

[57] I. K. Poonawala, 'ĀB ii. Water in Muslim Iranian culture,' in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, last modified December 30, 2012, http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/ab-ii-water-in-muslim-iranian-culture. Accessed on 17th September 2022.

[58] Anna Krasnowolska, 'Ḵeżr,' in *Encyclopaedia Iranica,* last modified July 15, 2009, https://iranicaonline.org/articles/kezr-prophet. Accessed on 22nd September 2022.
Krasnowolska discusses in detail the origin of the legend of Ḵeżr. She cites one of the passages from the Koran where Moses is accompanied by a youth in his search of the junction of the Two Seas. On their way they find a dried fish under a rock, which, when thrown in the water, comes back to life. The motif of the Water of Life, from which Ḵeżr is supposed to have drunk and achieved immortality, appears in several Persian epics, according to Krasnowolska.

[59] J. Jeffrey Franklin, 'The Economics of Immortality: The Demi-Immortal Oriental, Enlightenment Vitalism, and Political Economy in *Dracula,*' in *Les Cahiers victoriens et édouardiens: Believing in Victorian Times* 76 (Autumn 2012): 127-148.

[60] Franklin, 129.

('The Living Corpse') creates the vampire as the pinnacle of a medical discovery. The professor's ability to prolong life after death constructs immortality not as a mysterious curse, but as an outcome of a failed experiment which can be rationally studied, analysed, and given meaning to.

Professor Tabani's failed *scientific* efforts turn him into an evil undead, who is finally killed by Aqil's brother. Although there is no use of the cross in *Zinda Laash* ('The Living Corpse') unlike in *Horror of Dracula*, both films reinstate the fear of the decaying dead, as the camera zooms in on the rapidly decaying body of the vampire. This moment of inevitable decay, which Tabani and the Count had delayed for long, finally catches up with them. The anticipation of this final moment of truth, of the body's inability to escape death, defines the horror in both these films. *Zinda Laash* ('The Living Corpse') therefore brings the reader right back to where it had started its story — the fantasy of escaping death and the impossibility of the same. This cultural anxiety of facing death is also seen in Hemendra Kumar Roy's portrayal of vampirism, which highlights the universal fear of the lifeless body as a vulnerable object. As Amulyababu's analysis of the *pishach* shows, there is a serious premonition that the dead body can be used as a tool by evil powers to further their own end:

> প্রেতাত্মাদের আমাদের মতো দেহ নেই - একথা তুমি জানো। দেহ না থাকলেও দুষ্ট প্রেতাত্মাদের আকাঙ্ক্ষা প্রায়ই প্রবল হয়ে থাকে। কিন্তু দেহের অভাবে তারা সে আকাঙ্ক্ষা মেটাতে পারে না। তাই অনেক সময় দুষ্ট প্রেতাত্মারা মানুষের অরক্ষিত মৃতদেহের ভিতরে গিয়ে আশ্রয় নেয়। তখন সেই মরা মানুষ জ্যান্ত হয়ে উঠে জীবিত মানুষদের ধরে রক্তশোষণ করে। এই জীবন্ত মৃতদেহগুলোই পিশাচ নামে খ্যাত।
>
> (Ghosts do not have bodies like us, you know this. Even without bodies, evil ghosts often have a strong desire. But because of the absence of a body they are not able to fulfil their desire. That is why evil ghosts often take shelter in the unguarded bodies of dead people. Then the dead person comes back to life and sucks the blood of those alive. These living dead bodies are called by the name of *pishach*.)[61]

[61] Roy, 346-347.

It is important to understand the nature of 'desire' that Roy hints at in the above passage. This is because the vampire, in Roy's story, is not an independent supernatural entity in itself. Unlike the vampires in Stoker, who are a resurrected version of their own selves, the vampire in Roy's story is a ghost who has apparently taken over the dead body of Mrs Kumudini to fulfil his/her desires. The issue of a vampiric attack becomes clear to Amulyababu when Gobindobabu, the railway doctor, informs him that the son of Gadadhar, Mrs Kumudini's gardener, is suddenly on his deathbed because of anaemia. When Amulyababu notices a bite-mark between the patient's neck and chest, he suspects it to be the work of a vampire.[62] When he decides to take the patient away with him, the author mentions that there is a look of anger reflected in Mrs Kumudini's eyes.[63] In Benson's original, Urcombe merely reports Mrs Amworth's 'shocked surprise' at the boy being moved to his residence. The anger of Mrs Kumudini appears similar to that of the Count, whose 'eyes were positively blazing,' when he discovers that the three female vampires are about to feed on Harker. Just like the Count assertively claims that Harker belongs to him,[64] so also Mrs Kumudini has a desire for possessive control over Gadadhar's son, and gets furious when he is taken away. Mrs Kumudini's dead body is therefore used an instrument to fulfil some spirit's carnal, possibly sexual, desire.

Roy's story is, as noted earlier, based on E.F. Benson's 1923 story 'Mrs Amworth', rather than on *Dracula*.[65] There are striking similarities between 'Mrs Kumudini Choudhury' and Stoker's novel which shows that it exerts an indirect influence on Hemendra Kumar Roy's

[62] Roy, 350.

[63] Roy, 351.

[64] Stoker, 43.

[65] E.F. Benson, 'Mrs Amworth,' in *Night Terrors: The Ghost Stories of E.F. Benson*, edited by David Stuart Davies, (London: Wordsworth Editions, 2012), 327-340.

text through Benson.[66] As we will soon discuss, a constant sense of the vulnerability of the dead persists through all of these texts. Yet, despite these inherent similarities towards the idea of the dead/undead, the three texts also display a vast difference in the way the vampire is conceptualised, depending on the source from which they are drawn. Stoker's vampire, as we know, is based heavily on Romanian beliefs and superstitions. In one of the important studies of Romanian vampires, Agnes Murgoci observes that the undead in Romanian mythology are based on the primitive ideas about the body's relation to the soul after death.[67] According to local beliefs, the soul does not immediately proceed to Paradise after death, and lingers on for years together. In these primitive communities, the belief in vampires as reanimated corpses is extremely common because of the idea that *all* departed souls would cause harm to those living, and had to be prevented from doing so through proper ritualistic burying.[68] Although the departed soul is seen as a source of threat to those living, it is the lifeless body left behind which has to be staked, burnt, or decapitated to eliminate the threat. Within the Romanian culture, therefore, the portal between the living and the dead, though a fragile one, is monitored, guarded, and kept closed for good.[69] But in the nineteenth century Britain the breach of the portal between the dead and the living is welcomed rather than shunned. This is because the idea that the dead can communicate with the living through a medium gave rise to the Spiritualist movement in the Victorian period. Although the movement is said to have begun in America in 1848, it came to Britain in 1852 when Mrs Hayden, an American medium, gave

[66] Roy himself Indianised Stoker's novel in *Bishalgarh-er Duhshason* ('The Tyrant of *Bishalgarh*') (1949). The date of 'Mrs Kumudini Chowdhury' unfortunately remains unknown at the moment.

[67] Agnes Murgoci, 'The Vampire in Roumania,' in *Folklore* 37, no. 4 (1926): 320.

[68] Murgoci, 'The Vampire in Roumania,' 320-321.

[69] Murgoci, 'The Vampire in Roumania,' 320. Murgoci observes that the dead bodies would be taken out after 3 years in case of children, four to five years in case of young people, and after 7 years in case of elderly people to check if their bodies had decomposed or not. Only if the bones were white and clean (a sign that they had been finally put to eternal rest), they would be washed with water and wine and then reburied.

demonstrations of her séances in front of the press. The rise of the séances in the Victorian period was tied to the idea that the dead could provide important knowledge to humans which was otherwise inaccessible. For example, in one of the articles published in the 1853 periodical *The Spirit World*, W.R. Hayden, the publisher and the husband of Mrs Hayden, observes that these séances 'reveal to them their innermost secrets, and many things long since forgotten, and others that they did not know at the time, and which could not have been known to anyone but the inhabitants of the spirit world.'[70] The body in this case becomes a mediating symbol standing at the threshold of existence. The return of the dead therefore elicits a dual response from the Victorian public; one of fear, represented by the rise of vampire narratives, and one of curiosity, represented by the public séances. While analysing *Dracula*, it is thus important to acknowledge that the dead/undead body as an icon of horror is complemented by the notion of the body as a useful medium for understanding the life beyond. Stoker explicitly uses this icon of the body as a kind of Spiritualist medium in the case of Mina Harker, who establishes a telepathic connection with the undead Dracula, once he feeds her his blood. Although she finally recovers from the curse of vampirism, her body stands at the junction between life and death and thus can be used by the Crew of Light to understand the whereabouts of the undead Dracula.

Benson's treatment of the vampire bypasses the idea of the vampiric body as a symbol of the cultural anxieties about death and afterlife. This is because Amworth's death, or her return thereafter, does not define the nature of her vampirism; she was already a vampire while she was alive. At the beginning of the story, Urcombe says that when one of the 'ghoulish spirits' possess the body of a *living* wo/man, it gives them supernatural powers and then sustains itself on blood.[71] However, this narrative of possession, which Benson begins with, is

[70] W.R. Hayden, 'Slanders of the 'The Zoist.'—The Rapping Phenomena,' in *The Spirit World* 1, no. 1 (1853): 1.

[71] Benson, 330.

soon side-lined to give Mrs Amworth a vampiric heritage, similar to Carmilla. Mrs Amworth appears to have somehow inherited this curse of vampirism; she is related to Elizabeth Chaston, the vampire who haunted Maxley in medieval times.[72] On the contrary, Roy's vampire specifically takes control of someone else, who is *already dead*, in order to fulfil its needs and desires.[73] Roy therefore, expounds the idea of vampirism as possession, which Benson had begun his story with (but then diverted from), and combines it with Stoker's idea of the evil undead. This dual idea of vampirism as possession, and vampirism as an unwarranted return from the dead, is embodied in the figure of the *pishach* in 'Mrs Kumudini Choudhury.' Although the vampiric possession of Mrs Kumudini Choudhury's body is totally different from the harmless possession of bodies by spirits in case of Victorian Spiritualists, the idea of the body as a medium, which Stoker propounds through what happens to Mina, has been effectively used by Roy in his creation of the *pishach*.

This significant departure of Roy from Benson's idea of hereditary vampirism thematically highlights the cultural fear of the unattended dead, which forms a common source of horror both in 'Mrs Kumudini Choudhury' and in *Dracula*. The act of keeping watch over the vampiric graves of Mrs Kumudini and Lucy reminds us of the death rituals, wherein the body has to be guarded through the night of death or after, to protect it from evil possession. The practical reason for guarding the dead bodies in different cultures could have ranged from the idea of protecting them from being taken away by animal predators to preventing them from being stolen by grave-diggers for medical or other purposes. However, since Lucy or Mrs Kumudini have already turned into vampires, this act of watching is not meant to protect their

---

[72] Benson, 335.

[73] In Benson's story, Urcombe mentions the outbreak of vampirism at Peshawar in India a few years ago and adds that Mrs Amworth's husband was one of its victims. Roy's Amulyababu expands this into the death of Mrs Kumudini Choudhury at Peshawar, a fortnight after which event her husband succumbs to the kind of anaemia that is afflicting the town of Jhanjha where the events are taking place. We are told at the very beginning of the story that Mrs Choudhury is Christian. Therefore, when she died at Peshawar, her body was not cremated, and was therefore available for possession by the vampire.

dead bodies (since they have already been violated) but to destroy them so that they are released from the clutches of evil. Thomas W. Laqueur observes that the care of the dead body is somehow tied to the notion that even after passing away, the dead continue to exist in some other world.[74] He identifies a gap between the lifeless body which is here and the actual dead, who is believed to exist somewhere else.[75] According to him,

> The corpse becomes an icon, a way of making something present and tangible that [sic] is not present and cannot be grasped. The corpse represents something radically different from itself—the dead themselves, a soul subsisting somewhere.[76]

Even after being turned into the undead, therefore, the bodies of Lucy, Mrs Amworth, and Mrs Kumudini must be ritualistically killed, because such destruction serves as an indication to those living that the soul is at rest. As an icon, therefore, the dead body defines the relationship of the living to the one who has passed away. The return of the dead body thus is not only a physical violation of the corpse but also tampers with the memory of that person in the minds of those left behind. It disrupts the process of mourning and alters the relationship that the living have with their dead ones. When Lucy returns as an undead, therefore, Seward's relationship and memory of her is radically changed. He himself acknowledges, 'At that moment the remnant of my love passed into hate and loathing; had she then to be killed, I could have done it with savage delight.'[77] Seward here quite clearly makes a difference between the Lucy whom he loved dearly, and the undead spirit who is seen as a separate supernatural entity, animating her corpse for some nefarious purpose. The undead Lucy's unclean eyes 'full of hell-

[74] Thomas W. Laquer, *The Work of the Dead: A History of Mortal Remains* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), 80.

[75] Laquer, 80-81.

[76] Laquer, 83.

[77] Stoker, 188.

fire' is pitted against the 'pure, gentle orbs' of the Lucy whom Seward and the others remember.[78]

In Mrs Kumudini's case, the gap between the body as an icon of the memory of the dead, and the body as a vicious tool for some other spirit, is even more pronounced. The person we are familiar with as Mrs Kumudini is in fact just her body, being used by another bloodthirsty soul. When the protagonist is shocked on seeing Mrs Kumudini being run over by a train, Amulyababu comforts him, saying that it is only a vessel for some vampire — 'পিশাচের আশ্রিত দেহ.'[79] Amulyababu therefore, expects the protagonist to withdraw his sympathy from Mrs Kumudini because although the body belongs to her, the spirit is that of another. The spirit of the real Mrs Kumudini is somewhere else; and thus any human feelings of compassion for the disfigurement of this body is deemed unnecessary. This dissociation between the body and the spirit thus manipulates the social reactions which the characters have towards the vampiric body. At the end, therefore, Amulyababu once again reminds the protagonist that the body which is inside the coffin is that of a vampire, and that he should not stop Amulyababu from plunging a crowbar into its heart.

This notion of the body as a vulnerable vessel thus forms one of the important cross-cultural foundations of the horror of *Dracula* because it plays upon the reader's affective response towards the monster. In Stoker's novel, there is a clear distinction between the irredeemably evil Count and Lucy who has been turned into a vampire against her wishes. In the brief footnote to Van Helsing's comment that Lucy was turned in her sleep, and there is no malignancy in her actions, the Norton edition observes:

[78] Stoker, 188.

[79] Roy, 355.

> According to Van Helsing, Lucy is a less terrible vampire because she was unconscious during her metamorphosis. Stoker invented this chivalrous piece of hair-splitting. *Dracula* adaptors have dropped it, as Stoker himself seems to do in the next tomb scene.[80]

This attempt to exonerate Lucy, which the editors believe to be merely a chivalric response to her vampirism, is in fact a reflection of the ethical dilemma tied to the idea of icons of horror and evil used in the text. If Lucy was turned into a vampire against her wishes, can her undead self be held accountable for the horrific acts she commits? Horror fiction as we know, relies heavily on these constructs of good and evil where the destruction of the latter forms the main narrative arc of the story. As the Norton edition notes, most adaptors of *Dracula* have dropped the hair-splitting analysis of Van Helsing by portraying Lucy as just another woman turned into a vampire and not as a less terrible one just because she was turned in her sleep. But Van Helsing's comment about Lucy's vampirism in the novel represents a valid concern over the subversive nature of vampirism as a text of horror fiction, which problematises the notion of the undead body as evil. This concern is restated at the end wherein for a brief moment after being killed, there is 'in the face [of Dracula] a look of peace, such as I never could have imagined might have rested there.'[81] Even Dracula, the absolute embodiment of Evil in the novel, seems to have been relieved that he has finally escaped the curse of vampirism, which makes us wonder about his moral agency once again. Was he too turned against his will, and thus forced to feed upon the innocent? Benson deals with this dilemma by portraying Mrs Amworth as harbouring a spirit of 'untold evil and malignancy' because of her vampiric heritage.[82] Roy cleverly bypasses this moral deadlock, by shifting the responsibility of the heinous acts to an unquestionably evil spirit, who possesses the dead body of Mrs Kumudini. Although, even in Stoker's novel the undead Lucy is shown to be under the control of Dracula,

[80] Stoker, 179. Space

[81] Stoker, 325.

[82] Benson, 338.

ultimately the spirit which has to be reclaimed from his clutches is that of Lucy. But the vampire Mrs Kumudini has no link to the human Kumudini whatsoever; in fact, we never get to know the real Mrs Kumudini who had died in Peshawar. Her body is just being used for the nefarious purpose of fulfilling some evil spirit's desire; it thus becomes a symbol of evil which must be destroyed. As readers, therefore, the sight of destruction of Mrs Kumudini's body signifies the end of the narrative arc of horror. While the killing of the vampiric Mrs Kumudini with a crowbar excites a pure sense of victory, the staking of Lucy is thus more sombre. Roy provides an affective closure to the readers, which Stoker deliberately withholds by problematising the death of Dracula with the look of peace in his final moments. The body, both dead and undead, thus forms a vital iconography of *Dracula* that can be universally translated across cultures to produce horror.

Visualising Dracula's Home

One of the most important contributions of Stoker to the genre of vampire literature is that he gave the vampire a home distinctly set in the geographical and cultural setup of Romania. Unlike Varney, Dracula constantly reminds Harker (and through him the readers) of the cultural and geographical location of his home. The Count's reference to Harker as a city dweller shows how he can easily use his awareness of his geographical surrounding to his advantage. By making his vampire distinctly Romanian by culture, Stoker emphasises the link between the geography and the history of the land, and his undead Count. As a result, several scholars have tried to critique the veracity of Stoker's research on Romania by locating the source of inspiration behind the Count's castle. The first work to try to determine the location of Dracula's castle is Florescu and McNally's book *In Search of Dracula* that posits the Bran Castle as the source of inspiration of Stoker's work.[83] Later scholars have often discredited this

[83] Raymond T. McNally and Radu Florescu, *In Search of Dracula: The History of Dracula and Vampires* (1972; reprint., New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1994), 7-14.

analysis by pointing out the historical inaccuracy of unambiguously linking the Count to the Romanian ruler Vlad III. This has led to even greater conjectures about other possible locations that might have served as the model for Stoker. Hans Corneel de Roos, for example, meticulously calculates the distance travelled by Harker, along with the time taken for the same, in order to create a detailed map of Harker's journey, and estimates Dracula's castle to be located somewhere in the Călimani Mountains.[84] While such cartographic studies on *Dracula*'s setting offer fascinating insights into the historical background of the novel, I argue that it is also essential to study Dracula's castle not just with respect to its authentic geographic location but with respect to its visual impact. That is to say, visualising the imposing presence of the castle against the topography of the remote mountains is important to an understanding of the horror in Stoker's novel. Studying the angle at which Harker sees the castle approaching, or at which he sees the Count climbing down the walls of the castle, or the way in which he visually navigates the dark passages and alleyways to the Count's room, can offer us useful insights into the way Stoker organises the topographic and architectural spaces to generate horror. In this section, I will study the effect of this visual recreation of Dracula's home in other geographical or cultural contexts, looking at three important adaptations of the novel. The first one is the 1977 Broadway adaptation of *Dracula*, based on the play-text by Hamilton Deane and John Balderstone.[85] The second is the 2019 Bengali novel *Kantajew-er Pishach* ('The Vampire of *Kantajew*') by Md. Alamgir Taimur which reimagines the Dracula figure in the Dinajpur district of Bangladesh,[86] and the third is Hemendra Kumar Roy's *Bishalgarh-er*

[84] Hans Corneel de Roos, 'Count Dracula's Address and Lifetime Identity,' in *Dracula: An International Perspective*, ed. Marius-Mircea Crișan (Cham, Switzerland: Springer Nature, 2017), 103, e-book.

[85] Hamilton Deane and John L. Balderstone, *Dracula A Vampire Play in Three Acts* (New York: Samuel French, 1927).

[86] Md. Alamgir Taimur, *Kantajew-er Pishach* ('The Vampire of *Kantajew*'), in *Hakini* (Kolkata: Aranyamon, 2019), 39-78.

Duhshasan (*'*The Tyrant of *Bishalgarh*'), in which the vampire's lair is shifted to the hills of Madhya Pradesh.[87]

Although Stoker's novel is based on the horrors of vampirism, the way this horror is constructed is not uniform throughout the novel. Depending on the location of Count Dracula, the narrative can be broken down into two parts — the monster at home, and the monster on the prowl. The latter part of the novel, with Dracula out in England hunting down Lucy and Mina, reads more like an adventure tale where Van Helsing and the others embark on a quest to kill and defeat the monster once and for all. The focus of the narrative here is on eliminating Dracula as a threat rather than on Dracula himself. On the other hand, the tone of horror in the beginning of *Dracula* is much more sinister because here Harker is literally trapped inside the castle with the monster. Harker's fear, therefore, is not only that the monster is at home, but that this *is* the monster's *home*, where he has been held a prisoner. It is thus important to understand the way Stoker invokes fear in Harker and the readers alike, because Harker's vision of the castle determines the way he perceives the threat from the Count. The appearance of Dracula's castle is always marked by an obscurity of vision which puzzles Harker from the start. It appears that Harker is almost in a trance-like state when he arrives at the castle because although the structure is huge, he notices it only when they have already entered its courtyard.[88] This obscurity of vision is further enhanced by the fact that the clouds had covered the moon on their way up to the castle, leading to complete darkness.[89] The castle almost seems to have crept up on Harker, just like the predatory Dracula. Similarly, when he sees the Count climbing down the walls of the castle, Harker says that after a while he 'vanished into some hole or

[87] Roy, 6.

[88] Stoker, 20-21.

[89] Stoker, 20.

window' and that 'the distance was too great to allow a proper angle of sight.'[90] Harker's inability to see the castle in the darkness thus signals the failure of his empirical abilities. His meticulous efforts of recording every detail of his journey to the castle, and his experiences thereafter, is challenged by the visual trickery of Dracula's home, which, he claims, 'perhaps seemed bigger than it really is.'[91] The castle thus disrupts Harker's objective vision, and makes it impossible for him to give an empirical description of either the route leading to it, or the castle itself.

Harker's failure to objectively record the visual appearance of the castle when he first arrives is tied to the changing notions of visuality in the nineteenth century. Despite the widespread use of optical devices like the stereoscope or the camera obscura, which were used to produce 'realistic' images in mass visual culture, the nineteenth century increasingly prioritised models of 'subjective vision' rather than images based on simple imitation.[92] The psychological and emotional attributes of the subject perceiving a scene become crucial in forming a visual image through the camera, painting, or other visual media. The notion of a neutral passive observer recording an objective visual experience therefore gradually breaks down, as is evident from Harker's failure to describe the castle at first. The sense of Harker's horror of entrapment is thus brought out by his subjective perception of the castle and the world around. When he looks out towards the south, he notices the stark contrast between the claustrophobic darkness of the courtyard of the castle, and the freshness and the brightness of the hills beyond it: 'There was some sense of freedom in the vast expanse, inaccessible though it was to me, as compared with the narrow darkness of the courtyard.'[93] Ironically, the beauty

[90] Stoker, 39.

[91] Stoker, 21.

[92] Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 9.

[93] Stoker, 38.

of the hills which cheers Harker up and gives him peace,[94] also makes him realise that he is a prisoner within the Count's castle. The vast expanse of the mountains, by providing Harker and the readers with a sense of freedom, highlights strongly the feeling of helplessness which he feels inside the castle, at the mercy of Dracula. Furthermore, it also motivates him to explore the other passages and exits of the castle to try escaping from Dracula's clutches. Critics like Duncan Light often argue that Stoker presented Transylvania 'as a remote and sinister place on the very margins of Europe.'[95] However, the remoteness and the isolated nature of Romanian topography is not ubiquitously shown as evil in the novel. Rather, as we see in Harker's ecstatic description of its beauty, it is also used to establish a visual, aesthetic, and emotional contrast to Harker's experience within Dracula's castle.

The castle in Stoker's novel serves as a visual marker not only of Dracula's power over Harker but also of his reign of terror over the people of the Romanian village around. Most of the existing research on Stoker's novel has focused on Dracula as an external threat that captures Britain's fear of the 'civilised' world being colonised by 'primitive' forces, in the face of its declining status as a world power in the late nineteenth century.[96] This overemphasis on Dracula as a symbol of reverse colonisation has led scholars to overlook the horror of the Romanian villagers living near the vampire's castle who have been subjected to his tyrannical bloodlust. To Harker, the castle and its supernaturalism is an antithesis to western modernity and rationalism, an antithesis which he can escape from, and later on rationalise, with the help of Van Helsing. To the Romanian villagers however, the castle is not just a supernatural threat but a symbol of a very real and current oppression and tyranny, from where their children are

[94] Stoker, 39.

[95] Duncan Light, 'Imaginative Geographies, Dracula and the Transylvanian 'Place Myth,' *Human Geographies: Journal of Studies and Research in Human Geography* 2, no. 2 (2008): 10.

[96] Stephen D. Arata, 'The Occidental Tourist: 'Dracula' and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonization,' *Victorian Studies* 33, no. 4 (Summer, 1990): 622-623.

ruthlessly taken away and treated as food by those living in the castle; to them, the castle is a visual symbol of a community fear which they all share and are troubled by. It is interesting to note here that although Stoker originally intended the castle to be destroyed, this portion was later on removed from the final draft.[97] Although Harker and his crew succeed in ousting Dracula from England and defeating him, the castle remains in the novel as a lasting visual reminder of the Count's tyranny over the Romanian villagers.

The play-text of *Dracula* by Deane and Balderstone makes a significant change in this visual narrative of the castle by shifting the entire action from Transylvania to England. The scene of Harker's entrapment in the castle in Romania — which the external topography of the mountain highlights — is totally omitted. Instead, the action of the play is limited to Dr Seward's sanatorium in England, where Dracula arrives as a guest, and secretly feeds on Lucy. By shifting the entire scene of action to England, the play mistakenly frames the horror of Dracula solely as the horror of an external invasion, as scholars have frequently done. In the absence of the visual context of Romanian topography and the castle, Dracula also loses much of his political character and becomes a mere bloodsucking monster. In the novel, when Harker first comes to Dracula's home, he notices the 'broken battlements'[98] of the castle which graphically anticipate Dracula's speech later about the war with the Turks.[99] Stoker therefore uses the castle to construct Dracula as a historical, nationalistic warrior who has been mysteriously corrupted and converted into this monstrous figure, draining the blood of his own people. By removing this visual aid, the play completely changes Dracula's character and the nature of horror itself. It is no longer the horrific fall of Dracula from a brave warrior to a base

[97] Stoker, 325. In the Norton edition of *Dracula*, the editor mentions in fn. 5 on that page that Dracula's death in the original manuscript of the novel is more final because the castle explodes at the end with the destruction of the monster.

[98] Stoker, 20.

[99] Stoker, 34.

predator which generates fear in the reader. Rather it is the victimisation of Lucy Seward, an Englishwoman wasting away because of the evil outsider, that shocks the audience. This shift of emphasis from the monster itself to the victim of its monstrosity is graphically depicted by beginning the text not in Dracula's castle but in Dr Seward's sanatorium, where Lucy is being treated, and then moving on to Lucy's boudoir. While in Stoker's novel much of the reader's interest — before the appearance of Seward and Van Helsing — is in understanding the nature of the monster, the play, from the beginning itself, demands that its readers should be intrigued by the plot of eradicating the monster who is threatening the life of Lucy.

Although the spatial displacement of the Count from Romania to England sometimes changes the nature of horror in the play, Gorey's set design for the 1977 Broadway adaptation also visually reconstructs some of Stoker's fear tactics, adding new meanings to the text. Stoker's novel, as discussed earlier, relies heavily on the scene of Harker's entrapment to create the foundation of horror. In the novel, he is constantly stalked by the predatory Count who creeps into his room when he has taken out his shaving glass,[100] or breaks the seal of the letter Harker sent to his friend Peter Hawkins in order to read its contents.[101] Although in Gorey's adaptation this scene at the castle is omitted, the set invokes a constant feeling of the characters being watched over by Dracula. In all the three sets for the three acts in Seward's library, Lucy's boudoir, and Dracula's crypt respectively, there is a significant use of the bat motif on the walls and props on the stage. The images of Edward Gorey's 1977 set design have been recreated using *Edward Gorey's Dracula: A Toy Theatre* and are presented below.[102]

[100] Stoker, 30.

[101] Stoker, 46.

[102] Edward Gorey, *Edward Gorey's Dracula: A Toy Theatre* (Portland: Pomegranate Communications Inc, 2002). The pictures used in the chapter have been taken using the toy theatre model to recreate the stage design. While the toy theatre closely imitates the original production of the play designed by Gorey there may be minor variations which would not affect the analysis.

Figure 2.1: The Library in Dr Seward's Sanatorium

Figure 2.2: Lucy Seward's Boudoir

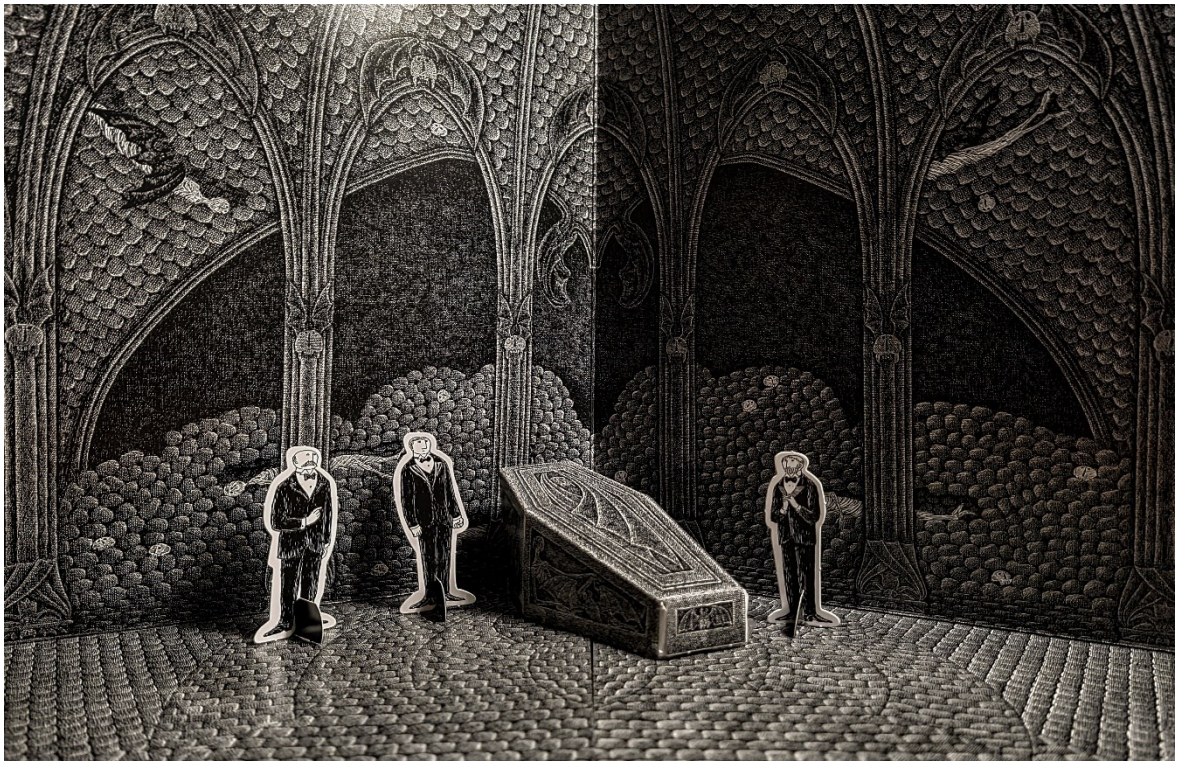

Figure 2.3: The Crypt of Dracula

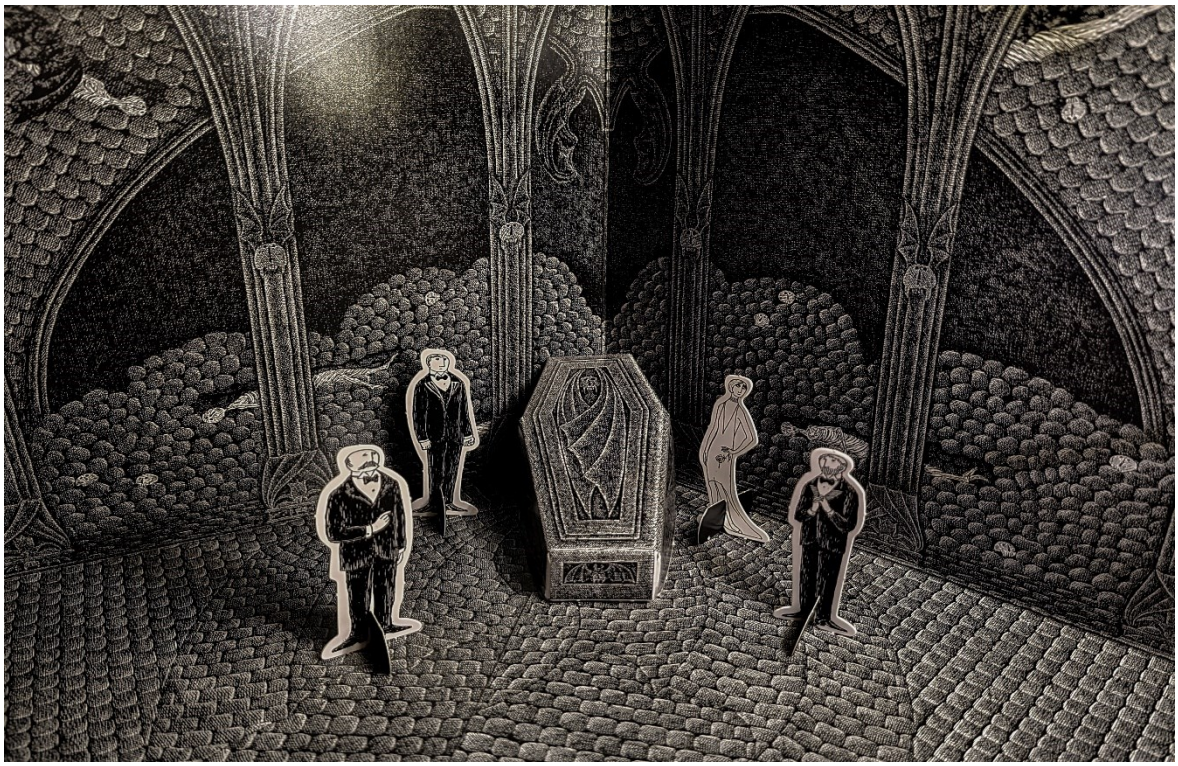

Figure 2.4: Top view of Dracula's Coffin

The placement of the bat motif over the arches near the ceiling [visible at the uppermost portion in Figure 2.1, 2.2, 2.3] is important because it creates the illusion of Dracula watching Van Helsing, Seward, and Lucy, even when he is not physically present on the stage. Therefore, just like Harker's actions were constantly being monitored by the Count, in Gorey's adaptation there is the looming presence of the monster, influencing the audience's perception of horror in the play. This subliminal use of the bat motif as a way to make the audience constantly aware of Dracula's presence deliberately generates in the audience a sense of being trapped with the monster. This affective state of horror is created through visual artistry in Gorey's *Dracula.* As Andrea Sauchelli observes, art-horror (as opposed to natural horror involving real-life events) is aimed at evoking a specific horror mood, or 'H-mood' as he calls it, in the audience.[103] This 'specific H-mood', Sauchelli notes, 'is generally evoked in representational arts by a morbid attention towards (principally) death, murder, and evil, through the artistic means appropriate to the specific artistic form'.[104] Both Dracula's castle in the novel, and the sanatorium in Gorey's version where the vampire makes an appearance, elicit the same mood of horror in the audience despite the two locations being geographically, culturally, and aesthetically removed from each other. In Gorey's stage version, however, the visual narrative anticipates the vampire's presence from the beginning. In Act I, when Lucy's sickness has not yet been attributed to a vampiric attack, the audience is already being warned of a supernatural presence of the Count using these gothic motifs. The motifs thus constitute a visual dramatic irony wherein the audience can deduce the presence of vampirism in Seward's sanatorium before Van Helsing and the others. Although the motif of the bat remains the same in Act II, it carries a totally different meaning here. Unlike in the previous scene, where it merely depicted the foreign vampire's presence in England, the presence of this motif over Lucy's bed shows that

[103] Andrea Sauchelli, 'Horror and Mood,' *American Philosophical Quarterly* 51, no. 1 (January 2014): 43.

[104] Sauchelli, 43.

the Count has now infiltrated the private spaces of the English domestic sphere; the figure of the bats watching over her bed thus carries a voyeuristic connotation. This sexual voyeurism of the Count, symbolically depicted by Gorey, is narrated even by Mina Murray in Stoker's novel when she recounts of a dream where a 'livid white face [is] bending over me out of the mist.'[105] Act III of Gorey's adaptation once again changes the meaning of the bat motif. Not only are the bats drawn over the arches but an enormous bat is depicted in the background, against which Dracula's crypt is kept, almost as if it is protectively watching over it, to prevent any harm. Surprisingly, although this is the scene where Van Helsing and the others will defeat and kill the vampire, it is also the scene where the symbolic stage presence of Dracula is most dominant. Unlike the previous scenes, where the stealthy bloodsucking of the Count was visually matched by the strategic positioning of the miniature bat motifs in nooks and corners of the room and near ceilings, in Act III the giant bat figure on the wall graphically depicts the open fight between the vampire and Van Helsing's crew. Moreover, while the background wall depicts the bat with outstretched wings, signifying wakefulness, the coffin of Dracula also bears the motif of a bat with closed wings, showing that it is the abode of the vampire in sleep.

This combination of the bat with outstretched wings and the bat with folded wings is crucial to a visual translation of Stoker's idea of the undead. When Harker opens the Count's coffin in the vault in the novel, he comments, 'He was either dead or asleep, I could not say which — for the eyes were open and stony, but without the glassiness of death….'[106] The undead, while in its coffin, is thus simultaneously awake/alive and asleep/dead, symbolised by the bat with two different wing positions. The horror of this in-between state of the undead, which makes it possible to sense any attack on its body even while asleep in its coffin, is visually translated through these motifs. The visual narrative of Gorey's adaptation is thus

[105] Stoker, 228.

[106] Stoker, 50.

slightly different from the textual narrative. In the textual narrative, a non-European vampire invades the domestic space of an Englishwoman, Lucy, and feeds on her; Van Helsing, Seward, and Harker discover the vampiric nature of the Count and is able to defeat and kill him, thus restoring normality and peace both at home, and in England in general. In the visual narrative, from the beginning itself we are thrown into a gothic world, filled with the symbols of the horrors of Dracula. At the end, even when the Count is defeated, his visual presence lingers on in the bat motifs in the background [as seen in Figures 2.3 and 2.4], just like the castle keeps the memory of the Count alive in Stoker's novel. This is important because, although the story requires the monster to be killed and eliminated in the textual narrative, the mood of horror, which Sauchelli has talked about, has to persist throughout the novel or the play in art-horror. Thus, the visual narrative upholds the horror mood even after the monster is killed off. While the textual narrative neatly packs away the object of horror at the end, the visual one deliberately shies away from such a clean closure.

This continuity of the horror mood, which Gorey's adaptation effectively translates from Stoker's novel, is also highlighted in the way the three sets are architecturally designed. In the novel, when Harker describes the newly purchased estate of Carfax to Dracula, he observes, 'The house is very large and of all periods back, I should say, to medieval times, for one part is of stone immensely thick, with only a few windows high up and heavily barred with iron.'[107] If we look at the walls of the sets in Gorey's adaptation, they bear a striking similarity to this description of Dracula's house in England. But it is not just the crypt in Act III which is designed in the manner which Dracula prefers his house. Even Dr Seward's library and Lucy's boudoir appear to have stone walls which are rugged and ancient.[108] The high ceiling in the

[107] Stoker, 28-29.

[108] Deane and Balderstone, 7. In Act One of the play the stage setting is described as follows: 'The library on the ground floor of Dr Seward's Sanatorium at Purley. Room is medieval, the walls are stone with vaulted ceiling supported by two stone pillars, but is comfortably furnished in modern style.' This curious intermingling of the

library, bedroom, and the vault reflect Dracula's desire to have a house which is 'old and big.' The entire set, and not just Dracula's home, thus gives the visual impression of the vampire's crypt. Although the novel does not visually replicate the medievalism of Dracula's castle in Lucy's bedroom, there is a grave-like quality to the atmosphere in the boudoir. In Stoker's novel, Lucy compares the garlic flowers on her neck to the flowers put on Ophelia in her grave.[109] In a footnote to Van Helsing's instructions to keep the doors and windows of Lucy's room closed, the editor of the Norton edition observes 'With its closed draperies and sealed windows, the typical Victorian sickroom was as airless, even tomblike, as Lucy's chamber.'[110] This tomb-like setting in England, in both the novel and in Gorey's adaptation, thus, challenges the airtight division between British modernity and Romanian antiquity which has served as the basis of analysis for *Dracula* as invasion literature. Citing Harker's comment about the delayed arrival of the train as they move towards East, Ahmet Süner observes that for the modern British individual the entry into the East is marked by a movement away from punctuality to a 'pre-modern time when time does not count'.[111] David Punter similarly argues that Dracula embodies a conflict between the modern, represented by Van Helsing and the others, and 'the pull of the past' represented by the Count; while the triumph of the modern in the novel symbolises a return to safe domesticity, *Dracula* explores the influence of unknown realms.[112] However, the use of a medieval style of architecture in the construction of Lucy's bedroom or Seward's sanatorium breaks down this binary between West/East, as

medieval with the modern prefigures the appearance of the 'ancient' Dracula in 'modern' England. This binary is however challenged as we will discuss further.

[109] Stoker, 122.

[110] Stoker, 122, fn. 4.

[111] Ahmet Süner, 'The Representation of Time, Modernity and Its Prehistory in Dracula,' *Studia Neophilologica* 90, no. 4 (February 2018): 2, https://doi.org/10.1080/00393274.2018.1434421. Accessed on 5th January 2023.

[112] David Punter, 'Bram Stoker's Dracula: Tradition, Technology, Modernity,' in *Post/modern Dracula: From Victorian Themes to Postmodern Praxis,* edited by John S. Bak (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2007), 35.

modern/medieval. The zone of the so-called modern Britain's 'safe domesticity' easily blends in with Dracula's archaic presence, graphically illustrated by what Richard Eder, in his review of the play, calls Gorey's use of 'witty and variegated gray' or 'intelligent gray.'[113] The use of the grey pen-and-ink strokes in the theatre background makes Victorian England appear as archaic as Dracula's castle in Stoker's novel, exposing the dark regressive underside of nineteenth century Britain.[114] It becomes extremely easy for the criminal-like Count to blend into the Victorian landscape, already terrorised by the likes of Jack the Ripper in 1888, and suffering a degeneration of its own.[115] As Glendening observes, 'As modernity's shadow, Dracula challenges the apparently civilised, highly evolved status of the modern world by revealing the primitivism that lurks just below its surface.'[116] This is evident in the play version in a prominent manner because Dracula's crypt is not located in a separate house, but in a vault accessible through Dr Seward's sanatorium itself. When Renfield follows Dracula through this hidden passage in the sanatorium, Seward says, 'I never knew there was a passage.'[117] Just like Dracula thrives in the hidden vault within Seward's sanatorium (and in the cellar of the

[113] Richard Eder, '*Theater: An Elegant, Bloodless 'Dracula*,*' New York Times*, October 21, 1977.

[114] This fear of a latent primitivism lurking beneath the modernity of London is explored in several Victorian texts including Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Dickens's *Bleak House.* Dickens for example, while describing the fog-covered muddy streets of London comments that it would not be surprising to 'meet a Megalosaurus, forty feet long or so, waddling like an elephantine lizard up Holborn Hill.' Charles Dickens, *Bleak House* (1853. Reprint. London: Penguin Books, 1996), 13.

Similarly, Marlow, in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, talking about the city's ancient history when the Romans came to conquer it, comments, 'And this also…has been one of the dark places of the earth.' Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, In *Heart of Darkness and Other Tales* (1899. Reprint. New York: Oxford World Classics, 2002), 105. Although the prehistoric primitivism of *Bleak House* is different from the supernatural primitive in *Dracula*, the Gothic is used as a primary theme in the latter and as a secondary motif in the former to question the idea of British modernity.

[115] Elizabeth Miller argues that the 'story of *Dracula* begins and ends in 1893'. She observes that Stoker's working notes includes a daily calendar for '189_' and cites the reference to the death of French neurologist Charcot — who passed away on August 1893 — in the novel which helps us contextualise the text in this timeline. Elizabeth Miller, *A Dracula Handbook*, 34-35.

[116] John Glendening, 'What ''Modernity' Cannot Kill': Evolution and Primitivism in Stoker's *Dracula*,' in *The Evolutionary Imagination in Late-Victorian Novels: An Entangled Bank* (England: Ashgate, 2007), 108.

[117] Deane and Balderstone, 71.

Holmwood household in the 1958 Hammer film) without anyone's knowledge, so also the criminal underworld continued to secretly fester underneath the flourish of British modernity. To interpret Dracula as a rift between modern Britain and ancient Romania in Deane and Balderstone's play is therefore counter-productive. Critiquing the visual adaptations of horror in Dracula helps us to understand Stoker's critique of Victorian modernity within this framework of the East/West divide.

While the play adaptation of *Dracula* geographically displaces the Count from Romania to England, Md. Alamgir Taimur culturally displaces the vampire to the Dinajpur district of Bangladesh in his novella *Kantajew-er Pishach* ('The Vampire of *Kantajew*'). The novella tells the story of Tushar Naag, who is summoned by the zamindar Girijanath to oversee the restoration of the ancient temple of *Kantajew*. He discovers a secret stairway in the temple one night, and suspects that there may be a hidden treasure somewhere beneath the temple. However, when he opens a chest hidden in the vault beneath, he is attacked by the vampiric zamindar Ganesh, who in his lifetime had been a ruthless leader, terrorising the Muslim community under his rule. Resurrected from his undead state, he sucks Tushar's wife and child dry, and takes control of the body of Tushar Naag, planning to kill Girijanath and take over his zamindari. Just like Dracula's castle is a visual embodiment of his tyrannical control over the villagers, the lair of the vampiric Ganesh is a visual marker of his violent communal practices. The temple in the novella loses its sacred connotations and becomes a lair for the evil Ganesh because of its troubled communal past. It is a site of a historic tension between the Hindus and the Muslims which Ganesh had taken advantage of by torturing the Muslims and desecrating their holy structure, or by decimating the temple which he himself had built. Taimur thus transforms the zone of political violence into one of supernatural horror. Although the *Kantajew* temple is a real historical structure in Bangladesh, establishing the historical validity of Taimur's portrayal of violence surrounding the structure is beyond the scope of this chapter.

Rather, I will address the change in the aesthetics of horror which is brought about by a cultural and architectural displacement of the vampire from the medieval castle of Romania to an eighteenth-century temple in Bangladesh.

Situating the vampire's home inside the temple in *Kantajew-er Pishach* ('The Vampire of *Kantajew*') creates a problem very similar to the one in Stoker's *Dracula*. As we come to know from Van Helsing's research, Dracula can only rest in a box of soil which had been previously consecrated: 'For it is not the least of its terrors that this evil thing is rooted deep in all good; in soil barren of holy memories it cannot rest.'[118]The evil Dracula who is repelled by the crucifix and all things sacred, paradoxically can only rest in soil which was previously considered to be holy. This perversion of the sacred is recreated in Md. Alamgir's novella by situating the lair of the vampiric Ganesh under the temple. Stoker refuses to solve this paradox because this uncanny proximity of good and evil is partly responsible for generating fear in the novel. *Kantajew-er Pishach* ('The Vampire of *Kantajew*') replicates this contrast between the impurity of the vampire and the purity of the place his lair is set in. However, the architectural design of the vampire's home situates it beyond the mere constructs of good and evil. If we look at the construction of the castle or the lair of the vampire in Stoker's novel or Md. Alamgir's novella there is a deep-rooted political history which comes to the forefront. In Stoker's *Dracula* the castle is described as an enormous structure with a huge door studded with large iron nails and set in a 'projecting doorway of massive stone.'[119] Moreover, as Harker observes, it is located at the edge of a precipice surrounded by deep forests, rivers, and chasms in between.[120] Similarly, in Hemendra Kumar Roy's *Bishalgarh-er Duhshasan* ('The Tyrant of *Bishalgarh'*), when the vampiric Rudrapratap Singha describes his home to Binoy, he refers

[118] Stoker, 213.

[119] Stoker, 21.

[120] Stoker, 31.

to it as a 'গড়' or fortress.[121] While exploring Rudrapratap's castle Binoy observes that the 'অঙ্গন' or extensive courtyard surrounding the castle was set in stone at one point. Surrounding this courtyard is an enormous wall of at least fifty feet height, beyond which are the rows of hills and forests.[122] Both Dracula's castle and Rudrapratap's fort are not merely decimated ruins of the past in which the vampire has set up his lair. Rather, they are strategic strongholds which were formerly used as places to repel an enemy attack during battles. The extensive hills and forests surrounding the castle and the fort would make it difficult for the enemy to gain access to the people within. Both Harker and Binoy on seeing the non-traversable lands around the castle, and the strong locked doors within, conclude that the vampire has made them a prisoner. This diverts the attention of the readers to the current vampiric state of Count Dracula and Rudrapratap who have sinister intentions behind keeping Harker and Binoy locked up. However, it is important to realise that the strong stone structure, which the vampire is inhabiting now, was originally meant to keep the enemy out rather than to keep the people inside locked in. This architectural detail is important because it links the monstrous Count Dracula and Rudrapratap to their ancient political past. In Stoker's novel, the Count proudly tells Harker that he belongs to the race of Szekelys who were known for their brave fighting spirit; he also recounts how his race defeated the Turks on their own ground.[123] When Roy shifts the home of the vampire to Madhya Pradesh, he changes his heritage to that of the Rajputs. Just like Dracula claims that he belonged to a 'conquering race'[124] so also the Rajputs were considered to be a warrior race. The effectiveness of Dracula and Rudrapratap as military strategists make their conversion into vampires more horrific. Their manipulative plotting and

[121] Roy, 18.

[122] Roy, 21.

[123] Stoker, 33-34.

[124] Stoker, 34.

strategising of the way the coffin is stored, transferred, and kept hidden, stems from their military acumen of defending the castle and their home from foreign invaders as historical rulers. The abandoned, stone architecture of the vampire's home may have been kept the same across cultural translation, but by making Rudrapratap a Rajput, Roy ensures that the monster's cunning moves and schemes are set against his historical prowess as a warrior. The architecture of the castle is therefore not a mere Gothic setting of ruin and desolation but a crucial link between the ethnicity of Dracula and Rudrapratap, and their political past as warriors. The castle and fortress of Dracula and Rudrapratap are also architecturally important because they hint at the existence of the morally-ambiguous past of the two figures before they were turned into vampires. Since no information is provided about the possible cause of Dracula and Rudrapratap turning into vampires, their past human selves cannot be constructed as a good/evil binary. The architecture of the castle and the fortress become a visual reminder of this undisclosed narrative of their past human selves before the story becomes a hero-monster chase where each tries to defeat and eliminate the other. The successful translation of the aesthetics of horror in *Bishalgarh-er Duhshason* ('The Tyrant of *Bishalgarh*') relies on this narrative of a mysterious fall into vampirism, and subsequent moral decay. Like Dracula reminiscing about his proud heritage, Rudrapratap recounts that although Bishalgarh is currently in ruins it used to be the seat of pride and affluence many ages ago.[125] In this brief moment, therefore, the readers do not see Rudrapratap as the scheming villain that he is but as a human character beyond the binary of good/evil, who has not only suffered from a great political decline but has been mysteriously converted into this monstrous figure. The architecture of a ruined castle thus traces both this political decay and the moral decay of the vampire in Stoker and Roy.

[125] Roy, 18.

In his comparative analysis of Stoker's *Dracula* and Sophocles' *Antigone* as exemplars of the genres of horror and tragedy, Robert I. Levy argues that the Count promises an escape to a world which rejects the civic system of logic and morality completely, where a baby stolen from the mother can be guiltlessly devoured by the monsters as food.[126] When Harker enters Romania, he 'is entering a realm in which power is separated from the moral interactions of his [Harker's] own community.'[127] As a protagonist of horror literature, Harker's actions will determine whether he yields to this non-social world by succumbing to the three female vampires or not. Levy sets this narrative framework of horror literature against that of a tragedy like *Antigone* observing that in the latter one has to deal with ideal moral actors whose social relationships and behaviour towards the community and family are determined by complex ethical choices.[128] In this world, choosing one action over the other will inevitably lead to a deathly consequence. He differentiates horror from tragedy by arguing that in the former, characters like Harker can participate in a world beyond morality either in fantasy or in action,[129] while in tragedy, characters like Antigone cannot turn their face away from difficult moral decisions which may even lead to the annihilation of their selves.

Levy's argument about tragedy being at the centre of the social moral drama and horror being at the wings, or outside it, can be effectively challenged by an architectural analysis of Taimur's novella. The *Kantajew* temple in the text serves as the site for a conflict between

[126] Robert I. Levy, 'Horror and Tragedy: The Wings and Center of the Moral Stage,' *Ethos* 13, no. 2 (Summer, 1985): 180.

[127] Levy, 180.

[128] Levy, 182.

[129] Levy cites the episode where the three female vampires are about to prey on Harker, and he feels a contradictory emotion of thrill and repulsion. Levy argues that by fantasising about the voluptuous vampires, Harker is tempted to suspend his morality. He treats this as a form of escapism absent in tragedies. However, although the female minions of Dracula have exerted a hypnotic influence on Harker, that his moral sense is still operating is evident in his worry that should Mina read about this incident she would be deeply hurt. Harker's ethical concerns about his fiancée and marriage, even at the most perilous moment of his life, disproves Levy's claims about Harker's escapist fantasy.

political law and religious law. During the rule of zamindar Ganesh he first breaks down the Hindu temple of *Kapalini Jakhkhini* to please the Muslim ruler of Bengal Sihabuddin Baijid Shah, and adopts Islamic culture to suit his own needs. Soon however, he kills Sihabuddin and destroys the mosque, built in place of the temple, and desecrates it, torturing the Sufis in the region.[130] Throughout his rule, this destruction of the sacred temple/mosque and defilement of the holy space continues as per his political needs. Ganesh therefore uses his political power to usurp the sacred space and disrupt religious law for his own personal gain. The temple/mosque, under which Ganesh is buried alive by his ministers, and from which he returns as an undead, frames this conflict between political power and religious power. However, this conflict which the ruins of the temple serve to highlight, is prefigured early in the text in Tushar Naag's exploits as a forest ranger. When the zamindar Girijanath employs him to catch the poachers engaged in illegal hunting of birds and animals, he comes across Dakshini Ray, a powerful priest of the local deity *Yakhshini*. It is at this point that the conflict between the political order and the religious order comes into play. On the one hand, Tushar Naag is supposed to arrest Dakshini Ray because he has violated the dictates of the zamindar's law, and killed a *barasingha*-deer, an endangered species. But on the other hand, Sekher Po, the man accompanying him on this journey, warns him against disrespecting Dakshini Ray because he is deemed to have supernatural powers.[131] The *barasingha* Dakshini Ray killed has been offered as a sacrifice to the Goddess *Yakhshini*, and thus falls within the domain of the religious order. Tushar Naag is thus faced with an important ethical choice, similar to the ones Levy had argued can only be found in tragedy. If Naag chooses to let off Dakshini Ray without any punishment, he will disregard the zamindar's political authority; and if he tries to put the priest

[130] Taimur, 73-74.

[131] Taimur, 50.

under trial for his crime, he will violate the sanctity of the religious order, and of the Goddess *Yakhshini*. Both moral courses of action thus will lead to a serious consequence for him.

Tushar Naag chooses to hold the priest responsible for his actions, and falls terribly ill as a result. Therefore, the tragic fate that befalls him at the end of the story, wherein he loses his family, his body, and his very existence to Ganesh, is not merely a matter of greed, as Father Roko makes it out to be.[132] Rather, the fact that he is turned into a vampire in the basement of a temple, which formerly used to be the temple of *Yakhshini*, relates his downfall directly to the ethical choice he makes early on in the narrative — the choice to arrest *Yakhshini*'s priest for killing the endangered animal. Furthermore, if we analyse the description of the place where Ganesh's undead body is kept, it strangely resembles a temple's *garbhagriha* (the womb-chamber or the sanctum). The room is extremely cold and dark; it is inaccessible for most people; and the trunk in which Ganesh lies is placed at the centre of the room, much like a deity's idol is located at the centre of the *garbhagriha*.[133] Ganesh, who had manipulated the sacred space of the goddess himself while alive, unwittingly becomes her undead agent of revenge by wreaking havoc on Tushar Naag's life. This argument is supported by Father Roko's observation that Ganesh had turned into a vampire because of his knowledge of the dark arts of *Yakhshini*.[134] The temple therefore is both a haunt and a prison for Ganesh; it is the place where he is at his most powerful on account of it being his home, and also where he is at his weakest. The basement where his coffin-like-trunk is stored is on the one hand a perverted replica of the *garbhagriha* where he dwells. On the other hand, it is an enclosure that binds his evil soul, and prevents it from escaping, until Naag opens it in search of the treasure, enabling Ganesh to feed on his body.

[132] Taimur, 78.

[133] Taimur, 59.

[134] Taimur, 75.

With respect to the two aspects of the visual construction of horror in *Dracula* and its adaptations, namely iconography and architecture, the following findings have thus been established: firstly, although *Dracula* and other vampire literature involve a heavy use of symbols specific to a religion, the texts are not bound by their religious contexts. As part of a larger repertoire of narrative motifs used in horror literature, these symbols can be replaced, reoriented, and reinserted in different cultural contexts, which accounts for the successful translation of the aesthetics of horror. The narrative function of these visual symbols within the specific textual context should thus be considered instead of seeing them as hallmarks of a particular religious philosophy. Furthermore, these symbols of good and evil, even when changed, for example, from the crucifix to the non-specific amulet, work successfully in vampire literature across the world because of a uniform cultural response towards the dead body as an object of dread and fond remembrance. When Van Helsing informs Dr Seward that the marks on the throat of the children (who went missing for a while in the Hampstead neighbourhood) were made by Lucy, Dr Seward gets extremely angry 'as if he [Van Helsing] had *during her life* struck Lucy on the face' [my italics].[135] Since Dr Seward's memory of Lucy is now tied to her corpse, the idea that her dead body is involved in some heinous act of crime infuriates Dr Seward. Maligning her corporeal self therefore feels similar to maligning Lucy's reputation, just as violating her body by cutting her head off also seems to Arthur like she is being struck 'during her life,' which Arthur initially objects to.[136] While the body serves as the only remaining physical memory of the one who has passed away, it is also seen as a source of horror on account of its state of decay, and its constant reminder of human mortality. Although part of the horror of vampire literature is the undead body that transcends the laws of decay, this horror is also the source of a wishful fantasy of the living about a body that does not die,

[135] Stoker, 173.

[136] Stoker, 184.

as *Zinda Laash* ('The Living Corpse') effectively demonstrates. In Stoker's *Dracula* too, the woman who performs the last rites in the funeral of Lucy remarks, 'She makes a very *beautiful corpse*, sir' [my italics].[137] The reference to the 'beauty' of the dead body, which borders on necrophilia in several scenes in the novel, is part of this wishful fantasy of the body without decay. When the Crew of Light open the grave of Lucy, Dr Seward describes the body as lying 'in all its death-beauty.'[138] Similarly, Van Helsing describes the undead women in Dracula's castle as being 'full of life and voluptuous beauty' and says that he is 'moved' by these vampire women '*even lying as she lay in a tomb fretted with age* and heavy with the dust of centuries, though there be that horrid odour such as the lairs of the Count have had' [my italics].[139] Van Helsing's choice of words shows that he believes that there is an element of beauty in these undead women *despite* the fact that they are dead/undead and covered with dust and are emitting a putrid odour. However, I argue that Van Helsing finds in them an element of beauty and 'fascination'[140] *precisely because* they are dead/undead. It reinforces this idea of a fantasy about the corpse that does not decay, which forms the basis of the vampire lore. Although the visual and fictional manifestation of the fear of the undead is different for each culture, the fundamental psychological base remains the same, leading to the recurrence of similar visual narratives of the undead.

This construction of the visual narrative is also dependent on the way the architecture of the house of the undead is framed. In Gorey's set designs of the theatrical adaptation of *Dracula*, the spatial displacement of the vampire's home from Romania to England is accompanied by the dominance of the bat motif and a replication of the castle's architectural

[137] Stoker, 147.

[138] Stoker, 190.

[139] Stoker, 319.

[140] Stoker, 319.

style, lending a continuity to the atmosphere of horror. In Stoker's *Dracula* and the two Bengali adaptations by Roy and Taimur analysed in this chapter, the haunt of the vampire is presented as a ruined one. However, the use of a dilapidated, ancient structure as the vampire's hideout is not just a Gothic trope of setting. Rather, they trace the tragic downfall of Dracula, Rudrapratap, and Ganesh who share an illustrious political past. Although the location of the castle is changed from Romania to Madhya Pradesh in India and Dinajpur in Bangladesh, there is an architectural uniformity among the texts in the way the Count's castle, Rudrapratap's fort, or Ganesh's temple harp on the power wielded in the historical past by these kings and zamindars as military strategists. The castle thus presents a disjointed history of the Count and Rudrapratap, contrasting their past success as able rulers with their current evil vampiric selves. Despite the cultural differences in the nature of the castle and the fort, the emotion of horror is sustained because of this narrative of political downfall, and an unexplained moral decay caused by their mysterious conversion to vampirism. In the case of *Kantajew-er Pishach* ('The Vampire of *Kantajew*'), this element of moral decay is explored through the character of Tushar Naag, whose body is usurped by Ganesh and turned into a vampire.[141] Naag's tragedy is occasioned by his own greed. He goes down to the basement of the temple in search of hidden treasure, which not only causes him to lose his entire family but also endangers the life of his beloved nephew Somu. The visual and written narratives thus interact with each other and serve as an effective medium of translating horror from one culture to the other. However, this translation also involves a change in the treatment of history, both political and social, which will be explored in the following chapter.

[141] The storyline of Naag's downfall from a government official with a happy family to a mere soulless body being used as a puppet by Ganesh can be said to be more tragic than horrific. This is because the text does not solely rely on the emotion of fear, that is common to both horror and tragedy, but on the emotion of pity, which determines our attitude to Tushar Naag. Although Naag's downfall is a result of his own greed, the readers sympathise with the fate he suffers at the end since Naag loses his identity, family, and existence to the evil vampiric Ganesh.

Chapter 3: Vampirism and Global Power Relations: A Study of the Fictive Histories in the Adaptations of *Dracula*

Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) has proven to be the definitive text of vampire literature across ages, surpassing texts like Polidori's *The Vampyre* (1819), James Malcolm Rhymer's *Varney the Vampire* (1845), or Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla* (1872). Over the years vampire literature has proliferated, each work treating the theme of blood-drinking according to the anxieties and fears of its age and geographical location. However, no matter how far the storylines of these vampire narratives may move away from that of Stoker's novel, they are always pitted against *Dracula*, which the other texts are shown to align against or deviate from. This has led to a debate around what constitutes the 'original' and what constitutes the 'apocryphal' in the oeuvre of vampire fiction. Scholarly studies on these 'adaptations' frequently try to trace the ways in which the 'authentic' *Dracula* is transformed, tampered with, and transferred into a different cultural and historical context, in order to cheat the mechanisms preventing the direct piracy of literary works. In the process, the adaptations also radically alter the structure of the fictive history against which Stoker's novel is set.[1] Such changes to the fictional historical narrative are mostly seen as necessary technical changes to bypass legal issues related to the publication of a 'bootleg' novel. However, I argue in this chapter that the change in the fictive history in these adaptations is a deliberate creative intervention meant to interpolate Stoker's narrative with new political tensions and social drama, which change the nature of horror itself that defines the 'original' *Dracula*. As Brundan, Jones, and Mier-Cruz argue, just like Dracula appropriates and transforms the bodies he preys upon, the myriad 'inauthentic' and unauthorised translations and adaptations of *Dracula* alter Stoker's novel and appropriate it, playing a crucial role in the transmission and reproduction of the text.[2] In this chapter I will study two such

[1] I have used the term 'fictive history' to denote the historical elements which have been used in the texts either directly as part of the vampire lore, or indirectly after being modified according to the needs of the text. These elements of history which have either been extrapolated from actual events which took place, or created for the purpose of setting the narrative is referred to as 'fictive history' in my analysis.

[2] Katy Brundan, Melanie Jones, Benjamin Mier-Cruz, 'Dracula or Draculitz?: Translational Forgery and Bram Stoker's 'Lost Version' of *Dracula*,' *Victorian Review* 45, no. 2 (Fall 2019): 294. 10.1353/vcr.2019.0060. Accessed on 11th February 2022.

adaptations of Stoker's novel — the 1899 Swedish version of *Dracula* published by Rickard Berghorn as *Powers of Darkness*, and the 1928 novel *Dracula in Istanbul* by Ali Rıza Seyfioğlu that reimagines Stoker's text in the context of modern-day Istanbul. Instead of trying to verify the actual historicity of Stoker's novel and its adaptations, I will compare the fictive histories of Stoker's novel, the Swedish text, and Seyfioğlu's novel in order to prove that any change in Dracula's fictional history leads to a change in the kind of horror generated by the vampire figure in the text.

Dracula and Orientalist Fantasies of Sexual Excess

Although Stoker locates the castle of the vampire in Transylvania, Count Dracula traces his heritage back to the Szekelys, who were primarily a Hungarian tribe. Dracula repeatedly mentions how his tribe had defended the land against the Turks over the course of history:

> …the Szekelys were claimed as kindred by the victorious Magyars, and to us for centuries was trusted the guarding of the frontier of Turkey-land […] when the flags of the Wallach and the Magyar went down beneath the Crescent, who was it but one of my own race who as Voivode crossed the Danube and beat the Turk on his own ground?[3]

Matthew Gibson, in his analysis of the Eastern Question in *Dracula*, observes that Stoker created the fictional history of the Count by combining the history of the Wallachian Voivode Dracula, found in William Wilkinson's *An Account of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia* (1820), and the political history of the Szekelys, found in Major Johnson's *On the Track of the Crescent* (1885).[4] Although the Wallachians and the Szekelys belong to different ethnic traditions, Stoker combines the two in the figure of the Count by representing their common enmity against the Turks. As Gibson says, Stoker combines the Turk-hating Dracula of Wilkinson with the Szekelys tribe in order to establish Dracula as 'a guardian against the Turks … [who] pits the cross against the crescent, even though the former has by now forsaken him.'[5] As we have argued in the first chapter, the Christian symbols in the novel serve more as elements of horror iconography than as markers of a specific

[3] Stoker, *Dracula*, 34.

[4] Matthew Gibson, *Dracula and the Eastern Question: British and French Vampire Narratives of the Nineteenth-Century Near East* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 75.

[5] Gibson, 77.

religious worldview. Therefore, Gibson's interpretation of Dracula's tirade against the Turks as a fanatic preference of the cross over the crescent appears too simplistic and faulty. This is because while Dracula proudly talks about how the Szekelys were trusted with the responsibility of defending the borders against the Turks by the Magyars, in the course of the same speech he also talks about how the Turks 'threw off the Hungarian yoke'[6] which is a clear reference to the time the Turks defeated the Hungarians in 1526, and Transylvania achieved a status of semi-autonomy.[7] This anomaly in Dracula's political affiliations (which Gibson mentions briefly but ignores as Stoker's misappropriation of his source materials) is significant in two respects.[8] Firstly, it shows that Dracula's vain stories about his past military glory do not imply his allegiance either to the cross or to the crescent but highlights his sense of skilled oratory that tries to elevate his image from that of a scheming, bloodthirsty monster to that of a brave warrior.[9] Secondly, it situates Dracula at the intersection of Turkish and Hungarian politics, highlighting the influence of both East European and Oriental cultures on the character of the Count. In Stoker's novel, the Oriental influence is only hinted at, and not explored fully. When the Count keeps Harker awake every night, talking about his past, Harker notes that his diary entries, recording the daily conversations he has with Dracula, bear a strong resemblance to the *Arabian Nights*.[10] Harker's analogy picturises Dracula as an Oriental despot, who will kill Harker once he is done with him, just like the king plans to execute Scheherazade

[6] Stoker, *Dracula,* 35.

[7] Auerbach and Skal ed., footnote in *Dracula*, 35.

[8] In the Norton edition of Dracula, the editor mentions in 35 fn. 1 that the patriotic rhetoric of Dracula 'makes more sound than sense'. This hollow oratory of Dracula and his obsession with his political past seems to be more than nostalgia for his military exploits. Since Stoker deliberately refrains from revealing the origins of Dracula as a vampire, it is possible that the Count's reminiscence of history is based on a longing for his past human self before he was turned into an undead.

[9] Dracula's eloquent speeches also link him to another important literary portrayal of evil, namely, Milton's Satan. Declan Kiberd in his book *Irish Classics* goes so far as to say that 'In another kind of story, Dracula would indeed have been the hero (at least in the way that Satan was in *Paradise Lost*).' Declan Kiberd*, Irish Classics* (2000; Reprint, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 391. Although as readers we may not see either him or Satan as a hero, Dracula views himself not as a bloodsucking monster but as a descendent of a powerful race meant to conquer the world.

[10] Stoker, 35.

in the *Arabian Nights* once she has completed her story.[11] However, Dracula combines the role of the king and Scheherazade, since he is the one telling the story, and he is also the one who plans on killing Harker. Although there has been a reversal of role whereby it is Dracula who is telling the story and not the other way around, it is interesting to note that Harker compares his relationship with Dracula to Shahryār and Scheherazade of the *Arabian Nights*, who ultimately share a nuptial bond. Even before the Count has made an attempt to turn Harker, the latter imagines himself to be a 'bride' of Dracula, thus giving their relationship a deeply sexual character.[12]

While Stoker restricts the Orientalism in *Dracula* to this brief analogy, the Swedish version of Dracula, titled *Powers of Darkness* and published in 1899, explores this connection in a more detailed manner. The Swedish version is not a mere translation of Stoker's novel, as scholars had believed for long, but features additional scenes and characters which alter the text in significant ways. In one such scene added to the novel, the Count, referred to as Draculitz here, offers to show Harker the gallery of family portraits. While going through the portraits, Harker sees the figure of the mysterious woman who appears to him several times in the castle, and towards whom he feels an irresistible sense of attraction.[13] The Count, sensing the hidden passion in Harker for the woman in the portrait, goes on to revel in the sensuous details of her physique, which Harker professes, deeply offends his sensibilities.[14] The idea of sexuality and vampirism in Stoker's *Dracula* has mostly been seen in terms of Victorian anxieties about the expression of sexual desire outside the boundaries of monogamous, heterosexual marriage. Christopher Craft, for example, argues that the novel opens with a sexual threat of Dracula's interest in Harker, which may lead to the Count penetrating and

[11] Richard Francis Burton, trans. *Arabian Nights* (1888; Reprint, London: Harper Press, 2011).
[12] The queerness of Dracula has been analysed by Prodosh Bhattacharya and Abhirup Mascharak in their essay ''Wilde Desire' Across Cultures: *Dracula* and its Bengali Adaptations,' in *Imperial Maladies: Literatures on Healthcare and Psychoanalysis in India*, ed. D. Bandopadhyay and P. Kundu (New York: NovaScience Publishers, 2017), pp. 181-212. However, Harker's portrayal of his relationship to Dracula in such nuptial terms brings into focus the question of Harker's queerness as well.

[13] Bram Stoker and A-e, *Powers of Darkness*: *The Unique Version of Dracula*, serialised in the newspaper *Dagen* from 1899-1900; trans. Rickard Berghorn (Sweden: Timaios Press, 2022), 94.

[14] Stoker and A-e, 95.

draining him.[15] Similarly, Phyllis A. Roth observes that Lucy is allowed to be voluptuous only after she is turned into a vampire, and that the human relationships in the novel are spiritualised to the extent that their sexual natures are made invisible.[16] However, *Powers of Darkness* situates the sexual perversion of Dracula within the larger Orientalist discourse of the nineteenth century, rather than just placing it in the context of the Victorian repression of sexuality. When Dracula speaks about the portrait of the woman in overtly sexual terms, Harker says that he is reminded of a painting he once saw in an exhibition, and goes on to give a detailed description of the scene in that painting:

> …a slave trader who displayed his product to a lustfully reclining Turkish pasha (or something along those lines) — a beautiful naked woman whose charms he expatiated upon and pointed out with the full eloquence of the connoisseur and the businessman, hoping to make her even more desirable to the intended buyer…[17]

The Oriental landscape has frequently been seen as a place of sexual excess by the western imagination. As Nigel Leask observes, the East in orientalist literature was increasingly seen as a place of licentiousness and perversion by the West in order to justify the moral and economic appropriation of the Orient by the colonial forces of Europe.[18] Harker assumes a moral high ground above Dracula because he feels that the Count's excessively erotic descriptions of the woman in the portrait forms a part of his Eastern identity. Even before Stoker the association of Oriental sexual excess with vampirism is found in Byron's *The Giaour* where the intense sexual rivalry between Hassan and the Giaour over Leila leads to Hassan killing his beloved, and the Giaour avenging her death by killing Hassan.[19] Because of the Giaour's act of murder, the narrator observes, the Giaour will haunt his family and suck their blood as a vampire to sustain his undead body. Similarly, in

---

[15] Christopher Craft, ''Kiss Me with those Red Lips': Gender and Inversion in Bram Stoker's *Dracula,*' *Representations,* no. 4 (Autumn 1984): 109-110, http_s://doi.org/10.2307/2928560. Accessed on 29th March 2023.

[16] Phyllis A. Roth, 'Suddenly Sexual Women in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*,' *Literature and Psychology* 27, no. 3 (1977): 115.

[17] Stoker and A-e, 95-96.

[18] Nigel Leask, *British Romantic Writers and the East: Anxieties of Empire* (1992; Reprint, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 21.

[19] George Gordon Byron, *The Giaour*, in *Byron's Poetry and Prose*, ed. Alice Levine (1813; Reprint, London: WW. Norton & Company, 2009), 123-155.

William Beckford's *Vathek*, the eponymous Oriental ruler indulges in licentious sexual activities, and in excessive worldly pleasures in his five Palaces of Senses, eventually leading to his damnation.[20] Harker's recollection of the painting with the lustful Turk, in response to Draculitz's sensual picturisation of the portrait, thus falls within the tradition of western writers labelling the Orient as a land of sexual perversion and ribaldry. However, it is not Draculitz whom he compares with the lustful Turk in the painting. If we study the analogy closely, Harker here is comparing Draculitz to the slave trader who is displaying the naked woman. The Count's attempt to titillate Harker with his erotic picturisation seems to extend the analogy further, with Harker seemingly performing the role of the lustful Turk in the painting. Later on, Harker also wilfully participates in this orientalist sexual fantasy, when he is repeatedly visited by the mysterious woman in the castle. As Said observes, for the European writer the Orient was a place where one could experience sexuality in a more guilt-free manner than was possible in the West.[21] If Draculitz's purpose is to make the mysterious woman irresistible to Harker, like the slave trader's 'display' makes the woman being sold more desirable to the Turkish lord, the Count is indeed successful. Harker himself confesses at one point that he has had several opportunities to escape from the castle through other hidden routes but the sensual memory of the mysterious woman and the desire to see her again has prevented him from doing so.[22] Unlike Stoker's Harker who is trapped by Dracula without any chance of escape, the Harker of *Powers of Darkness* is trapped by his own desire. Although he realises the incipient dangers of staying in the castle he says, 'I do not wish to talk about, nor think about going home — the thought itself is a horror.'[23] The white, western man has thus immersed himself in the oriental fantasy that Draculitz creates and he participates in, to the point that he is unwilling to escape from it. Moreover, the thought of going home makes Harker afraid because the pleasures of sensual imagination, in which he has

[20] William Beckford, *Vathek* (1786; Reprint, London: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[21] Edward Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient* (1978; Reprint, New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2001), 190.

[22] Stoker and A-e, 186.

[23] Stoker and A-e, 188.

indulged in Draculitz's castle, would haunt him with guilt once he enters the 'civilised' western world. This is because, although Harker maintains his fidelity to Wilma (the Mina figure in the Swedish version) by not giving in completely to the seductions of the woman at the castle, he repeatedly calls out to the latter mentally, and enjoys thinking about her sexualised form. Similar to the white, English writers of the eighteenth and nineteenth century like Byron vicariously enjoying the pleasures of unbridled sexuality through their orientalist writing,[24] Harker too participates in the fantasy of the mysterious woman to break free from his sexual restraint in this alternative space. The horror in *Powers of Darkness*, unlike in Stoker's novel, is not just the horror of the white, western man on encountering the Other in an unfamiliar, culturally-distant setting. It is the horror of returning from the non-western, orientalised space, and re-acclimatising oneself to the society of England, after one has willingly participated in the sexualised fantasies of the East. In *Powers of Darkness* when Harker repeatedly finds himself on the brink of giving in to the temptations of the woman in Draculitz's castle, he writes:

> The ground in this lair of damnation is burning under my feet and the air is stifling me — stifling me like her kisses — but no — *I do not wish to talk about, nor think about going home — the thought itself is a horror*. [my italics][25]

For Harker therefore, the thought of returning back to his fiancée, Wilma, in England is filled with horror after the sexual fantasies he has had about the woman in Draculitz's castle. It is perhaps because of this fear of returning to his home in England that Harker fails to escape from the castle. As he himself observes at one point, although the plan of escape was full of dangers, he had adequate opportunities for the same, which he did not use because of his attraction to the woman in the castle.[26] However, as we have analysed, it is not just the temptation of the woman but the

[24] Byron's poem 'The Bride of Abydos,' *The Giaour* and William Beckford's Gothic novel *Vathek* are some such examples.

[25] Stoker and A-e, 188.

[26] Stoker and A-e, 186.

thought of going back to England after having sexual fantasies about her that stops him from executing his plan for escape.

While Harker had referred to Draculitz as a 'Hungarian, or rather Transylvanian, magnate'[27] on receiving his letter at Bistritz, following the scene at the gallery he calls Draculitz an 'immoral, barbaric, unreliable, and despotic Oriental — or rather half-Asian'.[28] Soon after, when Draculitz continues to talk about women in explicitly carnal terms, Harker comments on his 'strange Asian eyes' and is disgusted with his 'Eastern eroticism'.[29] The change in Harker's portrayal of the Count's heritage from an East European one to an out-and-out Eastern one is a significant departure from Stoker's novel. Stoker's Dracula inhabits a world which despite being located at the far eastern ends of Europe is nonetheless a part of it. The Crew of Light therefore actually go to Transylvania and kill the Count, along with the female vampires, thereby restoring normality to the region and re-instating it as a part (although a culturally distant one) of the rational west. In *Powers of Darkness* on the other hand, Draculitz's world is orientalised to the point that it is imagined as an alternative, fantastic space to which neither Harker returns, nor the Crew of Light goes to end the terrors inhabiting the castle. Draculitz is killed off in London itself; whatever horrors remained in the castle at Transylvania, including the woman who had repeatedly appeared to Harker, and the mysterious creatures participating in some weird blood cult, are left undisturbed in that alternative space. The orientalising of Draculitz thus leads to the creation of this zone of horror, which, despite the efforts of Van Helsing and the others, is not integrated into the European space. Moreover, this alternative zone of horror does not remain restricted to Transylvania but is also found in the orientalised space of Carfax where Dr Seward meets the Countess. While in Stoker's novel, the house at Carfax was used solely by Dracula as his lair, in *Powers of Darkness* it becomes the meeting place for strange cultists, which

[27] Stoker and A-e, 56.

[28] Stoker and A-e, 96.

[29] Stoker and A-e, 96.

forms the second layer of horror in the text. When Dr Seward is invited to the house at Carfax to treat the Countess, he is directly led into her private room. Although the house is in London, Seward notes how the wallpaper depicts 'an Oriental landscape' and how the finely carved latticework with thin columns was 'probably a fantasy of some returned nabob, who…had wished to conjure a colourful, Oriental world in the vicinity of fog-shrouded London.'[30] The oriental world which Harker had conjured up in his imagination in Transylvania has thus assumed a physical reality of its own and permeated the house at Carfax in London. Within this world Dr Seward participates in a kind of orientalist harem fantasy where he sees the Countess in her private domestic space, rising up from a divan to meet him.[31] The harem, as a cloistered space in the household reserved for the women and inaccessible to people from outside, formed an important part of the western sexual imagining of the East in the paintings and the writings of the nineteenth century. The women in such narratives — whether visual or textual — would often be shown as nude or semi-nude in 'a state of pleasing vulnerability' while the European onlooker is fully dressed and equipped with his rationality and language to describe this encounter.[32] This orientalist harem fantasy becomes all the more explicit the second time Dr Seward visits the house at Carfax. This is because this time Dr Seward is directly taken to the bedroom of the Countess, where she is lying down with a dressing gown wrapped around her.[33] As Seward opens the dressing gown to check her with the stethoscope, he notices that 'she was entirely undressed under the same, so that her naked, perfectly beautiful figure' was outlined against the lining of the robe.[34] This undressing of the Countess in her bedroom by Dr Seward marks the

[30] Stoker and A-e, 418.

[31] Although Seward initially refers to the appearance of the Countess as that of a 'Paris chic,' he later refers to her as a 'more or less dubious Polish, Wallachian, or Roumanian Countess.' Stoker and A-e, *Powers of Darkness*, 418 and 424. The orientalising of the private space of the Countess reminds us of Harker's orientalising of the gallery scene with Draculitz, as both the scenes associate the Orient with some kind of sexual excess.

[32] Rana Kabbani, *Imperial Fictions: Europe's Myths of Orient* (1994; Reprint, Kiribati: Pandora, 2008), 73.

[33] Stoker and A-e, 426.

[34] Stoker and A-e, 426.

fulfilment of his sexual fantasy, which, I argue, had been triggered by the orientalist motifs on the wall the first time he had entered Carfax. While the Countess lies there in her state of vulnerability — both in the sexual sense of being undressed, and in the physical sense because of her illness — Seward arrives as a symbol of western rationality with his knowledge of medicine and cure. However, the rationality of the white, western man is soon subverted as he is called upon to cure her not by using his knowledge of medicine but through the process of hypnosis.[35] Just like Harker, this oriental world which his own fantasies have played upon, consumes him completely to the point that he returns time and again to the house at Carfax, furthering his own destruction.

Powers of Darkness and Continental Politics in the Nineteenth Century

The Swedish version, therefore, adds extensive oriental details to, and significantly alters the nature of, Stoker's original text. Although such details may appear to be a mere reflection of nineteenth century European attitudes towards the East, they bring about significant changes in the original political dynamic of Stoker's novel. Stoker's *Dracula* brings out the horror of an East European Count who 'invades' England and spreads his empire by turning people into vampires. This East European monster is tracked down to its East European region and killed, securing the borders of Britain against foreign elements. *Powers of Darkness* complicates the political framework of the text by highlighting Draculitz's position in the global politics of the time. When Harker browses through the letters of the Count he finds that there are names which 'are known throughout Europe, indicating secret connections and combinations … [that are] significant, politically as well as socially and culturally'.[36] When Barrington Jones, the detective, starts investigating Draculitz's political activities he finds that the latter is suspected of involvement in several political conspiracies and

[35] Although hypnotism was regularly experimented with by British physicians during the late nineteenth century, it had not become a part of mainstream medical practice. As Teri Chettiar notes, despite the evidence of the therapeutic uses of hypnotism in the 1880s and 1890s, it was excluded from serious medical consideration by the end of the nineteenth century. Teri, Chettiar, ''Looking as little like patients as persons well could': Hypnotism, Medicine and the Problem of the Suggestible Subject in Late Nineteenth-century Britain,' *Medical history* 56, no. 3 (2012): 335. https://doi.org/10.1017/mdh.2011.39. Accessed on 23rd May 2023.

[36] Stoker and A-e, 164.

associated with several anarchist groups on the Continent.[37] Moreover, he also uncovers a conspiracy against England in the letters of the Count, which was meant to weaken the country's power and influence from within. The reference to the political upheavals in the Continent along with the oriental details in *Powers of Darkness* highlights Britain's complex international relations with France, Sweden, and the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth century. From the end of the eighteenth century to the beginning of the nineteenth century, the political ambitions of Napoleon Bonaparte led to a series of global conflicts over the issue of territorial control, referred to as the Napoleonic Wars. Although the parties involved in the Napoleonic Wars changed with each Coalition that was formed, Britain's rivalry with France over the process of empire building led to the continuation of war between them for twenty years, with Britain spending over £65 million in subsidising wars against Napoleon.[38] Meanwhile, because of King Gustavus IV Adolf's dislike of the French Revolution, Sweden joined the Third Coalition in 1805 along with Britain and Russia, leading to the Franco-Swedish War.[39] In *Powers of Darkness* the house at Carfax becomes the meeting point for a group of cultists who are also linked with some form of political conspiracy. These meetings of conspirators are presided over by the Countess, whose appearance and language are revealed to be French. Given the common hostility of Britain and Sweden towards France during the Napoleonic Wars, it is no surprise that the leader of a group of political conspirators is given a French character in a Swedish adaptation of an English text. Although the novel is written and set during the end of the nineteenth century, the Napoleonic Wars highlight the long-standing history of rivalry between Britain and France in that century. This is why, although there is no direct reference to the Napoleonic Wars in *Powers of Darkness*, the historical background of this rivalry between the two countries helps us understand why the leader of the conspirators is shown to be French.

[37] Stoker and A-e, 265.

[38] Alexander Mikaberidze, preface to *The Napoleonic Wars: A Global History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), xiii-xiv.

[39] Mikaberidze, 334.

Powers of Darkness therefore significantly alters the London-Romania political dynamic of Stoker's *Dracula* by introducing this additional subplot that ties England to the global politics of the time. Unlike Dracula's invasion of London and spread of vampirism, which is contained within England once he arrives at Whitby, Draculitz's invasion of England affects its position within Continental politics of the time as a whole. As Barrington Jones says, '…this is about a grand conspiracy of a political nature…England's power and influence have long been a thorn in the side of the nations of the Continent…our enemies…have had the sense to enlist allies…'[40] The invasion of the vampire in Stoker's *Dracula* is a localised threat from Romania, that temporarily acts as a source of anxiety about the intrusion of the East European Other. In *Powers of Darkness*, on the other hand, Draculitz's coming to England is tied to the systematic destabilisation of Britain's continental influence. The threat in the latter case is not just a supernatural threat from East Europe which can be isolated and eliminated but a diplomatic and political threat posed by the countries across the Continent which Draculitz is manipulating to his advantage. The fear of Britain's political downfall thus accompanies the fear of spiritual degeneration that Stoker's *Dracula* was based on. That is why Draculitz is defeated by the combined efforts of Van Helsing, who uses his knowledge about the occult to stop the spiritual and moral decay brought about by the vampire, and Barrington Jones who uses his intelligence about secretive international conspiracies to reduce the political damage inflicted by the Count's criminal activities. Moreover, unlike Stoker's novel, *Powers of Darkness* does not receive a closure with the death of Draculitz alone. Many of the Count's accomplices who served as diplomatic corps in England are called back by their governments, while some disappear or commit suicide.[41] Despite the end of the supernatural villain, there is a hint that England's political troubles are far from over, given the complicated nature of its diplomatic relations with other countries. The successful translation of horror from a British text to a Swedish one is thus based on shared political

[40] Stoker and A-e, 510.

[41] Stoker and A-e, 539.

aspirations and anxieties of the two countries in the Continental struggle for power. The supernatural horror in Stoker's *Dracula* only acts as a metaphor for the fin-de-siècle Victorian fears about sexuality, degeneration, and social change. In *Powers of Darkness* however, the political horror is not just metaphorical but an actual part of the plot that cannot be resolved using the conventional remedies against supernatural monsters. This actuality of the political horror — which is fused with the supernatural horror of the novel —extends it beyond the boundaries of the text, and beyond the death of the vampiric Count.

The presence of the Countess within London, from where these conspirators plan to bring their scheme of destroying England to fruition, is thus a political commentary on the rivalry between France and Britain over territorial expansion during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. However, the continental politics in the Swedish version is not restricted to the Franco-British or Franco-Swedish conflicts alone. When Dr Seward goes to attend the concert of Signor Leonardi — a famous musician who is a part of the cultist group at Carfax — he overhears a conversation about a secret plan to destroy Britain, involving huge sums of money:

> Why, Russia has not yet said its last word…the mines are already worth billions and there is infinitely much more gold than they yet suspect…once the armaments are completed, I promise that the mood *here* will be such that it only takes one spark to light the fuse — and then — *finis Britannia*![42]

The reference to the gold mines, which they would probably use to generate wealth for making arms, seems to be a reference to the gold rush which took place in Siberia during the nineteenth century as a result of the discovery of a mine in Siberia in 1838 on the Ulderey River. This resulted in Russia becoming the main source of gold, accounting for as much as sixty percent of the total world production in the first half of the nineteenth century.[43] In the novel, it is probably the wealth that is being generated through these mines that is being used to fund the political destruction of Britain. Although Draculitz is not directly shown participating in these schemes of disrupting Britain's social

[42] Stoker and A-e, 467.

[43] John O. Marsden and C. Iain House, *The Chemistry of Gold Extraction*, 2nd Edition (1992; Reprint, Colorado: Society for Mining, Metallurgy, and Exploration, Inc., 2006), 3.

stability, his presence at the meetings at Carfax, and the letters Harker discovers at his castle, hint at his involvement in this larger political scheme. For a large section of the novel, Draculitz is absent from the main scene of action, with the plot revolving around Seward's gradual discovery of the dangerous nature of the conspiracies being hatched in the house opposite to his asylum. But it is important to remember that it is Draculitz who had purchased the house at Carfax, and who is now controlling this flow of wealth to manipulate the cross-continental rivalries to his advantage. In Stoker's novel Carfax was more of a lair for the undead where Dracula's coffins were stored. In the Swedish version, however, the political activity at the house in Carfax supersedes the vampiric activity of Draculitz in England. Rather than acting as the undead who rises up from his grave to prey on the living, Draculitz's vampirism is seen more as a medium for establishing his position within global politics as a powerful contender for power. Stoker's Dracula sees his past glory as a Szekely warrior as part of a different world which is gone. After his initial conversations with Harker about his war with the Turks we never find a reference to his political identity when he comes to London to prey on the living as a vampire. Draculitz, by contrast, renews his political ambitions of ruling the world as a conqueror by carefully using international alliances and rivalries to strengthen his hold over power. In doing so he places Eastern Europe at the centre of world politics rather than as a peripheral power living in the shadow of the West. The reference to the gold being used for making armaments also alters the nature of vampirism in the text. Stoker's Dracula, as critics have pointed out, is seen as an aristocratic hoarder of wealth, and is a symbol of old money belonging to a corrupt class.[44] Citing the scene where Harker finds a heap of gold covered in dust at Dracula's castle, vampirism is seen as a hindrance to the natural flow of currency.[45] Similarly, Franco Moretti observes that Dracula 'lacks the aristocrat's conspicuous consumption' as he keeps no servants, drives his own

[44] Judith Halberstam, 'Technologies of Monstrosity: Bram Stoker's *Dracula,*' *Victorian Studies* 36, no. 3 (Spring 1993): 346-348.

[45] Halberstam, 346.

carriage, and prepares the bed and meals for Harker on his own.[46] Although this wealth is later used by Dracula to infiltrate London and satisfy his bloodlust, on the whole the Count has managed to keep money out of circulation. In *Powers of Darkness*, on the other hand, not only does Draculitz have a deaf-mute woman at the castle to work for him, but, once in London, he is also seen in the lavish parties hosted at Carfax. Within this changed Gothic economy, the vampire has not only learned to circulate the wealth he has amassed but also to use it in his transactions of power across the world. He no longer acts as the monopolistic villain who hoards both blood and gold for himself, acting as the sole source of horror in the text. Rather, Draculitz operates in conjunction with a host of other characters, who, despite their participation in cultist activities, may not be blood-sucking vampires themselves. Unlike Stoker's Dracula, the act of turning others into vampires is not the sole purpose with which the Count arrives in England. Through his wealth and influence, Draculitz generates a cross-continental alliance, working towards spreading his power on a more global scale.

The involvement of Russia in this plot against England becomes significant in the light of what Seward reads in the telegram section of the newspaper. While commenting on the general state of war and lawlessness across the world, Seward notes that 'the free republicans in France are lauding with exultation the representative of slavery and despotism in the East — their highly honoured and beloved new ally, 'Holy' Russia!'[47] Britain's relationship with Russia had already been fraught with tensions because of the Crimean War fought between 1853-1856, over issues of territorial control in areas which were then under the Ottoman Empire. Although both Britain and France had supported the Ottoman Empire in the conflict with Russia during the Crimean War, the alliance of Germany and Austria in 1879 severely disturbed the balance of power in Europe, which led to the creation of the Franco-Russian alliance in 1894.[48] Seward's mention of France's newest ally is marked by a tone of

[46] Franco Moretti, 'Dialectic of Fear,' in *Signs Taken for Wonders: On the Sociology of Literary Forms* (1983; Reprint, London: Verso, 2005), 90.

[47] Stoker and A-e, 469.

[48] V. I. Bovykin and D. W. Spring, 'The Franco-Russian Alliance,' *History* 64, no. 10 (1979): 21.

condemnation towards Russia, which further highlights Russia as a force of evil that is working towards the destruction of Britain.[49] The horror in the Swedish version of *Dracula* therefore stems from a sense of political volatility that was gradually spreading across continents before the ultimate eruption of the First World War. Within this scene of instability and mistrust among the global powers, the fear of national safety somehow overlaps with the personal fear of being turned into a vampire and being corrupted by Draculitz. But there is also a subtle hint that while Draculitz is using this atmosphere of political volatility to further his own nefarious purposes, he is not necessarily the cause of it. The intense struggle for territorial control and imperial rivalries among the different countries were gradually pushing the world towards a point of total breakdown during the end of the nineteenth century. Draculitz's power-hungry vision of ruling the entire world mirrors the political ambitions of most of the global, imperial powers like Britain, Russia, France, and others, all of whom were locked in a struggle for control. The horror in *Powers of Darkness* is thus less tangible because it is not concentrated in the monster alone but is diffused across the countries. Rickard Berghorn, in his introduction to the novel, commenting on Dr Seward's reference to the persecution of the Jews, observes that the novel anticipates the rise of Nazism in a way. He compares Draculitz's ideas of building a world ruled by 'the Strong' with Hitler's fascist ideas about the superiority of his own race.[50] While such references either to the rising anti-Jewish sentiment or to Franco-Russian politics are not explored beyond their initial mention, they point towards a global hunger for power that seriously impacts the course of history. Count Draculitz's vampirism, while a formidable threat to deal with, becomes secondary to this broken state of world order which cannot be restored easily. *Powers of Darkness* thus has to be read, in retrospect, in the light of the events of the First and the Second World Wars that would eventually rack the world long after the novel was published. And it

[49] It is important to note that Britain too joined the Franco-Russian alliance later, forming the Triple Entente in 1907. However, at the time when *Powers of Darkness* was published in 1899, Britain was diplomatically aloof from the affairs of the continent, forming no permanent allies. This period, often referred to as Britain's 'splendid isolation.' finds a reflection in the novel wherein Britain receives no help from the continent regarding the conspiracies being plotted against it, and must fight off Draculitz's transcontinental attack alone.

[50] Rickard Berghorn, ed., introduction to *Powers of Darkness*, 12.

is this retrospective, historical reading which leads to a successful translation of the horror from Stoker's *Dracula. Powers of Darkness* thus continuously looks forward in horrific anticipation, looking at the monster as a threat to modern, mercantile, and military England from the feudal past of the continent, and at the monster's involvement with the volatile balance of power in Europe. It is this fear of what is to come, rather than the fear of what there is from the past, that haunts the readers throughout.

Dracula and the Turkish-Romanian Conflict

Stoker's *Dracula* frames the entire narrative in the context of the political dynamic between London and East Europe, and the anxieties surrounding the invasion of the London public and domestic spheres by the Romanian Count. At the beginning of the novel however, Dracula gives a lengthy account of Romania's political rivalry with the Turks, referring specifically to the confrontation between the Voivode and the Turks across the Danube River.[51] Ali Rıza Seyfioğlu's *Dracula in Istanbul* expounds the Dracula narrative in the context of this rivalry between the Ottoman Turks and Romania, by changing the geographical setting from London to Istanbul. Seyfioğlu's novel operates across two historical timelines. The first one is the immediate context of the Turkish War of Independence which took place between 1919 and 1923. The main characters who set out to defeat and kill Dracula — Turan Bey, Doctor Atif Bey, and Özdemir Oğuz — are all said to have served at the frontlines during the Turkish War of Independence. The second historical context takes us back to the fifteenth century, wherein the vampiric Count is equated with the Wallachian ruler Voivode Dracula who is said to have committed barbaric acts of cruelty against the Turks during the reign of Mehmed II. Both these historical timelines, although separated by years from each other, are brought together through a nationalist sentiment that runs through the novel. In this section, I will argue that this nationalistic treatment of *Dracula* from the Turkish perspective alters the horror narrative of the text in significant ways.

[51] Bram Stoker, *Dracula*, 34.

The portrayal of the conflict between the Ottoman Turks and the Wallachian ruler is of direct relevance to the narrative of *Dracula in Istanbul* given that the vampiric Count hails from Romania. What is interesting, however, is the reference to the Turkish War of Independence and the choice to make Turan Bey, Doctor Atif Bey, and Özdemir Oğuz veterans of that war. This is because, although Romania had been a part of the Allied forces fighting against the Central Powers of the Ottoman Empire – Germany, Bulgaria, and Austria-Hungary – it played no direct political role during the Turkish War of Independence. However, this modification in the political affiliation of the people fighting the vampire alters the nature of the monster in a significant way. In Stoker's *Dracula*, when Van Helsing encourages the Crew of Light to fight the Count, he presents it more as a spiritual duty. He says that if they fail in this task of defeating Count Dracula, they are not only doomed in life but suffer the risk of turning into vampires themselves. Even when Lord Godalming gets angry on learning that Van Helsing plans to cut off Lucy's head, Van Helsing says that he has 'a duty to the dead.'[52] The task of defeating the vampire, then, is a moral obligation in Stoker's novel. In Seyfioğlu's novel, however, Turan Bey and the others have a duty towards the nation rather than only a spiritual duty towards the dead in defeating the Count. The act of stopping Dracula, in Seyfioğlu's novel, is a political act of defending one's land against the territorial expansionism of the Count. The identity of Turan Bey, Doctor Atif Bey, and Özdemir Oğuz as war veterans is significant because the Turkish War of Independence too was a war fought to reclaim areas — which formerly belonged to the Ottoman Empire — from the Allied forces in the post-World War I era. More importantly, the Turkish War of Independence was symptomatic of the growing nationalistic sentiment around ideas of the Turkic nation which became prominent with the publication of the 'Three Types of Policy' by Yusuf Akçura in 1904.[53] Akçura argued that the Ottoman Empire had hitherto pursued two policies

[52] Stoker, *Dracula*, 184.

[53] Yusuf Akçura, 'Three Types of Policy,' in 'Yusuf Akçura's Üç Tarzi Siyaset ('Three Types of Policy'),' translated by Ismail Fehmi, *Oriente Moderno* 61, no. 1/12 (1981): pp. 1–20. http://www.jstor.org/stable/25816814. Accessed on 16th June 2023.

with respect to the people of the state: Ottomanism and Pan-Islamism. While the policy of Ottomanism focused on 'creating a single, unified state out of the racially, linguistically and religiously differentiated subjects of the Ottoman Empire,' pan-Islamism sought to unify all Muslim subjects under the Ottoman Sultan.[54] Akçura proposed a third alternative to the two policies, that of pan-Turkism, which would work towards the development of a Turkish national consciousness that would be based on the ethnic union of the Turkic people. The idea of pan-Turkism thus sought to reduce the emphasis on a shared Islamic, religious past, and to unify the Turkic people based on their ethnicity alone. Akçura envisioned the creation of a Turkic nation beyond the political boundaries of the Ottoman Empire based on race. Akçura and other ethnic nationalists were not racists in the sense that for them ethnicity comprised elements of language, culture, and religion and was not dependent on physiological racial traits. However, Özgür Balkılıç and Deniz Dölek note that some form of blood nationalism could be found in the writings published in the pan-Turkist magazine *Türk Yurdu*, which focused on aspects of lineage and race in the discourse on what constituted the homeland.[55] Interestingly, he quotes Ali Rıza Seyfioğlu, the author of *Dracula in Istanbul*, who writes in his essay that the homeland is homeland only because it has been watered by Turkish blood.[56] Similarly, in his account of the exploits of Kemal Reis and Baba Oruç, Seyfioğlu writes how Oruç had left his blood as an heirloom in many foreign lands and not just in the Ottoman homeland.[57] Therefore, the idea of Turkish nationhood was strongly influenced by a belief in the sanctity of the Turkish blood, which in its extreme form often led to questions about racial purity. Bülent Gökay and Tunç Aybak, for example, analyse how the emergence of Turkey as a republic, following the War of Independence,

[54] Ismail Fehmi, Introduction, 'Yusuf Akçura's Üç Tarzi Siyaset ('Three Types of Policy'),' 2.

[55] Özgür Balkılıç and Deniz Dölek, 'Turkish nationalism at its beginning: Analysis of *Türk Yurdu*, 1913–1918', *The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity* 41, no. 2 (2013): 324.

[56] Ali Rıza Seyfioğlu, 'Edebiyat: Kızılırmak Kıyısında,' *Türk Yurdu* 1*,* no. 15 (1998): 246, Tutibay Publications: Ankara.

[57] Ali Rıza Seyfioğlu, *Büyük Osmanlı Denizciler: Kemal Reis and ve Baba Oruc* (*Great Ottoman Marines: Kemal Reis and Baba Oruc*), machine translated (1909; reprint, Istanbul: Fazilet Publications and Trade, 2012).

was based on Mustafa Kemal's attempt to create an ethnically homogeneous Turkey.[58] Even Ataturk, in his speech to the youth of Turkey on 20th October 1927, says that the 'strength you shall need exists in the noble blood flowing through your veins'.[59] Blood lineage thus played an important role in the idea of Turkish nationalism during the beginning of the 20th century. The horror in Seyfioğlu's *Dracula in Istanbul* can thus be read as the horror of the disruption of this ethnically homogenous blood lineage by the vampiric Count, who sucks on the blood of the Turks and tries to become like them by learning their language and culture. It is important to mention that the fear of racial miscegenation through the act of blood drinking was already present in Bram Stoker's *Dracula.* Stephen D. Arata, for example, talks about how Dracula's kiss deracinates Lucy and thus the only solution to help her recover is to 're-racinate' her by transfusing into her the 'pure' blood of the English aristocrat Arthur Holmwood.[60] While the fear of miscegenation in Stoker was related to Victorian ideas about degeneration, in Seyfioğlu's novel this fear of racial blood-mixing resonates with the political question about the formation of Turkish nationhood during the twentieth century. The concerns about the authenticity of blood lineage in the creation of a Turkish identity is witnessed in a crucial omission in Seyfioğlu's text. In Stoker's *Dracula* it is not only the Count who drinks the blood of its victims; he makes Mina Harker drink his blood too. The use of the words 'Unclean, unclean!' by Mina,[61] is not just a reference to the spiritual defilement of her body by the Count but highlights her perception of the Romanian Count's blood as a mark of racial 'impurity.' However, once Dracula is dead, the mark on Mina's head, caused by the sacred wafer, gets erased and the question of this racial miscegenation is completely overlooked. Lucy becomes an evil vampire once

[58] Bülent Gökay and Tunç Aybak, 'Identity, Race and Nationalism in Turkey—Introduction to the Special Issue,' *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies* 18, no. 2 (2016): 109, DOI: 10.1080/19448953.2016.114157.

[59] Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, 'Ataturk's Address to the Turkish Youth,' 27th October 1927, http://www.columbia.edu/~sss31/Turkiye/ata/youth2.html. Accessed on 10th March 2023.

[60] Stephen D. Arata, 'The Occidental Tourist: 'Dracula' and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonization,' *Victorian Studies* 33, no. 4 (Summer, 1990): 632, https://www.jstor.org/stable/3827794. Accessed on 4th January 2022.

[61] Stoker, 248.

Dracula bites her and is killed off, whereas Mina is conveniently reintegrated into the society, and the concerns about the mixing of racial bloodlines are abandoned. Unlike Lucy who is shown vampirising little children, Mina is recast into the traditional role of Victorian motherhood at the end of Stoker's novel, where she gives birth to a baby boy.

Seyfioğlu's novel corrects this narrative flaw in Stoker by omitting the scene of Guzin — the Mina figure in *Dracula in Istanbul* — drinking the blood of Dracula. More importantly, Seyfioğlu omits this scene to maintain the 'purity' of Guzin's Turkish blood, so that she can be a part of this group, comprising the veterans of the Turkish War of Independence, and fight off this national threat. The emphasis on the Turkishness of the characters thus plays an important part in defining their status as heroes. For example, Azmi Bey, in describing Guzin's determination in fighting off Dracula refers to her qualities as a Turkish woman:

> But my Güzin, delicate as a rose, tender as a hyacinth, turned out to be as tough as steel — no, as tough as a true Turkish girl. Turkish girls… What qualities should be described to differentiate them? The easiest is the pride and enthusiasm she shows when she sees her husband charging against dangerous challenges and obstacles![62]

Within this discourse on Turkish nationalism, had Guzin been bitten by Dracula and drunk his blood — as it happens in Stoker's *Dracula* — she would not have been seen fit to counter the nationalistic threat because of the lack of 'authentic' Turkish blood. Her strength to fight against the monster, as Azmi says, is shown to come from her racial Turkish bloodline. Tugce Bicakci Syed commenting on Azmi's interpretation of the blood as a symbol of nationalism and race cites two significant moments in the novel that foreground the importance of Turkish blood in the formation of national identity.[63] The first is Azmi's realisation that he has helped the Count to come to Istanbul where 'this devil would drink Turkish blood and create a land of devastation like the cursed Impaler Voivode who

[62] Bram Stoker and Ali Rıza Seyfioğlu, *Dracula in Istanbul* (1928; reprint, translated by Necip Ateş, United States: Neon Harbour Entertainment, 2017), 134.

[63] Tuğçe Bıçakçı Syed, 'The Origins of Turkish Gothic: The Adaptations of Stoker's Dracula in Turkish Literature and Film,' *Studies in Gothic Fiction* 4, no. 1/2 (2015): 60.

lived centuries ago.'[64] The second instance is that of Dr Resuhi who says that they have to 'prevent a monster, who centuries ago did not tire of drinking Turkish blood, from drinking Turkish blood in Istanbul'.[65] Stoker's Harker on the other hand, just refers to his fear that the Count will come to London and satiate his lust for blood.[66] The ethnic specificity in *Dracula in Istanbul* makes the vampire more of a localised threat. Moreover, Azmi and Dr Resuhi focus on the threat of Dracula to the Turkish population only. The population of Istanbul, though Turkish in majority, however, consisted of other ethnic groups like Armenians, Greeks, Kurds, and others, who too would be under the threat of Dracula's vampiric attack. The fact that Azmi and Dr Resuhi focus only on the loss of Turkish blood shows that, unlike Stoker's portrayal of the Count as a universal threat, Seyfioğlu chooses to frame the horror of the vampire as a political threat mainly to the Turkish majority living in Istanbul. The narrative choice to focus on Dracula's threat to the 'Turkish blood' alone is symptomatic of the ethnic conflicts that reared its head during this period. During the process of Turkification in the period after the Republic of Turkey was formed, the attempt to create an ethnically homogeneous nation often led the Ottoman Empire and even the Kemalist government to adopt policies that ensured the migration of other ethnic communities from Istanbul. The genocide of Greeks in the post-World War I era and the 1923 population exchange between Greece and Turkey are clear examples of such ethnic cleansing which focused on creating a unified Turkish demography in Istanbul. Azmi and Dr Resuhi's ideas about bloodlines thus mirror Count Dracula's manic speech on his racial heritage and noble blood in Stoker's novel.

The fear of racial miscegenation through blood drinking, although common to both Stoker's *Dracula* and Seyfioğlu's *Dracula in Istanbul*, thus plays out differently in the two texts. In the former, it manifests as the Victorian anxiety of racial degeneration of the white race, in the latter it manifests as the political anxieties about nation formation and the Turkification of the population in Istanbul.

[64] Seyfioğlu, 48.

[65] Seyfioğlu, 133.

[66] Stoker, 53.

Although the same blood-drinking, Romanian, vampiric Count has been imported into the Turkish text, Dracula has thus undergone an enormous change. The monster may be the same but the nature of his monstrosity has been altered, once the historical and political context in which he is implanted is changed. This is because the effect of horror that the monster generates depends on the way it is affectively perceived by the reader belonging to a particular socio-political milieu. In one of the most iconic moments in Stoker's novel, for example, Dracula arrives at Whitby aboard the Russian ship Demeter. Commenting on the strong anti-Russian sentiments in the novel Jimmie E. Cain argues that the middle-class fears shown in *Dracula* posit Russia as a social, military, political, and racial threat to Victorian England.[67] Following Belford's observation that Varna, the port from which the Demeter sails, is an anagram of Narva, Cain observes that the voyage of Dracula on Demeter becomes an important part of the Russophobia operating in the novel.[68] This is because Narva served as an important site for the English experience of the Crimean War of 1856 and the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878.[69] Dracula's arrival in London on a Russian vessel thus sets him up as an invasive, political threat in Stoker's novel, similar to the threat of Russian expansionism in the nineteenth century. The relation between Russia and the Ottoman Empire too was fraught with turmoil owing to the tussle for power over the Balkan region during the nineteenth century. However, when Dracula arrives in the Russian vessel in Demeter in Seyfioğlu's novel, although the same scene is recreated, the political implications have now changed. This is because, *Dracula in Istanbul* is set in the period following the Turkish War of Independence, when the Russian Bolshevik government had extended its support to the Turkish revolutionaries during the 1920s. The involvement of Russia is evident in the way Soviet military agents formed a network not only in the city of Turkey and the Caucasus but also in

[67] Jimmy E. Cain, 'Dracula: Righting Old Wrongs and Displacing New Fears,' Bram *Stoker and Russophobia: Evidence of the British Fear of Russia in Dracula and The Lady of the Shroud* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 2006), 119.

[68] Cain, 134-135.

[69] It is important to note that Romania sided with the Russians in the Russo-Turkish Wars and thus, the arrival of the Romanian Count Dracula in a Russian vessel is also a subtle indication of this alliance.

the cities of Constantinople and Izmit, controlled by Allied powers, in order to gain information about the Kemalists.[70] However, the Bolsheviks also supplied military equipment and money to help the Turkish nationalists in fighting off the British Allied powers in the Near East.[71] The arrival of Dracula in a Russian vessel in a Turkish novel which repeatedly mentions the War of Independence thus assumes a different meaning. Unlike Stoker's *Dracula*, where the Demeter is an obvious symbol of an invasive enemy, the Russian ship in Seyfioğlu's novel is the symbol of a problematic and dubious ally. The flag which is there on the ship is that of the new Bolshevik Soviet government.[72] That Dracula arrives in the vessel of this temporary ally of Turkey becomes a commentary on the deceptiveness of the vampire. When Guzin approaches this Russian ship, she is filled both with curiosity and a sense of apprehension. It is exactly this sense of inquisitiveness and uneasiness which characterised the relation of Bolshevik Russia and Turkey in the post-War period. This is because, although the Bolsheviks had supplied arms and military support to Turkey, the people of Turkey were well-aware that the political alliance between the two countries was an unstable one. K Coş cites two significant events which hint at the possible conflict brewing between Turkey and the Soviets even during the period of their alliance. The first is the Friendship Treaty of 1920-21 when the USSR suggested that Turkey should relinquish certain eastern provinces to the Republic of Armenia, which was formerly under the Russian Empire.[73] The second is the Treaty of 1925 when USSR tried to limit the control of Turkey over the Straits, which formed an important, international passageway for ships.[74] Both incidents — which take place shortly before the novel was published — show how

[70] Bülent Gökay, 'The Turkish Independence War and Bolshevik Russia: Some New Aspects in the Light of Soviet Documents,' *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin* 18, no. 2 (Fall 1994): 45-46, https://www.jstor.org/stable/43384472. Accessed on 10th May 2023.

[71] Gökay, 50.

[72] Seyfioğlu, 56.

[73] Kivanç Coş and Pinar Bilgin, 'Stalin's Demands: Constructions of the 'Soviet Other' in Turkey's Foreign Policy, 1919–1945,' *Foreign Policy Analysis* 6, no. 1 (January 2010): 49- 50, https://www.jstor.org/stable/24909877. Accessed on 19th August 2023.

[74] Kivanç Coş and Pinar Bilgin, 51.

Russia, even when acting as an ally of Turkey, was gradually trying to pursue its policy of territorial expansion and control. Dracula likewise, by coming to Istanbul and drinking Turkish blood, plans to infiltrate the land of Istanbul and spread his dominance across the land. Azmi, Dr Resuhi, and others therefore constantly present the task of defeating Dracula as an act of defending their nation. The arrival of Dracula in a ship with a Bolshevik flag becomes a commentary on the problematic nature of Turkey's new ally. The horror of Dracula thus becomes a tool at the hands of Seyfioğlu, in this particular scene, to forewarn the Turkish people about the possible dangers of the Russian alliance. The treaty of 1921 and 1925 had already shown the USSR as a latent threat, which would finally manifest itself during World War II. Seyfioğlu's novel, by associating the vampire with the ship with the Bolshevik flag, indirectly acts as a cautionary tale for the same. Interestingly however, in the film version of *Dracula in Istanbul*, which came out in 1953, this detail of the Bolshevik flag on the ship is completely omitted.[75] We just come to know that someone has sent crates of soil from Romania by ship and that the crew is dead. There is no mention of the ship being Russian or of the Bolshevik flag. Although there is no sure way to know why this detail was removed in the film version, we might postulate that the warning which the figure of Dracula had helped to convey was no longer necessary at the time when the film was released. This is because not only had Turkey joined the NATO in 1952, thus ensuring its safety from the Russian threat of expansionism, but after World War II Russia had openly put pressure on Turkey in matters of territorial control. The façade of 'friendship' which had necessitated the subtle use of Dracula as a warning for Russian expansionism was no longer existent. In *Dracula in Istanbul*, therefore, it is not just the socio-political conflicts of Turkey which determine the nature of the monster but the figure of the monster is used to determine the perception of the socio-political events during the time in which the narrative is set. This is because, writing at a time when Russo-Turkish relations were going through a phase of change and instability, Seyfioğlu uses the vampire to comment on the possibly dangerous outcome of such an alliance.

[75] Mehmet Muhtar, dir., *Drakula İstanbul'da* (*Dracula in Istanbul)* (Turkey: And Films, 1953).

The effect of Kemalism on *Dracula in Istanbul* can also be seen in the way religious symbols are used in the novel. Although Azmi is reluctant to take the crucifix from the old woman, he finally accepts it from her.[76] Moreover, his reluctance to accept the crucifix, as Azmi himself says, does not just stem from the fact that he is a Muslim but because it would be embarrassing for a rational man to do so.[77] The crucifix, and the *Enâm-ı Şerif*, which Azmi's mother had hung round his neck are, however, not seen as contradictory symbols of faith. On two occasions, in fact, the crucifix reminds Azmi about the Islamic amulet of protection. When the woman hangs the crucifix around his neck, he says that he is reminded of the *Enâm*.[78] On the second occasion, when Azmi realises that the Count has trapped him in his castle, he says that the crucifix reminded him of the *Enâm* round his neck.[79] The Christian and the Islamic symbols of faith are treated as equivalents. This is indicative of the secularist policies adopted by the Kemalist government as part of its reformative politics. In the early republican years, the Kemalists tried to modernise Turkey by abolishing the Caliphate in 1924, and putting Orthodox Islam under direct state control.[80] The new republic thus undertook a series of measures that would reduce the influence of Islam on education, law, and public administration, making religion only a part of people's private lives and not a part of public show.[81] This process of secularisation and modernisation which Turkey went through during the first half of the twentieth century is evident in the figure of Azmi, for whom both the crucifix and the *Enâm* serve as markers of faith that protect him from the evil powers of Dracula. The Republicans believed that the involvement of religion in all matters of state had prevented the progress and modernisation of

[76] Seyfioğlu, 10-11.

[77] Seyfioğlu, 10.

[78] Seyfioğlu, 10-11.

[79] Seyfioğlu, 33.

[80] Binnaz Toprak, 'Secularism and Islam: The Building of Modern Turkey,' *Macalester International* 15, Article 9 (Winter 2005): 31, https://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/macintl/vol15/iss1/9. Accessed on 24th October 2023.

[81] Toprak, 30-32.

Turkey. This idea of religion as an impediment to progress is evident in a key passage in Seyfioğlu's novel. In Stoker's *Dracula* Van Helsing says that some of the advancements which were being made in the field of electrical science would have been 'deemed unholy' by the very men who had discovered electricity, who themselves, in earlier days, 'would have been burned as wizards.'[82] Van Helsing makes no reference to any religion in his speech whatsoever. In Seyfioğlu's novel however, Doctor Resuhi says that if some of the achievements which made in their time would have been accomplished a hundred years earlier, 'the Christians would have burned them at the stake and called them sorcerers, while we Muslims would have crowned them and called them prophets or saints.'[83] But although Resuhi's speech hints at an underlying tone of criticism against the scientific ignorance of Christian and Islamic religion, there is also an overt use of the verses of Quran, which are typewritten on pages and kept in the boxes of Dracula to prevent him from entering it.[84] Verses from the Quran are also written by Doctor Resuhi and placed in Sadan's grave to prevent her re-entry;[85] he gives a small Quran to Doctor Afif Bey, before they undertake the difficult task of finishing off Dracula once and for all. But before he hands it over to him, he asks Doctor Afif not to laugh at him.[86] There is thus a dual sentiment working here — on the one hand, there is the aspect of faith in the Islamic culture, which forms a part of the nation's religious past; on the other hand, there is the new found notion of progress and modernity, which causes him to suspect that the act of fighting Dracula with the Quran may be laughable. This duality defines the canon of Turkish novels written during the early nineteenth century, which Jale Parla argues, was meant to ensure the safe passage of Turkey from a traditional, Muslim, eastern community to a modern, westernised society, so that there was a

[82] Stoker, 171.

[83] Seyfioğlu, 101.

[84] Seyfioğlu, 137.

[85] Seyfioğlu, 113.

[86] Seyfioğlu, 134.

successful transition from the empire to the nation-state.[87] It is important to note that the conflict between tradition and modernity had formed a central aspect of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* also. Ahmet Süner, for example, talks about the bifurcated representation of time in Stoker's *Dracula* wherein the ordered, methodical time of western modernity and nationhood are opposed to the chaotic, mythic time of Dracula and Transylvania belonging to the prehistory of modernity.[88] However, when Harker says that 'the further east you go the more unpunctual are the trains',[89] or when he talks about leaving the West and entering 'the *traditions* of Turkish rule'[90] (my italics) he subsumes Turkey under the same rubric of primitive, mythic time (or the period before modernity referred to Süner as 'prehistory of modernity') as that of Transylvania and Dracula's castle. In Stoker's Dracula therefore, the opposition is between London — which is seen as an intrinsic part of western modernity — and the East (including Turkey), which is seen as part of a traditional, ancient past. In *Dracula in Istanbul*, however, this opposition is not clearly defined as Turkey itself was going through the process of modernisation and westernisation at the time the novel was written. The Turkey of *Dracula in Istanbul* is situated somewhere between the western time of modernity and the primitive time of Dracula's castle. Dracula's arrival in Stoker's novel disrupts the western time of modernity, which the Crew of Light defend and restore using instruments of modern technology like the phonograph, the typewriter, and the telegraph to fight the vampire. Dracula's arrival in Seyfioğlu's novel, on the other hand, becomes a part of Turkey's nation-building process by initiating discussions about the balance between the traditions of the country's religious past and the modern notions of progress and development. The arrival of Dracula in Istanbul has led Doctor Resuhi and others to question the

[87] Jale Parla, 28.

[88] Ahmet Süner, 'The Representation of Time, Modernity and Its Prehistory in *Dracula*,' *Studia Neophilologica* (Published online 12 Feb 2018): 1-2, DOI: 10.1080/00393274.2018.1434421. Accessed on 5th January 2023.

[89] Stoker, 11.

[90] Stoker, 9.

fundamental structures of religion and nationhood that determined the way modern Turkey was being formed in the early twentieth century.

The situation of the vampire at the cusp of the birth of modern Turkey is also significant because of the way the novel unites the modern present with the prehistory of modernity. In Stoker's *Dracula*, as we have seen, the primitive past of Transylvania returns in a Gothicised manner, and tries to devour western modernity. The Crew of Light succeed in killing the vampire and separating this primitive past from the progressive modernity of London. *Dracula in Istanbul*, however, does not separate the past and present into two mutually-exclusive halves but rather unites them in a harmonious manner. On the one hand, we have Azmi's contemporary narrative, wherein he is trapped by the vampiric Count, who infiltrates Istanbul and preys on Sadan and other inhabitants of the country. But on the other hand, there is also the historical narrative of Voivode Dracula and the political conflict between the Ottoman Turks and the Romanians. Seyfioğlu cleverly joins the two strands of narrative, belonging to two different timelines, to create the image of modern Turkey. When Azmi first comes to Transylvania, he recalls Guzin telling him about Voivode Dracula and the 'bloody, horrible, blood-curdling acts' that he had committed during Mehmed II's reign.[91] Similarly, when the landlord and his wife cross themselves on hearing the name of Count Dracula, Azmi says that Guzin would have been immediately reminded of the 'unmatched barbarian' Voivode Dracula who had impaled the Turks along the Danube River.[92] Even before Azmi has met the Count, therefore, his image of him is mediated by the historic memory of Voivode Dracula. The hate, anger, and disgust he feels on remembering the historic Dracula thus influences the way he perceives the Count when he meets him. For example, in Stoker's *Dracula* Harker describes the mouth of Dracula as 'fixed and rather cruel-looking;' [93] Seyfioğlu's Harker figure, Azmi, on the other hand, detects in them a

[91] Seyfioğlu, 6.

[92] Seyfioğlu, 9.

[93] Stoker, 23.

'merciless determination.'[94] This 'merciless determination' as Azmi describes here, will later be fully explored by Resuhi Bey, when he talks about how Voivode Dracula had crossed the Danube River and fought against the Turkish army. While describing his acts of cruelty however, Doctor Resuhi calls him a 'stubborn and daring warrior.'[95] Resuhi's comment shows that while Dracula's cruelty poses a significant threat to them, his skills as a warrior incite a feeling of adulation about his military prowess. It is this political and military determination — although a cruel one — which Resuhi talks about, and which Azmi catches a hint of when he meets the Count. The collective, historical memory of Azmi as a Turkish individual thus guides his perception of Dracula in the first part. Even before the Count has attacked Azmi or the people in Istanbul, there is a latent sense of enmity and hate, stemming from this historic conflict between the Ottoman Turks and Romania. The repeated reference to Voivode Dracula while coming to Dracula's castle and the description of the 'merciless determination' of the Count's face shows that Azmi has already started to see the Count as a monster, without knowing that he is a vampire. The horror of the historic cruelties committed by the Voivode according to the novel thus precedes and supplants the supernatural horror of the vampire.

Although the change of Dracula's target city from London to Istanbul may seem to be a mere change in the geographical setting, it has widespread ramifications regarding the political perspective of the characters in the novel, which in turn affects the way the horror is perceived in the text. In Stoker's novel when Dracula recounts the history of the Szekely race and the relations they shared with the Turks, Jonathan Harker, as a white, western man becomes a mere spectator to the political drama of the East. On a 'modern' man of the West, Dracula's reminiscence of Eastern history fails to make any impression, except perhaps making him suspicious about the Count's eccentricity. Although he finds the history 'fascinating,' [96] it does not have much effect on the way he perceives the Count. And since as readers we see the narrative from Harker's perspective in the first section of

[94] Seyfioğlu, 24.

[95] Seyfioğlu, 127.

[96] Stoker, 33.

the novel, we tend to overlook this detail too. Moreover, once Harker leaves the castle, the narrative hardly circles back to the lengthy historical rant of the Count about the political injustices of the past. In *Dracula in Istanbul* however, Azmi, as a Turkish man, is not a mere spectator to the political drama of the East. Even before Dracula has begun to speak about the relations between the Szekelys and the Turks, the readers realise that the present encounter of Azmi with the Count forms a part of a long-standing political narrative involving the two nationalities that is rife with stories of violence, rivalry, and enmity. This is because, as the Count is about to begin his rant, Azmi says that he is shocked to realise that he is under the same roof where the Impaler Voivode, who had tortured and killed innocent Turkish woman and children, used to live. Azmi begins to visualise the present setting in the context of the past, thinking to himself that perhaps 'he threw the last of his Turkish captives into that dark, desolate courtyard — or even tortured them to death right outside this room!'[97] To Azmi (and through his perspective to the readers) Dracula's castle is not just the lair of a vampire where he is tortured and imprisoned, but an extension of the past where unresolved political rivalries are still festering. Harker had seemed to be confused that the Count spoke of the past 'as if he had been present at them all;'[98] the importance of the family history and lineage had to be *explained* to him by the Count because to him this history held no relevance. But Azmi understands Dracula better than Harker and relates to the passion with which he recounts the history of the two nationalities. Although they stand on the opposite sides of the boundary, both Dracula and Azmi share this deep sense of ethnic pride and strong attachment to their national past. If Dracula visualises the past as if he had been present there, so does Azmi, when he imagines the possible horrors inflicted by the Count on the Turks, or when Doctor Resuhi Bey passionately talks about the brutal tortures which the Turkish ambassadors had to endure, having their turbans nailed to their heads .[99] Therefore, while Stoker's Dracula had been a mysterious monster with an incomprehensible pride in his history and lineage, Seyfioğlu's

[97] Seyfioğlu, 34.

[98] Stoker, 33.

[99] Seyfioğlu, 131.

Dracula has clearer motives behind his action, and his past is more clearly charted. Although the political history makes him more human, in the sense that he turns out to be a mortal king turned into a vampire, it also makes his threat more dangerous. This is because, unlike Stoker's Dracula affecting chiefly the spiritual afterlives of his victims, Seyfioğlu's Dracula poses a threat to the civic and political order of Istanbul. If Dracula continues to victimise the Turkish populace, he will not only condemn them to their spiritual damnation but will destroy Istanbul's nationality and culture by assimilating them under his 'reign.' On the other hand, if Azmi and the other veterans of the Turkish War of Independence defeat Dracula, they will not only put an end to the supernatural threat but finally take revenge for the historical injustice against the Turks committed by the Voivode. However, as Tuğçe Bıçakçı Syed observes, for Dracula it is the Ottoman Empire who had acted as the imperialist power in the East keeping countries like Transylvania under its dominion; he thus sees the Turks as the imperial enemy of the East.[100] According to Syed therefore, in Seyfioğlu's novel, Dracula and the Turks repeatedly switch roles, each acting as the coloniser and the colonised at the same time, and sharing guilt and fear.[101] It is interesting to note how the same incident of the fight across the Danube River, which the Count describes as a brave attempt by Dracula to defeat the Turkish enemies,[102] becomes in Doctor Resuhi Bey's version, a brutal attack by the 'monster Dracula' on the Turkish army, during which he captured and impaled Turks.[103] Similarly, Dracula describes the act of his brother Radu siding with the Ottomans as an act of treachery because of which '*my* [my emphasis] people bore the yoke of enslavement under the Turkish sword.'[104] Doctor Resuhi, describing the same event, not only speaks approvingly of the loyalty of Radu to Mehmed II but also says that when

[100] Tuğçe Bıçakçı Syed, 'The Origins of Turkish Gothic: The Adaptations of Stoker's Dracula in Turkish Literature and Film,' 61.

[101] Syed, 61.

[102] Stoker, 35.

[103] Seyfioğlu, 127.

[104] Seyfioğlu, 35.

Mehmed II came to power '*his* [Dracula's] *own* [my emphasis] Christian population' complained about Dracula's tyranny.[105] Every narrative of Dracula, therefore, has a historical counter-narrative in Doctor Resuhi's voice. To Dracula, the Turks are an imperialist force trying to assimilate the people of his nation under their reign. If Dracula is guilty of coming to Istanbul, sucking Turkish blood, and making them *his own*, then from Dracula's perspective, the Ottoman Empire too was guilty of colonising his people, and thus metaphorically draining their life force. Doctor Resuhi's counter-narrative, however, tries to negate Dracula's recollection of history by claiming that the people of Wallachia resented Dracula's authority too. The construction of vampirism and monstrosity in *Dracula in Istanbul* is thus dependent on the way national narratives are created and disseminated by the characters in the novel. The ultimate victory of Azmi, Resuhi Bey, and the others depends not only on the way they physically kill the vampire but also in the way they establish their version of history as authentic, factual, and believable, and disprove Dracula's narrative of history as spurious, misguided, and unbelievable.[106] This is because, as readers, it is Doctor Resuhi Bey's narrative of Dracula's victimisation of the Turks that we believe in, rather than Dracula's account of how his people had to suffer under the Ottoman regime. Horror therefore plays a very different role in Seyfioğlu's *Dracula* from that in Stoker's novel. This is because in Stoker's *Dracula* horror is merely an affective response to the act of vampirism, but in Seyfioğlu's novel it is a political tool designed to establish the monstrosity of Voivode Dracula. While Van Helsing focuses on the attributes of vampirism only, giving a subtle nod to the possible historical ruler associated with the name Dracula, Doctor Resuhi's entire speech is focused mostly on the gory acts of bloodshed committed by Voivode Dracula in the past. The story of the Voivode impaling his enemies, and nailing the turbans of the Turkish ambassadors on their head, are all deliberately designed to generate a sense of horror in Azmi,

[105] Seyfioğlu, 127.

[106] Doctor Resuhi's version of history, linking Dracula to Voivode Dracula is itself flawed given that it is based on the previously-held notion that Stoker's Dracula was based on Vlad Tepes — a notion which has been disproved by critics like Elizabeth Miller. However, the appearance of the link between Vlad Tepes and Stoker's Dracula in *Dracula in Istanbul*, published in 1928, shows that the idea was circulating in popular imagination before Radu Florescu and Raymond T. McNally's scholarly discussion of the same idea appeared in the book *In Search of Dracula* in 1972.

Afif Bey, and Guzin so that Dracula is framed as a nationalistic, anti-Turkish villain, and not just as a bloodsucking monster. Soon after the Doctor finishes his speech Guzin says 'At these words, which sent a *thrill* [my italics] through us, Doctor Resuhi Bey suddenly stopped. There were beads of sweat at his temples.'[107] This emotion of thrill and horror is the affective response that Resuhi has purposefully created; it is also the emotion which has caused him to sweat and thus pumped him up for the task of killing Dracula. Horror in *Dracula in Istanbul*, therefore, is not just a literary device but a political one which forms a part of the narrative and is used to frame the enemy as a national threat.

Concluding Comments

Both *Powers of Darkness* and *Dracula in Istanbul*, therefore, show how the act of translating the emotion of horror from one culture to the other does not always mean a literal shifting of geographical locations or change of language. While translating the elements of horror, the same scene, character, or motif may begin to carry different historical and political meanings, thus changing the way the readers perceive the monster. In both the Swedish version and the Turkish version of *Dracula*, horror is not just the end result of the narrative, rather it is a medium through which the complex global relations between empires and nations are understood. Therefore, these translations are more than inauthentic, bootleg versions of Stoker's novel that they were earlier believed to be. Through the act of translation, they have acquired meanings which expand and enhance the global relevance of the myth of Dracula.

[107] Seyfioğlu, 132.

Chapter 4: *Dracula* and the Role of the Popular Imagination in the Translation of Horror

Although *Dracula* was not originally published in the serialised format of pulp fiction, it contained many thematic resonances with the penny dreadful stories that became popular in the nineteenth century. The use of sensationalism, gore, and the Gothic mode in *Dracula* bears a striking similarity to the penny dreadfuls of the Victorian era. Moreover, Stoker's Count Dracula also owes its characterisation at least partly to that of the titular figure in *Varney the Vampire*, which was a penny dreadful published in parts from 1845-47.[1] Although Stoker's tale is much more layered than the penny dreadfuls published during the time, the thematic similarities between them invited a lot of criticism when it was first published. In a review published in Manchester Guardian on 15th June 1897, it has been considered 'an artistic mistake to fill a whole volume with horrors. A touch of the mysterious, the terrible, or the supernatural is infinitely more effective and credible.'[2] Similarly, Roger Luckhurst observes how *Dracula* was looked down upon as a 'nasty shilling shocker' when it was first published because of the use of blood and gore in the story. [3] Over the years, Stoker's novel has received canonical status in the field of Gothic fiction and Victorian literature, with the publication of a range of critical studies on the novel and its historical context. The canonical status of *Dracula* as a seminal text of Victorian Gothic literature and horror fiction has also led to an increasing number of popular adaptations and appropriations of Stoker's text in different languages. In this chapter, I will be looking at some of the popular Indian appropriations of *Dracula* and study the effects

[1] James Malcolm Rhymer, *Varney the Vampire, or, The Feast of Blood*, Volume 3, 1845, reprint, edited by Devendra P. Varma (Arno Press: 1970).

[2] 'Bram Stoker's Dracula: A Review from 1897,' *Manchester Guardian*, June 15, 1897, https://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/from-the-archive-blog/2012/apr/20/bram-stoker-centenary-dracula-review. Accessed on 2nd December 2023.

[3] Roger Luckhurst, *Fifteen Eighty-Four: Academic Perspectives from Cambridge University*, December 6, 2017, Presshttps://www.cambridgeblog.org/2017/12/let-the-companion-to-dracula-in/. Accessed on 5th December 2023.

which the appropriation into the popular format has on the construction of horror in the text. In order to study the popular appropriations of *Dracula* it is necessary to devise a methodology that combines the structural necessities of the popular format with the cultural changes that accompany such translations of horror texts. I have therefore initially used a formalistic approach, breaking down Stoker's novel into fundamental structural units. My research then goes on to study how the appropriations use these structural units in varying combinations to create specific affective states of fear in the readers.

Dracula in Popular Bengali Horror Fiction

The appropriation of *Dracula* in the popular format necessitates two important structural changes. The first one is that of length. Stoker's *Dracula* tells the story of the Count and the victims of vampirism over the course of twenty-seven chapters. This leaves a lot of narrative space to develop the story both of Harker and the other characters and not just of the vampire figure. When adapted in the format of contemporary popular literature, the length of the text has to be significantly reduced to a few pages. Although this technical change may seem to be obvious and unimportant, it is essential to my central research question of how the appropriations of *Dracula* in different linguistic media maintain the horror quotient across the cultural divide. This is because, when the text is transferred to the popular format with a much shorter page count, the authors use only those portions of the novel which they believe is crucial to recreating the horror of the original novel. By studying the parts which are adapted and the parts which are omitted will help us understand which aspects of *Dracula* are perceived to be the core element of horror across cultures. Although the popular appropriations of *Dracula* do away with many sections of Stoker's novel which appear to be secondary to the construction of horror, it is necessary to read these texts against the deleted portions. This is because in any reading of these popular appropriations of *Dracula*, Stoker's text constantly asserts its narrative presence in the background even when a scene is removed. Therefore, the portions of Stoker's

novel which are deleted form what I would like to call a 'phantom text.' Despite being absent from the appropriations, they influence the way we read these texts. It is therefore important to understand the main narrative elements of Stoker's novel before we study how the element of horror is adapted in the popular media. One of the reasons why a study of the 'phantom text' is important is that it highlights a key change in the way the mechanism of horror operates in *Dracula*.

In Stoker's novel, as in most works of horror literature, shock plays a key affective role in creating the sensation of horror. Harker's sudden realisation that the Count is in reality a bloodthirsty monster, or the shock of Dr Seward and others on learning that Lucy is being drained of blood by a vampire, contributes to the sensation of horror in the readers. Tzvetan Todorov, in his analysis of the fantastic, had emphasised the importance of a sense of hesitation between the natural and the supernatural explanations of the events in the text that both the characters and the readers feel.[4] Thus, The discovery that the events of the text have a supernatural cause may shock the readers. While Todorov's idea of hesitation has been used by horror critics like Noel Carroll, it has also been challenged and expanded upon.[5] Matt Hills, for example, while establishing the importance of the affective disposition of the reader/audience in the framing of horror argues that 'shock and disorientation' can be produced in both the audience and the readers when there is a complete shift in the accepted narrative reality in the text.[6] Hills's theorisation of the use of shock in horror literature is useful in understanding scenes like Dr Seward's sudden realisation that Lucy is in fact the 'Bloofer lady' who is victimising the children in the neighbourhood – though the verbal assertion of that fact is made

[4] Tzvetan Todorov, *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1975), 25.

[5] Noel Carroll, *The Philosophy of Horror Or, Paradoxes of the Heart* (1990; reprint, London: Routledge, 2003), 97.

[6] Matt Hills, *The Pleasures of Horror* (London: Bloomsbury, 2005), 41.

in his presence by Van Helsing.[7] While this element of suddenness plays an important part in an affective theorisation of horror, in this chapter I will study how these popular appropriations of *Dracula* work on the emotion of recognition rather than shock. This is because, although in most of these appropriations the names of the characters are changed, or new characters added, the readers are already waiting to typecast them into a Dracula figure, a Van Helsing figure, or a Harker figure. This desire of the readers to map the characters and the action of the appropriations against Stoker's novel reiterates the importance of the 'phantom text.' While reading the appropriation, the reader constantly feels the narrative presence of the portions of Stoker's novel that have been deleted; this presence influences his reading of the text. Therefore, more than the affective state of shock, the reader enjoys this sense of recognition on seeing a specific action from Stoker's novel being adapted into a different geographical or cultural context. This sense of recognition does not dilute the experience of horror but rather intensifies it, creating a sense of anticipation around when the vampire will strike, or when the Harker-figure will be trapped in the castle.

This change in the nature of horror in the popular appropriations will be studied by breaking down the narrative structure of *Dracula* into its most fundamental units. I will then analyse the method in which these appropriations selectively combine and use certain structural elements to create new narrative outcomes, altering the horror-mood of the text. The structure of Stoker's *Dracula* can be divided into six narrative units which can be classified under two broad groups. The first group deals with the monster's narrative which comprises those sections which focus on Dracula's monstrosity and his victimisation of the protagonist and other characters. There are three parts of the action which constitute the monster's narrative. The first is that of entrapment, wherein the protagonist comes to Dracula's lair and is physically trapped by the vampire. The entire section of entrapment has a claustrophobic atmosphere, with Harker

[7] Stoker, 171-173.

trying to search desperately for an escape or an opening, and failing to do so. Although Count Dracula does not succeed in drinking Harker's blood, the horror in the first section of Stoker's novel — as in the appropriations dealing with this trope of entrapment — stems from this sense of being trapped in with the monster. The second part deals with Dracula's journey from Transylvania to London, which marks the beginning of the vampire's victimisation of people outside his own country. The movement of the monster outside his lair is also significant because it implies that the horror is no longer restricted within the boundaries of Dracula's castle or to Transylvania. The movement of the monster's body across geographical and national boundaries leads to the infringement of the cultural divide between the East and the West by the former in Stoker's novel. This breach of cultural boundaries has been adapted in several of the Bengali popular works of fiction to be studied, although in a different geographical or political context. The final part of the monster's narrative deals with the spread of vampirism, wherein Dracula starts to infect more people of the land he has travelled to, thereby making them similar to his own self. The narrative of 'the spread' is important because it marks the ultimate ploy of Dracula to usurp both the body and the sense of selfhood of the people he preys upon. The spread thus completes the intrusion of the monster into the space of 'civilisation' and the threat of a complete breakdown of the social and moral fabric of the country he has moved to.[8]

The second group of *Dracula's* narrative-structure deals with the heroes' narrative which again comprises three sections, each dealing with the protagonists' actions against the monster. Each of the monster's actions is challenged by the action of the heroes which helps to counteract the attack of the vampire. However, the heroes' actions complement the action of the monster by mirroring its tropes and narrative devices. The first section of the heroes'

[8] Bram Stoker and A-e, *Powers of Darkness*, 469. In *Powers of Darkness* the arrival of Draculitz leads to an increase in crimes and a general state of lawlessness in the country. Dr Seward, picking up a newspaper on his way home, comments that the 'telegram section of the newspaper reports much strange news: lunatic scenes and riots…general insecurity of life and property…You would think this is the middle of the Dark Ages!'

narrative deals with the night-watch wherein the protagonist or a group of characters wait through the night to discover the reason behind the uncanny activities taking place in the novel. It is after the night-watch that Harker sees the Count climbing down the walls of the castle and realises that the latter is far from being human.[9] Similarly, in Hillingham — where Lucy spends her days during her sickness — the night-watch helps Dr Seward and the others to discover the reason behind Lucy's failing health. The scene of the night-watch, where Dr Seward and others guard Lucy while she is sleeping, marks the beginning of the heroes' fight against the monster. But it is also the narrative point where the vampire is more powerful because the heroes are unaware of his powers, and inadequately equipped to fight off the attack. Just like Harker had tried to attack the Count when he was asleep in his coffin in the castle, Dracula attacks Lucy in her sleep, when she is completely defenceless.[10] Dracula's actions will once again be mirrored by the heroes when they try to kill him off before sunset, while he is still in the coffin in a vulnerable state. The second section of the heroes' narrative is the chase, which deals with the protagonist and his crew going after Dracula to defeat him once and for all. The chase may either result in the heroes following Dracula out of London and into Transylvania, or may take place within the city that Dracula has invaded. The trope of the heroes chasing Dracula out of the city mirrors the journey of Dracula into the city thus pushing the story towards resolution. Unlike the night-watch, where the monster is still powerful, at this point in the narrative the power of the heroes and the power of the monster are balanced against each other. The centre of power finally shifts in the third section which involves the defeat of the monster by the heroes. In the third section of the heroes' narrative, Dracula is at his weakest and most vulnerable, which the protagonists take advantage of. The horror in Stoker's novel and in the

[9] Stoker, 39.

[10] Dracula, however, was not completely defenceless but only in a state of 'sleep' since it was the time of morning when Harker attacked him. But just like Lucy has no power to retaliate against the Count's actions so also Count Dracula does not have adequate power to stop Harker from attacking him in the morning.

appropriations is a result of the way in which the heroes' narrative and the monster's narrative interact with each other through the story.

The division of Stoker's text into this structure of the monster's narrative and the heroes' narrative counterpoised and pitted against each other can also be justified using Stoker's notes for the novel. According to Stoker's planned structure of *Dracula* it was supposed to consist of four books titled 'Transylvania to London,' 'Tragedy,' 'Discovery,' 'Punishment.'[11] The first two books clearly consist of the monster's narrative where all power is concentrated in Dracula's hands. The last two books are clearly the heroes' narrative dealing with the way in which they track the source of the vampiric attacks and finally defeat Dracula. The ending of the heroes' narrative with 'Punishment' also shows that Stoker framed the story of Dracula as a moral narrative where the monster is punished for its evil actions, thus restoring ethical balance in the text. This is also highlighted by the fact that under the notes for this section, Stoker mentions the formation of a 'vigilante committee' referring to the Crew of Light.[12] The reference to the actions of the Crew of Light as vigilantism implies that they are protectors of the city who carry out the task of defending the city from external attacks based on their own ethical judgements.[13] However, as we will see in many of the appropriations, there is a lack of any such moral resolution culminating in the defeat of the monster. In Stoker's novel, although no backstory is provided for the way Count Dracula turned into a vampire, his actions are always judged along an ethical scale. But in many of the popular appropriations,

[11] Robert Eighteen-Bisang, and Elizabeth Miller, annotated and transcribed. *Bram Stoker's Notes for Dracula* (London: McFarland & Company, 2008), 29-31.

[12] Robert Eighteen-Bisang, and Elizabeth Miller, 31.

[13] The idea of the vampire hunters as vigilantes is also found in Elizabeth Kostova's *The Historian* where one of the vampire hunters, Professor Turgot Bora from Istanbul University, is later revealed to be a part of a secret organisation formed by Sultan Mehmed II to fight the Order of the Dragon. This organisation called Crescent Guard is responsible for tracing any members of the Order of the Dragon and killing them. The vampire hunters as vigilantes reinforce the idea of Dracula as a threat to the state and the social law, rather than a supernatural threat only, that must be exterminated to restore order in the country.

vampirism is evaluated beyond the ethics of good and bad by making the characters unwilling participants in the act of blood-drinking. In 'Mrityuheen' ('Undead') by Debajyoti Bhattacharya for example, Dracula does not become a vampire because of his evil actions but because he is infected by another vampire, and thus forced to bear the curse of bloodlust.[14] At the end of the story, we find that, as a result of fighting against Dracula, the vampiric entity has now taken hold of Harker's body. Similarly, in 'Kuashar Rong Laal' ('The Fog's Colour is Red') by Shouvik Chakraborty, Dr Seward has unknowingly turned into a vampire, and continues to drink the blood of his victims while believing that there is another vampire on the prowl which he tries to hunt down.[15] Dracula, Harker, and Dr Seward in these popular appropriations, therefore, are not framed within the structures of morality and ethics. Rather, their vampirism is shown to be compulsive, in which they have no will or choice. This duplication of evil in many of the popular appropriations does not follow any logic of good and bad but is shown to spread from one victim to the other. It is this evaluation of vampirism beyond the rules of ethics that leads to an absence of moral resolution in many of these texts. Without the structures of good and evil, the horror becomes even more intensified as it exists solely for its own sake without any reason or logic or overarching ethical structure. Despite being based on Stoker's novel, the absence of the resolution in many of the popular appropriations therefore changes the structure of the horror that the text of *Dracula* was based on.

The way the popular appropriations selectively use certain narrative points from Stoker's novel thus influences the nature of the horror produced in the text. At each point in the story, the monster's narrative and the heroes' narrative interact in a specific manner to create a different affective state in the reader. My chapter will focus on the way the popular

[14] Debajyoti Bhattacharya, 'Mrityuheen' ('Undead') in *Kishore Bharati* 54, no. 10 (July 5, 2022): 38-42.

[15] Shouvik Chakraborty, 'Kuashar Rong Laal' ('The Fog's Colour is Red') in *Kishore Bharati* 54, no. 10 (July 5, 2022): 59-61.

appropriations utilise this affective dimension of horror by playing with the fundamental structural elements of Stoker's narrative as outlined in the previous paragraphs. A tabular depiction of the way the heroes' narrative and the monster's narrative combine to produce specific horror tropes has been presented below. First, I will define and explain the different combinations in which the action of the hero(es) and the action of the monster can be used in the appropriations. I will then use selected texts to demonstrate how the combination used in such particular appropriations changes the nature of horror from the way it was presented in Stoker's *Dracula*.

	The Night-watch	**The Chase**	**Defeat of the Monster**
Entrapment	Abandonment	Release	Reclamation
The Journey	Anticipation	Invasion/Evasion	Restoration of Boundaries
The Spread	Confirmation of Vampirism	Submission of Selfhood	Containment

Table 4.1: Combination of the Heroes' Narrative and Monster's Narrative

The first narrative combination is seen in texts which feature the scene of entrapment by Dracula, followed only by the night-watch. In Stoker's novel, the first section of Harker's entrapment by Dracula is crucial because it builds the sort of trauma and anger in Harker that draws the readers into the world of the novel. In fact, the first four chapters of the novel form a 'miniature pastiche-Gothic novel' with Dracula's castle and his speeches on his ancestors

providing the sort of medieval setting common to the Gothic Mode.[16] However, while in Stoker's *Dracula*, the Gothic, medieval setting is soon contrasted with the contemporary world of London, providing a relief to from the claustrophobic atmosphere of the castle, in many of the appropriations the action is restricted to the scene of entrapment and the night-watch. The primary emotion on which the horror is based in such texts is that of abandonment. This is because, when the protagonist investigates his state as a prisoner within Dracula's castle, not only is there a sense of isolation but also a total surrender of one's self to the power of the vampire.[17] In the absence of the later sections present in Stoker's text where other characters chase Dracula and defeat him at the end, there is no resolution or victory over the monster in such appropriations. The loss of control which the protagonist experiences within Dracula's castle is not alleviated in them. This leads to the creation of a brand of horror totally different from that in Stoker's novel where there is a clear resolution.

In 'Roktochoshar Hahakar' ('The Blood-drinker's Howl') by Prithviraj Sen, for example, Deepnarayan, a chartered accountant from Kolkata, travels to Darjeeling to sort out the finances of the tea estate owned by a person called Subbaji.[18] As it soon turns out, Subbaji is a vampire who lures chartered accountants into his estate under the pretext of work, and then preys on them, drinking their blood till they die. Unlike Harker, Deepnarayan never escapes

[16] David Seed, 'The Narrative Method of Dracula,' *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 40, no. 1 (Jun., 1985): 69. https://doi.org/10.2307/3044836. Accessed on 17th November 2023.

[17] William E. Chambers, *Chambers's Etymological Dictionary of the English Language* (United Kingdom: W. and R. Chambers, 1867), 1. The etymological meaning of 'abandonment' is particularly useful in this context. *The Chambers Etymological Dictionary of the English Language* states that originally the word 'to abandon' meant 'to place at the absolute *command* [*sic*] of a person — hence to renounce all claim to the thing so placed.' In the absence of any help from outside, the protagonist is forced to surrender control of his life to Dracula. The use of the word 'command' in the given definition is also significant because within the walls of the castle, Dracula has complete control of and command over the protagonist's body, which he can prey upon at any moment. The feeling of complete helplessness and the loss of control leads to the protagonist's intense psychological trauma.

[18] Prthiviraj Sen, compiled. 'Roktochoshar Hahakar,' 'The Blood-drinker's Howl,' in, *Bhoot Jokhon Adbhut*, 'When Ghosts are Strange' (Kolkata: Rajendra Library, date unknown), 18-25. This text has been digitised and archived by Jadavpur University under the Endangered Archives Programme. I have accessed this text from the Endangered Archives Programme published in the British Library website.

the vampire's lair; neither does he return to defeat the Dracula figure by chasing him across Darjeeling. The hero's narrative in this text, therefore, never progresses beyond the scene of the night-watch, where he realises that he is trapped in with a monster. In the absence of the hero's arc, 'Roktochoshar Hahakar' ('The Blood-drinker's Howl') leaves the readers with a sense of doom, which is not mitigated by any scene of escape by Deepnarayan. This horror of abandonment is explicit in the final realisation of the protagonist that he may not be able to escape at all:

> ভাবতে থাকে সে, কিভাবে এখন থেকে পালিয়ে যাবে। কিন্তু, দীপনারায়ণ বুঝতে পারে, সে বোধহয় এই ফাঁদ থেকে কোনোদিনই পালতে পারবে না। এখানে তিলে তিলে মরতে হবে তাকে।
>
> (He kept thinking how he would be able to escape from here. But Deepnarayan understood that probably he would never be able to escape from this trap ever again. He will have to slowly die here.)[19]

The fulfilment of Deepnarayan's fears, when he finally dies in the castle, leads the narrator to comment that the evil Subbaji will continue to victimise people until death claims him.[20] 'Roktochoshar Hahakar' ('The Blood-drinker's Howl') deliberately disbalances the equilibrium between the hero's narrative and the monster's narrative by leaving both the protagonist and the readers with this sense of abandonment. This is because, even after Deepnarayan dies, the text lingers on in Subbaji's tea estate, with the narrator describing how Subbaji will once again print an advertisement for an accountant, and how he will turn into a bloodthirsty monster once again and prey upon the new accountant.[21] It is Deepnarayan's feeling of abandonment with which the text ends, and which is transmitted to the reader in the absence of a narrative closure. The reader too is left with this experience of physical confinement and emotional trauma which Deepnarayan feels in the text. The experience of

[19] Sen, 24.

[20] Sen, 24.

[21] Sen, 24.

horror is thus transmitted from Deepnarayan to the readers through a bodily response to the events of the narrative, as the reader too vicariously experiences this claustrophobia. The element of abandonment in 'Roktochoshar Hahakar' ('The Blood-drinker's Howl') is entirely structured around the way the body of the human victim is shown to be held captive by Subbaji, a feeling of captivity which even the readers begin to experience while reading the text. Citing the opening-credits scene of the 1958 Hammer film *Horror of Dracula* where the blood splatters on Count Dracula's coffin, and the organs preserved in Frankenstein's laboratory in *The Curse of Frankenstein* (1957), Xavier Aldana Reyes argues how the physicality of the body and corporeal mutilation and harm have always been used in horror films to incite a physical response in the viewers.[22] In 'Roktochoshar Hahakar' ('The Blood-drinker's Howl') similarly, the reader is made to feel how Deepnarayan's body is in a state of constant threat within the confines of Subbaji's Sunset Bungalow. The first sense of threat comes when Subbaji warns Deepnarayan against wandering too far from the bungalow as there are wild tigers all around. The second scene in which this threat to the body becomes even more prominent is when Subbaji reveals the death of the previous accountant. The first thought that Deepnarayan has is his isolation from the outside world which has made him a sort of prisoner:

> কিন্তু আস্বস্ত হতে হলো দীপনারায়ণ কে। আর কি-ই বা করতে পারে সে। আপাতত বন্দি সে সানসেট ভিলাতে। দার্জিলিং শহর থেকে পঞ্চাশ মাইল দূরবর্তী এই বাংলো বাড়িতে।
>
> (But Deepnarayan had to be at ease. What else can he do? For now, he is a captive in Sunset Villa; in this bungalow that is fifty miles from Darjeeling.)[23]

These scenes where Deepnarayan feels trapped in Sunset Bungalow invite readers to participate in this feeling of isolation and abandonment. As a result, when Subbaji finally turns into a

[22] Xavier Aldana Reyes, *Horror Film and Affect: Towards a Corporeal Model of Viewership* (London: Routledge, 2016), 11.

[23] Sen, 21.

monster and drinks the blood of Deepnarayan, the violation of the latter's body invokes a physical revulsion in the readers:

> তিনি এক মুহূর্ত তাকিয়ে থাকেন ঘুমন্ত দীপনারায়ানের মুখের দিকে। তারপর, তার গলার দু দিকে শিরার মধ্যে ফুটিয়ে দেন তীক্ষ্ণ দাঁতের ডগা। চোঁ করে রক্ত পান করতে থাকনে থাকেন তিনি।
>
> (He keeps staring at Deepnarayan's sleeping face for a moment. Then, he pierces the veins on the sides of his neck with his sharp teeth. He keeps drinking his blood.)[24]

The depiction of the vulnerability of Deepnarayan's body, while sleeping in Subbaji's bungalow, and the fact that the story provides no escape from the clutches of the vampire, establish an instinctive connection between the readers and Deepnarayan. Deepnarayan is drained of his blood on two successive nights and has no chance to realise what is happening to him. Although he notices the bite marks on his neck he fails to realise that they were caused by the attacks of the vampiric Subbaji. Unlike Stoker's *Dracula* where Harker's realisation that he is a prisoner in the Count's castle motivates him to search for an escape, in Sen's story, the sense of entrapment brings about a total feeling of dejection in Deepnarayan, who accepts his fate. That is why even after noticing the two bite marks on his throat after the first night, he does not do anything to escape from Subbaji's clutches, and is preyed upon for a second time, after which his corpse is thrown into the gorge nearby. Incidentally, like in 'Mrityuheen' ('Undead') and 'Kuashar Rong Lal' ('The Fog's Colour is Red') Subbaji too is puzzled about his transformation into a vampire at 2 a.m. every morning. His conversion to a blood-drinking beast-like figure is as much a mystery to Subbaji as it is to the readers. It appears that Subbaji has no control over his transformation. The narrator mentions that Subbaji is a good man otherwise:

> কেন এমন হয়? কেন এমন হয়? নিজেকে নিজেই বার বার প্রশ্ন করেন সুব্বাজী ... এমনিতে সুব্বাজী ভালো মানুষ।

[24] Sen, 23.

(Why does this happen? Why does this happen? Subbaji keeps asking himself…Otherwise Subbaji is a good man.)[25]

The lack of reason behind Subbaji's transformation, and his inability to control the same, further contribute to the horror of the text. It makes Deepnarayan's abandonment more horrific because the transformation to the vampire-figure cannot be dealt with either by Deepnarayan or by Subbaji himself. The feeling of abandonment is heightened by the 'visceral contact between the viewer's [body] and the character's [body]' because the physical violation of Deepnarayan's body, described in graphic terms, generates a physical response of fear and repulsion in the reader.[26]

While 'Roktochoshar Hahakar' ('The Blood-drinker's Howl') leaves readers with this feeling of confinement and physical vulnerability in the presence of Subbaji, there are other texts which offer a feeling of release from this captivity by furthering the heroes' narrative with the element of chase, followed by the defeat of the monster. The element of chase in the heroes' narrative, when followed by the entrapment by the vampire, releases the tension and the claustrophobic fear of the enclosed castle of Dracula created by the monster's narrative. It is this release of tension, and the new-found ability of the captured body to move freely that help further the heroes' narrative. The release is therefore followed by the defeat of the monster, where the protagonist completes the reclamation of his sense of identity and freedom from the vampire. In Stoker's novel, the entrapment of Harker by Count Dracula causes the protagonist to gradually lose touch with his sense of selfhood. The rational-minded, calm Jonathan Harker with an objective understanding of reality becomes this frenzied, disturbed man who begins to doubt everything he sees and experiences. However, once Count Dracula is killed off in the

[25] Sen, 23.

[26] Reyes, 3. Reyes calls this the 'anchoring point' and believes it to be the epitome of affect where the viewers' body is influenced by what is happening to the bodies on screen. Although we are dealing with a written text rather than an audio-visual text. I argue that the graphic depiction of bodily violation produces the same effect in the readers.

final scene of the novel, the structures of power are once again altered, and Harker and his Crew of Light regain control over Dracula. Just like Dracula had entrapped Harker in his castle, so also in the final arc of the heroes' narrative, the members of the Crew of Light surround Dracula's coffin and trap him in order to gain control over his body. This reversal of power structures, and the reclamation of the control over one's body from Dracula, is also symbolised in the way the mark on Mina's forehead disappears, returning her to normalcy.

Unlike 'Roktochoshar Hahakar' ('The Blood-drinker's Howl') the text 'Roktopishach' ('The Vampire') in Souren Dutta's compilation of horror stories *Bhoot Jokhon Adbhut* ('When Ghosts are Strange') completes the hero's arc with the defeat of the monster.[27] 'Roktopishach' ('The Vampire') tells the story of Hena, a singer, who is offered a job one night by a stranger, who asks her to take care of his old father. This stranger, Ranadhir Ray, takes Hena back to his house, Ray Castle, which is an old, ruined mansion in a secluded location. When Hena comments that the house is 'জংলা,' 'surrounded by overgrown trees,' and quite old, Ranadhir replies, 'আমরা পুরোনো সবকিছু পছন্দ করি যে মিস হেনা দেবী,' ('Indeed, we love everything that is old Miss Hena Debi!')[28] Ranadhir's statement, and the ancient nature of the mansion, already frames the scene as one of entrapment of Hena by a Dracula-like figure in the minds of the readers. This is because Ranadhir's love for the ancient house reminds us of Dracula's fondness for the old house at Carfax: 'I am glad that it is old and big. I myself am of an old family, and to live in a new house would kill me.'[29] The horror of the entrapment scene adapted in 'Roktopishach' ('The Vampire') also comes from the existence of a space which has been

[27] Souren Dutta, compiled. 'Roktopishach,' ('The Vampire') in, *Bhoot Jokhon Adbhut* ('When Ghosts are Strange') (Kolkata: Orient Library, date unknown), 3-30. This text has been digitised and archived by Jadavpur University under the Endangered Archives Programme. I have accessed this text from the Endangered Archives Programme published in the British Library website.

[28] Dutta, 9.

[29] Stoker, 29.

untouched by modernity. Stoker's *Dracula* deals with the 'haunting of the prehistory of modernity' represented by Dracula and Transylvania which cannot be fully controlled by modern technologies and modern time.[30] 'Roktopishach' ('The Vampire') similarly, creates the horror of Hena being trapped in a house beyond the purview of modernity. There is no electricity in the mansion although it is located in 'Calcutta.' Ray Castle is, additionally, shown to be in Bagbazar, which is one of the oldest areas of Kolkata, with a rich history and cultural past. More than the entrapment in space, both Stoker's text and its appropriation thus deal with the entrapment in time.

This entrapment in time is accompanied by the physical entrapment of Hena's body when Ranadhir Ray hypnotises her and uses vampire bats to draw blood from her while she is in a state of trance. Although there is no evidence in the story that Ranadhir is a vampire himself, we come to know that he has been kidnapping young girls and draining them of blood using the vampire bats. He believes that by injecting that blood into his body he will become immortal. It is only when Priyam Sen, a patron of the cabaret club where Hena used to sing, rescues her that the act of reclamation is complete. This is because when Priyam Sen, who has fallen in love with Hena, learns of her new job, rushes to Ray Castle to rescue her, and gets Ranadhir Ray arrested. The use of confined spaces thus forms an important part of the horror of *Dracula*, which is successfully translated across the appropriations. Hena's release from the clutches of Ranadhir Ray, however, is not limited to her escape from the physical confinement she suffered in Ray Castle. Her entrapment in the mansion, and her subsequent escape, mark the completion of her narrative arc in the story. The horror of 'Roktopishach' ('The Vampire') does not begin with the mysterious events in Ray Castle but in the cabaret club where Hena, and other economically-marginalised women like her, fall prey to the sexual advances of the

[30] Ahmet Süner, 'The Representation of Time, Modernity and Its Prehistory in *Dracula*,' *Studia Neophilologica* (Published online 12 Feb 2018): 1-2, DOI: 10.1080/00393274.2018.1434421. Accessed on 5th January 2023.

patrons. The monstrosity of Ranadhir Ray, who drains the blood of women using bats and inserts it into his own veins, parallels the monstrosity of the patrons of the cabaret club who prey on the women in their own way. This is evident in the way both Ranadhir Ray and the patrons are described in an animal-like, predatory manner. When Hena is singing in the club, the narrator comments that although the patrons belong to the high society, they have savagery in their eyes: 'কিন্তু নারীসঙ্গ কামনায় যেন জন্তুর মতন হিংস্র চোখে তাকাচ্ছে ডায়াসের দিকে' ('But the desire for women made them stare at the dais with animal-like ferocity').[31] When Ranadhir Ray first attacks Hena to take her blood, his hypnotic stare is similarly described as the look of a predator:

> তার দুই চোখের তারাদুটো যেন জ্বলছে — তীক্ষ্ণ তীব্র একজোড়া হলদে চোখ...যেন একটা ময়াল স্থির দৃষ্টিতে তাকিয়ে রয়েছে একটা ছাগলছানার দিকে আর ছাগলছানাটাও একটু একটু করে এগিয়ে যাচ্ছে ময়ালের কুণ্ডলীর দিকে।
>
> (The pupils of his eyes were burning — a pair of sharp, intense yellow eyes…as if a *moyal* snake [python] was steadfastly staring at a baby goat and the hypnotised baby goat was approaching the snake's coils little by little.)[32]

This animal imagery is repeated once again when Hena is ambushed by the vampire bats in the basement: 'জোনাকীর আলোর মতন বাদুড়গুলোর চোখ যেন জ্বলছে,' 'The eyes of the bats were burning like fireflies.'[33] The lustful stare of the patrons at the club, the hypnotic stare of Ranadhir and the burning stare of the bats, all form a part of the same horror narrative where Hena — a marginalised woman without any resources or family to depend on — is reduced to her mere physicality. The patrons objectify Hena as a mere object of lust while Ranadhir uses her body as a means to fulfil his plan of gaining immortality. The confined space of the basement where

[31] Dutta, 3.

[32] Dutta, 11.

[33] Dutta, 17.

Hena is trapped with the vampire bats in darkness mirrors the initial scene where Hena is surrounded by the licentious patrons and is trapped in the public. Entrapment in 'Roktopishach' ('The Vampire') and many other such appropriations of *Dracula* is more than physical confinement. Therefore, the reclamation of Hena when the monster is defeated is also more than a physical escape. Hena's fight to gain control over her body had already started when she refused to spend time with the patrons outside her singing performance as asked by the cabaret manager, Badri Chowdhury.[34] When Hena is ambushed by Ranadhir in the final scene, she hurls the table lamp at the curtain in the room, setting everything on fire.[35] This attempt of Hena to escape the clutches of Ranadhir also marks her final attempt at reclaiming her body and her identity from her oppressors. Just like she had refused to give herself over to the patrons in the first part of the story, so also does she refuse to give herself over to Ranadhir and his vampire bats. The defeat of the monster, therefore, is not complete with the arrest of Ranadhir. 'Roktopishach' ('The Vampire') had emphasised right from the beginning the horrors of the marginalised class trapped within the structures of power in society, especially after the destructive impact of the Second World War on society. It depicts how on the one hand there was an excess of wealth earned through immoral means, and on the other hand, how the poor, marginalised class was repeatedly victimised within such a system:

> রন্ধ্রে রন্ধ্রে ক্ষয়ে যাওয়া সমাজের দীর্ণ আর্ত মানুষেরা সভয়ে দেখতে লাগলো জীবনের এই অবমূল্যায়নের শোচনীয় পরিণতি, যদিও তারাই হয়েছিল এর প্রধান বলি। হেনাও ছিল এদেরই দলে ।
>
> (The tired, afflicted people of a disintegrating society stared with fear at the depreciating condition of life, although they were the primary scapegoats. Hena too was one of them.)[36]

As opposed to the intense, violent, piercing gaze of the oppressors (the patrons/Ranadhir/vampire bats), the gaze of the victims is marked by fear. This gaze built on

[34] Dutta, 5.

[35] Dutta, 26-27.

[36] Dutta, 4.

power hierarchies is what Hena tries to challenge, first, by resigning from the job at the cabaret club, and secondly, by trying to burn everything down and escaping Ranadhir's Castle. At the end of the story, therefore, Priyam Sen, the patron who had urged Badri to let him spend time with Hena, apologises to her. Although Hena is able to leave behind her life in the club, Priyam 'claims' her in marriage as a reward for having rescued her from the monster. Admittedly, he has reformed, and this goes back to the old folk-tale structure of the endangered woman being claimed by the male rescuer. The narrative makes it clear that she could not have escaped from Ray Castle without the help of another man, Priyam. In the entire story, only one woman could have come the aid of Hena: her distant relative who occupies a high position in a handicrafts factory and who shares her room with Hena on the condition that she will vacate the space the moment she gets her salary! Not only is she monumentally indifferent to Hena leaving the hostel at dead of night. She also reminds her niece – the author suddenly informs us that she is Hena's aunt – that Hena had promised to pay for her board once she received her salary. Hena pays her forty rupees – a fairly large sum at the time the story is set.

The entrapment forms an important part of the monster's narrative which lays the foundation of the horror in the text. However, it is the journey of the monster and the spread of vampirism that mark the pinnacle of the vampire's power. Although both the motifs of the journey of the vampire and the spread of vampirism function together, they have different narrative implications when seen in the context of the hero's arc. In appropriations where Dracula is shown to travel from his native place to a different location, the night-watch of the protagonist usually involves a feeling of anticipation and dread. Additionally, in the context of the spread, the night-watch of the protagonists is important because it leads to the confirmation of vampirism, whereby the mysterious illness of one or more characters is finally traced to a supernatural cause. The role of the night-watch in the confirmation of vampirism can be seen most prominently in the story 'Roktolobhi Pishach' ('The Bloodthirsty Vampire') in the

collection *E Juger Bhooter Golpo* ('Ghost Stories of this Age') compiled by Manojit Dey.[37] The text deals with the story of a prince Rupkumar who has mysteriously fallen ill with little blood in his body and puncture wounds on his neck. When the physician suspects that someone is draining the prince of blood, the three friends of the prince keep a night-watch and see a giant bat fly through the room, which then proceeds to drink Rupkumar's blood. Although they strike the wings of the bat with their swords, it manages to escape. The next day they find out that the bloodsucking bat was in fact the king's friend Samanta Sen, who had turned into a vampire because of some wrongful religious practice. Through the night-watch, they learn that the cause of the prince's sickness was not natural but supernatural. In Stoker's novel, Lucy's illness is initially treated as a medical condition which changes with the coming of Van Helsing, who attributes a supernatural cause to it. Similarly, in 'Roktolobhi Pishach' ('The Bloodthirsty Vampire') the three friends initially depend on the physician for learning about Rupkumar's illness. However, during the first night-watch they fall into a trance-like sleep. This leads them to seek the help of the priest Bama Thakur, who marks their foreheads with vermilion, as a protection against any evil power who tries to put them to sleep. There is a brief moment of uncertainty in the characters between the time they first hear about the prince's blood-loss and the time they keep their first night-watch when they finally suspect that the illness of Rupkumar is tied to a supernatural cause. This uncertainty or moment of hesitation is a vital part of the fantastic genre in general as outlined by Todorov. He argues that the fantastic is located in this period of uncertainty when the characters believe that the mysterious events taking place are either a product of the imagination or they may have a supernatural cause which will alter the characters' understanding of reality.[38] However, Todorov believes that the genre of the fantastic

[37] Manojit Dey, 'Roktolobhi Pishach' ('The Bloodthirsty Vampire') in, *E Juger Bhooter Golpo* ('Ghost Stories of this Age) (Kolkata: Orient Library, date unknown), 8-13. This text has been digitised and archived by Jadavpur University under the Endangered Archives Programme. I have accessed this text from the Endangered Archives Programme published in the British Library website.

[38] Todorov, 25.

is also based on the hesitation of the reader, who identifies and agrees with the main character/s relating to his/their conception of the uncanny event taking place in the narrative. Since my analysis of the translation of horror is mainly based on the affective changes that the text inspires in the reader, it is necessary to critique Todorov's statement as to the readers' perspective regarding the supernatural events in the story. In 'Roktolobhi Pishach' ('The Bloodthirsty Vampire') while the three friends initially depend on the physician for the recovery of Rupkumar, the readers already recognise the trope of a sick victim gradually losing his/her vitality, from the sequence involving Lucy in Stoker's *Dracula.* As a result, when the three friends keep their first night-watch unaware of the real cause, the readers are already caught in a state of anticipation and terror because of the foreknowledge gained through Stoker's *Dracula*. There is thus a gap between the time the readers expect a supernatural outcome of the events and when the main characters finally eliminate their uncertainty in the story. The readers do not identify with the main characters' hesitation about the supernatural occurrence because the readers already see the events in the context of the supernatural from the beginning. I argue that the successful translation of the horror of *Dracula* does not just rely on inciting the same element of fear in readers across cultures but on creating this moment of recognition wherein the readers learn to anticipate the appearance of the monster. When the friends of Rupkumar finally witness the vampire sucking Rupkumar's blood, the readers' perspective and the characters' perspective are aligned with each other, and the former's conjectures about the supernatural occurrence prove to be true. The appearance of the monster during the night-watch, which confirms the act of vampirism, rewards the readers with the feeling of having solved a puzzle, similar to their guess about who the culprit is in a detective story being confirmed by the detective in the end.

The night-watch is followed by the chase and the defeat of the monster in the heroes' narrative. In appropriations which show the journey of the monster to a different location, the

chase involves the protagonist(s) going after the monster who had invaded the locality, and thus the monster is now chased back to its original location. This is then followed by the defeat of the monster, which restores the division between the living and the undead, and reinforces the cultural and geographical boundaries which the vampire had breached during its arrival. The spread of vampirism followed by the chase and the defeat of the monster is the most important part of the intersection of the heroes' narrative and the monster's narrative. This is because, the hero's/heroes' pursuit of the vampire is accompanied by the knowledge that he/they too can be cursed with the same monstrosity if the vampire preys on them. The hero's/heroes' chase is therefore characterised by the possibility of a submission or sacrifice of selfhood, because he/they know(s) it may lead to a loss of his/their own humanity. It is only if and when he/they succeed(s) in the task of killing the vampire, that we reach the final stage, which is that of containment, wherein the horror of vampirism is finally put to an end. Although the containment marks the hero's/heroes' victory and the neutralisation of the threat, it is the previous stage of the potential sacrifice of selfhood which defines his/their heroism.

Both 'Mrityuheen' ('Undead') and 'Kuashar Rong Laal' ('The Fog's Colour is Red') however, destabilise the progression of the heroes' narrative and the monster's narrative in their own way. 'Mrityuheen' ('Undead') strangely begins with Dracula in the hero's narrative trying to defeat a vampiric creature. Unfortunately, in the process of killing the monster, Dracula becomes a vampire himself. The story thus begins with the ultimate sacrifice of Dracula's selfhood that transforms him from the hero to the monster. The narrative then shifts to the chase scene where Harker and the Crew of Light pursue Dracula across Transylvania. Although the chase of the heroes is more or less a faithful appropriation of the scene from Stoker's *Dracula*, the ending once again subverts the unambiguous resolution of horror. While killing Dracula, it is Harker who is now transformed into a bloodthirsty vampire. The sacrifice of selfhood is thus repeated with Harker instead of Dracula. 'Kuashar Rong Laal' ('The Fog's Colour is Red')

similarly begins as the standard narrative of chase where Dr Seward is seen chasing another vampire, which seems to be victimising people. Despite setting up local people as baits for the vampire, Seward repeatedly fails to capture the monster. The chase narrative is subverted at the end where Seward discovers that it is he who is victimising the villagers, without realising that he had turned into a vampire while fighting a *strigoi* (vampire) in Austria. Therefore, Dr Seward too has sacrificed his human self in his fight against the monster, making him the ultimate hero. The sacrifice of his human selfhood is accompanied by a destruction of his physical self, when he stakes himself so that he can no longer victimise the people. This ultimate act of self-sacrifice is the last human/humane act of Dr Seward to save others from the horror he has come to embody.

'Mrityuheen' ('Undead') and 'Kuashar Rong Laal' ('The Fog's Colour is Red') thus break down the division between the monster and the hero making both of them victims of an ancient curse without a cause. The vampire becomes the monstrous double of the hero in these appropriations. Stoker's *Dracula* had already shown how the vampire acts as a catalyst in highlighting the nature of his victims like Lucy.[39] Although the Crew of Light believe the Lucy in front of them to be a perverted imitation of her real self, different from the innocent, pure girl she was before, the appropriations discussed show how the monster and the hero cannot be separated by these superficial boundaries of ethics. Just like Dracula begins as the hero at the beginning of 'Mrityuheen' ('Undead') but turns into the monster, so also the self-righteous Jonathan Harker starts to give in to his craving for blood at the end of the story. When he sees the body of Morris covered in blood after the fight with Dracula, he is tempted to drink his blood:

[39] Manuel Aguirre, *The Closed Space: Horror Literature and Western Symbolism* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1990), 137.

আশ্চর্য! মরিসের শরীর ঘিরে কি অসামান্য সুখাদ্যের সুবাস! রক্ত! রক্ত যে এতো সুস্বাদু তা কেন আগে বুঝিনি। কী দুর্নিবার শক্তিতেই না আমায় আকর্ষণ করছে ওর শরীর ঘিরে ছড়িয়ে থাকা জমাট বাঁধা রক্তের স্রোত!

(Strange! Morris' body is covered with the fragrance of extraordinary food! Blood! Why did I not understand before that blood can taste so good! The smell of clotted blood-flow covering his body attracts me with an irresistible power!)[40]

This descent of the Harker-figure into a state of monstrosity is characterised by an intense desire to succumb to the primal, raw appetite for blood. However, even at this stage Jonathan Harker retains a part of his humanity. His shame in drinking the blood of Morris is noticed when he decides to dim the lights so that no one sees him in this state. This internalisation of the conflict with monstrosity is similar to Theophile Gautier's 'La Monte Amoureuse' where Romuald's love for the vampiric Clarimonde leads to a clash between his religious duties as a priest and his personal love for her. In Gautier's story, vampirism leads to a 'struggle of the self with his [Romuald's] own inner double … [which] can only lead to the destruction of one of the two selves.'[41] This internalised moral conflict in Bhattacharya, however, ends with the total destruction of John Hark's (the Harker figure's) humanity as he feeds on the blood of an innocent girl Tosiko, a novice navigator working under him, to slake his thirst without remorse.[42] 'Kuashar Rong Laal' ('The Fog's Colour is Red') too ends on a similar note where the hero has become the monster. However, Seward's moral conflict leads him to sacrifice his own life by staking himself, thus proving that he has retained a part of his humanity even as a monster. The horror of *Dracula*, while being framed as a fight between the good and the evil forces, is intensified in the appropriations which internalise this conflict. By merging the narrative of the monster with the narrative of the hero, the last two appropriations highlight that Stoker's vampire novel is at the end based on the horror of humanity facing itself.

[40] Bhattacharya, 42.

[41] Aguirre, 137.

[42] Bhattacharya, 42.

The source of this motif is that when human beings are about to destroy the vampire, they are troubled by the fact that before being possessed by the evil spirit, the body of the vampire was that of yet another human being. This is evident in scenes when the Crew of Light members question the brutality of the act of beheading Lucy, and in Van Helsing's characterisation of the staking of the female vampires in Dracula's castle as 'awful work' and 'terrible task.'[43] If the act of vampirism is an act of monstrosity because of the way it usurps the human body, so is the act of returning the vampire to its former, human self, which involves a cruel disfigurement and dismemberment of the body which was originally that of a human being. Monstrosity thus involves a confrontation of the self with one's own perverted double. It is a phenomenon of excess — be it the excessive draining of blood by the Count or the excessive violence on the undead vampiric body to restore it to its mortal state. It is this idea of monstrosity as the undeniably corrupted double of humanity that transcends the barriers of culture and space, making the text amenable for translation or appropriation.

By breaking down the narrative of *Dracula* into the heroes' narrative and the monster's narrative I have tried to analyse the structural components which constitute the horror of Stoker's novel. Subsequently, by studying the way in which the appropriations recombine these structural elements to alter the effect/affect of the horror narrative, I have shown how the emotion of fear travels across the boundaries of culture leading to a plethora of popular versions of *Dracula.* This successful appropriation of Stoker's novel in the popular format has popularised the figure of Count Dracula to the extent that he has become a cultural icon across the globe. In the next section I will analyse the formation and evolution of Dracula as a cultural icon in the Indian subcontinent, and the way in which popular texts utilise his image in their own fictional world.

[43] Stoker, 320.

Dracula and New Mythologies of Horror in Indian Comic Books

The popularity of the character of Dracula has led to the incorporation of the Count in different fictional worlds created in several Indian comic books. As a result of these appropriations, the horror associated with the character of the Count has been altered by the thematic and structural demands of the new genres that Dracula is made a part of. This has led to the creation of new mythologies of horror combining the vampire genre with other formats. In this section, I will study two such comic book appropriations of the character, which have radically changed the vampire mythology associated with Stoker's *Dracula*. The first is Sudeep Menon's *Dracula* which relocates the Count from Transylvania to India, blending horror with historical fantasy, and reimagining Dracula's role in the fight between Alexander the Great and King Porus.[44] The second text is the *Dracula* series published by Raj Comics, which pits its popular comic book characters like Nagraj, Super Commando Dhruv, Doga, and others against Dracula, thus looking at horror through the lens of the superhero genre.[45] In this section, I will analyse how the visual narrative in these texts creates new mythologies of horror by blending the vampire genre with that of historical fantasy or the superhero genre.

In the previous chapters we have already commented on the historical allusions and political references that abound in Stoker's novel, specifically in Dracula's speech about his Szekely heritage. In many of the popular appropriations of the novel, these historical details are often erased to create a simpler tale of horror that would be accessible to the masses. Sudeep Menon's text, however, creates an alternative historical narrative for Dracula, one that culturally displaces the vampiric Count from Transylvania to India. In Menon's text, the figure of Dracula is equated with the historical Vlad — an association that has now been

[44] Sudeep Menon, *Dracula* (Mumbai: Bullseye Press, Issue 1 2020, Issue 2 2023).

[45] Manoj Gupta, *सम्पूर्ण ड्रैकुला*, 'The Complete Dracula' (New Delhi: Raj Comics, 2021).

debunked by some critics like Elizabeth Miller. This cultural and historic displacement of Dracula leads to a change in the way the Count is portrayed in the visual narrative. Similarly, in the *Dracula* series published by Raj Comics, the visual depiction of the Count helps us understand his narrative displacement to a different fictional world. In both Menon's text and in Manoj Gupta's comics, the sartorial details of Dracula contribute to the process of myth-making in significant ways. In the first issue of Menon's *Dracula*, when Alexander the Great invades India and defeats King Porus, the latter seeks the help of Dracula, who resides in a desolate cave in India.[46] King Porus is shown to have met Vlad a long time ago, when the latter saved him from a ferocious mythical beast called Danteshvara, after which he returned to the forest.[47] There is however, a subtle difference in the way Dracula is first introduced to the readers — when he is portrayed as the saviour of King Porus during his fight with Danteshvara —and when he is seen interacting with the king in the cave.

In the first scene, where King Porus is about to be attacked by Danteshvara, Dracula appears almost as a hero. In fact, he is referred to by the narrator as a 'personification of Yama himself.'[48] This equation of Dracula with the Hindu God of Death leads to an overlapping of mythological worlds, altering the fabric of horror. Here, Vlad is pictured as a saviour, and his stance, like that of a hero, is one of confidence and bravery. Although his nails are long and sharp, and covered in blood, there is no evidence of him being a vampire. However, when King Porus punches the walls of the cave in anger and injures himself, Dracula sneaks up on him and grabs his hand. Unlike the heroic stance of the previous panel, Dracula here appears as a predator, with fangs protruding out from his mouth. The scene is reminiscent of Harker's shaving injury in Stoker's *Dracula* in which 'his [the Count's] eyes

[46] Menon, *Dracula* Issue 1.

[47] Menon, *Dracula* Issue 1.

[48] Menon, Dracula Issue 1.

blazed with a sort of demoniac fury' on watching him bleed.[49] In Menon's text too, the sight of King Porus' blood causes Dracula to temporarily lose control over his animalistic self. However, he soon regains his composure and tells him, 'Blood should not be wasted. It is…precious.'[50] The cultural translation of horror therefore, retains the primal myth of blood on which the horror of vampire literature is based. What is more important, however, is the way the change in the look of Dracula modifies the visual narrative. In the first instance, the expression on Vlad's face is that of resolute determination, which is used to frame him as a warrior; in the latter, it is that of an opportunistic predator, waiting to satisfy his thirst for blood and power.

Figure 4.1: Dracula Fighting the Beast Danteshvar

[49] Stoker, 31.

[50] Menon, Dracula Issue 1.

Figure 4.2: Dracula Gets Aroused Seeing the Blood on King Porus' Hands

This difference in the portrayal of Dracula is also evident from the way the hair of Vlad is drawn in the two panels. In the first panel, the long hair of Vlad is shown to flow with the wind, almost as if he is poised in the guise of a hero. Although the hair is flowing in the wind, it is drawn with a touch of beauty, with the ends forming neat curls, framed against the mellow yellow and pink background of the sky. In the cave panel, however, Vlad's hair is more unkempt, with strands of hair untidily flying in different directions, complementing the deranged expression he has on his face. The bright yellow and red background of the cave (as opposed to the mellow yellow of the first panel) also brings out the animalistic thirst for blood and power which Vlad has. The visual narrative of the cave panel, therefore, not only reveals the vampiric nature of Vlad but also forewarns the readers about the hidden megalomania in him that will lead to the betrayal of King Porus. As we see in the later part of the story, Vlad plots with King Porus' wife and kills him, taking over his kingdom to spread his tyranny. By situating Dracula's narrative within the political dynamic of ancient kingdoms at war, Menon changes *Dracula* from a vampiric myth of monstrous, mindless bloodlust[51] to

[51] In Stoker, Dracula's bloodlust has no cause outside his desire to convert people into vampires. No explanation has been given in the novel as to why Dracula wants to come to London and drink the blood of its citizens. Hence, the bloodlust of Dracula in Stoker's novel can be said to be mindless in nature. But it is this causeless nature of evil which makes Stoker's Count more horrific than any other vampire. This can be understood in the

a historic myth of struggle for monarchic power. The first issue of the series is therefore rightly named 'The Battle of Three Kings.' The second issue of Menon's *Dracula* begins with Vlad ruling over India and using his horde of vampires to terrorise the people.[52] Accordingly, the depiction of Dracula in the second issue is vastly different from that of the first. In the first issue, Vlad is pictured as an animalistic force, rising up from the cave in the forest to kill Alexander. This characterisation of Dracula — who is referred to both as Dracula and as Vlad the Impaler in the comics — as an ancient, primal power is reinforced by the visual narrative, where his upper body is bare and his lower body covered in torn rags, as seen in both the panels discussed above. The visual characterisation of Dracula as a primeval power is noticed even more in the cover of the first issue where he is shown to travel over a black cloud of bats, in his fight against King Alexander.

Figure 4.3: Dracula as a Primeval Force Fighting Alexander the Great

His hair once again is extremely unkempt, forming almost an aura of darkness behind his head, his nails and beard are overgrown, and his body seems to be covered in grime and dirt.

light of Terry Eagleton's argument in his book *On Evil*, that the 'less sense it makes, the more evil it is. Evil has no relations to anything beyond itself, such as a cause.' Terry Eagleton, *On Evil* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2010), 3.

[52] Menon, *Dracula* Issue 2.

His entire figure is set against a full moon, which is repeatedly associated in popular literature with animalistic transformations. As opposed to this portrayal of Dracula as a primeval, raw force in the first issue, the second issue imagines Dracula as a despotic king. Instead of the bare-bodied, grime-covered Vlad, we have a Dracula who is dressed in steel armour, ready for battle.

Figure 4.4: Dracula Dressed in Steel Armour

Dracula's dress across the second issue not only establishes him as a warrior and a king but also builds up the narrative of his tyranny over the kingdom of King Porus. If we notice the clothes he wears in the palace, they are markedly different from those worn by the Indian kings. During the Mauryan period, both men and women wore an unstitched garment called *antariya* which covered the lower part of the body from the waist to the calves or ankles, and an *uttariya* which covered the upper part of the body.[53] While Chandragupta Maurya is seen wearing the *antariya* and *uttariya*, Dracula's dress deliberately marks him as an outsider. The dress of the vampire has always been used to represent the boundary between the self and the society, especially in the film adaptations of Dracula, where he is Othered through his dress,

[53] Ayman Satopay, 'History of Indian Costumes,' Textile Value Chain, Feb 22, 2020, https://textilevaluechain.in/in-depth-analysis/articles/traditional-textiles/history-of-indian-costumes/#:~:text=MAURYAN%20AND%20SUNGA%20PERIOD%20(321,gold%20or%20other%20precious%20stones. Accessed on 5th November 2023.

accent, manner, and skin.[54] In Menon similarly, the visual narrative, expounded through the sartorial differences between Dracula and Chandragupta Maurya, creates the myth of a foreign, vampiric king forcing his reign of terror on the people of India. In Stoker's novel, the ability of the Count to blend in with the London crowd is used by him to prey on English citizens, without being singled out and identified as an outsider. Stoker's novel reflected the anxiety of an East European presence in England that was difficult to locate and trace because of its ability to adapt to the local culture. In Sudeep Menon's text however, the foreignness of Dracula, depicted through visual cues, becomes an important part of this fantastic, political mythology of a dictatorial king. The horror of Menon's text is explicitly political and is centred around/on? the confrontation between an Indian king and a foreign tyrant.

Menon's text thus creates a new myth of Dracula based on his involvement in the political strife between King Porus and King Alexander. This myth, which is visually created by changing the dress and the appearance of Vlad, replaces the original myth built by Stoker. Firstly, as Leatherdale observes, Stoker never makes a direct connection between Dracula and Vlad the Impaler, adding that there are no specific references to the historical figure of Vlad apart from generalised accounts of the Hungarian campaign against the Turks during the fifteenth century.[55] Secondly, Menon not only displaces Dracula spatially but also changes his temporal position by situating the story in 326 B.C. This means that it predates the birth of Christianity, and thus the Christian symbolism associated with the myth of Dracula stands nullified in Menon's world. For example, unlike in Stoker's novel, where the cross served as an important element in deterring the vampire, in this new mythology, a silver dagger made by King Porus is the only thing Dracula is afraid of, and by which he can ultimately be killed.

---

[54] Sarah Heaton, 'Consuming Clothes and Dressing Desire in the *Twilight* Series,' in *The Modern Vampire and Human Identity*, edited by Deborah Mutch (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 78-79.

[55] Clive Leatherdale, *The Origins of Dracula: The Background to Bram Stoker's Gothic Masterpiece* (1987. Reprint Westclif -on-Sea: Desert Island Books, 1995), 32.

As we have already established in the previous chapters, the Christian symbolism in Dracula is nothing more than a part of horror iconology that demarcates the boundary between the good and the evil. But relocating the myth of Dracula to a time before Christianity does not just mean that the horror icons associated with the religion will be inaccessible to the text. The temporal dislocation of the myth to ancient India also implies that the text can no longer access those parts of the myth or those historical realities associated with modernity, which were crucial to the original narrative. For example, since Stoker's novel was set in Victorian England, the reader could also associate the figure of Dracula, a silent killer who has blended in with the London crowd, with the figure of Jack the Ripper. Maurice Hindle, in her Introduction to the Penguin edition of *Dracula* cites the scene of Dr John Seward confessing his love to Lucy.[56] The latter, commenting on Dr Seward's nervousness in front of her says, that 'he kept playing with a lancet in a way that made me nearly scream.'[57] Hindle draws attention to the fact that Jack the Ripper too was believed to be a surgeon. Thus, Lucy's comment connects the novel to the other socio-historical narratives circulating in the popular discourse during the time. Moreover, Stoker's Dracula also subscribes to the myth of British modernity as evidenced in Jonathan Harker's comment about trains being late as he moves towards the East,[58] and the repeated reference to phonographs, typewriters, the telegraph, and other modern inventions. By dislocating the myth of Dracula to ancient India, therefore, Menon also restricts access to these other myths in time which the narrative of the Transylvanian vampire was associated with. This temporal and spatial displacement of the narrative, however, leads to its association with new historical realities and creates a space for the development of new cultural myths. For example, the wisdom and wit of Chanakya

[56] Maurice Hindle, 'Introduction,' *Dracula* (London: Penguin Books, 1993; reprint 2003), xix.

[57] Stoker, 58.

[58] Stoker, 11.

makes him a Van Helsing-like figure. He orchestrates the attack on Dracula, which eventually leads to the latter's defeat at the hands of Chandragupta Maurya.

As opposed to the creation of a new myth in Menon's text, Manoj Gupta's *Dracula* series constantly refers to the original myth created by Stoker, and then builds upon it. The original myth is sartorially referenced in the panels of the text featuring Dracula. The Count in Raj Comics' version, wears the suit and the cloak popularised by the on-screen portrayals of Dracula, brought to life by actors like Bela Lugosi and Christopher Lee. The formalised attire, complete with shoes and the cloak, reinforces the idea of the sophisticated vampire that Lugosi and Lee imprinted on the minds of people. The dress thus connects the Dracula of Raj Comics to the myth of the Count created in the popular imagination. Commenting on George A. Romero's 1977 film *Martin*, Stacey Abbott observes how the 'costume' of the vampire reveals the 'constructedness [sic] of the traditional vampire image' which has been depicted in the film adaptations over the years.[59] Although the myth of the undead and of demonic blood-sucking entities is an ancient one, the image of the vampire, circulating in the popular media, can be traced back to the twentieth century screen adaptations of Stoker's novel. The 'constructedness' of the vampire image thus indicates that it is mediated by the cultural memory of the metaphors associated with the monster. The use of the Dracula image brings along with it the subtext of invasion, infection, and other metaphorical 'meanings' that the monster symbolises. The 'constructedness' of the vampire image seems to imply that the Dracula of different eras will be portrayed differently because 'fear [is] an ongoing cultural

[59] Stacey Abbott, *Celluloid Vampires: Life After Death in the Modern World* (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 2007), 119. Abbott here discusses how Martin, who is a normal human being, claims that his acts of vampirism have no magic to it. Martin however, has adapted the 'costume' or identity of the vampires he has seen on the screen, evident in the black-and-white visions of vampires and mobs which have been deliberately made to look like scenes lifted from a Universal or Hammer film. For example, in one scene where he has this vision of a mob chasing him, there is a brief shot of a stone eagle which appears on the screen. This stone eagle, popularly seen in Dracula's castle in the Hammer Horror films, thus shows how Martin's construction of his vampire image is based on the tropes he has seen in the on-screen depictions of the same.

and personal presence.'[60] However, despite the existence of multiple Draculas, as Auerbach argues, there is a recognisable pattern in the meanings which the monster carries. The Dracula derived from the cultural memory is always recognisable, predictable even, and as a result, the myth of Dracula seems somehow stuck in time. I am not arguing for a timeless, universal image of Dracula that transcends history. What I am suggesting instead is that despite the variations of Dracula across ages, the popular construction of the vampire image, as developed through screen adaptations and other media, offers a recognisable pattern of imagery and appearances that the audience can quickly recognise. The long-flowing cloak, the finesse, and the sophistication of Dracula as a host, and the bat are a few examples of elements that have become a part of the popular mythology of the Count. Raj Comics' use of the cloak and the suit therefore, harks back to this image of the vampire that forms a part of the popular myth.

In the first issue titled 'ड्रैकुला का हमला' ('The Attack of Dracula') the story begins with a panel which has the figure of the Count thirsting for blood, against the background of his castle, with bats flying in the sky.[61] This sudden introduction of the Count thirsting for blood is possible only because the text can access the cultural memory of the myth through visual cues of the dress and the motif of the bat, which establish this demonic figure as Dracula in the minds of the readers. The 'costume' thus serves as a narrative link between the events that are to unfold in the mythological world of Raj Comics and the mythological world of Dracula existing in the popular imagination. The clothing of Dracula helps the readers anticipate the action, and to distinguish the monster from the protagonist.[62] This recognition

[60] Nina Auerbach, *Our Vampires, Ourselves* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), 3.

[61] Manoj Gupta, 'ड्रैकुला का हमला' ('The Attack of Dracula'), 2003, reprint, in *सम्पूर्ण ड्रैकुला*, 'The Complete Dracula' (New Delhi: Raj Comics, 2021), 1.

[62] Mary Ann Caws, 'What to Wear in a Vampire Film,' in *Fashion in Film*, edited by Adrienne Munich (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), 41. Caws argues that the act of vampirism becomes a kind of ritual, which is marked by the dress of the monster and the victim. This aspect of the vampire's dress as part of a

and anticipation of the act of monstrosity is essential for the successful translation of horror. While the suit and the cloak of Dracula in Raj Comics connect him to the original myth, they also distinguish him as an outsider. In Stoker's *Dracula*, and other screen adaptations that set the narrative in Victorian England, the suit and the cloak form a part of contemporary fashion.[63] Although Dracula's dress is markedly different from that of Harker, Van Helsing, and the other characters, it is nonetheless a part of the contemporary society. However, the use of the suit and the cloak in Raj Comics deliberately emphasises the displacement of the Count both in time and in space. As opposed to the other characters who are clad in jeans, t-shirts and other modern items of clothing, Dracula's dress is outdated, belonging to a different timeline altogether. This deliberate contrast between Dracula's dress and that of the other characters serves to highlight the displacement of the original myth in time. This displacement forms a part of the horror of Dracula as it signifies not only his intrusion into a different geographical space — Rajnagar and Mahanagar, the home of Super Commando Dhruv and Nagraj respectively — but also his invasion of modernity.

Apart from Dracula's spatial and temporal dislocation, the translation of horror in Raj Comics also depends on his transference to a different mythological world. Manoj Gupta's creation of the visual narrative in this mythology can be studied using the costumes used for the characters. Depending on the type of characters and the costumes they wear, the fictional world of this mythology can be divided into three groups. Firstly, we have Dracula, and the mythology he carries with him. Secondly, we have the mythological world of Nagraj, Dhruv, and the other characters that form a part of Raj Comics. And lastly, we have the victims, who

ritual is seen most prominently in *Powers of Darkness* where Harker sees Draculitz wearing an ankle-length robe of a fiery red colour, held together by a serpent-shaped piece of green jewellery. Harker's comment that the 'impressive and terrifying majesty' which surrounded Draculitz 'was something completely new' to him shows that the vampire's ritualistic dress distinguishes him from Harker's usual picturisation of him as an old, eccentric host. Stoker and A-e, 156-157.

[63] 'Victorian Era Capes,' in Victorian Era, https://victorian-era.org/victorian-era-capes.html. Accessed on 9th January 2024.

belong to Rajnagar and Mahanagar but are distinguished both from the hero and the monster by their clothes. This division is by no means based on a mere distinction between the protagonist and the antagonist. For example, even Nagpasha and Gurudev, the antagonists in the story, belong to the same mythological world as Nagraj and the other heroes. Dracula's dress, as we have previously discussed, is marked by the long cloak along with the suit and the shoes. The long black cloak that 'wraps us even as it reveals the character underneath' suggests an element of disguise.[64] In 'नागराज और ड्रैकुला' ('Nagraj and Dracula') the disguise turns into deceit when Gurudev slyly puts Nagpasha's soul into Dracula's body, and uses the vampire's powers to spread terror across the city. Gurudev thus tricks everyone into thinking that it is the Count who is wreaking havoc on the city, preventing Nagraj and the other heroes from knowing about Gurudev and Nagpasha's involvement in the plot. Just like the cloak that both hides and reveals the person wearing it, Dracula's body becomes a cover for the crimes committed by Nagpasha and Gurudev. Although the cloak has normally been used in various films to signify the association of the vampire figure with the bat,[65] it is also symbolically used to show the restriction of access to the Count's body. The heavy suit, with the cloak over it, means that the body of Dracula is hidden and thus cannot be easily penetrated. In 'ड्रैकुला का अंत' ('The End of Dracula') when Nagraj and Dhruv try to stake Dracula's heart they are unable to find it.[66] It is later revealed that Dracula's heart is located in his right thigh so that it remains hidden.[67] This anatomical peculiarity of Dracula reiterates the motif of the cloaked

[64] Caw, 42.

[65] Brigid Cherry, '*Daughters of Darkness*: Vampire Aesthetics and Gothic Beauty,' in *Dracula's Daughters: The Female Vampire on Film*, edited by Douglas Brode and Leah Deyneka (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2014), 224.

[66] Manoj Gupta, 'ड्रैकुला का अंत' ('The End of Dracula'), 2003, reprint, in सम्पूर्ण ड्रैकुला, 'The Complete Dracula' (New Delhi: Raj Comics, 2021), 112.

[67] Gupta, 'ड्रैकुला का अंत' ('The End of Dracula'), 114.

body that is difficult to access. Similarly, at the end of 'नागराज और ड्रैकुला' ('Nagraj and Dracula') Vedacharya uses his powers to send Dracula to a magical dimension where he is trapped without his abilities amidst creatures.[68] However, when Vedacharya tries to locate him so that he can destroy him forever, he is unable to do so. Although Vedacharya can feel his presence, he says that Dracula is hiding somewhere in this magical dimension: 'वह हमसे ज़्यादा दूर तोह नहीं है, लेकिन वह जहाँ पर भी है कई परतों में छुपा हुआ है! लेकिन मैं सारी परतें उधेड़कर भी उसको ढूंढ़ निकालूंगा- ' ('He is not far from us, but wherever he is now, he is hiding underneath several layers! I will tear apart all the layers and find him-').[69] The imagery of Dracula hiding behind layers is once again sartorial imagery, similar to the cloak that hides the body. Vedacharya's proclamation to tear apart all the 'layers' completes this imagery by suggesting that he plans on exposing the vampire's body, making it vulnerable to the powers of the heroes.

As opposed to the body of the vampire, which is heavily cloaked, and also protected by the vampiric wolf, the body of the victim is always vulnerable. 'ड्रैकुला का हमला' ('The Attack of Dracula') begins with the members of the Vampire Elimination Society using a wax figure of a girl as a bait to lure Dracula into their trap.[70] This ideal victim set up by them is dressed in a sleeveless dress with the neck and the body exposed, making her vulnerable to the attack of Dracula. The victim's body therefore is always presented as easily accessible unlike that of Dracula, which is hidden, cloaked, and difficult to penetrate. As opposed to the victim's, the heroes' body is covered, like that of Dracula, to prevent easy access. Moreover,

[68] Manoj Gupta, 'नागराज और ड्रैकुला' ('Nagraj and Dracula'), 2003, reprint, in सम्पूर्ण ड्रैकुला (The Complete Dracula) (New Delhi: Raj Comics, 2021), 76.

[69] Gupta, 'ड्रैकुला का अंत' ('The End of Dracula'), 9.

[70] Gupta, 'ड्रैकुला का हमला' ('The Attack of Dracula'), 4.

unlike the flowing cloak of Dracula, the sharp, tight-fitting costumes of Nagraj, Dhruv, and others facilitate easy movement and helps them maintain their agility.[71] Although Dracula is othered by his dress in Rajnagar and Mahanagar, he is integrated into their mythological world through the visual narrative. In most popular adaptations and appropriations of *Dracula*, the cloak of the Count is usually black in colour, or sometimes red, to symbolise his association with darkness and with blood. However, Manoj Gupta's Dracula wears a cape which is purple in colour, with a bluish-green suit, and a golden yellow shirt. This unique use of the palette in the portrayal of the Count is determined by the colour scheme dominating the pages of the fictional world of this narrative. Most of the colours that Dracula wears are colours from the costumes worn by the heroes. The purple used for the cloak of Dracula is the same purple used for Doga, who appears in the fourth part of the series titled 'कोलाहल' ('Clamour').[72] The bluish-green colour of the suit both complements, and contrasts with, the bright green costume of Nagraj. Similarly, the golden yellow colour used in Dracula's shirt is the same colour used in the costume of Super Commando Dhruv, and more prominently in Parmanu's costume whose help Dracula seeks to retrieve his own body from the volcanic mountains. These similarities in the colour schemes used for Dracula and the heroes of Raj Comics thus signify the integration of a western myth — created, developed, and circulated through screen adaptations and other visual media — into the mythological world of an Indian comic series. The successful translation of the horror of Stoker's *Dracula* not only depends on how well the element of fear is translated across cultures but also on the placement of the vampiric Count within other fictional mythologies. If the myth of Dracula

[71] Mary Ann Caws comments in her article that the flowing cloak that adorns the body of Dracula in Lugosi's portrayal impedes fast movement, thus giving the Count's movement a slow, ominous gait as he comes down the stairs in the 1931 film. The heroes' uniform can be seen as a contrast in Raj Comics, where it lends a sort of ease of movement to Dhruv, Nagraj, and the others whose movements are quick and brisk.

[72] Manoj Gupta, 'कोलाहल' ('Clamour'), 2003, reprint, in *सम्पूर्ण ड्रैकुला* (The Complete Dracula) (New Delhi: Raj Comics, 2021.

clashes with the local mythology of the text to which it is transferred, the element of horror also fails. Instead, a narrative continuity of the Dracula myth, and its seamless extension into the local mythology of the text, ensures that the readers can correctly anticipate the horror that is about to unfold.[73] While the element of shock has often been emphasised in discussions about horror literature, the affective satisfaction experienced by the readers/viewers when their anticipation of dread materialises on the page or on the screen also forms an important part of horror fiction.

However, each time the myth of Dracula is referenced, and imported into the fictional world of Nagraj and Dhruv, it is also altered in significant but subtle ways. In 'ड्रैकुला का हमला' ('The Attack of Dracula') elements of the original myth are referenced repeatedly including the use of garlic, the sign of the cross, and Dracula's inability to tolerate sunlight. These elements are immediately subverted, with Dracula proclaiming that he is no longer afraid of the cross or sunrise and sunset.[74] Instead, he is killed by a cross made with the bones of Saint Eulogian.[75] Soon, however, we find that he is brought back to life by Nagpaasha and his evil Gurudev who plan to use Dracula to defeat Nagraj, and establish their rule over the world. The second time, Dracula is killed using the bones of Lori's teeth, who is a successor of Saint Eulogian.[76] He is however brought back to life once again and becomes immune to the power of Lori. The third time, Dracula is almost killed when he bites Nagraj, as a result of which Dracula's body melts away.[77] Just before completely getting destroyed he bites Nagpasha, who has *amrit* (elixir of

[73] This intermingling of popular horror mythologies is also evident in the use of Frankenstein's monster (here referred to as Frankenstein) as a servant of Dracula. This fusion of popular horror icons is however not new, and has been seen most famously in films like *House of Frankenstein* (1944) and *House of Dracula* (1945) that brought together the on-screen monsters produced by Universal Studios.

[74] Gupta, 'ड्रैकुला का हमला' ('The Attack of Dracula'), 5.

[75] Gupta, 'ड्रैकुला का हमला' ('The Attack of Dracula'), 8-9.

[76] Gupta, 'ड्रैकुला का हमला' ('The Attack of Dracula'), 75.

[77] Gupta, ''नागराज और ड्रैकुला' ('Nagraj and Dracula'), 76.

immortality) flowing through his body. As a result, Dracula's body becomes immortal. Each time Dracula is killed and resuscitated, his myth deviates slightly from the original one. The processes of myth-building in Menon's *Dracula* and Manoj Gupta's *Dracula* are thus different from each other. In the case of Menon, the experience of horror is based on the readers' ability to replace the previous cultural knowledge about Dracula with a new mythology, created against the backdrop of Indian history. Although the success of this new mythology depends on the existence and circulation of the popular myth of Dracula among the masses, it nonetheless removes itself from the original source once it has imported the character of the vampire into its own fictional world set in ancient India. Manoj Gupta's use of the Dracula mythology, on the other hand, is extremely self-referential. When Lori informs her fiancé Mark that she has inherited Dracula's castle, the latter exclaims, 'वही वैम्पायर काउंट ड्रैकुला जिसके बारे में कई डरावनी कहानियां मशहूर हैं!' ('The same Dracula about whom several horrific stories are popular!')[78] Mark's reference to Dracula as a character that is popular immediately links the narrative to the larger body of fictional works on the vampiric Count, thus establishing an inter-textual mythology. This addition of a new mythology to a previous one serves to extend the narrative of Dracula constantly, leading to a growing body of knowledge about vampires and the Transylvanian Count that is perpetually changing and absorbing more and more cultural meanings and signification. The Count and the other characters constantly show an awareness of the existence of the popular mythology around Dracula, which the writer employs, propagates, and also subverts. For example, when Dhurv attacks the Count with a cross in 'ड्रैकुला का हमला' ('The Attack of Dracula') the latter replies, 'आsssह! तोह तूने किसी पुरानी किताब में पढ़ रखा है की ड्रैकुला के दिल में क्रॉस घुसाने से वह मर जाता है! लेकिन ये बात अब उन किताबों की तरह ही पुरानी हो गई है! देख ले, मैं नहीं मरा!' ('Ah! So you have read in some old book

[78] Gupta, 'ड्रैकुला का हमला' ('The Attack of Dracula'), 20.

that you can kill Dracula by inserting a cross into his chest! But that fact has become as old as those books you have read! See, I have not died!)[79] Within this fictional world, Dracula is himself aware of the countless books written about him. The mythology surrounding him is part of popular knowledge which is in constant circulation. Interestingly, Dhruv uses Dracula's awareness of his popularity against him. Although Dracula claims that the information circulating about him in those books have become outdated, his belief in his popularity leads to a sense of complacency. As he mistakenly thinks that Dhruv is following the old mythology where he can be killed using a cross, in reality the cross is made of gelatine, and is used to hide the real cross made from the bones of Lori that has the power to kill the Count.

Even as the story progresses, the mythology of Dracula has been updated and circulated without his knowledge. Mitigating the element of horror, in Stoker's novel as in Manoj Gupta's *Dracula* and many other appropriations, is thus based on how efficiently the characters can utilise these archival sources on vampires in general, and Dracula in particular. That is to say, the task of defeating the vampire always requires one to have a thorough knowledge of the previous mythology of the Count, and depends on how well that knowledge is stored in memory, retrieved, and modified when required. In Stoker's *Dracula*, for example, Van Helsing's preparations against the spread of vampirism are based both on his knowledge of 'the lore and experience of the ancients and of all those who have *studied* the powers of the Un-Dead'[80] and his own reading of the contemporary notes made by Harker that he advises Dr Seward to '*Read*…with the open mind' and to '*study* them well' (my emphases).[81] The experience of shared reading of texts is a central part of Stoker's *Dracula* where books and other documents circulate among characters, just like the flow of blood

[79] Gupta, 'ड्रैकुला का हमला' ('The Attack of Dracula'), 70-71.

[80] Stoker, 190.

[81] Stoker, 194.

from one character to the other.[82] This repeated emphasis on reading and studying former accounts within the narrative is important with regard to acknowledging and incorporating existing mythologies of horror within the current text. At the same time, with every reading and incorporation of the previous myth, it can also be altered. As Van Helsing himself tells Dr Seward, '…if you can *add* in any way to the story here told do so…' (my emphasis).[83] This addition of new narratives to old ones, which forms a part of the myth-making technique used by Stoker, is also found in appropriations like that of Raj Comics. The incorporation of the world of Raj Comics with the myth of Dracula and Frankenstein creates a shared textual reality that both borrows from its source material and extends it further by creating new narratives out of it. This makes the myth of Dracula a dynamic, evolving narrative that is constantly shaped by the changing nature of popular imagination.

The narrative authority to change the mythology of Dracula thus plays an important role in determining the centre of power in the text. In Christopher Fowler's short story 'Dracula's Library,' Harker is entrusted with the task of sorting the books of the Count's library, where he repeatedly has sexual fantasies and violent nightmares.[84] Harker devises a system to quantify the value of the books, and classifies them according to their practicality and use, which makes him think that it has led to the reduction of their value: 'A fanciful mind might imagine that I was somehow robbing the library of its power by reclassifying these tomes in such a manner, that by quantifying them I am reducing the spell they cast.'[85] The method of accessing and creating an archive out of Dracula's books thus grants Harker a sort of power.

---

[82] Sunggyung Jo, ''Vampiric Reading': Dracula and Readerly Desire,' *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 61, no. 3 (2019): 226, https://www.jstor.org/stable/26778835. Accessed on 12th January 2024.

[83] Stoker, 194.

[84] Christopher Fowler, 'Dracula's Library,' *Critical Quarterly* 40, no. 2 (July 1998): 48-58, https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8705.00160. Accessed on 20th January 2024.

[85] Fowler, 51.

While Dracula in Fowler's story uses the library as an erotic space for trapping Harker, the latter tries to reclaim his power by organising the books about Romania or Dracula's ancestors with a sense of rationality and order. Control over creation and dissemination of knowledge about the mythology of the Count thus provides one with power over the monster. Stoker's novel, similarly, constantly 'inscribes language and writing as ways of gaining and keeping power.'[86] Manoj Gupta's *Dracula* shows how this circulation of textual power is based on the ability to control the mythological narrative.

The cultural translation of Stoker's *Dracula* into these different mythological and historical realities has often been studied in the light of the socio-cultural meanings the monster is expected to carry. Scholarly studies on the adaptation and appropriation of *Dracula* often focus on how the original meaning is often replaced by new interpretations, depending on the change of history. As Nina Auerbach observes regarding vampire fiction, 'every age embraces the vampire it needs.'[87] The constitution of the monster thus becomes dependent on the meaning it is supposed to carry within the specific timeline. As a result, the monster becomes a mere metaphor, a hollow shell, which does not have any existence outside its role as a historical signifier. The popularity of the vampire narrative, for example, is believed to be a by-product of its 'metaphoric usefulness'.[88] Without the meaning, the monster ceases to exist in this line of analysis, which has been the foundation of critical studies on horror literature since long. Roger B. Salomon notes that instead of focusing on the inexplicability of the experience of fear, the primary response to the literature of horror has been to rationalise it away.[89] This

[86] Rebecca A. Pope, 'Writing and Biting in *Dracula*,' *Lit: Literature Interpretation Theory* 1, no. 3 (1990): 208, https://doi.org/10.1080/10436929008580030. Accessed 19th December 2023.

[87] Auerbach, 145.

[88] Veronica Hollinger and Joan Gordon, ed. Introduction, *Blood Read: The Vampire as Metaphor in Contemporary Culture* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), 3.

[89] Roger B. Salomon, *Mazes of the Serpent: An Anatomy of Horror Narrative* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2002), 2.

creates a constant pressure to consider the monster only in the light of the meaning it carries. As a result, two main metaphorical connotations of the word 'vampire' have been seen in popular usage — a social or political tyrant who sucks away the life-force of the people he rules over; or an enticing lover who drains the energy, ambition and life of the beloved for his/her own benefit.[90] The translation of the horror of Dracula is thus seen as the replacement of the Victorian socio-political and sexual parameters present in Stoker's novel with new ones, specific to the temporal and spatial domain he is transferred to. The narrative of Dracula is thus seen as a '*cultural* [my emphasis] scenario learned early and repeated again and again' in the popular media.[91] As per this analysis, the monstrosity of Dracula (or of any other monster) depends ultimately on this cultural core, which is thought to be present at the centre of this mythology. This detachable cultural core is believed to be replaced by a different one when there is a change in the cultural context, leading to a change in the mythology of horror. Without this core, the monster is considered to be incapable of functioning. For example, Dracula's monstrosity is only understood through the critical lens of sexual metaphors, or the political upheavals he is a part of. Within this analysis, the political conflict of Dracula with the Turks in Stoker's novel is replaced by his conflict with King Alexander in the first issue, and with Chandragupta Maurya in the second issue, of Sudeep Menon's graphic novel. Without this political core, the undead status of Dracula cannot be critiqued as per this model of the monster as a metaphor in horror literature.

[90] Ernest Jones, *On the Nightmare* (London: Hogarth Press, 1931).

[91] James Twitchell, 'The Vampire Myth,' *American Imago* 37, no. 1 (Spring 1980): 84, https://www.jstor.org/stable/26303815. Accessed on 20th December 2023.

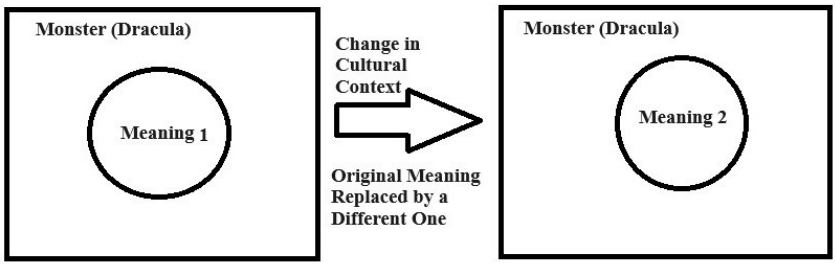

Figure 4.5: Monster as Metaphor Model of Analysis

However, I wish to propose a different model of analysis for the horror of Dracula, and monsters in general, that recognises the existence of the monstrosity outside this cultural core. It is important to note that I am not suggesting in any way that the socio-political and historical context is irrelevant to the nature of horror in the text. As my previous chapters show, an understanding of the change in the cultural context is crucial to any study of the translation, adaptation, and appropriation of Stoker's novel in different languages. What I am suggesting instead is that the monster (Dracula) first exists in its own right within the textual space, and then gets linked to other cultural meanings that expand the mythology of horror in these adaptations and approprations. The structural integration of Stoker's myth of Dracula with other mythologies in different visual and textual media is an important part of the proliferation of the Count's story. Stoker's *Dracula* itself is a text that relies on the way the narrative is structured and assembled from the different diary entries, phonograph records, shorthand notes, and other material kept by the characters. While *Dracula* narrates its own textual assembly,[92] it also creates a possibility for extending that narrative by adding on more records, and new material to the existing story. *Powers of Darkness*, for example, includes a scene where Dr Seward buys a newspaper and notices reports about riots organised by anti-Semites, blaming

[92] Seed, 73.

Jews for ritual murders, abduction of children, and other horrific crimes.[93] While these newspaper reports have nothing to do with Draculitz in particular, they extend the overall narrative beyond its supernatural limits to inscribe a tale of global instability into the story of the vampire. The multiple points of view, and the multiplicity of records kept by different people in different forms, lead to narrative inconsistencies, gaps, and missing linkages in the novel which constantly disrupt the flow of reading.[94] However, it is because of these gaps in the narrative that new mythologies can be filled in, or a part of the text removed from the 'original' text. Stoker's *Dracula* is a text which can be disassembled at any juncture and welded to new mythologies and new histories without damaging the flow of fear through the novel. It is the 'narrative vacancy' in the text,[95] resulting from the fragmentary nature of the story, which leads to its constant replication across media time and again.

Both Sudeep Menon's graphic novel and Manoj Gupta's comics show how seamlessly Stoker's mythology of Dracula blends in with either the world of historical fantasy, or with the superhero genre. This smooth transition of the vampiric Count to the world of ancient India, or to the world of Nagraj and Dhruv, cannot be explained by the 'monster as metaphor' model of analysis, which requires one to empty one meaning and infuse another, each time the cultural context is changed. To understand this connection of Dracula to diverse mythologies across media, it is essential to follow the 'monster as a pattern of fear' model of analysis.

[93] Stoker and A-e, 469.

[94] Robert Ready, 'Textula,' *Journal of Narrative Theory* 40, No. 3 (Fall 2010), 281, https://www.jstor.org/stable/41427233. Accessed 29th December 2023.

[95] Ready, 'Textula,' 278.

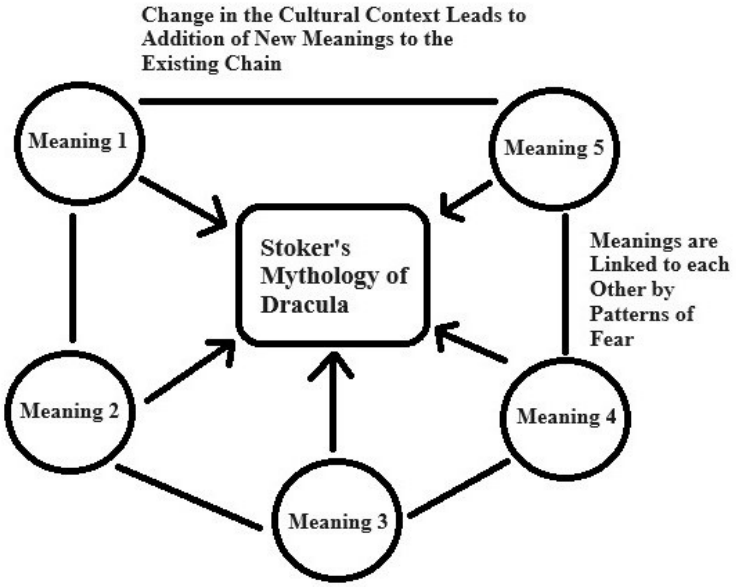

Figure 4.6: Monster as a Pattern of Fear Model of Analysis

In this model, the monster (Dracula) does not have a cultural core or meaning. The fear it generates is a part of the mythology created in the fictional space of the novel. The monstrosity of Dracula, in this model, stems from no external source other than the physicality of the vampire, and its sinister predatory nature. However, Dracula's victimisation of Lucy Westenra or Mina Harker in London generates a sort of horror which bears similarities to other horrors of invasion. Similarly, the horror of the tyrannical rule of the Count over his people in Romania — brought forth in the scene of stealing babies from the villagers — bears a similarity to the tyranny of Romania over the Turkish soldiers in *Dracula in Istanbul* for example. These similarities between the mythology of Dracula and other fictional and historical realities create a pattern of fear that links Stoker's novel to these different cross-cultural appropriations. Therefore, Stoker's monster, which has been linked with Russo-phobia, can also be conveniently and comfortably be placed within the context of the invasion of India by King Alexander in Menon's text, or in the fictional context of the invasion of Rajnagar and Mahanagar by the vampiric Count in Manoj Gupta's comics. It is for this same reason that

emancipation from the tyranny of Dracula can be equated with the emancipation of the Turks during the Turkish War of Independence in *Dracula in Istanbul*. In each of these cases, Dracula is not a mere metaphor whose meaning is being changed with the change in the historical context. Rather, all these different meanings form a cultural chain, and get linked to the central mythology of Dracula because of the creation of a pattern of fear across historical or fictional narratives. The change in the cultural context merely leads to the addition of new meanings without changing the central mythology of Stoker's monster. Even in texts like Sudeep Menon's *Dracula* that completely reimagines the nature of the Count, the readers' reception of the text is always fused with the memory of Stoker's creation of the monster. It forms, as we have discussed in the first section (Chapter 2), a sort of phantom text, which influences the reading of *Dracula*. This model of analysis does not make the monster a mere metaphor. Its horror exists outside the cultural meanings, although it is linked to these other social and historical narratives through the pattern of fear.

Scholars have often noted how Dracula has been made to represent Victorian anxieties about society, making the Count 'mutate into almost anything' including an Irish landlord, a medieval aristocrat, or a sexual deviant.[96] This 'interpretive slipperiness'[97] of Dracula has led to the assumption that Dracula 'mutates' or changes into the specific meaning he is carrying within a particular critical paradigm. However, as we have established, the central core of horror of Stoker's *Dracula* remains the same across fictional, critical, or historical paradigms. It only gets linked to additional meanings through patterns of fear. By analysing the myth-making process of *Dracula* as a process of creating these patterns, we move from a rationalistic approach to a more emotion-driven approach in horror literature. This is because these patterns

[96] Jarlath Killeen, *The Emergence of Irish Gothic Fiction: History, Origins, Theories* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), 80.

[97] Killeen, 80.

of fear are not created through cognitive links but arranged on the basis of the affective response towards certain events on the page or on the screen. Dracula himself is seen to manipulate and control the affective map of the narrative in both Menon's text and Manoj Gupta's comics to establish his power. In 'नागराज और ड्रैकुला' ('Nagraj and Dracula') Nagpasha deceitfully takes over the body of the Count and starts spreading terror on the streets of Mahanagar with his vampiric wolves. When the people hide in their houses to protect themselves from these creatures, he sends flesh-eating insects that force them out of their homes. Nagpasha plans to use the body of Dracula to force the people into surrendering to his will, so that he can ultimately kill Nagraj. As Nagpasha/Dracula says, 'हा हा हा! सभी महानगर वासी अपने-अपने घरों में दुबक गए हैं! वे समझते हैं कि जब तक वे वहां हैं तब तक वे सुरक्षित हैं! उनको घरों से बाहर निकालना होगा! उनको जान की भीख मांगने के लिए मजबूर करना होगा!' ('Ha ha ha! All the people of Mahanagar are hiding in their houses! They think that as long as they are in their houses they are safe! I have to bring them out of their homes! I have to compel them to beg for their lives!)[98] It is thus the affective state of the people of Mahanagar that creates power hierarchies rather than any cognitive choice. Nagpasha's/Dracula's ability to destroy their state of security within their houses establishes his supremacy over them, just like the hero's ability to alleviate this fear situates him above the ordinary citizens. The appearance of the hero Faceless, just before the people are about to surrender to Dracula, changes the affective dynamics of the scene.[99] Similarly, the second issue of Menon's *Dracula* begins by establishing the horror mood of the narrative through emotive details. The narrator describes how the 'wailing of children and lamentations of women echoed through the sacred lands of Aryavarth.'[100] Dracula's power in

[98] Gupta, ''नागराज और ड्रैकुला' ('Nagraj and Dracula'), 49.

[99] Gupta, 'नागराज और ड्रैकुला' ('Nagraj and Dracula'), 55.

[100] Menon, *Dracula*, Issue 2.

the narrative is thus not just physical; it is the power to control and manipulate the affective intensities, both of the characters and of the readers. While Shaw argues that the pleasures of horror fiction arise from our perception of the 'horrific force as an embodiment of awesome power,'[101] I argue that it is the audience's/readers' vicarious experience of emotional vulnerability that contributes to the success of horror fiction. The monster's ability to manipulate the emotions of the characters puts him at the top of the power hierarchy. For example, in Menon's *Dracula*, Issue 2, the courtesan-turned-vampire Kalyani tells the other blood-sucking prostitutes before they devour their human clients, 'Enjoy your dinner sisters! Let them run, let them cry for their gods!! Their fear is appetizing.'[102] If the monster 'enjoys' the fear of the victim, the reader too 'enjoys' the vulnerability of the victim at the hands of the monster, in the sense that the reader willingly participates in the act of horror by drawing narrative pleasure from it. The same emotional vulnerability utilised by Nagpasha/Dracula in 'नागराज और ड्रैकुला' ('Nagraj and Dracula') to control the citizens of Mahanagar is used here by Vlad and the courtesan vampires to remain at the top of the power hierarchy. Although they belong to two different mythological and historical paradigms they are part of the same pattern of fear. It is this shared affective experience which contributes to the success of the translation of the horror of *Dracula* across media and across cultures. It is thus possible to formulate a model of analysis where the core of horror in any monster tale is an affective one, and which gets linked to other cultural meanings later, based on the way it generates, circulates, and modifies the emotion of fear in the readers/audience.

The translation of Stoker's *Dracula* across cultures thus involves a reiteration, in different forms and different mythological spaces, of the pattern of fear that was present in the

[101] Daniel Shaw, 'Power, Horror and Ambivalence,' *Film and Philosophy* 4, Issue on Horror (2001): 6, https://doi.org/10.5840/filmphil2001423. Accessed on 4th January 204.

[102] Menon, *Dracula* Issue 2.

original novel. These patterns of fear determine the affective states that the readers are made to experience through different narrative and aesthetic means. The emotion thus generated is however, not triggered by a particular object alone. If the 'children of the night' scare Harker into prolonging his stay in Dracula's castle, the object of horror in Menon's text or Manoj Gupta's comics is not necessarily the same. For example, Dracula's castle in 'ड्रैकुला का अंत' ('The End of Dracula') is not guarded by the wolves but by a demon in the form of a clock, an evil painting that pulls people within its world, and other demonic characters who have no existence within Stoker's world. Yet the central essence of Dracula's castle and Dracula's body being difficult to access is present in both. The translation of the emotion of horror is thus not object-based. Although Dracula's body or the castle or any other element *contributes* to this feeling of dread as an *object of horror*, ultimately it is the intangible mood of fear permeating the text which is translated across cultures. Horror is based on an objectless condition of anxiety that is created through iconography, music, or other elements creating an overall mood or affect.[103] This objectless feeling of anxiety or dread implies that the horror mood is sustained even when the object of fear, that is Dracula, demons, or any external threat, is eliminated. Stoker maintains this anxiety by showing Dracula's castle standing tall even after his demise.[104] Because the readers' anxiety is not just tied to the figure of Dracula but to the paraphernalia of iconography and setting, the castle generates anxiety even after the Count is killed. However, since the mood of horror can be created using other paraphernalia as well and not tied to a particular object only, in the appropriations of *Dracula*, the object generating the horror can easily be changed. For example, the same lingering sense of fear is translated in Sudeep Menon's *Dracula*, Issue 2. Although the vampires are defeated and Vlad captured in chains,

[103] Hills, 25.

[104] Stoker, 325.

we discover that Chandragupta Maurya failed to strike the heart of Dracula, and that the weapon is nowhere to be found. As a result, Chanakya requests the black magic monks to erase the memory of Dracula so that his threat is neutralised. Even though the object of fear is eliminated, the readers are left with a sense of anxiety about Dracula's return, which is heightened by the question posed by the narrator at the end, 'But will the story of Dracula ever be told? Only time will answer?'[105] This question which the narrator poses in the text highlights the possibility of Dracula's return. However, instead of the castle, it is the body of Dracula which serves as an object of fear, contributing to the anxiety of return. Similarly, in 'कोलाहल' ('Clamour'), the final part of Manoj Gupta's *Dracula*, a divine voice reveals that Dracula's soul will have to wait at the gates of hell for years, which is followed by the narrator's voice announcing that the story of Dracula is yet to be over.[106] Both the texts therefore turn the anxiety of return — a prominent trope of horror fiction — into the expectation of return. The lingering sense of dread becomes, in the popular imagination, a source of possibility for further appearances of Dracula in different cultural contexts and mythological worlds.

It is this ability of popular media to generate expectations of Dracula's reappearance, based on the anxiety of return present in horror fiction, which contributes to the continued popularity of the vampiric Count. As this chapter demonstrates, the figure of the Count across popular media in different cultures work in the shadow of Stoker's mythology, even when deviating from it. Although the mythology of Dracula constantly expands each time it acquires new cultural meanings, certain key motifs and narrative units remain intact, and form the affective core of fear that is replicated in the adaptations and appropriations. It is only when we study the way Stoker's mythology interacts with other mythologies like that of Nagraj, or

[105] Menon, *Dracula* Issue 2.

[106] Gupta, 'कोलाहल' ('Clamour'), 120.

with other historical fantasies like that of Menon's text, that we begin to understand how these patterns of fear function in a synchronised manner.

Chapter 5: Sacrifice, Sexuality, and Shamanism: Translating the Symbolism of Blood in *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula* and *Nishi Trishna* (*Night Thirst*)

In the previous chapter, we have studied how the adaptations of Dracula across cultures are connected by patterns of fear which influence the way the monster is created, perceived, and circulated in the popular imagination. The most important reason why the text of Dracula is so easily translatable across regional and linguistic boundaries is that it latches on to the primordial blood myths present in every culture. Despite the cunning displayed by the Count, and the long speeches about his political history as a Szeleky, he is ultimately a predator who is essentially thirsty for blood. Within the vampiric world of *Dracula*, Stoker often borrows elements from the Christian idea of blood as a symbol of sacrifice. Dracula's consumption of blood, and his act of making Mina drink his own blood, are often read as distorted and perverted versions of the Eucharist ritual. However, as we had argued in Chapter 1, these so-called 'Christian' elements merely form a part of the horror iconography of the text. What is significant is that the use of the blood symbol allows Stoker's novel to be translated to other cultural setups with their own symbolisms of blood. At the same time, the symbol of the blood is also instrumental in altering the nature and the meaning of the element of horror in the text. This is because, while the vampire's consumption of blood in Stoker's novel can be interpreted variously as a perversion of the Eucharist ritual, a mark of the animality of the Count, or a proof of the primeval nature of the evil haunting London, in the adaptations these meanings are often altered because of a change in the symbolism. This chapter will study these altered meanings of blood in the adaptations. I will try to determine how the blood as a symbol facilitates the cultural translation of horror, and how it changes the nature of the horror in the process, through the multiplicity of meanings it generates across the cultural divide. I will focus on two adaptations of Stoker's novel. The first is Hammer's unmade *The Unquenchable Thirst of*

Dracula, written by Anthony Hinds, which was released as a BBC radio adaptation in 2017, and was directed by Mark Gatiss. The second is the 1989 *Nishi Trishna* (*Night Thirst*) which is considered to be the first Bengali vampire film. Both relocate Dracula to, or place a vampire-figure which clearly references Dracula in, India, and feature a secondary narrative of a regional blood cult that is steeped in local folklore and religion. Using these texts, I will argue that the different symbolisms of blood in these vampire narratives affect the nature of horror associated with them. Although I will focus on the different cultural variations of blood symbolism used in these narratives, it is important to remember that they share certain common patterns of fear which we have discussed in the previous chapter. The horror of *Dracula* and its adaptations and appropriations are therefore constructed both at a foundational level — where each narrative shares certain key elements of fear, like the fear of an invasive Other or an animalistic alter-ego — and at a secondary, dynamic level — consisting of visual cues, cultural symbolisms, and blood narratives — which changes according to cultural and historical paradigms. While the previous chapter dealt with the foundational core of the *Dracula* narrative, this chapter focuses on the secondary aspect of blood symbolism which is contingent upon cultural belief systems.

Blood as Materia Magica

The association of Dracula with regional blood cults in the Indian appropriations of the novel may be seen as an attempt to read the character of the Count against the local mythology. However, the mythology of these regional blood cults may also have inspired Stoker's creation in the first place. As a result, when Dracula is transported to India, and his deeds narrated against the stories of local blood cults, the translation of horror is seamless. Although the vampire, as imagined by the West, was largely absent in Indian folklore, several mythologies associated with blood-drinking were abundantly present. Devendra P. Varma traces the origin

of the vampire narrative of the West to the blood-drinking and/or fanged deities of India, Tibet, Nepal, Mongolia and other Eastern mythologies.[1] Citing the example of the Indian Kali drinking the blood of the demons, the Nepalese 'blood-drinking God of Death' with three blood-shot eyes, and other 'vampire gods' of Tantric Buddhism, Varma shows, how the vampire motif travelled from India to central Asia, and through the Great Silk Route to the Mediterranean, and then to Eastern Europe.[2] If the western vampire, including Dracula, is traced back to these Eastern religious mythologies, there is a drastic change in the way its character is interpreted. In the religious mythologies referred to by Devendra Varma, blood is seen as having a symbolic significance. When blood is used as a part of ritualistic practices, or when it appears in Eastern mythologies dealing with 'vampire gods,' it is seen as a divine 'sanguinary soul-substance.'[3] The symbolism of blood in primitive cultures revolved around the idea that it was a potent agent which could be used to establish an intercommunion between the human and the sacred orders.[4] The consumption of blood, or hematophagy, was, therefore, a symbolic gesture of the absorption of the life-essence, animating all bodies. In many ancient cultures, including Mesopotamia, blood, and especially human blood, was given a divine character, and was believed to have come from the gods.[5] The act of hematophagy would then be a means to assert a spiritual connection between all life forms. In the case of the western vampire, however, there is a deliberate perversion of this ritualistic act of hematophagy. Stoker's Dracula intercepts this free flow of blood across life forms and hoards it for himself.

[1] Devendra P. Varma, Introduction, 'The Vampire in Legend, Lore and Literature,' in *Varney the Vampire, or, The Feast of Blood*, by James Malcolm Rhymer 1845, reprint, edited by Devendra P. Varma (New York: Arno Press, 1970), xiv.

[2] Varma, xiv-xx.

[3] E.O. James, *Sacrifice and Sacrament* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1962), 60.

[4] James, 25-26.

[5] Dennis J. McCarthy, 'The Symbolism of Blood and Sacrifice,' *Journal of Biblical Literature* 88, no. 2 (1969): 166. https://doi.org/10.2307/3262876. Accessed on 3rd February 2024.

Just like he hoards wealth and prevents its flow into the economy, so also does he hoard blood for his undead body and prevents it from being used as a life-force for the living. Dracula's hoarding of blood can be best understood in the scene where he prevents the female vampires from feasting on Harker, claiming that the latter belongs to him.[6] Therefore, even if the imagery of hematophagy in Eastern mythologies may have influenced Stoker's vampiric Count, as Varma believes, the nature of Dracula's blood-drinking is totally different from the ritualistic, sacrificial use of blood in the religious context. As opposed to the use of blood as an object of sacrifice in these religious cultures, where it symbolises the rise of fresh life from death, Dracula's act of blood-drinking only leads to more undead bodies, who consume blood solely for the sake of their own sustenance.

Despite the similarity of the blood-drinking motif, therefore, each of these mythologies differs vastly in terms of the symbolism of blood. Therefore, to classify them together, as Varma does, under the broad umbrella term of 'vampirism' will be a false generalisation. What is more important is the way the horror of Stoker's *Dracula* is changed, each time the narrative is linked to a particular mythology of blood from a different culture. This difference between the use of hematophagy in the mythology of religion and the mythology of Stoker's *Dracula* is evident in *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*.[7] In this radio-play, the Count operates in India with the help of the Maharaja and the Rani, who procure young victims for him to slake his thirst. However, the Maharaja and the Rani are themselves part of a cult which worships a 'god of blood.' After Dracula has satisfied his thirst, the victim is taken to the altar of this god for sacrifice. There is a cultural change in the symbolism of blood from the time Dracula consumes it to the time when the victim's blood is shed on the altar as a sacrifice to the god. For Dracula, blood is a mere source of sustenance for his undead body. For the Rani and her brotherhood of

[6] Bram Stoker, *Dracula*, 43.

[7] Anthony Hinds, *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*, directed by Mark Gatiss (London: BBC Studios, 2017), Radio Drama, 1 hr., 26 min.

blood, however, it is a gift to the god. The use of the blood as an element of oblation establishes its importance as the divine 'sanguinary soul-substance,' as discussed above. The use of blood-sacrifice as a symbolic enactment of the rise of life from death is also evident when the Rani refers to the god of blood as the 'great god of creation and of destruction,' and offers the woman Lakhsmi's blood as a 'gift.'[8] The reference to Lakshmi's blood as a gift is crucial in understanding the nature of the blood symbolism used in this adaptation. In primitive societies, the pouring out of the blood in sacrifice was essential because it was a symbol of life that was consecrated and liberated in order to establish a connection with the divine entity.[9] The offering of the blood as a gift was therefore used to gratify the entity and to appease it, to obtain favours from it, or to express gratitude for the benefits received from the divine forces.[10] As opposed to the selfish consumption of blood by Dracula, the Rani's use of blood is supposed to be a part of a ritualistic gift to the god.[11] The act of spillage which defines this ritual, is seen differently by the Rani and by Dracula. This is because, for the cultists, the act of spilling the blood of the victim is necessary to initiate a connection between the worshipper and the object of worship; the flow of blood becomes a symbolic representation of the flow of life from the victim's body

[8] The idea of blood as a gift is also present in Stoker's *Dracula*, although not in the religious context. In the novel, it is Lucy who receives the 'gift' of blood from Dr Seward, Arthur Holmwood, and Quincey Morris, all three of whom had been in love with her. Although Van Helsing, the father-figure to Lucy, also gives his blood to her, in case of the other three men the offering of blood is seen in the context of a romantic pact. Holmwood, moreover, sees the transfusion of blood as a validation of the marriage which was to take place between them: 'Arthur…was speaking of his part in the operation where his blood had been transfused to his Lucy's veins… Arthur was saying that he felt since then as if they two had been really married and that she was his wife in the sight of God. None of us said a word of the other operations, and none of us ever shall.' (Stoker, 157). Instead of its medical value, Holmwood has turned the 'gift' of blood into a social contract that tries to validate his exclusive relationship with Lucy. His perception, however, is invalid, given the multiple transfusions Lucy has received.

[9] E.O. James, 25-26.

[10] James, 25.

[11] While *The Unquenchable Thirst* separates Dracula's use of blood from the cultists, the Swedish *Powers of Darkness,* features Draculitz — the Dracula figure — as the leader of a blood cult himself. In *The Unquenchable Thirst* Dracula sees the ritualistic spillage of blood as 'waste' although for the worshippers it is an offering intended to please the deity. However, the 'sacrifice' in the ritual performed by Draculitz does not involve spilling the blood as 'waste' but rather becomes a communal act of vampirism, wherein all the members of the congregation drink the blood of the victim after the mysterious half-human half-animal creature sitting at the foot of the altar has had its fill (Stoker and A – e, *Powers of Darkness*, 161-162).

to that of the deity. This flow of blood to the deity is supposed to please her so that the worshippers are blessed with rewards for this human sacrifice. For the cultists themselves, blood acts as a *materia magica* – a magical fluid which when combined with the correct rituals and correct recitation can be used to unlock bigger powers and benefits. For Dracula, on the other hand, blood is an object of consumption which must be fully absorbed into his own body and enjoyed for its life-giving properties. There is no inherent magic in the essence of blood for the vampire; the pleasure he experiences on satiating his thirst is an end in itself. It merely serves to sustain his existence as an undead creature and does not hold any ritualistic significance.

While both the act of spillage and the act of absorption of blood are visually effective in creating an atmosphere of horror, the meanings they generate are totally different. In case of the spillage of blood by the cultists, the sacrificial body is not only 'the ceremonial focal point' around which the ritual is being performed but it is also the focal point of the 'horrific aesthetic of sacrifice.'[12] The perspective of horror in this case is built around the victim's body, with the blood flowing *away* from it. In the case of Dracula, however, the horrific aesthetic is centred on the vampire's body where Dracula bends over Lakhsmi and drinks her blood, after which he lies in a state of ecstasy with the eyes distant, and the body sprawled out on the chaise lounge. The perspective of horror is focused on the blood flowing *into* the body of the vampire. Thus, the way the flow of blood is perceived determines the nature of the horror in the text. When the cultists prepare the body of Lakshmi for sacrifice, the voice of the Rani gets louder as she offers the sacrifice to the god. The narration becomes fast-paced, as the background music rises to a crescendo, and then stops just at the point where the sacrifice is made. This rise in the intensity of the aural paraphernalia during the sacrifice mimics the rapid gushing of blood

[12] Douglas E. Cowan, *The Forbidden Body: Sex, Horror, and the Religious Imagination* (New York: NYU Press, 2022), 82.

from the victim's body. Since *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula* is a radio drama, the horror of the blood oozing from the victim's body cannot be visually conveyed. As a result, the lack of the visual imagery of the blood flowing out is compensated by the rising voice of the Rani, the fast-paced narration, and the increasing loudness of the background score. This rise of the aural paraphernalia to a crescendo is followed by a gradual fall, where the background score and the other voices become quieter and quieter, till there is a complete moment of silence. This fall into the moment of silence thus marks the gradual loss of the life-force of the victim, ending in her death. As opposed to this loud aural structure of the narrative during the sacrifice, the scene of Dracula drinking the blood of Lakshmi is marked by whispering voices, and a slow and calm pace of narration. The low voice of the narrator, and the low, raspy sound of Dracula drinking her blood, are in sharp contrast to the loud voices found in the scene of the cultists sacrificing Lakshmi. This is because the aural narrative tries to capture the predatory nature of Dracula who lies hidden in the palace of Mahabad and covertly feeds on his victims. The whispers and the slow style of narration mimic the predator's stealthy movements to capture and feed on his prey. On the other hand, the cultists' sacrifice contains an element of show; the ritualistic flow of blood must be accompanied by loud chanting voices and excited calls to the deity. The use of the blood by Dracula and by the cultists, therefore, offers us two different strands of horror narrative.

The two strands of horror narrative also contain two different symbolisms of blood. In the horrific aesthetic of sacrifice, the use of the blood revolves around the rejuvenation of the deity. Prem's blood, body, and soul will be the deity's glory, as the Rani says. As the cultists prepare for the sacrifice, they keep chanting *'Rakht jivan hai,'*[13] which is a direct translation of Renfield's dictum 'The blood is the life' in Stoker's novel.[14] Despite the cultists' chant being a

[13] Gatiss, *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*.

[14] Stoker, 130.

literal translation of Renfield's dictum, however, the two statements have vastly different meanings. As discussed, the cultists' chant implies that they perceive the blood as a material for magic because of its symbolic value as the vital force that unites all life forms and connects them to the divine. On the other hand, Renfield's dictum in Stoker's novel — which is also the basis of Dracula's use of blood in the radio drama — implies that it is meant for the rejuvenation of one's own body. As Dracula tells the Rani in *The Unquenchable Thirst*, "What do you know of blood? To you and your foolish followers it is something to spill, to waste…you know nothing, nothing of its life-giving spirit, of life without end."[15] Dracula, therefore, sees the spillage of blood in sacrifice as a waste of the vital fluid of life. Similarly, in Stoker's novel, Renfield keeps repeating 'The blood is the life! The blood is the life' while licking Dr Seward's blood after injuring him, with the aim, as he explains later, of 'strengthening my vital powers by the assimilation with my own body of his life through the medium of his blood …'[16] Renfield's attempt to prolong his life by assimilating other life forms in Stoker's novel, and Dracula's claim that the cultists know nothing of the life-giving properties of the vital fluid in the radio drama, indicate a conception of blood which is more medical than ritualistic. The consumption of human blood for curing diseases has long been a part of pseudo-medical practices. Richard Sugg traces it back to the Romans, who would drink the blood of dead gladiators to cure epilepsy and other diseases.[17] Sugg also notes how Pope Innocent VIII drank the blood of three young boys, who were cut and bled, to cure his failing health.[18] Sugg's study records evidence of hematophagy across history, showing that the practice was common and

[15] Gatiss, *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*.

[16] Stoker, 206.

[17] Richard Sugg, *Mummies, Cannibals and Vampires: The History of Corpse Medicine from the Renaissance to the Victorians* (New York: Routledge, 2011; reprint, 2015), 15.

[18] Sugg, *Mummies, Cannibals and Vampires*, 24.

also popular.[19] Since the loss of blood would lead to people getting tired, pale, and weak, most historic cultures associated blood with vitality, and believed that ingesting the same could help them regain their health.[20] Dracula's consumption of blood, both in Stoker's novel and in *The Unquenchable Thirst*, follows this medical practice of ingesting blood to regain one's vitality. Although Renfield says that he has borrowed the phrase 'The blood is the life' from scriptural sources,[21] there is no ritualistic/religious use of this vital fluid either by him or by Dracula. For the undead body of the vampire, the ingestion of human blood is meant to prolong his life by giving him strength and vitality. During the time Stoker wrote his novel, blood transfusions from humans to humans were already taking place. In the reports published by the physicians, the reinvigorating effect of the transfusion was often noted. For example, in a report published on 3rd January 1829 in *The Lancet,* the effect of Dr Blundell performing a blood transfusion on a lady in Walworth is recorded.[22] While the lady appeared to be 'blanched, and perfectly bloodless in appearance' because of a haemorrhage post child-birth, after the transfusion, 'she felt as if life were infused into her body.'[23] This life-infusing property of blood, which was circulating in the medical terminology of transfusions during the nineteenth century, makes the vampirism of Stoker's Dracula, and Renfield's attempts to assimilate life through

[19] Sugg also notes the evidence of a medicinal jam recipe by a Franciscan apothecary in 1679, which requires the use of *human* blood 'from persons of a warm, moist temperament, such as those of a blotchy, red complexion and rather plump of build' [quoted in Sugg, 29].

[20] Mark Hay, 'The Strange Endurance of Consuming Human Blood for Our Health,' *Atlas Obscura*, October 31, 2022, https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/history-of-drinking-blood. Accessed on 5th March 2024.

[21] Stoker, 206. In the footnote to Renfield's statement, 'The blood is the life' in the Norton edition of *Dracula*, the editors observe the equivocality about the element of blood-drinking, which was prohibited in the Old Testament but promoted in the New Testament when Jesus asked his followers to partake of his blood in the Last Supper. This equivocality, however, does not seem to affect our understanding of Renfield because his act of consuming insects is more Darwinian than scriptural in the way Renfield follows the idea of the food chain. Although the idea of food chain had been discussed previously by other naturalists, Darwin reported on it extensively in the third chapter of *The Origin of Species* where he talked about how the bees who pollinated red clover were eaten by mice, who is turn were eaten by the cats.

[22] Bundell, James. 'Successful Case of Transfusion,' *The Lancet* 11, no. 279 (1829): 431–432. doi:10.1016/s0140-6736(02)91682-x. Accessed on 23rd March 2024.

[23] Blundell, 431-432.

hematophagy, more contextual.[24] Despite Dracula being shown as a primitive source of evil, his conceptualisation of vampirism is technically in tandem with the medical practices of Victorian modernity which gave importance to the life-infusing properties of this fluid.

The conflict between the Rani and Dracula about the use of the blood of the victim is thus a conflict between two different cultural paradigms. On the one hand, the Rani and the cultists treat the blood as a magic material within the context of a religious ritual. On the other hand, Dracula emphasises the use of blood as a bodily fluid that restores vitality, thus following the more modern, medical understanding of blood. However, both Dracula and the Rani use blood as a medium for fulfilling their own needs. Dracula needs the blood of his victims to satiate his thirst physically. While the Rani uses the blood as part of a symbolic ritual, her attraction to the victim also has a physical component. When the Rani sees Prem, there is a look of lust in her eyes. The narrator brings out the physical excitement and sexual attraction which the Rani feels by describing how she 'kneels down and extends her shaking hands to caress him.'[25] Similarly, when Prem is finally brought before the brotherhood of blood, the Rani once again 'runs her hands over the sides of Prem's exposed neck.'[26] Even Dracula understands the Rani's motives when she talks about Prem, and says, "You want him for yourself."[27] Dracula refuses to concede to the Rani's request, claiming that "the boy is mine,"[28] just like he had claimed that Harker belongs to him in Stoker's novel.[29] Although the Rani

[24] However, since Stoker's *Dracula* predates the discovery of blood-type matching by the physician Karl Landsteiner, the issues of the compatibility of blood-type is not taken into account during Lucy's transfusions. *Dracula in Istanbul* updates the account of the transfusions given to the Lucy figure Şadan with Afif Bey recording Dr Resuhi's statement: "According to an earlier blood test of Sadan Hanim, we all have the same blood type." (66) He later adds 'By a great coincidence, the blood type of Turan and Sadan were also the same.' (67)

[25] Gatiss, *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*.

[26] Gatiss, *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*.

[27] Gatiss, *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*.

[28] Gatiss, *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*.

[29] Stoker, 43.

claims that she wants Prem as a sacrifice to the god, untouched by Dracula, she herself claims ownership over the body of Prem because of the lustful desires she harbours towards him. The pleasure which the Rani draws from the physical touch of Prem's 'unsullied flesh'[30] is no different from Dracula's feeling of pleasure after satisfying his blood-lust. The Rani's lust for Prem, therefore, disrupts the sacrifice even before Dracula enters and kills her for disobeying him. This is because the idea of sacrifice requires the worshipper totally to surrender ownership of the person being sacrificed. The Rani, however, wants Prem for herself, thus failing to satisfy the necessary prerequisites for making the sacrifice.

Despite the difference in Dracula's and the cultists' understanding of blood, the vampire shares a commonality with the leader of the cult, the Rani. For both the Count and the Rani, the act of shedding blood, whether through sacrifice or through hematophagy, is linked to a sense of physical and sexual ecstasy. The interpretation of vampirism in Stoker's *Dracula* in terms of the ideas of Victorian sexuality is not new. John Allen Stevenson argues, for example, that *Dracula* is essentially a story of competition, where one old man (the Count), struggles with four young men and another old man (Van Helsing), for the bodies and souls of two young women (Lucy and Mina).[31] One might add that it is also a competition between one old man (Dracula), and three young women (the three female vampires), to own the body and the soul of one young man (Harker). Similarly, Phyllis Roth argues that in *Dracula*, vampirism is equivalent to sexuality and that it is a disguise for fantasies which are both desirable and fearful.[32] The act of sucking the blood of the victim is interpreted as an act

---

[30] Gatiss, *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*.

[31] John Allen Stevenson, 'A Vampire in the Mirror: The Sexuality of Dracula,' PMLA 103, no. 2 (1988): 139. https://doi.org/10.2307/462430. Accessed on 15th March 2024.

[32] Phyllis Roth, 'Suddenly Sexual Women in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*,' 1977; reprint; in *Dracula: A Norton Critical Edition*, edited by Nina Auerbach and David J. Skal, 1-327. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997), 414.

of sexual penetration. The conflict which arises in *The Unquenchable Thirst* between Dracula and the Rani is because of the question of double penetration. This is because, after Dracula has sexually and physically violated the victim Lakshmi through his act of blood-drinking, her body is taken to the cave where she is sacrificed on the phallic *lingam* with its sharp point.[33] The excited voice of the Rani just before the victim is about to be impaled on the *lingam*, indicates the sexual pleasure she feels through this act of vicarious penetration. Even in Prem's case, before she is ready to sacrifice him on the *lingam*, she enjoys the physical touch of his exposed neck. In Stoker's novel too Harker had played the role of a passive victim about to be bitten by the female vampires whose 'demonism is figured as the power to penetrate.'[34] In Stoker's *Dracula*, the Count had controlled all acts of penetration, even stopping the female vampires from having their fill. In *The Unquenchable Thirst*, on the other hand, the Rani defies the Count and takes Prem away to be penetrated by the *lingam*, even before Dracula has had a chance to do the same. In the case of Lakshmi, Dracula has already penetrated her body before the Rani vicariously does so via the *lingam*. Lakshmi's blood and body are thus supposed to offer pleasure at three stages — first to Dracula as he drinks her blood, then to the Rani as she is about to sacrifice her, and third, to the god to whom she is offered as a gift. Dracula's rage — which culminates in the killing of the Rani — is fuelled at the beginning of the story itself, when he sees that the cultists have taken Lakhsmi away before he has completed drinking her blood. Although Dracula has already drunk her blood once, his rage at not being able to have Lakshmi completely to himself shows that the Count is not happy that the victim's blood is shed again at the altar of the deity. By taking Lakshmi away, therefore, the Rani disrupts the orgasmic pleasure of Dracula and prepares her body for

[33] Gatiss, *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*.

[34] Christopher Craft, ''Kiss Me with Those Red Lips': Gender and Inversion in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*,' *Representations*, no. 8 (1984): 109. https://doi.org/10.2307/2928560. Accessed on 29th March 2023.

a second penetration at the *lingam*. Dracula's revenge on the Rani, similarly, involves the disruption of the Rani's pleasure of vicariously penetrating Prem. Just as she is about to sacrifice Prem on the *lingam*, Dracula appears and kills her, which enables Prem to escape. The Rani's experience of orgasmic pleasure, indicated by the fact that her 'face [is] wet with perspiration' as she is about to sacrifice Prem, is thus cut short by Dracula.[35] Interestingly, however, although the acolytes come to defend the Rani from Dracula as the Count is about to kill her by throwing her onto the sharp spikes of the *lingam*, they 'moan with anguish.'[36] The acolytes' cries, therefore, also resemble the moan of pleasure on experiencing sexual release. Although the Rani is deprived of the pleasure of having Prem to herself without the intervention of Dracula, she is herself penetrated by the *lingam*.

Her penetration by the *lingam* becomes the source of pleasure, mixed with dread, for the brotherhood of blood. The link of vampirism with desire and fear was already present in Stoker's novel, which demonstrated how desire attracts but also frightens.[37] *The Unquenchable Thirst* expands this ambivalence between desire and fear beyond the idea of vampirism, by showing the physical excitement of the cultists on seeing the victim impaled on the *lingam*. The conflict between Dracula and the Rani, and between the ritualistic use of blood by the cultists and the biological use of blood by Dracula for the rejuvenation of his undead body, is thus only superficial. Both perceive the blood and its shedding/consumption as the point of contact of desire and fear.[38] Both Dracula and the Rani compete with each other to gain access to the victim's body and draw maximum pleasure from it while disrupting the other's moment

[35]Gatiss, *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*.

[36] Gatiss, *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*.

[37] Franco Moretti, 'The Dialectic of Fear,' *New Left Review* 136 (Nov.-Dec. 1982): 77.

[38] This intersection of desire and fear is also noted in the scene of Lakshmi's sacrifice. As the acolytes grab Lakshmi, she tries to free herself. As the narrator says, 'She starts to struggle trying to get free which seems to *please* the worshippers who howl with *glee*' [my italics]. The pleasure and 'glee' of the worshippers is thus tied to the fear which Lakshmi feels before she is sacrificed.

of orgasm. While Dracula's control over pleasure was absolute in Stoker's novel, in *The Unquenchable Thirst* it is challenged by the Rani who has her own needs to fulfil. The horror in this radio drama is not changed just because of a cultural change of setting, but because of the conflict between Rani and Dracula over the way the blood of the victims is used. Although both perceive the shedding/consumption of blood as a way to penetrate the body (directly or vicariously), it carries a different symbolic significance for them. While for the cultists it is a symbol of an offering, for Dracula it is a symbol of sustenance. This symbolic variation in the meaning of blood (despite the underlying commonality of both Dracula and Rani violating the body to extract it) creates this tension in the narrative. It highlights two competing forces fighting to derive pleasure from the victim's blood, each in their own different way.

Unlike *The Unquenchable Thirst* where Dracula seems to be opposed to the blood-cult from the beginning of the narrative, in Parimal Bhattacharya's *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst'), the Dracula-figure is completely contextualised within the ritualistic symbolism of blood.[39] In fact, as the film reveals at the end, the vampire is created because of a dark magic ritual performed long ago. The film revolves around Paul (Prosenjit Chatterjee), a curio dealer, and his group of friends Anjan, Santana, and Tapan, who decide to halt at the Garchampa palace on their way to Maynabari. Even before they leave for Garchampa palace, Paul is informed that there are stories circulating about supernatural occurrences at the palace, which further piques his curiosity. As they enter the palace, they are greeted by Mr John (Shekhar Chatterjee), who arranges for their stay at the palace. *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') recreates the scene from *Dracula* (1931), wherein Bela Lugosi descends down the stairs in a black cape with a candle in his hand.[40] Here too, Mr John eerily descends down the stairs, dressed in a black kurta, with a lamp in his hand. The visual similarities between the two scenes are obvious, and, at first, it

[39] Parimal Bhattacharya, dir., *Nishi Trishna* (*Night Thirst*) (Kolkata: S.B. Films Private Limited, 1989), Prime Video.

[40] Tod Browning, dir., *Dracula* (California: Universal Studios, 1931), Prime Video.

seems *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst'), is merely drawing on the portrayal of the Count that has survived in the popular imagination. However, this visual setup is deliberately misleading, as it paves the way for the final bit of revelation in the film, wherein it is shown that Mr John is merely helping the vampire obtain his prey, and is not a vampire himself. This use of a popular visual motif from the adaptation of Stoker's novel, only to subvert the audience's expectation at the end, is what makes *Nishi Trishna'*s ('Night Thirst's) Indianisation of the vampire trope work. Throughout the film, the audience is led to believe that Mr John is the one who is feeding on the blood of his victims. This misconception is further strengthened by the clever way in which the film frames the appearance of Mr John and the vampire. Never do we find the two of them in the same frame when we watch the scenes at Garchampa palace. The appearance of the vampire always precedes or follows that of Mr John, but the two never appear simultaneously at Garchampa palace. Furthermore, when Paul and his friends decide that they have to leave the palace immediately, they suspect that Mr John has closed all the exits so that they cannot escape. Once again, this is a reference to Harker realising that he is a prisoner in the Count's castle, and that all the doors are locked. Similarly, the scene of John whipping his mute servant for helping Shimli (Moonmoon Sen) seems to resemble the scene in the 1970 Hammer film *Scars of Dracula* in which Dracula brands his servant Klove with the heated blade of a sword for helping Simon and Sarah escape. Repeatedly therefore, the narrative misleads the audience by suggesting that Mr John might be the vampire. Even after they have escaped from Garchampa palace, we see a coffin being carried in a truck to Paul's curio office. While the delivery man claims that Mr John has sent the items from Garchampa palace in the truck, the coffin contains the body of the vampire, who then attacks Paul's girlfriend Merina. Since the Count had arranged for his own body to be shipped to London in Stoker's novel, we are led to believe that Mr John is the vampire who is hiding in the coffin in the truck. Santana tells her mother Dr Banerjee (Sumitra Mukherjee), who is treating Merina, that the vampire

who had attacked her in Garchampa palace may be the same one who has attacked Merina. In the film Mr John ferries the coffin containing the vampire to places in the nearby town of Shiuliganj so that the creature, called *Dakin*, can feed on victims. This closely resembles the scene in the 1966 Hammer film *Dracula Prince of Darkness* where Dracula's servant Klove is seen carrying the coffin of the Count and his victim-turned-vampire Helen to the abbey. Therefore, the scenes where John is seen carrying the coffin makes us wonder whether he is the vampire or a Klove-like figure serving him.

It is at this point that the film subverts the expectation of the audience regarding the identity of the vampire, and deviates from Stoker's text. Dr Banerjee reveals in a flashback that she was once in love with Mr John. John was interested in knowing more about life after death, which led him to seek the help of a *tantric*. With the *tantric*'s help, John had arranged for a dead body to be brought back to life. The *tantric* had warned him that the dead body would be reanimated by blood-thirsty spirits, who would ask for an offering in return. Ignoring his warning, John proceeded with the ritual, and the dead body rose to life. Initially, the vampire tried to attack Dr Banerjee, who had stumbled upon the scene of the ritual. But in turn, John attacked the vampire to save his fiancée, which enraged the creature as he was unable to satiate his thirst. The vampire then turned on John. To save his own life, John, as instructed by the *tantric*, agreed to be his slave for the rest of his life and do his bidding. The vampire, therefore, was born as a result of a botched ritual to reanimate a dead body, conducted by John.[41] Although the vampire in *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') never speaks,[42] it is clear that it wanted Dr Banerjee's blood as an offering in return for reanimating the corpse. Since John interfered in

[41] There are strong echoes here of Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein* and Khwaja Sarfaraz's film *Zinda Laash* ('The Living Corpse') , both of which deal with a monster which is created because of a failed experiment to create life or to ensure the scientist's immortality, respectively.

[42] This again reminds us of the 1966 *Dracula Prince of Darkness*, in which, unlike in every other Dracula-film made by Hammer, Dracula does not speak a single word.

the process of the vampire collecting his offering, and refused to give up his own life too, he now has to provide the vampire with women whom he can feed upon.

Thus, although John is responsible for the creation of this blood-drinking monster and brings him victims for feeding, he himself is not the vampire. The misdirection which *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') uses, however, is not just meant to provide a dramatic twist at the end of the film. Its real purpose is to re-contextualise the symbolism of blood used in the narrative. The thirst for blood which the vampire has in this film is based on the idea of a gift or an offering, similar to the obsession of the cultists in *The Unquenchable Thirst*. As discussed, the *tantric* had already warned John that once reanimated, the blood-thirsty spirit would ask for something in return. Blood in *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') thus becomes a currency of exchange. The act of vampirism in the film is part of this ritualistic exchange, wherein the spirit animated the dead body for John in exchange for blood. The use of the symbolism of blood as a gift is similar to the radio drama where the Rani offers the victim's blood as a gift to the deity. The identity of the Dracula-figure in *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') is, therefore, restricted to this ritualistic exchange; he is a part of this pact of blood made with John, beyond which the existence of the undead has no importance. For Stoker's Dracula, vampirism is just one part of his identity; he is also a proud warrior who enjoys reminiscing about his past and plans on extending his power in London through reverse-colonisation, a shrewd manipulator who convinces Harker to extend his stay at the castle, an excellent learner who has familiarised himself with the language and culture of England and a warm host who initially tricks Harker into thinking that all the fears he had about coming to the castle were baseless.[43] On the other hand, the Dracula of *The Unquenchable Thirst* is part of an exchange just like the vampire in *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst'). As the Rani says, they had made a bargain when Dracula had

[43] Harker notes, 'The light and warmth and the Count's courteous welcome seems to have dissipated all my doubts and fears' (Stoker, 23). The Count's welcoming approach makes Harker think that the warnings of the people at Bistritz and his fear about Dracula's castle were unfounded.

come to them in order that they would help each other in fulfilling their needs, implying that they would share the victim's blood.[44] Dracula's identity in this radio drama therefore becomes tied to this bargain of blood, leaving out the other nuances found in Stoker's novel. In *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') the other shades of Dracula's character, as found in Stoker's characterisation, are further eliminated as the vampire is made exclusively a product of the ritualistic exchange which John makes. As noted earlier, the vampire in this film is never seen to talk. Although the vampire in *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') can hypnotise its victims, the manipulation which the Count was capable of is here done by Mr John in his search for victims; similarly, it is Mr John who acts as the host, when Paul and his friends come to Garchampa palace. The Dracula-figure who has been restricted to the pact of blood thus only appears to feed on the victims that Mr John provides for him. Moreover, unlike Dracula, the vampire in this film is not an undead version of his own self. Rather, he is animating a dead body belonging to someone else who had died in an accident.[45] While Dracula's vampirism was also important for sustaining and rejuvenating his own body, the vampire in *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') merely drinks the blood to satiate his thirst which does not revitalise the body. This subtle difference in the nature of blood-drinking can be understood from the way the vampire looks. In Stoker's novel, as Harker observes, Dracula looks younger when in London, as a result of feeding on people.[46] However, the body of the vampire in *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') is decaying, with marks all over his face. Drinking the blood of young women does not rejuvenate his body in any way. It only satiates the thirst of the spirit animating this body, thus ensuring that the pact of exchange has been honoured. The body of the vampire itself is in a state of

[44] Gatiss, *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*.

[45] A detailed analysis of the idea of the reanimated body and the figure of the *pishach* in Bengali horror fiction has been done in Chapter 1, while discussing Hemendra Kumar Roy's 'Mrs Kumudini Chowdhury.' In Roy's story too, the vampire is a blood-thirsty spirit animating the body of a dead person, and not, as is the case with the western vampire, a dead person coming back to life. As noted there, in this Roy markedly differs from his source-text, E. F. Benson's short story 'Mrs Amworth.'

[46] Stoker, 155.

exchange with the blood-thirsty spirit. Trapped in an endless cycle of thirst (after which the film is named), the body of the vampire is forced to act as the vehicle for the spirit's act of blood-drinking. Although it is animated by the spirit as part of this exchange, unlike *Dracula*, it does not turn younger with every act of vampirism. This brings up a contradictory idea of vampirism in *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst'). On the one hand, the *tantric* clearly mentions that the blood-thirsty spirit which will re-animate the dead body will be a *dakin* or *dakini*, creatures who accompany the Goddess *Chhinamasta*. On the other hand, Dr Banerjee's characterisation of the attacks on Merina as that of a 'blood-sucker evil spirit' seems to be based on that of the western vampire, which drinks the blood of its victims to both sustain and rejuvenate itself.

In *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') just as in *The Unquenchable Thirst*, the idea of offering human blood as a gift also implies that the victim's body is offered up for the vampire to draw sexual pleasure from. The successful translation of the horror of Stoker's *Dracula* into the Indian setting is possible because of this similarity in the interpretation of this blood symbolism. However, as we have observed, despite the existence of these similarities, the use of the blood symbolism is also altered in subtle ways, which leads to a change in the nature of horror in the text. In *The Unquenchable Thirst*, for example, we have observed the role played by the act of double penetration of the victim's body in developing the mood of horror. In *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') similarly, the association of sexuality and blood is slightly altered from Stoker's novel. The Dracula of Stoker, or of *the Unquenchable Thirst*, is a natural predator who draws equal pleasure from both male and female victims. When the Rani asks if she can keep Prem for herself, Dracula refuses. Similarly, his interactions with Harker in Stoker's novel have an ingrained strain of homoeroticism. There are several scenes where Dracula shares a physical closeness with Harker, bordering on sexual intimacy. After Harker has had his supper, Dracula begins talking to him. As he leans closer to him, and his hands touch that of Harker, the latter

can smell his rank breath.[47] The careful placement of this scene after that of supper hints at the intermingling of the appetite for food (blood in the case of the vampire), and the sexual appetite of Dracula. Similarly, when the Count suddenly appears near Harker while he is shaving, he mistakenly cuts himself, causing him to bleed.[48] The association of blood with some sort of physical, or even sexual intimacy, is thus common in Stoker. The symbolism of the blood as a medium for spreading diseases has been studied by critics as a latent indication of the homophobia prevalent during the Victorian period. Talia Schaffer, for example, calls *Dracula* one of the first epidemiological horror novels, dealing with the nineteenth-century misconception that same-sex desire was a disease which could be caused, communicated, and cured.[49] Similarly, Prodosh Bhattacharya and Abhirup Mascharak discuss the widespread fear of homosexuals 'turning' other people into 'diseased' individuals like themselves, thus turning into a metaphor the fear behind Dracula turning other people into vampires.[50] *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') however, deliberately and emphatically does away with the homoerotic strain present in Stoker's *Dracula*. Dr Banerjee while explaining the nature of the blood-thirsty spirits to Paul and his friends says:

> মনে হচ্ছে মেরিনা কোনো ব্লাডসাকার ইভিল স্পিরিটের পাল্লায় পড়েছে। বাংলায় যাদের বলে রক্তপিশাচ। এরা দিনের বেলায় ঘুমোয় আর রাত নামলেই রক্তপিশাচে পরিণত হয়। তখন তাদের অপোজিট সেক্সের রক্ত চাই ই চাই।

[47] Stoker, 24.

[48] Stoker, 30-31.

[49] Talia Schaffer, ''A Wilde Desire Took Me': The Homoerotic History of Dracula,' *ELH* 61, no. 2 (1994): 407. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2873274. Accessed on 15th March 2024.

[50] Prodosh Bhattacharya, and Abhirup Mascharak, ''Wilde Desire' Across Cultures: *Dracula* and its Bengali Adaptations,' in *Imperial Maladies: Literatures on Healthcare and Psychoanalysis in India*, ed. D. Bandopadhyay and P. Kundu (New York: NovaScience Publishers, 2017), 184.

(I think Merina has fallen into the hands of some blood-sucker evil spirit. In Bengali we call them *roktopishach*. They sleep during the day and turn into vampires at night. At that point, they must have the blood of the opposite sex.[51])

Unlike Stoker's vampire, or even the vampire in *The Unquenchable Thirst*, who would like to prey upon both sexes, the vampire in *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') explicitly preys on the members of the opposite sex. Dr Banerjee's choice of words not only exposes a latent homophobia but also shows how a small change in the vampire's choice of victim for drinking blood alters the horror of Stoker's text. If Dr Banerjee had said that the vampire would crave the blood of a woman at night, the homophobic anxieties would probably not have been so glaringly obvious. However, the explicit mention of the vampire drinking the blood of the opposite sex *only* establishes the symbolism of blood-drinking in overtly heterosexual terms.[52]

Although the homosexual dynamics of Stoker's novel are removed from *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst'), the vampire's lair is constructed as a homosocial space. Garchampa palace, for example, is a space inhabited exclusively by three males: Mr John, the vampire, and the male servant. The only female presence in the Garchampa palace, before the arrival of Paul and his friends, is that of the rural girl Kamli, who is held captive in some corner of the palace. As we learn, she is yet another female victim for the vampire to drink from. Garchampa palace therefore is, in some ways, a space of homosocial bonding. This homosocial bonding is most prominent in the relationship between Mr John and the vampire. Once again, the homosocial

[51] Bhattacharya, *Nishi Trishna* (*Night Thirst*).

[52] In Bram Stoker's *Dracula* when Lucy starts to prey on children, the victims of her bloodlust seem to be explicitly male. However, in the 1958 Hammer film *Horror of Dracula*, Lucy is shown luring away a young girl just before being intercepted by Arthur. Hélène Collins notes that 'instead of giving comfort to children, Lucy steals pleasure from them, since they prove unable to give their consent in their erotic exchange with Lucy.' Hélène Collins, 'She Who Cannot be Named: Lucy as a Child Molester. Stoker's Rhetoric of Taboo,' *Appellation(s)* 6 (2013): 23-38. https://doi.org/10.4000/esa.1162. Accessed on 20th March 2024.
The gender of the children on whom Lucy preys upon thus plays an important role in understanding this 'erotic exchange' between Lucy and her victims. In the novel, despite the homoerotic undertones in the relationship between Dracula and Harker, Lucy's vampirism is shown in heterosexual terms. In the 1958 film however, Lucy's vampiric attack on the female victim changes the sexual dynamic of the text. In *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst'), similarly, the explicit mention of the vampire's exclusively female victims helps us understand the heterosexual nature of his victimisation.

bond between the two is based on a bond of blood. John's relationship with the vampire is based on the unspoken pact which requires him to supply the vampire with fresh blood. His relation to the vampire is also based on an equation of servitude, just like the male domestic help has a relation of servitude to Mr John. Exploiting this relation of servitude, John beats the domestic help when he tries to help Kamli's twin sister Shimli (Moonmoon Sen), who has come to rescue her sibling, escape from the confinement into which Mr John has placed Shimli. John's relation of servitude to the vampire contains an element of submissiveness, which defines the power dynamic between them. John's kneeling posture before the vampire, as seen in Dr Banerjee's flashback, is part of his future symbolic offering of the blood of the victims to him and his helplessness before the *Dakin*. However, by the end of the film, it is obvious that John has developed into a custodian of the vampire, going beyond the pact of blood, and the relation of servitude. This is because, when Paul and his friends kill the vampire at Garchampa palace, Mr John does not celebrate the fact that he is finally released from the pact. Rather, he decides to stop them by holding them at gunpoint. This implies that John has somehow accepted the relationship that he shares with the vampire as part of his identity. Although his initial interaction with the vampire was based on fear, where he had opted to become his slave to avoid being killed, gradually his own identity and desire have become linked with that of the monster. This is further supported by the fact that John seems to enjoy bringing the victims to the Dracula-figure or taking the vampire to its victims in Shiuliganj, as if vicariously drawing pleasure by satiating the vampire's thirst. In his interaction with Shimli this pleasure is clearly visible on his face as he tells Shimli that no one can hear her screams in the castle and locks her up, probably so that the vampire can feed on her in addition to her sister Kamli.[53] This dysfunctional homosocial space, built around a mechanism of the desire for

[53] Bhattacharya, *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst').

blood and the fear of the vampire, breaks down at the end of the film. The Dracula–figure is killed by driving a stake through the heart, which, even in Stoker's novel was seen as a phallic symbol in Lucy's case, leading to an equation between blood and semen.[54] What is interesting, however, is that John himself dies at the hands of the servant who shoots him; John in turn shoots the servant, and kills him. By drawing the blood of John therefore, the servant frees himself from the exploitative homosocial bond which he shared with him. Just like the bond between John and the vampire was created through the pact of blood, so also, the drawing of blood from the vampire's body, John's body, and the body of the servant, leads to the dissolution of the homosocial space of Garchampa palace.

The way the vampire figure in *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') defines its relationship to blood also affects the horror of vampirism. In Stoker's novel, Count Dracula's relationship to the captive figure of Harker was not solely defined by his bloodlust. He cleverly manipulates him to arrange for his purchase of the estate at Carfax, and also uses him to master the language of the people at England so that he can blend in with the crowd. Even though all these machinations of Dracula are ultimately directed towards his act of blood-drinking, they define his relationship to Harker. The horror of Harker's interactions with Dracula is not just tied to the possibility of being drained of blood by the vampire but also to the psychological trauma he faces in the castle. In *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst'), on the other hand, the relationship of the vampire to the captive figure of Kamli (or for that matter to any of his victims) is restricted to blood-drinking, while John embodies the manipulative aspects of Stoker's Dracula. This is observable in the moment when Shimli comes to rescue her twin sister Kamli. On seeing her twin sister, Kamli records no feeling of joy or relief; she is rather horrified, thinking that the

[54] Christopher Bentley, 'The Monster in the Bedroom: Sexual Symbolism in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*,' in *Dracula: The Vampire and the Critics*, edited by Margaret L. Carter (London: UMI Research Press, 1988), 29-30.

vampire has come to suck her blood taking the disguise of her sister. As she recoils from her own sister, she says:

> আবার এসেছিস! ভেবেছিস তুই সেজে এসেছিস বলে চিনতে পারবনা। এসেছিস তো রক্ত খেতে। ভেবেছিস তোর ভড়ং ধরতে পারবনা।
>
> (You have come again! You think because you have come disguised I won't recognise you. You have come to drink my blood. You think I will not be able to catch your deception.[55])

Although Kamli suspects that the vampire has disguised himself as her sister to suck her blood there are no evidences throughout the film that the vampire figure is capable of such psychological manipulation. It is John who arranges for all of the victims for the vampire who merely slakes his thirst with their blood. The vampire's relationship to Kamli and all of his other victims is solely based on blood, unlike Stoker's Count Dracula who is both a manipulative villain as much as he is an animalistic predator. At the same time, Kamli's reaction of physical repulsion on seeing her sister, and her near-certainty about Shimli being the vampire, suggests that the element of psychological torture which formed a part of Stoker's novel still exists in *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') through the character of John who has held her captive at Garchampa Palace. When Shimli says that the same blood flows through both their bodies, Kamli responds:

> 'হ্যাঁ। তুমি তো রক্ত খেয়ে বাঁচবে। কিন্তু আমি, আমি তো শেষ হয়ে আসছি।'
>
> (Yes. You will live having drunk my blood. But I, I am gradually perishing.)[56]

For Shimli, blood is a symbol of familial bonds which binds her to her sister. For Kamli, however, the symbolism of blood has been perverted by the vampire. To her it symbolises a medium of unfair exchange, wherein she loses all her life-force while the Dracula-figure continues to slake its thirst. Kamli therefore fails to understand Shimli's symbolism of blood,

[55] Bhattacharya, *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst').

[56] Bhattacharya, *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst').

which is based on an idea of lineage, and mutual connection. She has rather started to believe in the vampire's idea of the pact of blood, where blood bonds inevitably involve the reduction of the body to a mere source for the monster to slake its thirst. Although the film eventually reveals to the audience that John is not the actual vampire, he too has transformed into one symbolically, by choosing to believe in the vampire's idea of blood as an offering, and as a fluid to be extracted from unwary victims. The real horror of *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') is perhaps John's loss of humanity as far as Paul and his associates are concerned. Amidst the dramatic excitement of killing the vampire in Garchampa Palace, the death of John at the hands of his servant is glossed over. Paul and his friends show no mark of agitation or disturbance on witnessing his death, treating him like an insignificant character, who merely worked for the vampire. This lack of thought is clearly visible in the scene where they immediately turn back and exit the palace, leaving John's body on the floor. This is in sharp contrast to Stoker's novel, where even Dracula, the ultimate vampire, has a part of his humanity restored after his death. Mina notices that 'there was in the face [of Dracula] a look of peace' after he is killed,[57] indicating that through death, Dracula has somehow returned to his original human self, just before he crumbles to dust.

However, it is in Dr Banerjee's eyes that some aspect of John's humanity still survives. As all the other characters leave, Dr Banerjee casts one last longing look at John and remembers his former self. The film immediately cuts to a flashback of Dr Banerjee's younger days, with her telling John that she has chosen to love a brilliant scholar and not some ghosthunter. There is thus a quick change of perspective from that of Paul and his friends to that of Dr Banerjee. While the former see the body of John as the useless remnant of a vampire's slave, the latter frames it within the narrative of lost humanity and lost love. This change in perspective through

[57] Stoker, 325.

which the body of John is seen thus determines the perspective of horror. Secondly, the appearance of the vampire in the life of John also disrupts his relationship with Dr Banerjee. Just like in *The Unquenchable Thirst* the Rani's libido is curtailed by Dracula, who stops the sacrifice of Prem, so also the vampire in *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') interferes with Dr Banerjee's potential sexual relationship with John by forcing the latter to serve him and bring him victims to satisfy his bloodlust. This is because once the vampire is summoned by John, he is forced to devote his entire life to the relationship of servitude that he has with the vampire, instead of continuing to stay with her. Initially John vows to become a slave to the *Dakin*'s wishes partly because he made the *Dakin* turn on him when it attacked Dr Banerjee, thereby saving her. But gradually John seems to enjoy bringing victims to the *Dakin* and even seems to want to protect it. On the other hand, Dr Banerjee's desire is still tied to that of John after all these years. Her husband is not mentioned once throughout the film. When John finally dies, it is she who remembers her younger days spent with him, when he had not yet fallen into the trap of the vampire. Therefore, John's servitude to the vampire leads to a total loss of his humanity which implies that he must be eliminated just like the vampire so that there is a return to normalcy at the end of the narrative.

The symbolism of blood, in the appropriations of *Dracula*, extends beyond the ideas of sexuality and sacrifice. The use of blood in the appropriations is also tied to the narrative of purity which will be discussed in the next section.

Rituals of Blood and the Narrative of Purity

The link between the symbolism of blood and the narrative of purity in *Dracula* is commonly made in critical works on vampirism that focus on the discourse on race. The horror of vampirism is often equated with the fears of miscegenation, and the dangers of the mixing of the blood of a white, western woman with that of the East European Count. Bellafiore, for

example, argues that the fear of vampirism in the nineteenth century revolved around the anxieties of 'weakened British bloodlines.'[58] She discusses the importance placed by Britain on the idea of blood as the distinguishing factor that separated them from the 'uncivilised' native.[59] Similarly, Kathy Davis Patterson links vampires to 'racialized constructions of monstrosity.'[60] Following Stephen D. Arata's analysis, she reads *Dracula* as an allegory of British anxieties surrounding the immigration of East European Jews into England during the nineteenth century.[61] In the adaptations and appropriations of *Dracula* that resituate the monstrous Count to a different geographical and cultural context, these anxieties of miscegenation are also translated according to the political climate of the time. In Chapter 2, for example, we have discussed how *Dracula in Istanbul* links the idea of blood to the creation of an ethnically homogeneous nation after the formation of the Republic of Turkey. The act of vampirism, therefore, both in Stoker's *Dracula* and in its multicultural adaptations and appropriations, is fraught with concerns about the purity of blood. As part of this discourse on race, the vampire becomes associated with 'half-breeds' who bring about a 'pollution of the blood.'[62] This racial idea of the purity, and the pollution of the blood, which forms an integral part of *Dracula* or any other vampire narrative, is further complicated by the religious discourse of purity in *The Unquenchable Thirst*. While the narrative of purity was already a part of Stoker's *Dracula*, the ritualistic use of blood in the sacrifice introduces fresh concerns about the pollution which the vampire causes. This is because the idea of offering blood to a deity

[58] Daniella Bellafiore, 'Vampirism and Blood Identity: An Analysis of Social Constructions and Anxieties,' *Concept* 30 (2007): 2. https://concept.journals.villanova.edu/article/view/281/244. Accessed on 5th April 2024.

[59] Bellafiore, 2.

[60] Kathy Davis Patterson, 'Echoes of Dracula: Racial Politics and the Failure of Segregated Spaces in Richard Matheson's *I Am Legend*,' *Journal of Dracula Studies* 7 (2005): 19, https://research.library.kutztown.edu/dracula-studies/vol7/iss1/3. Accessed on 20th June 2024.

[61] Patterson, 19.

[62] H.L. Malchow, *Gothic Images of Race in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1996), 168.

involves the question of the suitability of the sacrifice. In almost every religious culture dealing with the issue of sacrifice, there is the question of whether the body/blood being offered as a sacrifice is pure enough for the deity. The purity of the sacrificial blood becomes important in completing the ritual and gaining the full benefit from it.

It is thus only 'pure' blood which can establish the connection between the worshipper and the worshipped. Although *The Unquenchable Thirst* deliberately seems to avoid any reference to a specific deity from a particular religion, using the generalised figure of the 'god of blood,' it incorporates the universal concern about the purity of the sacrifice in the plot. The sacrifice, therefore, is governed by ritualistic rules about the nature of the sacrificial object and the process through which this offering is made. As Heesterman observes, the sacrifice is a contest between life and death; it represents the 'catastrophic centre' of the ceremony which has to be governed by the rules of the ritual.[63] The technicalities of the ritual which govern the sacrifice ensure that the risks involved in the sacrifice are somewhat mitigated, though this does not always happen. *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') for example, shows how the outcome of the sacrifice is unpredictable and full of risks. Although the *tantric* had previously told John that the reanimating of the dead body would require a sacrifice, he could not predict that it would lead to the creation of a vampire to whom John would have to pledge servitude for life. John asks for help when the vampire attacks Dr Banerjee, but the *tantric* says that the situation is beyond his control. The sacrifice, therefore, creates this chaotic narrative energy which horror fiction utilises. In making the Dracula-figure a product of a failed sacrificial ritual, *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') frames the vampire within this narrative of the unpredictability of horror. That is to say, Stoker's *Dracula*, and for that matter, most of the adaptations, use the element of anticipation while framing the narrative. As discussed in the previous chapter, the

[63] J.C. Heesterman, *The Broken World of Sacrifice: An Essay in Ancient Indian Ritual* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), 3.

emotion of dread is tied to a sense of anticipation in such texts, where we constantly predict the appearance and the attack of Dracula. In *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') on the other hand, it is the unpredictability of the sacrificial ritual, resulting in the creation of the vampire, which haunts John and the readers alike. In some aspects this is similar to *Zinda Laash* ('The Living Corpse') wherein Professor Tabani's experiments in creating a potion of immortality lead to his death and subsequent transformation into a vampire. But while Tabani's vampirism is a result of a failed scientific endeavour, John's fate of creating and serving a vampire is totally a random outcome of rituals which involve the raising of the dead.

The dangers of the sacrifice also lie, as Heesterman says, in the possibility of a 'frenzied passion' taking over the act and causing destruction.[64] This horror of the overwhelming passion is found in the Rani in *The Unquenchable Thirst* who has become so blind with power that she decides to take Prem away from Dracula. For the Rani, overcome with this passion for sacrifice, the deity and the devotee have become one and the same. As discussed in the previous section, her own personal desire for Prem is intermingled with the demand of the cult that he must be sacrificed. Before offering the blood of Prem as a sacrifice to the deity, she caresses his body and even tells Dracula that she wants him for herself. Interestingly, it is Dracula who breaks this 'frenzied passion' of the Rani by stopping the sacrifice. Despite the Rani's claim that she is sacrificing the 'unsullied flesh' of Prem to the deity, her own desire, instead of Dracula's bite, has already polluted this offering of blood. The idea of the purity of blood was not completely absent in Stoker's novel either. After Dracula drinks the blood of Mina Harker, and then forces her to drink his blood so that he can have her under his control, Mina screams 'Unclean! Unclean!'[65] This exchange of blood between Dracula and Mina has often been analysed in terms of the sexual metaphors being used in the novel. Lapin, for example, argues

[64] Heesterman, 3.

[65] Stoker, 248.

that Mina either has to drink the blood of Dracula or she suffocates, which leads him to label it as a case of 'coerced fellatio.'[66] Moreover, Dracula's offering of his own blood to Mina has also been studied as a perverted version of the Eucharist ritual. *The Unquenchable Thirst* imports this idea of the purity of blood, situating it within the religious discourse of sacrifice, and the idea of the perfect offering. *The Unquenchable Thirst*, or *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') however, does not deal with the perversion of the sacred, but rather with the horror of the intersection of the sacred and the profane through the medium of blood. While in the Bengali film, this intersection takes place through John's Faustian desire to acquire knowledge about life after death, in case of the English radio-drama, it takes place through the deal made between the Rani and Dracula to share the victim's blood. The victim whose blood Dracula drinks for his own pleasure is the same victim who is offered up as sacrifice to the deity. This intersection of the profane and the sacred, which is the point of the bargain made between Rani and Dracula, is also the point of conflict between the two later in the narrative. When Dracula refuses to give the Rani the body of Prem, she talks about the pollution of blood which he causes: 'It is you who is [*sic*] unclean. It is you who skulk in the dark. It is you who fouls [*sic*] the pure, sacrificial youth with your evil…'[67] Similarly, as the Rani secretly takes Prem away for the sacrifice, she says that he is pure and clean unlike his sister Lakhsmi, and has not been defiled. In this, Prem is unlike the others on whom Dracula has put his 'unholy mark.'[68] Prem's pure blood, pure body, and pure spirit will bring glory to the deity, according to the Rani. Although she believes that Dracula is responsible for polluting the purity of the blood of sacrifice, she fails to see that the idea of the sacred, which the cult believes in, intersects with Dracula's selfish, predatorial

[66] Daniel Lapin, *The Vampire, Dracula and Incest. The Vampyre Myth, Stoker's Dracula and Psychotherapy of Vampiric Sexual Abuse* (San Francisco: Gargoyle Publishers, 1995), 41.

[67] Gatiss, *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*.

[68] Gatiss, *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*.

idea of blood. If the vampire is guilty of satiating his thirst with the blood of the innocent victims, the cultists too are guilty of using the blood of unsuspecting strangers to give shape to their horrific vision of worship. It is Dracula who reminds the Rani of this intersection between the sacred and the profane, and tells her that it is because of his help that they can escape legal retribution from the British authorities. This shows that despite the differing use of blood by Dracula and the cultists, ethically the Rani and the vampire share the same space. Both use their powers in nefarious ways to fulfil their personal desires. While the Rani believes that Dracula is defiling the blood of the sacrificial body, Dracula, in turn, considers the cultists to be the source of the pollution of blood. As he tells the Rani, the cultists know nothing about the blood which they only waste, and use 'to drench your unclean bodies in.'[69] Similarly, while the Rani believes that Lakhsmi was defiled by Dracula, the latter tells her that they have already 'despoiled' the sister. Dracula's allegations about the cultists' 'despoiling' Lakhsmi seem to be unfounded. The narrator clearly mentions that Dracula looked satiated when the cultists took away the body of Lakshmi. The only explanation for Dracula's anger seems to be that he is having to share the blood of the victim with the cultists. He sees the ritualistic offering of blood as an act of defilement in itself since he considers it to be a waste. Moreover, Lakshmi was still in a state of 'sexual coma' when the cultists arrived. Dracula probably planned on feasting on Lakshmi multiple times,[70] a plan which was thwarted by the cultists' sacrifice which the Count considers to be defilement. On the other hand, the sacrifices made to the god have also been made 'impure' since the victims have already been drained of blood by Dracula.

The narrative of purity in *The Unquenchable Thirst* is therefore tied to the dual issue of availability and accessibility. That is to say, beyond the discourse of religion and vampirism,

[69] Gatiss, *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*.

[70] Even in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* the Count does not drain Lucy of her blood in one single attack. Rather, he keeps her alive and repeatedly returns to feast on her until her body finally collapses. In *The Unquenchable Thirst* he probably had similar plans for Lakshmi which was interrupted by the cultists.

the fundamental point of conflict between the Rani and Dracula is that the availability of the amount of blood is limited. If Dracula is left with the victim for too long, he will drain him/her completely, thus leaving nothing for the sacrifice. On the other hand, if the victim is taken to the sacrifice, all the blood will be spilled and wasted, leaving Dracula unsatiated. This brings forth the issue of accessibility, that is, who has access to the victim's body first. While Dracula wants to ensure that he gets the first pass at the victim to fulfil his thirst, the cultists want the victim to be 'unsullied.' This is not just because they want the sacrificial body to be perfect but because the availability of blood is limited. *The Unquenchable Thirst* deals with this idea of the scarcity of blood as a commodity to be utilised. Even in Stoker's novel, the Count says, 'Blood is too precious a thing in these days of dishonourable peace.'[71] Waldby and Mitchell talking about the 'tissue economy' of blood, argue that it has value as a commodity, and is an exchangeable object with a price.[72] In *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') the exchange value of blood is not measured in terms of monetary gain but is rather measured as part of the currency of ritual. By promising the vampire that it will be offered the gift of blood, John ensures the completion of the ritual which had led to the animation of the dead body. The circulation of blood in society implies different social, ethical, and health-based outcomes, which are hierarchised as part of this tissue economy.[73] This hierarchy of the value of blood is best understood in *The Unquenchable Thirst* where both the Rani and the Dracula prioritise their valuation of blood. Within Dracula's archaic economy of blood and gold,[74] his tendency to

[71] Stoker, 35.

[72] Cathy Waldby and Robert Mitchell, *Tissue Economies: Blood, Organs, and Cell Lines in Late Capitalism* (London: Duke University Press, 2006), 32.

[73] Waldby and Mitchell, 32. Tissue economy refers to the system of storage, exchange, and distribution of human tissues like blood, bone, and organs which are sold, donated, or used in medical research. It deals with social, ethical, and economic concerns about the way in which biological materials have become a part of economy and profit.

[74] J. Jeffrey Franklin, 'The Economics of Immortality: The Demi-Immortal Oriental, Enlightenment Vitalism, and Political Economy in *Dracula*,' *Believing in Victorian Times* 76 (2012): 127-148.

hoard makes him a symbolic representative of 'monopoly capitalism.'[75] Just like he believes in hoarding the gold rather than using it as part of the economy, so is he also a hoarder of blood, who wants all the blood for himself. For Dracula, any use of blood that does not involve satiating the thirst of the vampire is a waste and thus lies at the bottom of this hierarchy of value. The Rani, similarly, believes that the cultists' use of blood as a sacrificial fluid is situated at the top of the hierarchy, and thus Dracula's satiation of thirst with it is an act of desecration. This difference in the understanding of the value of blood for the cultists and for Dracula thus leads to the construction of the narrative of purity in the text. Although in *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') there are no conflicting uses of blood involved, the film clearly delineates it as part of an exchange, where blood is given to sustain the reanimation of a dead body.

The arrangement which the Rani of Mahabad has made with Dracula for sharing the blood of the victim also has a strong element of the politics of power involved in it. The colonial context of an East European Count taking over the palace of Mahabad to physically exploit the natives for his own needs is obvious. Stoker's *Dracula* has been repeatedly read in the context of reverse-colonisation depicting the fears of the invasion of England by an East European Count. However, in the appropriations of *Dracula* that displace the Transylvanian vampire to an Oriental setting, the politics of colonisation become directly relevant. For example, in yet another Hammer adaptation of *Dracula*, titled *The Legend of the Seven Golden Vampires*, Dracula usurps the body of a Chinese priest Kah, and continues to terrorise rural China by drinking the blood of the villagers and pillaging the village with the help of the golden vampires.[76] The dynamics of power between Dracula and Kah in *The Legend* is similar to that between the Rani and Dracula in *The Unquenchable Thirst*. In both cases, a native ruler/person

[75] Judith Halberstam, *Skin Shows: Gothic Horror and the Technology of Monsters* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995), 103.
[76] Roy Ward Baker, and Chang Cheh, *The Legend of the Seven Golden Vampires* (Hong Kong: Shaw Brothers Studios and Hammer Film Production, 1974), Prime Video.

of power seeks to utilise the help of a foreign power to further their own sinister goals in their exploitative regime. And in both these cases the plan fails horribly. In case of Kah, Dracula takes over the body of Kah instead of helping him, and in case of the Rani, Dracula takes charge of the victims and ultimately kills her for disobeying his orders. The question of the accessibility to the blood of the victim, as discussed earlier, is therefore, a political question, involving a colonial disbalance of power. Talking about the political symbolism of blood in India, Copeman and Banerjee discuss its importance in the colonial discourse, whereby it reveals 'illegitimate and illicit flows, forcible extractions, gender politics, and histories of contamination.'[77] They discuss the popular use of blood as a symbol of 'vampiric political extraction' during British colonialism in India, citing Dadabhai Naoroji's equation of the flow of blood and wealth from the colony to the city of England.[78] In both the appropriations of Dracula that are set in an Oriental setting, the appearance of the vampire is followed by a dehumanisation of the natives, whereby they are exploited physically, and treated as commodities for providing blood. The colonial dynamics underlying the act of vampirism is explicitly mentioned in *The Unquenchable Thirst*. When Dracula shows Penny the victims of his vampirism, the narrator comments that 'all of them are female, all of them are either Indian or Eastern nationality' except her sister Lucy.[79] The act of blood-drinking, therefore, becomes associated with racial victimisation of the Indians by the white coloniser. The palace of Mahabad, within this analysis, becomes the centre of the vampire's colonial rule, from where

[77] Jacob Copeman, and Dwaipayan Banerjee, *Hematologies: The Political Life of Blood in India* (London: Cornell University Press, 2019), 30.

[78] Copeman and Banerjee, 46.

[79] Gatiss, *The Unquenchable Thirst*. Although we have previously noted the homoerotic undertones in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, the mention of Dracula's victims to be female problematises this analysis. Just like in *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst'), there seems to be a very deliberate attempt to portray the vampire's desires as exclusively heterosexual in this section. Given that the text has not shied away from adapting Dracula's claim over Harker in Stoker (evident in Dracula's refusal to hand over Prem's body to Rani), this sudden change in the vampiric/sexual preferences of Dracula seems troubling. It may have been inspired by Stoker's Dracula preying on women exclusively once he is in England.

he operates, and systematically satiates his bloodlust. This political symbolism of blood in *The Unquenchable Thirst* is also evident from Dracula's reminder to the Rani that he is the one who controls the British authorities so that the cultists do not have to face any repercussions for their actions. Unlike in Stoker's novel, Dracula's vampirism in this radio drama is heavily dependent on the political power he enjoys in India. Although his powers are restricted to the limited area of Mahabad, and does not hold any global relevance as it does in the Swedish *Powers of Darkness,* it is nonetheless important in constructing the political narrative in the text.

The narrative of the purity of blood must be seen in the context of this colonial subtext. This is because the symbolism of blood as pure/impure has been an important part of the discourse of nationalism. Citing Gandhi's idea that impure blood led to a state of vulnerability to the epidemics spreading in the country, Copeman and Banerjee argue how British colonialism was equated with these epidemics.[80] Just as impure blood caused susceptibility to these epidemics, so also an 'impurity' in the anticolonial struggle led to the failure of its efforts of ending British colonial rule in India. Such an equation of the idea of nationalism with the purity/impurity of blood is also found in Seyfioğlu's *Dracula in Istanbul*. In Seyfioğlu's text, the act of defeating the vampire is infused with a nationalistic sentiment of protecting Turkish blood, and for avenging the horrors inflicted by the Count on Turkish soldiers.[81] In *The Unquenchable Thirst*, and in *The Legend of the Seven Golden Vampires*, on the other hand, the native ruler forms an alliance with a foreign power to increase their hold on the natives. Although the Rani later labels the Count's touch as impure, her own alliance with him leads to her total loss of power. As Dracula himself tells the Rani, 'I am your master. Nothing less than total obedience will suffice.'[82] Therefore, while the Rani had hoped that her coalition with

[80] Copeman and Banerjee, 53.

[81] Stoker and Seyfioğlu, *Dracula in Istanbul* (1928; reprint, translated by Necip Ateş, United States: Neon Harbour Entertainment, 2017).

[82] Gatiss, *The Unquenchable Thirst*.

Dracula would be based on a structure of shared power, the latter assumes dictatorial control over the palace and over the victims who come to Mahabad. The 'impurity' which Dracula's vampirism causes, according to the Rani, is thus of a political character. The impurity is a symbolic representation of the invasion of the palace of Mahabad by a foreign power. Although it is Dracula who drinks the blood of the Indians and of the Chinese villagers in *The Unquenchable Thirst* and in *The Legend of the Seven Golden Vampires* respectively, the native ruler/person of power becomes a vicarious participant in this act of vampirisms since it is they who arrange for the victims.[83] The Rani uses the narrative of purity to separate herself from Dracula and to frame her act of sacrifice as sacred, as opposed to the 'evil' vampirism of Dracula. Similarly, Dracula's subscription to the narrative of purity is aimed at separating his act of vampirism — which serves as a source of rejuvenation — from the 'childish games' in which the cultists are involved. Dracula's infantilising of the native cultists shows how the text creates hierarchies of power based on the differences in the use of blood. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the infantilising of the non-European Other formed an important part of the colonial project as it placed Europe at the apex of modernity and evolutionary progress.[84] Dracula thus acts as the colonial father-figure, who seemingly protects the Rani and the cultists by ensuring that it is 'safe for you to continue your childish games.'[85] He thus justifies his usurpation of power, and establishes his total control over the palace of Mahabad, demanding

---

[83] During the period of British colonialism in India, many native rulers helped the Britishers, most notably during the time of the Indian Rebellion of 1857. *The Unquenchable Thirst* captures this political dynamic between local rulers and the colonial government perfectly through the arrangement made between Dracula and the Rani. Furthermore, when the Rani tries to revolt against Dracula by taking Prem away from him, the Maharaja betrays her by informing Dracula about her disobedience. The Maharaja's actions may also have been motivated by his sexual jealousy, seeing Prem as his rival for the Rani's favours. These fractures within the structures of native kingship and governance are once again reminiscent of the period of British colonialism in India which were facilitated by the regional tensions brewing within the country during the time.

[84] Matt Finn, and Cheryl McEwan, 'Left in the Waiting Room of History?: Provincializing the European Child,' *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 17, no. 1 (2015): 114.

[85] Gatiss, *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*.

total obedience from the Rani. Dracula's assumption of colonial authority over the natives is, however, based on the exploitation of native resources, which in this case is blood. Although Dracula is feasting on the bodies of the natives, he demarcates a clear distinction between himself and the cultists, using the narrative of purity. When the Rani tries to assert her authority as the High Priestess of the Temple of Blood, Dracula laughs and says that they know nothing about blood, and waste it by drenching their 'unclean bodies' in it.[86] The statement about 'unclean bodies' highlights a sort of repulsion which the vampire feels on seeing the native body covered in blood. This repulsion indicates the existence of a racial demarcation between the body of the European vampire and the non-European natives. The trope of using physical repulsion as a means of creating a racial hierarchy was also present in Stoker's *Dracula*, although in a totally different manner. In Stoker's novel, it was Harker, the white, western man who was repelled by the physical proximity of Dracula, an East European Count, on getting a whiff of his rank breath.[87]Although in *The Unquenchable Thirst* it is the vampire who experiences this feeling of repulsion, the context of a racial hierarchy framed around the narrative of cleanliness and purity remains the same. As the European man in India, he assumes the position of racist supremacy of Harker, designating the natives as unclean. Just like Harker in Stoker's *Dracula* displays a belief in western superiority (as seen in his comments about trains running late as one moves towards the East), Dracula in *The Unquenchable Thirst* displays a sense of condescension towards the natives.

The conflict between Dracula and the Rani thus becomes a point of confrontation between a regional power and a foreign invader. Unlike in Stoker's novel where Dracula is defeated by a group of white, western men, in *The Unquenchable Thirst*, the defeat of Dracula is occasioned by the uprising of the native cultists against the vampire. The fight against

[86] Gatiss, *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*.

[87] Stoker, 24.

Dracula is clearly framed as an act of colonial resistance, aimed at defending the regional queen and ousting the foreign vampire. As the vampire is about to kill the Rani, the cultists charge at him, shouting, 'ये हमारी रानी का इज़्ज़त का सवाल है', 'This is a question of the honour that is due to our queen.'[88] The fight against the vampire is not a moral or a spiritual duty for the cultists, as is the case with the Crew of Light in Stoker's novel. It is a nationalistic duty, as in Seyfioğlu's *Dracula in Istanbul*. Defeating the vampire in *The Unquenchable Thirst* is essential in restoring the regional power by avenging the death of their queen. The act of vampirism within this context becomes a political act of suppressing this rebellion. Although the acolytes try to attack him, Dracula succeeds in defeating them and quenches his thirst with their blood. This defeat, however, is only temporary. Interestingly, the final defeat of the vampire only takes place after his Indian partner, the Maharaja, is killed. By betraying the Rani and siding with Dracula, the Maharaja has betrayed the native cultists. This betrayal of the natives thus assumes a political character, as the Maharaja decides to help the foreign invader. As already discussed, Dracula's power as the colonial master is dependent on the support he receives from the rulers of Mahabad. Therefore, in order to destroy Dracula's vampiric regime, it is not just the Count but his Indian partners too who must be killed. When the Maharaja tries to escape with the body of Dracula, his car gets stuck in a procession for the god, Jagannath. When the Maharaja comes out of the car, and tries to assert his authority he faces a resistance from the crowd. Seeing that the car will block the procession of Lord Jagannath, the local devotees push the Maharaja's car into a narrow alley, which eventually rolls down the hill and crashes. The refusal of the local devotees to listen to the Maharaja's orders thus completes the narrative of colonial resistance ending with the Maharaja's death under the wheels of the chariot of Jagannath. His death is symbolic of the rise of the ordinary citizen to a position of power, and the overthrow, not just of the vampire, but of the entire vampiric regime of Mahabad. Soon after the death of the

[88] Gatiss, *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*.

Maharaja, therefore, the acolytes return and corner Dracula in the Tower of Silence, from where the Count ultimately falls to his death, getting impaled on the bamboo stakes placed by the acolytes. The end of Dracula thus symbolises the end of this vampiric regime that physically exploited the natives to satiate the needs of the ruling class.

This termination of the vampire's regime, however, turns out to be illusory. As the ending of the radio drama indicates, the structures of colonial power and oppression cannot be easily broken down by removing the tyrants in control. The power which Dracula held as a white, European man in India is soon transferred to Penny as the white, western woman who now has her own hoard of undead army to follow her. Unlike Dracula however, Penny's vampiric rule is less dictatorial. As opposed to Dracula's demand for total respect and subservience, Penny's relation to the other undead vampires seems to be one of solidarity and affection. As the undead natives, on whom Dracula had feasted, emerge from the bottom of the pit, they kiss Penny's hand, almost as a show of this loyalty and affection. Furthermore, Dracula, in Stoker's novel, refused to share Harker with the female vampires; and in *The Unquenchable Thirst*, he refused to share the blood of his victims with the cultists. Penny's act of vampirism, on the other hand, is more communal, in that her hoard of vampires feast on Prem's blood together. *The Unquenchable Thirst,* therefore, uses the symbolism of blood to form a political narrative of colonial oppression, and an attempt to break down the structures of exploitative power that ultimately fails. In *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') too, vampirism is associated with a kind of political oppression of the rural hinterland by the urban middle class shown in the fear the Gypsies express about Garchampa palace and through the corpse of the *Adivasi*, 'aboriginal,' woman found dead in the woods by the driver of the carriage in which Paul, Shimli, and the rest are travelling to Garchampa. The woman, as the driver hints, has fallen victim to the vampire by foolishly staying out after nightfall. It is an indigenous representation of the vampire myth where the rural and urban spaces encroach upon each other;

the first encroachment is occasioned by the urban John's apprenticeship to the village *tantric*, and the second is occasioned by the vampire's invasion of the urban space.[89] The *Dakin's* victimisation of people from the rural hinterland initially goes unchallenged. This is because people like the Gypsy Kamli have no means of resisting the acts of violence against their body and blood. The cult of blood in *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') is thus used in the horror narrative to create a subculture that lies outside the limits of society. It forms an alternate reality where the horror of vampires can freely operate, as opposed to the 'normal,' everyday life of the people. By refusing to divulge any details about the nature and the origin of the blood cult, the narrative creates a generalised subculture, existing outside mainstream society, and proceeds to demonstrate the class divisions inherent within this social structure. It is only when Merina, the urban, middle-class woman is attacked by the vampire, that Paul and his friends decide to finally kill the monster. The victimisation of Kamli, the rural woman, who, along with her twin sister Shimli, had been abducted by a tribal leader in her childhood, does not cause the same stir in the film.[90] In fact, her twin-sister Shimli's plan to rescue Kamli ends in abject failure. The vampire drains and kills Kamli. Following this, Paul and his friends escape from Garchampa palace, leaving the vampire to roam freely. It is only when they realise that the vampire has infiltrated the city that Paul and his friends decide to track the creature to its lair and kill him once and for all. The use of blood as a political tool situated at the nexus of culture and religion is thus an important part of the narrative of horror in both the texts. However, the socio-political and cultural symbolisms that the imagery of blood carries is dependent on the way the narrative of horror is constructed around its material presence on screen. This imagery

[89] Mithuraaj Dhusia, *Indian Horror Cinema: (En)Gendering the Monstrous* (New York: Routledge, 2018), 82.

[90] In the film Mr John reveals that Shimli and Kamli are the daughters of a tea-garden owner Mr Henry whom John had abducted. Therefore, Shimli and Kamli do not originally belong to the rural class. However, no one except Mr John, and perhaps the two girls, know this, and Shimli is seen by Paul and the rest as a Gypsy girl, and therefore, marginalised.

of blood in terms of the politics of its physical representation in regional blood cults will be studied in the next section.

Blood Symbolism and the Superficiality of the Horror Imagery

In Stoker's *Dracula*, Renfield's statement, 'For the blood is the life' is explicitly a scriptural reference found in Leviticus 17: 10-14. Within the biblical context, the prohibition around ingesting blood is based on the fact that it is considered to be the fluid that sustains all life. In many religious cultures, it also acts as a *materia magica*, since the sacrifice of blood connects the human to the divine, and thus its consumption is limited only to the gods. However, as we have repeatedly observed, although scriptural symbols and references are frequently used in Stoker, their relevance is restricted to the role they play in sustaining the horror narrative of the text. Therefore, when the story of a Transylvanian vampiric Count is set in India against the cultural background of indigenous cults, the scriptural meanings of blood also change. Nevertheless, as seen in *The Unquenchable Thirst* and *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') the narrative of horror deliberately seems to avoid referencing any specific sect or religious ideology in portraying these regional blood cults. For example, in *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') when John asks the help of a *tantric* to reanimate a dead body, the latter says that only blood-sucking spirits, who appear with the goddess *Chhinnamasta* [the one with the severed head], will come to do the job. Despite the reference to this form of Kali, during the actual ritual no images of any specific deity are seen. The ritual only visually depicts John cutting his palm with a sharp object, and offering the blood in the fire. Similarly, in *The Unquenchable Thirst*, the Rani refers to the deity, only as the 'god of blood'; their cult is called the brotherhood of blood. Despite the reference to a *lingam*, and to the Rani's invocation of the 'god of creation and of destruction,' the name of Shiva is not used. The cult represents a nameless pocket of worship, separate from the mainstream religion. This is in sharp contrast to the ending of the radio drama, where the procession of the Hindu deity of Jagannath is

mentioned. The difference between the scene of the cultists sacrificing the blood of innocent victims and the scene of the crowd taking out the procession of Jagannath is that one involves the aesthetics of horror and the other involves the aesthetics of carnival related to mainstream Hinduism.[91] Understanding the lack of specificity in the aesthetics of horror is important in understanding the way the symbolism of blood is translated across cultures. This is because, when Stoker's *Dracula* is adapted within the context of these regional blood cults, the Biblical implications of blood fade away. While Dracula's perversion of the Eucharist ritual and Renfield's distorted, partial, and incomplete understanding of the scriptural meaning of blood constituted the horrors of Stoker's novel, in these appropriations the Biblical symbolism of blood no longer operates. Within this new aesthetics of horror, the materiality of the blood and the visual spectacle accompanying the sacrifice become an important part of the narrative. The lack of specificity, in terms of the deity to whom the offering is made, or to the religious ideology within which these cults are situated, are unimportant in comparison to the effect of dread and bodily disgust produced through the visual and/or aural narration of the spillage of blood.[92] This superficiality of the imagery of blood is thus deliberate. Although we have tried to uncover the symbolic interpretation of the use of blood in the appropriations of *Dracula* in this chapter, ultimately it is the materiality of blood and the visual and tactile sensation accompanying its flow away from the sacrificial body that defines its translatability across cultures. The sight or thought of blood is thus supposed to create a physical sensation of revulsion in the audience. This reaction to the materiality of the blood is visible most

[91] The scene of the procession of Jagannath as a scene of carnival involves a subversion of the structures of power. It is the mob which holds the authority to control the movement, and to decide who will be allowed to stay within this carnivalesque space. The Maharaja of Mahabad is quickly removed from the scene, with a blatant disregard for his position. Incidentally, the Maharaja being crushed under the wheels of the chariot of Jagannath in the radio play does remind us of the word 'juggernaut' which is derived from the name of the Hindu deity, and normally has negative connotations of an overwhelmingly destructive force.

[92] The horror in blood-cult narratives is similar in this respect to slasher horror which similarly relies on the spectacle of blood.

prominently in the scene in *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') where the *tantric* explains to John how the body will be reanimated by blood-sucking spirits. As the *tantric* tries to explain the dangers of the ritual to John, the former looks away in a dazed manner as if visualising these spirits. Talking about their depiction as blood-drinkers in religious mythology, the body of the *tantric* literally shakes with fear, and his voice quivers with excitement. It is this physical revulsion and shuddering caused by the materiality of blood — rather than by its symbolic value — that the aesthetics of horror heavily relies on.

The cultural politics involved in the representation of the imagery of blood and the regional cults depicted in these horror narratives can be best understood by studying the production process of yet another unmade Hammer film *Dracula and the Curse of Kali*.[93] The film, developed by Don Houghton in 1974, was supposed to be set in 1856, against the context of the imminent revolt of the sepoys in 1857, depicting Dracula's journey to India to marry the Hindu goddess Kali. However, as it turns out, the Kali in question is not the real goddess, but a woman who has been sacrificed and reincarnated by an evil priest, Shinwar Khan, whose surname is more common among Muslims than Hindus. The political context of the rebellion of 1857 and the racial tensions between the Britishers and the Indian soldiers are beyond the purview of my thesis. What I want to focus on is the debate around the figure of Kali, and whether to portray her as the real Hindu goddess, or as a fake one created by the evil machinations of Shinwar Khan. While Houghton repeatedly tried to argue for the latter approach, Michael Carreras, the head of Hammer Studios, wanted the film to show the real goddess Kali, involved in a romantic liaison with Dracula.[94] The cultural appropriation involved in the use of the figure of Kali to create a narrative around the western vampire genre

[93] The script of this unmade Hammer film is currently stored in an archive at the Cinema and Television History Research Institute (CATHI). I have referred to Kieran Foster's account of the script in his book *Hammer Goes to Hell: The House of Horror's Unmade Films* for my analysis. , Kieran Foster, *Hammer Goes to Hell: The House of Horror's Unmade Films* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2023).
[94] Quoted in Kieran Foster, 75.

is obvious. Carreras' idea is to create the film in the style of the exploitation films popular in the 1970s with violence, nudity, and shock value, set against the backdrop of India.[95] Creating an association between Kali, a goddess associated with blood-drinking, with a western vampire, therefore, highlights the superficiality of the imagery of blood that we have discussed above. Although Houghton may have re-designed the script in a way that would be less controversial within the Indian community than the depiction of the real Kali, his vision of the shock value of the imagery of the blood-drinking goddess is evident from the historical notes that precede the script. In the first historical note, Houghton notes:

> Kali, a dark mother-goddess…had a fearful Cult following throughout many parts of India in the Seventeenth, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries. The murderous Thags or Thugs who terrorised the length and breadth of the sub-continent until they were suppressed by the British in the Nineteenth Century, practiced [*sic*] in her name a ritual of robbery by deceit and strangulation. Her worship included indecent, orgiastic rites, magical in meaning and effect and accompanied by 'the pleasures of wine, flesh and women.' Thus KALI…is a vision of violence and debauchery. With a necklace of skulls, her girdle of severed human heads, her many arms and the blood-drenched sword, she represented the lust for life terminating in tormented death.[96]

By situating the worship of Kali as part of a criminal cult, the above historical note reinforces colonial stereotypes about the Britishers bringing the light of civilisation to the colonies and restoring law and order to an apparently chaotic land. Since the robbery and murder were 'practiced [*sic*] in her name,' the suppression of the robbers suggests that Kali too, like the evil Dracula, needs to be defeated and eradicated by the white, western man. A similar structure was also followed in *The Legend of the Seven Golden Vampires*, where Hsi Ching, the grandson of a farmer, victimised by the eponymous golden vampires, seeks the help of Van Helsing to defeat Dracula. Although Hsi Ching and his siblings have martial prowess that is effective in

[95] The exploitation films were a part of the craze for film dealing with zombies, monsters, sexualised nuns, and other elements aimed at titillating and shocking the audience. This increase in the exploitation films in the European film industry was referred to as the Eurocult phenomenon. See Danny Shipka, *Perverse Titillation: The Exploitation Cinema of Italy, Spain and France, 1960-1980* (London: McFarland Publishers, 2011), 5.

[96] Quoted in Foster, 75, from Don Houghton, Historical Note 1, in *Dracula and the Curse of Kali*, unpublished treatment, Hammer Script Archive, De Montfort University. May 1974.

fighting the vampires, the presence of the white, western man, and his cultural knowledge about the vampires, are seen as indispensable in bringing peace and stability to the Chinese village. In *Dracula and the Curse of Kali*, similarly, as Foster argues, the main characters instrumental in fighting the cult of Shinwar Khan are the British Van Helsing and the British soldier Lieutenant Ashwood, despite the existence of other Indian characters.[97]

Carreras wanted *Dracula and the Curse of Kali* to use the element of gore as an intrinsic part of the plot. This excessive display of carnage and violence, showing the human body in a state of mutilation and dismemberment, which is referred to as 'carnography' by Richard Gehr, forms an important part of the conceptualisation of the confrontation between Kali and Dracula.[98] As Isabel Pinedo argues, post-1968 horror film relies heavily on what she calls 'wet death,' wherein the contents of the body are spilled, devoured, and/or penetrated leading to a monstrous spectacle.[99] Since the vampire's act of blood-drinking only involves quietly sucking the blood out through tiny puncture wounds, it fails to satisfy the voyeuristic desire for gore on screen. *Dracula and the Curse of Kali*, like *The Unquenchable Thirst*, uses the regional mythology of blood cults to create this carnography of violence, where the sacrifices made to the deity might have served to display the mutilation of the body, in ways which the vampiric attack would have failed to do. The plan to create this carnography on screen is evident from Carreras' suggestion that during the main story, the film should 'cut to either Drac and his "Bats" causing havoc as they travel south [from Europe to India], or Kali and her thugees causing havoc as they travel North [from India to Europe].'[100] While Carreras' vision is based on this idea of depicting scenes of carnage on the screen to follow the then-current trend in

[97] Foster, 78.

[98] Richard Gehr, 'Splatterpunk.' *Village Voice* (Feb. 6, 1990): 57—58.

[99] Isabel Cristina Pinedo, *Recreational Terror: Women and the Pleasures of Horror Film Viewing* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2016), 61.

[100] Quoted in Foster, 79.

horror films, the depiction of the journey of either Dracula or Kali, each to meet the other, also emphasises the cultural confrontation between the two forces. The journey of Dracula from Transylvania to London forms one of the most important sections of Stoker's novel, which has facilitated the adaptation and/or appropriation of the novel in different cultural contexts. As we have already discussed in the previous chapters, the question of translatability is ingrained in the novel as it deals with the issue of Dracula trying to learn the language and the culture of the English people so that he can easily blend in with the crowd and carry on with his vampiric activities without being noticed. By choosing to adapt the scene of Dracula's journey in *Dracula and the Curse of Kali,* Carreras, consciously or unconsciously, emphasises the cultural interaction between the two mythologies — the religious mythology of Kali, and the literary mythology of the western vampire as envisaged by Stoker. The journey of Dracula, or of Kali, symbolises this flow of cultural meanings of blood, although coloured by racial prejudices and popular imagination. Although the motif of blood and blood-drinking acquire different symbolisms across cultures and historical timelines, *Dracula* and its multicultural translations use the basic spectacle of draining the blood of the victim by the vampire which either uses the close-up of Dracula's fangs, with blood spilling over from the side of his mouth, or merely suggests that Dracula is drinking the blood of its victims by showing the Count covering the victim with his cloak as seen in *Horror of Dracula* (1958) and *Dracula Prince of Darkness* (1966). This visual spectacle or the suggestion of the sucking of blood, which audiences/readers associate with the narrative of vampirism, also contributes to the translatability of the text.

Apart from the racial hierarchy established through the narrative of vampirism and the depiction of the thuggee cult, what is striking in this historical note is that Houghton's and Carreras' idea of Kali is situated in a cultural blind-spot that fails to understand the deeper philosophical underpinnings of blood involved in the mythology of the goddess. For Houghton and Carreras, blood acts merely as a visual stimulus in the narrative of Kali, which they wish

to utilise as part of the superficial imagery of horror in the film. This analysis of the use of the blood imagery to create the aesthetics of horror is evident in Houghton's reference to Kali as a '*vision* of violence and debauchery' [my emphasis]. It is the visual narrative of violence associated with the mythology of the goddess that serves as the basis for its incorporation into the film. Furthermore, the vampire mythology in the West is always built around the preservation of the dead body in its perfect form. That is to say, the vampiric body is always shown to be full of life, even after death.[101] Apart from the puncture wounds on the neck, through which the blood is lost, the body remains intact. The myth of Kali, as understood by Carreras and Houghton, on the other hand, could be used to depict the dismembered body. The severed human heads, the skulls on her neck, all serve to arouse the fear of the human body that has been mutilated. The blood-symbolism of Kali, therefore, reframes the horror of Dracula as 'Body Gothic,' [102] in which the flow of blood on screen creates the aesthetics of horror. Moreover, as the historical note on Kali shows, the figure of the goddess itself was pictured as a Gothic body with 'her many arms.' As Xavier Aldana Reyes observes, 'Gothic bodies produce fear through their interstitiality: they are scary because they either refuse absolute human taxonomies or destabilise received notions of what constitutes a 'normal' or socially intelligible body.' [103] The anatomical peculiarities of the goddess, and her 'monstrous' body, are in sharp contrast to the body of Dracula which, apart from the long canines — and the hair on the palm of his hands in Stoker's novel — is visually the body of a human being. Even the vampire in *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') has the appearance of a human being because it is the body of a person who died in an accident. The body of Kali, on the other hand, is a Gothic body; it is

[101] See Chapter 1 to read how the undead body which does not decay simultaneously becomes a source of desire and fear.

[102] Xavier Aldana Reyes, *Body Gothic: Corporeal Transgression in Contemporary Literature and Horror Film* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2014), 5.

[103] Reyes argues that the Gothic body transcends categorical divisions, and is thus located in the interstices between social categories, subverting ideas of 'normality.' Although Dracula is able to transform into a dog or a bat in the novel, he appears to Harker and to the Crew of Light mostly in his human form.

almost similar to that of a human being yet not quite like it. The role of the Gothic body in shaping the narrative of horror is noted in the poster designed for the film by Tom Chantrell. By contrast, in *Horror of Dracula, Dracula: Prince of Darkness*, *Dracula Has Risen from the Grave*, and other sequels it is the image of the vampiric Count which forms the focus of the visual narrative depicted in the poster. Dracula's body too, in these posters, is at once similar to and different from that of human beings, the difference being marked usually by his protruding fangs. However, Dracula's horror has always been his ability to blend in with the human crowd, and to spread his vampirism as stealthily as possible. As opposed to the portrayal of Kali on the poster (which is gigantic, more than human, and horrific due to its sheer scale) Dracula's body is that of a monster who can easily pose as human, both in appearance and in behaviour. Even his relation to his victims follows the social structure of ordinary society, as is evident from the poster of *Horror of Dracula* with the question, 'Who will be his bride tonight?'

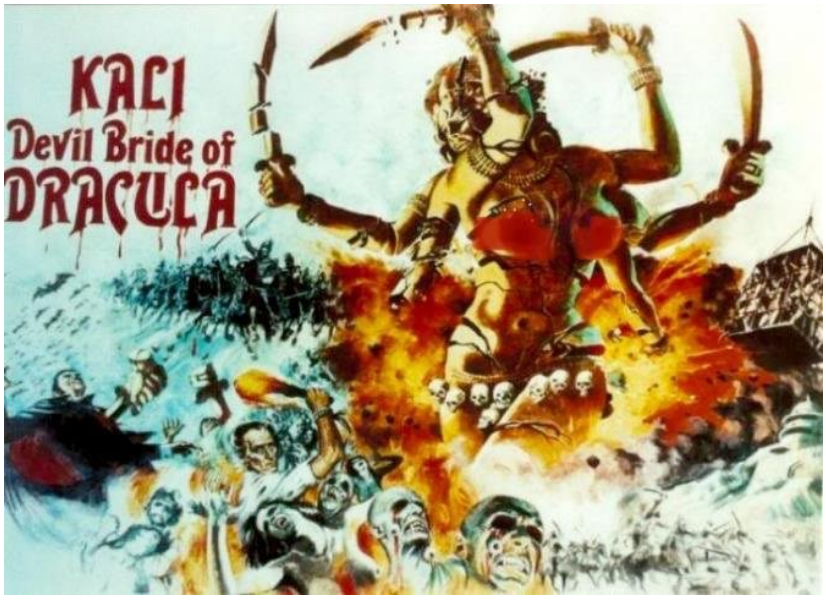

Figure 5.1: Poster of *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*

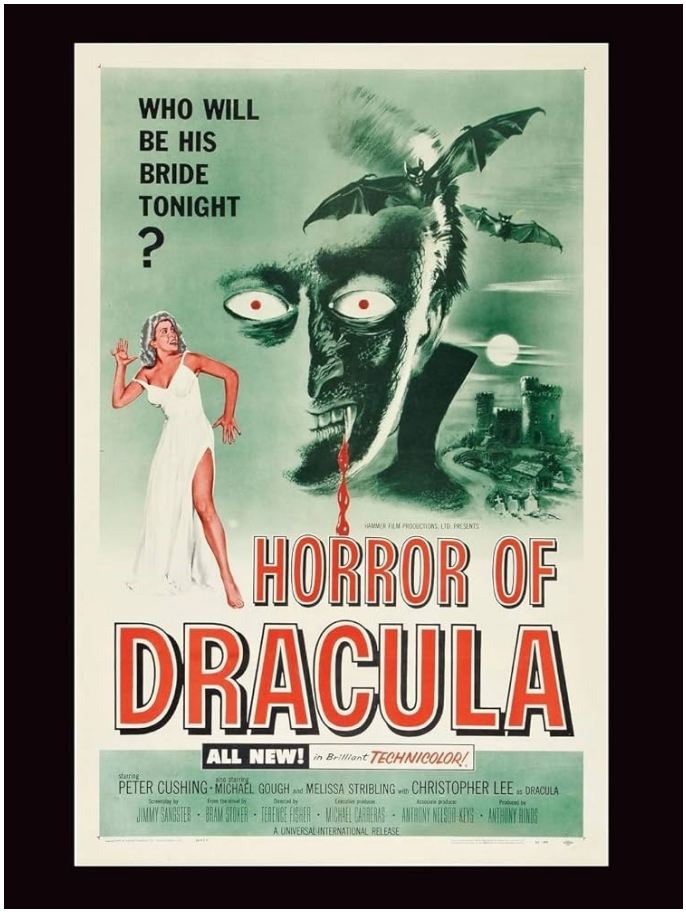

Figure 5.2: Poster of *Horror of Dracula*

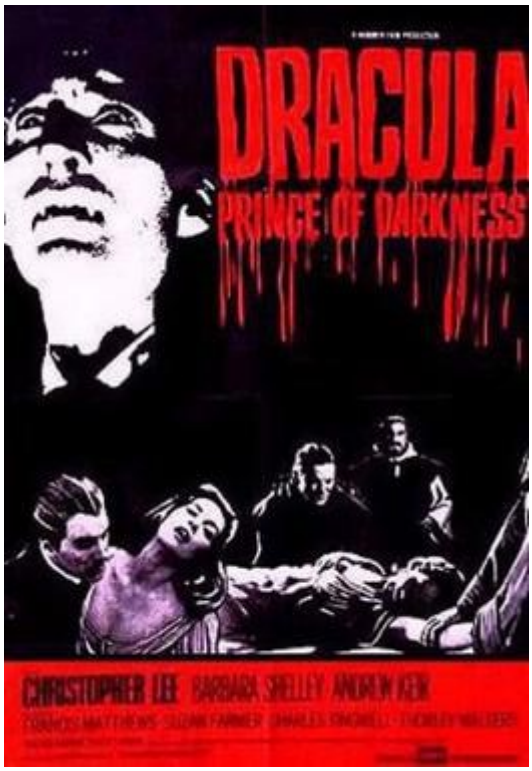

Figure 5.3: Poster of *Dracula Prince of Darkness*

In the second and third posters the face of Christopher Lee as Dracula looms in the background with the victims depicted in a cowering posture or in states of vulnerability. In case of *Dracula and the Curse of Kali*, however, it is the image of the goddess which occupies the central position in the visual narrative of the poster. Dracula is in the left corner, impaled by the sword of Kali, while Van Helsing fights the other cultists or vampires. It cannot be ascertained whether this would have been the final poster for the film, given that it discloses the twist at the end where the real Goddess Kali is shown to be on the side of good.

> The giant stone effigy of Kali cracks. The statue pitches forward. The granite swords in her six arms sweep down . . . Kali had [*sic*] answered her High Priest. As the statue crashes – the stone swords impale them [Dracula and the evil Shinwar Khan], striking through their chests – and into their evil hearts.[104]

However, it is clear that the Gothic Body of Kali with her six arms and a necklace of skulls around her waist is used to emphasise its role in creating the horror aesthetic of the text. The visual 'monstrosity' of Kali, which is finally negated as embodying good and not evil, is preferred over the actual monstrosity of Dracula while designing the poster of *Dracula and the Curse of Kali*.

The symbolism of blood in the appropriations of Stoker's *Dracula* thus plays a significant role in determining the translation of horror in the text. As a text replete with references to Victorian modernity, Stoker's novel treated the idea of blood in medical terms, using it as a fluid to regain physical vitality. In *The Unquenchable Thirst*, Dracula retains this idea of blood as a life-giving fluid, using it to satiate his thirst and rejuvenate himself. However, there is also a secondary symbolism of blood as an object of sacrifice, which is added to the text through the plotline of the cultists. The cultists' belief in the idea of blood as a gift makes it a magic material that connects the worshipper to the worshipped. This conflict between Dracula's idea of blood and the cultists' belief in blood is reflected in a conflict of power

[104] Quoted in Foster, 76.

between the foreign vampire — acting as a colonial master — and the native people of Mahabad. Moreover, the symbolism of blood also brings in the question of purity and impurity, which contextualises the text within the racial and the religious discourses. In *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') the conception of blood as a sacrifice, and as a pact, leads to the association of vampirism with exploitative power. It also highlights how the addition of cultic practices and ritualistic uses of blood to vampirism alter the narrative of Stoker's *Dracula.* In the final analysis, we have observed how the translation of horror is dependent on the depiction of the draining of blood by the vampire which is either shown by focusing on the fangs of the vampire or indirectly suggested as in the first scene of *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') where the shock on Mili's face is shown followed by a scream hinting that she has been attacked by the vampire. The suggestive depiction of vampirism on screen is linked with the creation of Gothic Bodies, which are either in a state of mutilation or are located beyond the boundaries of 'normal' human anatomy. The translation of the horror of Stoker's *Dracula* thus involves the way the appropriations use the multiple social, religious, and fictional conceptions of blood, thus situating vampirism in new cultural contexts.

Chapter 6: Conclusion — Theorising the Cultural Translatability of Horror Using Stoker's *Dracula* as the Primary Text

Despite the existence of vampires in both literary and non-literary texts prior to *Dracula*, Stoker's novel has cemented the place of the Count in the popular imagination as the ultimate vampire figure. As a result, the character of Count Dracula has been the foundation of numerous vampire texts across cultures. The central focus of my thesis has been to study how the horror of *Dracula* is translated across different cultural contexts and to identify the factors which contribute to the same. The aim of my research was to see how the displacement of Count Dracula from Transylvania to other historical, geographical, and cultural paradigms changes the nature of the horror in the adaptations and appropriations. I intended to address the research gap in the study of the cultural translation of the element of horror across translations, and to identify the mechanism that guided the cross-cultural adaptations of a popular horror icon. To address this gap, the following research questions were framed:

- In what ways does a spatial displacement of *Dracula* from the isolated Transylvanian mountains contribute to narrative alterations in Stoker's depiction of the vampire?
- In the different adaptations and appropriations of *Dracula* set in locales other than Transylvania, how is the element of horror culturally translated?

In order to answer these questions, I had selected texts (mostly literary and some film texts) that could help me understand the displacement of the Dracula-figure by situating him outside the Transylvania-England setting. However, the texts I selected for my thesis are not all direct adaptations of Stoker's novel. I have also included texts which borrow some of the narrative or character elements from Stoker's novel, and utilise or subvert them to create a totally different text altogether. The reason why I have chosen to work on these texts is that they show how the idea of the vampire has been propagated in popular media through the figure of

Dracula, and how it has influenced the creation, dissemination, and consumption of regional vampire stories which have similarities to Stoker's novel. In many cases, as I have discussed in the preceding chapters, the local mythology and folklore have fused with the western mythology of Dracula as created by Stoker to generate a hybrid and culturally fluid idea of the undead.

While studying the way in which the horror of *Dracula* is translated across these adaptations and appropriations, I have not resorted to translation theorists who focus on aspects of linguistic translation, or on generalised aspects of the translatability of texts. Rather, I have used arguments from specific areas of horror studies that deal with certain aspects of the cultural translation of horror texts in particular. I have used Devendra P. Varma's idea of the origin of the vampire figure in the Eastern mythologies of India, Tibet, Nepal, and Mongolia as the basis of my argument on the translatability of the horror element.[1] Varma's analysis of the way the blood-drinking motif has travelled from the Himalayan regions to the west has been used to frame the idea of the translation of blood symbolisms across cultures in my thesis. However, I have also deviated from Varma's thesis to show how the same motif can have different religious and cultural connotations, thus altering the nature of horror across translations, adaptations, and appropriations. Similarly, I have also engaged with Tabish Khair's argument about the absence of the vampire figure per se in South Asian literature, despite the presence of the Undead.[2] By using Varma's and Khair's work on the existence of the vampire figure in non-western cultures (or its absence therein) I have contextualised the issue of a cross-cultural study of the horror of *Dracula.* While studying the overlap between horror studies and translation I have identified three main critical approaches to Stoker's novel

[1] Devendra P. Varma, Introduction, 'The Vampire in Legend, Lore and Literature,' in *Varney the Vampire, or, The Feast of Blood*, by James Malcolm Rhymer 1845, reprint, edited by Devendra P. Varma (New York: Arno Press, 1970), xiv.

[2] Tabish Khair, 'The Man- Eating Tiger and the Vampire in South Asia,' in *Transnational and Postcolonial Vampires: Dark Blood*, ed. Tabish Khair and Johan Höglund (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 105-106.

which contribute to the cross-cultural popularity of *Dracula*: the study of the visual narrative, the historical and socio-cultural perspective, and the study of the affective dimensions of the horror narrative. After the introductory chapter (Chapter 1) where I have traced the lineage of Stoker's *Dracula* from the accounts of the undead found in records belonging to Medieval period, I have focused on how the visual depiction of the home of Dracula through geographical and architectural details affects the cultural translation of horror in the first section (Chapter 2). Understanding the way Dracula's home is pictured in popular media not only plays an important part in understanding the visual narrative but also helps in gauging the socio-political implications of shifting Dracula's lair to other cultural setups. In order to study this visual narrative, I focused on the use of iconographies, religious or otherwise, in developing the ambience of horror in popular fiction. In the second section (Chapter 3), I have discussed the works of scholars like Nina Auerbach, David Punter, Matthew Gibson, and Judith Halberstam who have worked on the historical and socio-cultural setup of *Dracula* to study the way monstrosity is constructed in the novel. I have used their analyses to establish that the change in the historical narrative in texts like *Dracula in Istanbul* and the Swedish *Powers of Darkness* may alter the source of fear generated in these texts but the thematic patterns of horror which make Stoker's novel work — like that of invasion by a monstrous Other — remain constant. For example, in second section (Chapter 3) I have shown how the recontextualising Stoker's text against the backdrop of the Turkish War of Independence in *Dracula in Istanbul* has changed the nature of horror.[3] However, despite this change, the theme of the vampire's invasion has remained the same — in Stoker it was centred on the invasion of London, in Seyfioğlu's text it is centred on Istanbul. Using Tzvetan Todorov's idea of the 'fantastic,'[4]

[3] Bram Stoker and Ali Rıza Seyfioğlu, *Dracula in Istanbul* (1928; reprint, translated by Necip Ates, United States: Neon Harbour Entertainment, 2017), 134.

[4] Tzvetan Todorov, *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1975), 25.

Xavier Aldana Reyes' emphasis on the physical response generated in the audience by horror narratives,[5] and Andrea Sauchelli's conception of 'H-Mood,'[6] I have shown how the translation of horror across cultures also depends on the way the readers are affectively influenced by it. The creation and translation of the emotion of horror is influenced by the visual narrative of the novel. Using Stacy Abbott, Mary Ann Caws, and Sarah Heaton's study on the use of clothing in the creation of the vampire identity on screen I have shown in the third section (Chapter 4) how the visual depiction of the vampire on screen has cemented its place in the popular imagination thus contributing to its status as a translatable and widely translated text.

My thesis therefore, uses this framework of the overlap between horror studies and translation as the basis of textual interpretation. The methodology used in this thesis is also a synthesis of the three critical approaches described above. By recognising the way in which the visual narrative, the historical/socio-cultural factors, and the affective outcome interact with each other I have been able to devise a methodology that is suitable for studying the cultural adaptation of *Dracula* across different media. The development of this methodology and its application to study the translation/adaptation of *Dracula* in other cultural setups provides a broader mechanism to study those inter-cultural and inter-textual spaces where texts of horror literature across the world converge, interact, and overlap with each other. For example, apart from *Dracula*, other texts of horror literature like Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla*, or William Peter Blatty's *The Exorcist* have also been translated and adapted across many languages and cultures. Although these texts have not been covered in this thesis, the methodology developed to study the cultural translation of horror in the adaptations of *Dracula* can also be used to study the translation of horror in these texts. As the findings of this thesis show, the main factor which connects the three critical lenses discussed above is the way

[5] Xavier Aldana Reyes, *Horror Film and Affect: Towards a Corporeal Model of Viewership* (London: Routledge, 2016), 11.

[6] Andrea Sauchelli, 'Horror and Mood,' *American Philosophical Quarterly* 51, no. 1 (January 2014): 43.

these texts of horror literature circulate in the popular imagination. While many texts of horror literature may be found to be suitable for translation across cultures, the ultimate question of whether or not the translation of popular horror icons works depends on the mark left by the original text on the cultural imagination of the people. In this regard, out of the three factors mentioned above, the visual narrative is seen to play a significant role. In many cases it is mainly through the visual cues in the horror narrative, including the iconography, the style of clothing, the construction of the physical location, and other such details that the reader/audience remembers the text. For example, as we have discussed in third section (Chapter 4), the cloak which Dracula is shown to be wearing in his Hollywood representations has formed an important part of the Count's identity in popular media. Similarly, the figure of the bat (which only sparingly appears in Stoker's text) has become widely associated with the figure of Dracula and vampires, although the original novel also showed reptilian and werewolf-like characteristics in Dracula. The texts selected for this study, therefore, are not always direct adaptations of Stoker's novel but texts which build upon this idea of Dracula circulating in popular media. Dracula is thus more than just a monster; he is a part of the popular market and imagination. The cross-cultural adaptations of the figure repeatedly refer to his previous iterations in other media. The popularity of *Dracula* leads to more translations, adaptations, appropriations of Stoker's text. The fact that Dracula is seen as the ultimate vampire figure, despite the existence of other vampires like Varney or Carmilla, and this has favoured multiple translations, adaptations, and appropriations of Stoker's text. These adaptations then further contribute to the popularity of this horror icon thus creating a cycle of adaptations and appropriations, and the growth in popularity of this figure.

By studying these texts therefore, I have been able to observe the role popular imagination plays in the translation of the horror of a cult vampire figure. There are four main findings of my research. These findings have been listed below to understand the way in which

the emotion of horror is translated across cultures, using *Dracula* as the focal point of our analysis:

1. One of the main bases of the cultural translation of horror of *Dracula* is the change of the iconography – religious or otherwise. One of the most prominent iconographies used in most works of literature is that pertaining to religion. In *Dracula*, and its various cross-cultural adaptations, we find the use of the crucifix, holy objects, Eucharist rituals, and other similar symbolisms that contribute to the creation of the 'horror mood.' However, as we have observed, the religious symbols used in these narratives merely form a part of the horror iconography that serve as entry points into these alternate, fantastic spaces, and dictate the internal logic of the story. That is to say, the presence of the crucifix in the text helps the readers identify it as part of the larger network of vampire narratives and horror narratives that use the crucifix in a similar fashion. In other texts of horror literature similarly, other religious symbols play a vital role in constructing the binary between good and evil, serving as tangible, moral signifiers that aid in the process of constructing the idea of 'monstrosity.' In *Dracula*, as we have observed, the crucifix plays an important role in defining Count Dracula's aversion to holy objects that constitutes a part of his vampirism. In the different adaptations of *Dracula* this crucifix is often replaced by holy amulets belonging to other religions but the function of these as the marker of the vampire as a morally corrupt figure remains the same.

2. A lot of adaptations or translations rely on the visual narrative in Stoker's novel, and expand upon it. The physical appearance of Dracula, the clothes he wears, and the house he lives in, all form a part of a visual frame which facilitates an easy translation of the horror on a non-linguistic level. The physical location of Dracula's castle, and the way its architecture is designed, form an important part in constructing certain key narrative points like the entrapment of the protagonist, or the looming presence of the vampire throughout the first half

of Stoker's text. In many adaptations and appropriations of *Dracula*, although the geographical location is changed, the topographical features like that of the mountains, or the architectural features of the castle, are similar to those in Stoker's text. This contributes to the same affective response of entrapment and abandonment from the protagonist and the readers. The effect of the visual narrative on the translation of horror can especially be observed in the Indian graphic novel adaptations of *Dracula* which use elements of the Count's clothing to import the western lore of vampires, while combining it with regional mythologies and historical fantasies of its own. The visual narrative, in this case, serves to create, expand, and alter new mythologies around the popular character of Dracula, thus combining the horror of the vampire lore of the West with other regional fictional and/or folkloric horror figures like *pishachas* and shape-shifters.

3. The horror of *Dracula* is not solely dependent on any particular social-cultural or historical core of meaning which is changed each time the narrative is recontextualised in a different cultural setup The monstrosity of the vampire generates an ambience of horror onto which the socio-cultural fears latch themselves. The narrative of Dracula contains certain core *thematic* patterns like that of invasion by an outside force, or the fears of miscegenation which can be used to reinterpret the novel in different historical or cultural contexts. This makes the text more flexible and open to different cultural variations. However, the text does pick up different cultural markers like the symbolism of blood, and such markers are used to further the narrative of horror across translations. Similarly, the historical markers that *are* associated with Stoker's novel, such as the Victorian fin de siècle anxieties about the onset of modernity, or the fears of reverse colonisation, do play a role in the construction of the horror narrative. But their role is limited to the introduction of the thematic patterns like the invasion by an outside force or the

anxieties about miscegenation, which ultimately determine the translation of the horror element in the adaptations.

4. Popular imagination plays a vital role in the global relevance of Dracula as the ultimate vampire, and influences the way the text is received, translated, and remembered by people across the world. The popularity of the Dracula figure and its presence in the popular media implies that all translations, adaptations, or appropriations, no matter how far they stray from Stoker's narrative, are immediately measured and analysed against the 'original' text. The cultural translation of the horror of Dracula thus deals with questions regarding what constitutes the original, authentic text and what constitutes the so-called 'bootleg' or pirated versions. However, these new meanings acquired through such adaptations and appropriations lead to the expansion of the Dracula mythos and add new layers of cultural meanings to the 'original' text. As I have discussed in the fourth section (Chapter 5), texts like *The Unquenchable Thirst* or *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') offer additional meanings to the act of vampirism by introducing new uses of the symbolism of blood in creating the atmosphere of horror. These new cultural symbolisms do not subvert or replace the existing horror narrative of vampirism in Stoker but rather build upon it to make the translation of horror across cultures more effective.

The relevance of this thesis is thus three-fold. Firstly, by considering the religious iconography found in Stoker's novel as part of the horror iconography, this thesis tries to debunk the notion that Catholicism plays an important role in forming the element of horror in texts like *Dracula.* Rather, it tries to understand the larger visual narrative as part of an inter-textual space where horror texts of one culture can utilise and/or substitute the iconography like the crucifix from another culture and yet be able to contextualise and/or substitute it within its regional setup. Secondly, it devises a methodology for studying the cultural translation of

horror that combines historical and cultural study with the study of visual narrative and the generation of the emotion of horror in the reader/audience. This provides a much broader and detailed scope of analysis than a study of linguistic translation would provide. Thirdly, it recognises the role of popular imagination in the cultural translatability of the text. This provides a scope for an inter-textual study of *Dracula* which takes into account both the 'authentic' novel and the several 'bootleg' or 'pirated' versions, and appropriations of the text which contribute to the overall popularity of Stoker's novel. Rather than discrediting these versions (which adapt Stoker's entire narrative or parts of the narrative and character profiles), this thesis studies their role in influencing the circulation of *Dracula* as the definitive vampire story across ages.

However, this thesis also has certain limitations with respect to the range of texts dealt with and the issues addressed. It is important to note that while the Bengali and Hindi adaptations of *Dracula* have been read, discussed, and quoted in their original language, I have followed the English translation in case of texts like *Powers of Darkness* and *Dracula in Istanbul*, owing to the problem of the language barrier. However, since I have mostly focused on the thematic aspects of the two novels in question — discussing aspects of cultural translation rather than linguistic ones — the analysis offered has not been affected by the constraints of language. The second limitation of this thesis is the range of texts selected for the study. Since the aim of the research was to identify the factors which contribute to the translation of the horror element of *Dracula* in cross-cultural adaptations, I have not adhered to any specific historical timeline or geographical region. Rather, I have had to select texts which could provide an insight into the change in the nature of horror when certain key factors were altered. As a result, the study of the cultural translation of horror could not be restricted to a particular region or historical period which would have given a detailed overview of such translation(s) in one language, geographical area, or timeline. However, the methodology

developed through this thesis, and the factors identified as constituting the key elements of the cultural translation of horror can be applied to other texts in order to conduct such a detailed study on the adaptations of horror literature in particular cultural and historical paradigms. Thirdly, although the thesis has referred to several works of vampire literature and lore, the primary focus was on the adaptation of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, or on texts which utilise narrative elements and characters from his novel. Other texts of vampire literature like Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla* or Anne Rice's *Interview with the Vampire*, which have also been adapted across multiple languages and cultures, are not included in this study.

A comprehensive study of these other texts of vampire literature and their cultural translation/adaptation can help us formulate a theory of the translation of horror that is more specific to the field of vampire literature in general. Such a study, however, was beyond the scope of this thesis. The main idea of this thesis was to question whether the horror of *Dracula* can be translated to other cultures and to identify the factors which contribute to the same. As the findings have shown, the successful translation of *Dracula*'s horror across different cultural contexts depends on aesthetic, affective, and historical changes made in the adaptations which borrow, subvert, and expand upon the idea of monstrosity in Stoker's text, giving it new textual lives. The research questions of this thesis, and the insights they provided into the translation of horror in *Dracula*, can therefore be used as the foundation for further studies on the way the aesthetics and affective mechanisms of horror function in literatures across different cultural frameworks.

Bibliography

Primary Texts

Baker, Roy Ward, and Chang Cheh. *The Legend of the Seven Golden Vampires.* Hong Kong: Shaw Brothers Studios and Hammer Film Production, 1974. Prime Video.

Beckford, *Vathek*. 1786; Reprint, London: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Benson, E.F. 'Mrs Amworth.' In *Night Terrors: The Ghost Stories of E.F. Benson*, edited by David Stuart Davies, 327-340. London: Wordsworth Editions, 2012.

Bhattacharya, Debajyoti. 'Mrityuheen' ('Undead'). In *Kishor Bharati* 54, no. 10 (July 5, 2022): 38-42. Kolkata: Patrabharati.

Bhattacharya, Parimal, directed. *Nishi Trishna* ('Night Thirst') Kolkata: S.B. Films Private Limited, 1989. Prime Video.

Browning, Tod, directed. *Dracula*. California: Universal Studios, 1931. Prime Video.

Burton, Richard Francis, translated. *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night*. 1888. Reprinted as *Arabian Nights*, London: Harper Press, 2011.

Byron, George Gordon. 'The Giaour.' In *Byron's Poetry and Prose*. Edited by Alice Levine, 123-155. 1813. Reprint. London: WW. Norton & Company, 2009.

Calmet, Augustine. *The Phantom World, Or, the Philosophy of Spirits, Apparitions, &c. Volume II.* London: Richard Bentley, 1850.

Chakraborty, Shouvik. 'Kuashar Rong Laal' ('The Fog's Colour is Red'). In *Kishor Bharati* 54, no. 10 (July 5, 2022): 59-61. Kolkata: Patrabharati.

Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. 'Christabel.' *The Penguin Book of Romantic Poetry*. Edited by Jonathan Wordsworth, 481-487. London: Penguin, 2005.

Conrad, Joseph. *Heart of Darkness.* 1899. Reprint. In *Heart of Darkness and Other Tales*, 101-187. New York: Oxford World Classics, 2002.

Darwin, Charles. *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, Or, the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*. 1859. Reprint. Dover Publications, 2006.

Dasgupta, Himadrikishore. 'Mosmai Orchid.' In *Gaa Chhamchhame Bhoot* (*The Body-trembling Ghosts*), 226-239. Kolkata: Mitra & Ghosh Publishers, 2010.

Deane, Hamilton, and John L. Balderstone. *Dracula A Vampire Play in Three Acts*. New York: Samuel French, 1927.

Dey, Manojit. 'Roktolobhi Pishach' ('The Bloodthirsty Vampire'). In *E Juger Bhooter Golpo* ('Ghost Stories of this Age'), date unknown, 8-13. Kolkata: Orient Library.

Dickens, Charles. *Bleak House*. 1853. Reprint. London: Penguin Books, 1996.

Dutta, Souren, compiled. 'Roktopishach' ('The Vampire'). In *Bhoot Jokhon Adbhut* ('When Ghosts are Strange'), date unknown, 3-30. Kolkata: Orient Library.

Fisher, Terence, dir. *Horror of Dracula*. 1958; Burbank, CA: Warner Home Video, 2002. DVD.

Flückinger, Johann. 'Visum et Repertum.' *Vampires, Burial, and Death: Folklore and Reality.* Yale UP, 1988, pp. 15-20.

Fowler, Christopher. 'Dracula's Library.' *Critical Quarterly* 40, no. 2 (July 1998): 48-58. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8705.00160. Accessed on 20th January 2024.

Gangopadhyay, Sunil Kumar. *Bidhei Atma* (The Disembodied Spirit). Mandal Book House. Kolkata. 1967

Geoffrey of Burton. *Life and Miracles of Saint Modwenna.* Translated by Robert Bartlett. New York: Oxford UP, 2002.

Gupta, Manoj. 'ड्रैकुला का हमला' ('The Attack of Dracula'). 2003. Reprint. In *सम्पूर्ण ड्रैकुला* ('The Complete Dracula'). New Delhi: Raj Comics, 2021.

---. 'नागराज और ड्रैकुला' ('Nagraj and Dracula'). 2003. Reprint. In *सम्पूर्ण ड्रैकुला* ('The Complete Dracula'). New Delhi: Raj Comics, 2021.

---. 'ड्रैकुला का अंत' ('The End of Dracula'). 2003. Reprint. In *सम्पूर्ण ड्रैकुला* ('The Complete Dracula'). New Delhi: Raj Comics, 2021.

---. 'कोलाहल' ('Clamour'). 2003. Reprint. In *सम्पूर्ण ड्रैकुला* ('The Complete Dracula'). New Delhi: Raj Comics, 2021.

Hayden, 'Slanders of the 'The Zoist.'—The Rapping Phenomena.' In *The Spirit World* 1, no. 1 (1853): 1-2.

Hinds, Anthony. *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*. Directed by Mark Gatiss. London: BBC Studios, 2017. Radio Drama, 1 hr., 26 min. https://archive.org/details/hammerhorrorstheunquenchablethirstofdracula

Holland, Thomas Lee. *Fright Night*. 1985; Culver City, CA: Columbia Tristar Home Video, 1999. DVD.

Joynes, Andrew, editor. *Medieval Ghost Stories An Anthology of Miracles, Marvels and Prodigies*. Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006.

Keats, John. 'La Belle Dame sans Merci.' 1819. Reprint. *The Penguin Book of Romantic Poetry*. Edited by Jonathan Wordsworth, 516-517. London: Penguin, 2005.

Kiberd, Declan. *Irish Classics*. 2000. Reprint, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001.

King, Stephen. *Salem's Lot*. New York: Doubleday Publishers, 1975. Reprint, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2011.

Kostova, Elizabeth. *The Historian*. London: Time Warner Books, 2005.

Le Fanu, Joseph Sheridan. *Carmilla*. 1872. Reprint. London: Pushkin Press, 2020.

Menon, Sudeep. *Dracula* Issue 1. Mumbai: Bullseye Press, 2020.

---. *Dracula* Issue 2. Mumbai: Bullseye Press, 2023.

Muhtar, Mehmet. Directed. *Drakula İstanbul'da* (*Dracula in Istanbul*). Turkey: And Films, 1953.

Polidori, John. *The Vampyre*. 1819. Reprint. Edited by Alan Ryan, 7-24. *The Penguin Book of Vampire Stories*. London: Penguin, 1988.

Ramsay Brothers, dir. *Veerana* (*The Ruins*). 1988; USA: Mondo Macabro, 2009. DVD.

Roos, Hans de, translated. *Powers of Darkness*, Bram Stoker and Valdimar Asmundsson. New York: Overlook Duckworth, Peter Mayer Publishers, 2017.

Roy, Hemendra Kumar. Roy. *Bishalgarh-er Duhshasan* ('The Tyrant of *Bishalgarh*'). 1949. Reprinted in *Hemendra Kumar Roy Rachanabali* (*The Writings of Hemendra Kumar Roy*), Vol. 18, 5-70. Kolkata: Asia Publishing Company, 2005.

---. 'Mrs Kumudini Choudhury.' In *Hemendra Kumar Roy Rachanabali* (*The Writings of Hemendra Kumar Roy*), Vol. 3, 345-360. Kolkata: Asia Publishing Company, 1983.

Rymer, James Malcolm. *Varney the Vampire, or, The Feast of Blood*. 1845-1857. Reprint. Edited by Devendra P. Varma. New York: Arno Press, 1970.

Sarfraz, Khwaja, dir. *Zinda Laash* ('The Living Corpse'). 1967; U.S.A.: Mondo Macabro, 2003. DVD.

Sen, Prithviraj, compiled. 'Roktochoshar Hahakar' ('The Blood-drinker's Howl'). In *Bhoot Jokhon Adbhut* ('When Ghosts are Strange'), date unknown, 17-24. Kolkata: Rajendra Library.

Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*. 1818. Reprint. London: Penguin, 2003.

Stoker, Bram. *Dracula*. In *Dracula: A Norton Critical Edition*, edited by Nina Auerbach and Skal, David J. 1-327. London: Archibald Constable and Company, 1897. Reprint, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997.

---. 'Dracula's Guest.' In *Dracula: A Norton Critical Edition*, edited by Nina Auerbach and David J. Skal, 350-360. London: Routledge, 1914; New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997.

---. *Bram Stoker's Notes for Dracula*. Annotated and transcribed by Robert Eighteen-Bisang and Elizabeth Miller. London: Mcfarland & Co., 2008.

Stoker, Bram, and A-e. *Powers of Darkness: The Unique Version of Dracula*. Translated by Rickard Berghorn. Sweden: Timaios Press, 2022.

Stoker, Bram, and Ali Rıza Seyfioğlu. *Dracula in Istanbul*. 1928. Translated by Necip Ates. United States: Neon Harbour Entertainment, 2017.

Taimur, Md. Alamgir. *Kantajew-er Pishach* ('The Vampire of *Kantajew*'). In *Hakini*, 39-78. Kolkata: Aranyamon, 2019.

Varma, Devendra P. Introduction. 'The Vampire in Legend, Lore, Literature.' *Varney the Vampire, or, The Feast of Blood*, *Volume 3*. 1845, xiii-xxx.. Reprint. New York: Arno Press, 1970.

Voltaire. *A Philosophical Dictionary, Vol. VII, Part I.* 1764. Reprint. Translated by William F. Fleming. The Hubert Guild, 1901.

William of Newburg. *The History of English Affairs, Book V*. Translated by Joseph Stevenson, edited by Paul Halsall. E-book, Internet History Sourcebooks Project, Fordham University, 2000.

Secondary Texts

Aguirre, Manuel. *The Closed Space: Horror Literature and Western Symbolism*. New York: Manchester University Press, 1990.

Akçura, Yusuf. 'Three Types of Policy.' In 'Yusuf Akçura's Üç Tarzi Siyaset.' Translated by Ismail Fehmi, Oriente Moderno 61, no. 1/12 (1981): pp. 1–20. http://www.jstor.org/stable/25816814. Accessed on 16th June 2023.

Arata, Stephen D. ‘The Occidental Tourist: ‘Dracula’ and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonization.’ *Victorian Studies* 33, no. 4 (Summer, 1990): 621-645. https://www.jstor.org/stable/3827794. Accessed on 4th January 2022.

Ataturk, Mustafa Kemal. ‘Ataturk's Address to the Turkish Youth.’ 27th October 1927. http://www.columbia.edu/~sss31/Turkiye/ata/youth2.html. Accessed om 10th March 2023.

Auerbach, Nina. *Our Vampires, Ourselves*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995.

Balkılıç, Özgür and Deniz Dölek. ‘Turkish nationalism at its beginning: Analysis of Türk Yurdu, 1913–1918.’ *The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity* 41, no. 2 (2013): 316-333.

Bellafiore, Daniella. ‘Vampirism and Blood Identity: An Analysis of Social Constructions and Anxieties.’ *Concept* 30 (2007): 1-13.
https://concept.journals.villanova.edu/article/view/281/244. Accessed on 5th April 2024.

Bentley, Christopher. ‘The Monster in the Bedroom: Sexual Symbolism in Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*.’ In *Dracula: The Vampire and the Critics*, edited by Margaret L. Carter. London: UMI Research Press, 1988, 25-34.

Bhattacharya, Prodosh, and Abhirup Mascharak. ‘‘Wilde Desire’ Across Cultures: Dracula and its Bengali Adaptations.’ In *Imperial Maladies: Literatures on Healthcare and Psychoanalysis in India*, edited by D. Bandopadhyay and P. Kundu, 181-212. New York: NovaScience Publishers, 2017.

Black, Winston. ‘Animated Corpses and Bodies with Power in the Scholastic Age.’ *Death in Medieval Europe: Death Scripted and Death Choreographed*. Edited by Joëlle Rollo-Koster. New York: Routledge, 2017. 71-92.

Bovykin, V.I., and D. W. Spring. ‘The Franco-Russian Alliance.’ History 64, no. 10 (1979): 20-35.

Bowles, Noelle. ‘Crucifix, Communion, and Convent: The Real Presence of Anglican Ritualism in Bram Stoker's Dracula.’ *Christianity and Literature* 62, no.2 (Winter 2013): 243-258.

‘Bram Stoker's Dracula: A Review from 1897,’ *Manchester Guardian.* June 15, 1897. https://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/from-the-archive-blog/2012/apr/20/bram-stoker-centenary-dracula-review. Accessed on 2nd December 2023.

Brundan, Katy, Melanie Jones, and Benjamin Mier-Cruz. ‘Dracula or Draculitz?: Translational Forgery and Bram Stoker’s ‘Lost Version’ of Dracula.’ *Victorian Review* 45, no. 2 (Fall 2019): 293-306. https://doi.org/10.1353/vcr.2019.0060. Accessed on 11th February 2022.

Brundan, Katy. ‘The Polyglot Vampire: The Politics of Translation in Bram Stoker's Dracula.’ *Forum for Modern Language Studies 52*, no. 1 (January 2016): pp. 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1093/fmls/cqv094. Accessed on 14th April 2022.

Cain, Jimmy E. ‘Dracula: Righting Old Wrongs and Displacing New Fears.’ *Bram Stoker and Russophobia: Evidence of the British Fear of Russia in Dracula and The Lady of the Shroud*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 2006.

Carroll, Noel. *The Philosophy of Horror Or, Paradoxes of the Heart*. 1990. Reprint. London: Routledge, 2003.

Caws, Mary Ann. ‘What to Wear in a Vampire Film.’ In *Fashion in Film,* edited by Adrienne Munich, 40-53. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011.

Chambers, William E. *Chambers's Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*. United Kingdom: W. and R. Chambers, 1867.

Cherry, Brigid. ‘Daughters of Darkness: Vampire Aesthetics and Gothic Beauty.’ In *Dracula’s Daughters: The Female Vampire on Film*, edited by Douglas Brode and Leah Deyneka,219-234. Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2014.

Chettiar, Teri. ‘‘Looking as little like patients as persons well could’: Hypnotism, Medicine and the Problem of the Suggestible Subject in Late Nineteenth-century Britain.’ *Medical History* 56, no. 3 (2012): 335–354. https://doi.org/10.1017/mdh.2011.39. Accessed on 23rd May 2023.

Collins, Hélène. ‘She Who Cannot be Named: Lucy as a Child Molester. Stoker’s Rhetoric of Taboo.’ *Appellation(s)* 6 (2013): 23-38. https://doi.org/10.4000/esa.1162. Accessed on 20th March 2024.

Copeman, Jacob, and Dwaipayan Banerjee. *Hematologies: The Political Life of Blood in India*. London: Cornell University Press, 2019.

Corneel de Roos, Hans. ‘Count Dracula’s Address and Lifetime Identity.’ In *Dracula: An International Perspective*, edited by Marius-Mircea Crișan, 95-118. Cham, Switzerland: Springer Nature, 2017. Ebook.

Coş, Kivanç, and Pinar Bilgin. ‘Stalin's Demands: Constructions of the ‘Soviet Other’ in Turkey's Foreign Policy, 1919–1945.’ Foreign Policy Analysis 6, no. 1 (January 2010): 43- 60, https://www.jstor.org/stable/24909877. 19th August 2023.

Cowan, Douglas E. *The Forbidden Body: Sex, Horror, and the Religious Imagination*. New York: NYU Press, 2022.

Craft, Christopher. ‘‘Kiss Me with Those Red Lips’: Gender and Inversion in Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*.’ *Representations*, no. 8 (1984): 107–133. https://doi.org/10.2307/2928560. Accessed on 29th March 2023.

Crane, Jonathan Lake. *Terror and Everyday Life: Singular Moments in the History of the Horror Film*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1994.

Crary, Jonathan. *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century.* Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992.

Creed, Barbara. *The Monstrous-Feminine: Film, Feminism, Psychoanalysis.* New York: Routledge, 1993. Reprint, 2015.

Davidson, Carol Margaret. Introduction. *Bram Stoker's Dracula: Sucking Through the Century, 1897-1997*. Edited by Carol Margaret Davidson and Paul Simpson-Housley. Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1997.

Dhusia, Mithuraaj. *Indian Horror Cinema: (En)Gendering the Monstrous*. New York: Routledge, 2018.

Eagleton, Terry. *On Evil*. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2010.

Eder, Richard. '*Theater: An Elegant, Bloodless 'Dracula.' New York Times*, October 21, 1977.

Ferguson, Christine. 'Nonstandard Language and the Cultural Stakes of Stoker's *Dracula*.' *ELH* 71, no. 1 (Spring 2004): pp. 229-249. doi: 10.1353/elh.2004.0015230. Accessed on 22nd April 2022.

Finn, Matt, and Cheryl McEwan. 'Left in the Waiting Room of History?: Provincializing the European Child.' *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 17, no. 1 (2015): 113-134.

Florescu, Radu, and Raymond T. McNally. *In Search of Dracula: The History of Dracula and Vampires*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1994.

Foster, Kieran. *Hammer Goes to Hell: The House of Horror's Unmade Films*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2023.

Franklin, J. Jeffrey. 'The Economics of Immortality: The Demi-Immortal Oriental, Enlightenment Vitalism, and Political Economy in *Dracula*.' Les *Cahiers victoriens et édouardiens: Believing in Victorian Times 76 (Autumn 2012): 127-148.*

Franklin, J. Jeffrey. 'The Economics of Immortality: The Demi-Immortal Oriental, Enlightenment Vitalism, and Political Economy in *Dracula.*' *Believing in Victorian Times* 76 (2012): 127-148.

Galvan, Jill. ‘Occult Networks and the Legacy of the Indian Rebellion in Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*.’ *History of Religions* 54, no. 4 (May 2015): 434-458.

Gehr, Richard. ‘Splatterpunk.’ *Village Voice* (Feb. 6, 1990).

Gibson, Matthew. *Dracula and the Eastern Question: British and French Vampire Narratives of the Nineteenth-Century Near East*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.

Glendening, John. ‘What ‘‘Modernity’ Cannot Kill’: Evolution and Primitivism in Stoker’s Dracula.’ In *The Evolutionary Imagination in Late-Victorian Novels: An Entangled Bank*, 107-136. England: Ashgate, 2007.

Gökay, Bülent and Tunç Aybak. ‘Identity, Race and Nationalism in Turkey — Introduction to the Special Issue.’ Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies 18, no. 2 (2016): 107-110. DOI: 10.1080/19448953.2016.114157.

Gökay, Bülent. ‘The Turkish Independence War and Bolshevik Russia: Some New Aspects in the Light of Soviet Documents.’ Turkish Studies Association Bulletin 18, no. 2 (Fall 1994): 41-57, https://www.jstor.org/stable/43384472. Accessed on 10th May 2023.

Gorey, Edward. *Edward Gorey's Dracula: A Toy Theatre*. Portland: Pomegranate Communications Inc, 2002.

Groom, Nick. *The Vampire: A New History*. London: Yale UP, 2018.

Halberstam Judith. *Skin Shows: Gothic Horror and the Technology of Monsters.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995.

.— ‘Technologies of Monstrosity: Bram Stoker’s ‘Dracula.’’ Victorian Studies 36, no. 3 (1993): 333–52. http://www.jstor.org/stable/3828327. Accessed on 10th January 2022

Hay, Mark. ‘The Strange Endurance of Consuming Human Blood for Our Health.’ *Atlas Obscura*. October 31, 2022. https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/history-of-drinking-blood. Accessed on 5th March 2024.

Heaton, Sarah. ‘Consuming Clothes and Dressing Desire in the *Twilight* Series.’ In *The Modern Vampire and Human Identity*, edited by Deborah Mutch, 76-92. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

Heesterman, J.C. *The Broken World of Sacrifice: An Essay in Ancient Indian Ritual.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993.

Hills, Matt. *The Pleasures of Horror*. London: Bloomsbury, 2005.

Hindle, Maurice. ‘Introduction.’ *Dracula*. London: Penguin Books, 1993. Reprint 2003.

Hollinger, Veronica, and Joan Gordon, ed. Introduction. *Blood Read: The Vampire as Metaphor in Contemporary Culture*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997, 1- 10.

James, Blundell. ‘Successful Case of Transfusion.’ *The Lancet* 11, no. 279 (1829): 431–432. doi:10.1016/s0140-6736(02)91682-x. Accessed on 23rd March 2024.

James, E.O. *Sacrifice and Sacrament*. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1962.

Jo, Sunggyung. ‘‘Vampiric Reading’: Dracula and Readerly Desire.’ *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 61, no. 3 (2019): 225-243. https://www.jstor.org/stable/26778835. Accessed on 12th January 2024.

Jones, Ernest. *On the Nightmare*. London: Hogarth Press, 1931.

Kabbani, Rana. *Imperial Fictions: Europe’s Myths of Orient*. 1994; Reprint, Kiribati: Pandora, 2008.

Keyworth, G. David. 2006. ‘Was the Vampire of the Eighteenth Century a Unique Type of Undead-Corpse?’ *Folklore* 117, no. 3: 241-260, https://www.jstor.org/stable/30035373. Accessed on 18th March 2022.

Khair, Tabish. ‘The Man- Eating Tiger and the Vampire in South Asia.’ In *Transnational and Postcolonial Vampires: Dark Blood*, edited by Tabish Khair and Johan Höglund, 105-120. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

Killeen, Jarlath. *The Emergence of Irish Gothic Fiction: History, Origins, Theories*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014.

Kordas, Ann. ‘‘The Blood Is the Life’: Roman Catholic Imagery in American Vampire Films of the 1930s.’ In *Roman Catholicism in Fantastic Film Essays on Belief, Spectacle, Ritual and Imagery*, edited by Regina Hansen, 114-125. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2011.

Krasnowolska, Anna. ‘Ḵeżr.’ In *Encyclopaedia Iranica.* Last modified July 15, 2009. https://iranicaonline.org/articles/kezr-prophet. Accessed on 22nd September 2022.

Lapin, Daniel. *The Vampire, Dracula and Incest. The Vampyre Myth, Stoker’s Dracula and Psychotherapy of Vampiric Sexual Abuse.* San Francisco: Gargoyle Publishers, 1995.

Laquer, Thomas W. *The Work of the Dead: A History of Mortal Remains*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015.

Leask, Nigel. British Romantic Writers and the East: Anxieties of Empire. 1992; Reprint, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Leatherdale, Clive. *The Origins of Dracula: The Background to Bram Stoker’s Gothic* Masterpiece. 1987. Reprint Westclif -on-Sea: Desert Island Books, 1995.

Levy, ‘Horror and Tragedy: The Wings and Center of the Moral Stage,’ *Ethos* 13, no. 2 (Summer, 1985): pp. 175-187.

Light, Duncan. ‘Imaginative Geographies, Dracula and the Transylvanian ‘Place Myth.’ *Human Geographies: Journal of Studies and Research in Human Geography* 2, no. 2 (2008): 6-17.

Luckhurst, Roger. *Fifteen Eighty-Four: Academic Perspectives from Cambridge University*. December 6, 2017. Presshttps://www.cambridgeblog.org/2017/12/let-the-companion-to-dracula-in/. Accessed on 5th December 2023.

Malchow, Howard L. *Gothic Images of Race in Nineteenth-century Britain*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996.

Marsden, John O, and C. Iain House. The Chemistry of Gold Extraction. 2nd Edition. 1992; Reprint. Colorado: Society for Mining, Metallurgy, and Exploration, Inc., 2006.

McCarthy, Dennis J. 'The Symbolism of Blood and Sacrifice.' *Journal of Biblical Literature* 88, no. 2 (1969): 166–76. https://doi.org/10.2307/3262876. Accessed on 3rd February 2024.

McNally, Raymond T., and Radu Florescu. *In Search of Dracula: The History of Dracula and Vampires*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1994.

Miller, Elizabeth. *A Dracula Handbook*. United States: Xlibris, 2005.

Mikaberidze, Alexander. Preface to The Napoleonic Wars: A Global History (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020.

Moretti, Franco. 'The Dialectic of Fear.' *New Left Review* 136 (Nov.-Dec. 1982): 67-85. [change in main text page of Moretti 72, in thesis chapter 3]

Murgoci, 'The Vampire in Roumania.' *Folklore* 37, no. 4 (1926): 320-349.

Nethercot, Arthur H. 1949. 'Coleridge's 'Christabel' and Le Fanu's 'Carmilla'.' *Modern Philology* 47, no. 1: pp. 32-38.

Parla, Jale. 'The Wounded Tongue: Turkey's Language Reform and the Canonicity of the Novel.' PMLA 123, no. 1 (January 2008): 27-40. https://www.jstor.org/stable/25501825.

Patterson, Kathy Davis. 'Echoes of Dracula: Racial Politics and the Failure of Segregated Spaces in Richard Matheson's *I Am Legend.*' *Journal of Dracula Studies* 7 (2005): 19-27. https://research.library.kutztown.edu/dracula-studies/vol7/iss1/3. Accessed on 20th June 2024.

Pinedo, Isabel Cristina. *Recreational Terror: Women and the Pleasures of Horror Film Viewing.* New York: State University of New York Press, 2016.

Poonawala, I.K. 'ĀB ii. Water in Muslim Iranian culture.' In *Encyclopaedia Iranica*. Last modified December 30, 2012. http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/ab-ii-water-in-muslim-iranian-culture. Accessed on 17th September 2022.

Pope, Rebecca A. 'Writing and Biting in Dracula.' *Lit: Literature Interpretation Theory* 1, no. 3 (1990): 199-216. https://doi.org/10.1080/10436929008580030. Accessed 19th December 2023.

Praz, Mario. *The Romantic Agony*. 1933. Reprint. Translated by Angus Davidson. New York: Oxford UP, 1951.

Punter, David. 'Bram Stoker's Dracula: Tradition, Technology, Modernity.' In *Post/modern Dracula: From Victorian Themes to Postmodern Praxis,* edited by John S. Bak. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2007, 31-44.

Purcell, Stephen. 'Not Wholly Communion: Skepticism and the Instrumentalization of Religion in Stoker's *Dracula*.' *Christianity & Literature* 67, no. 2 (2018): 294–311.

Ready, Robert. 'Textula.' *Journal of Narrative Theory* 40, no. 3 (Fall 2010), 275-296. https://www.jstor.org/stable/41427233. Accessed 29th December 2023.

Reyes, Xavier Aldana. *Body Gothic: Corporeal Transgression in Contemporary Literature and Horror Film*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2014.

Reyes, Xavier Aldana. *Horror Film and Affect: Towards a Corporeal Model of Viewership*. London: Routledge, 2016.

Roth, Phyllis. 'Suddenly Sexual Women in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*.' 1977. Reprint. In *Dracula: A Norton Critical Edition*, edited by Nina Auerbach and David J. Skal, 1-327. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997), 411-421. [change chapter 3 thesis reference. Pg of Roth 414)

Said, Edward. Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient. 1978; Reprint, New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2001.

Salomon, Roger B. *Mazes of the Serpent: An Anatomy of Horror Narrative* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2002.

Satopay, Ayman. ‘History of Indian Costumes.’ Textile Value Chain. Feb 22, 2020. https://textilevaluechain.in/in-depth-analysis/articles/traditional-textiles/history-of-indian-costumes/#:~:text=MAURYAN%20AND%20SUNGA%20PERIOD%20(321,gold%20or%20other%20precious%20stones. Accessed on 5th November 2023.

Sauchelli, Andrew. ‘Horror and Mood.’ *American Philosophical Quarterly* 51, no. 1 (January 2014): 39-50.

Schaffer, Talia. ‘‘A Wilde Desire Took Me’: The Homoerotic History of Dracula.’ *ELH* 61, no. 2 (1994): 381–425. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2873274. Accessed on 15th March 2024.

Seed, David. ‘The Narrative Method of Dracula.’ *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 40, no. 1 (Jun., 1985): 61-75. https://doi.org/10.2307/3044836. Accessed on 17th November 2023.

Seyfi,Ali Riza. Büyük Osmanlı Denizciler: Kemal Reis and ve Baba Oruc (Great Ottoman Marines: Kemal Reis and Baba Oruc). Machine translated. 1909; reprint, Istanbul: Fazilet Publications and Trade, 2012.---. ‘Edebiyat: Kızılırmak Kıyısında.’ Türk Yurdu 1, no. 15 (1998): 246. Tutibay Publications: Ankara.

Shaw, Daniel. ‘Power, Horror and Ambivalence.’ *Film and Philosophy* 4, Issue on Horror (2001): 1-12. https://doi.org/10.5840/filmphil2001423. Accessed on 4th January 204.

Shipka, Danny. *Perverse Titillation: The Exploitation Cinema of Italy, Spain and France, 1960-1980*. London: McFarland Publishers, 2011.

Starrs, D. Bruno. ‘Keeping the Faith: Catholicism in Dracula and its Adaptations.’ *Journal of Dracula Studies*, Vol. 6, Article 3 (2004). https://research.library.kutztown.edu/dracula-studies/vol6/iss1/3. Accessed on 15th September 2022.

Stevenson, John Allen. ‘A Vampire in the Mirror: The Sexuality of Dracula.’ *PMLA* 103, no. 2 (1988): 139–49. https://doi.org/10.2307/462430. Accessed on 15th March 2024.

Sugg, Richard. *Mummies, Cannibals and Vampires: The History of Corpse Medicine from the Renaissance to the Victorians.* New York: Routledge, 2011. Reprint, 2015.

Süner, Ahmet. 'The Representation of Time, Modernity and Its Prehistory in *Dracula*.' *Studia Neophilologica* (Published online 12 Feb 2018): 1-15. doi: 10.1080/00393274.2018.1434421. Accessed on 5th January 2023.

Syed, Tuğçe Bıçakçı. 'The Origins of Turkish Gothic: The Adaptations of Stoker's *Dracula* in Turkish Literature and Film.' *Studies in Gothic Fiction* 4, no. 1/2 (2015): 57-69.

Thomson, G.R. 'Romanticism and the Gothic Tradition.' *The Gothic Imagination: Essays in Dark Romanticism*. United States: Washington State University Press, 1974, pp. 1-10.

Todorov, Tzvetan. *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1975.

Toprak, Binnaz. 'Secularism and Islam: The Building of Modern Turkey.' *Macalester International* 15, Article 9 (Winter 2005): 27-43. https://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/macintl/vol15/iss1/9. Accessed on 24th October 2023.

Twitchell, James B. *The Living Dead: A Study of the Vampire in Romantic Literature*. Durham, N.C.: Duke UP, 1981.

.— 'The Vampire Myth.' *American Imago* 37, no. 1 (Spring 1980): 83-92, https://www.jstor.org/stable/26303815. Accessed on 20th December 2023.

'Vampire Fan Base Runs Thicker Than Blood Online.' Nielsen, 22 July, 2009, www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/article/2009/vampire-fan-base-runs-thicker-than-blood-online. Accessed on 10 Oct. 2021.

'Victorian Era Capes.' In Victorian Era. https://victorian-era.org/victorian-era-capes.html. Accessed on 9th January 2024.

Abbott, Stacey. *Celluloid Vampires: Life After Death in the Modern World*. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 2007.

Waldby, Cathy, and Robert Mitchell. *Tissue Economies: Blood, Organs, and Cell Lines in Late Capitalism.* London: Duke University Press, 2006.

Watkins, Carl S. *History and the Supernatural in Medieval England.* United Kingdom: Cambridge UP, 2007.

Wright, Dudley. 'Introduction.' *Vampires and Vampirism*. 1914. Reprint. London: William Rider and Son, 1924.