Undergraduate Honors Program

English

**Droch Fhola: Sexuality, Blood, Imperialism and the Mytho-Celtic Origins of Dracula**

by

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**Abstract**

This project explores Dracula's many shifting guises and identities, chiefly examining them through an Irish/Mytho-Celtic lens. Among these are Dracula's role as conqueror, mythical Celtic figure, sexual liberator, imperialist, aristocrat, landlord, victim and agent of imperialism. Although Dracula's nature and his portrayal in the novel is often contradictory, this project seeks to acknowledge the contradictions while at the same time pushing beyond them to get at the, for lack of a better phrase, soul of Dracula's character.

# Introduction:

Dracula. *Drac-ula*. It is hard to ignore the menace in the name, the morbid delight one gets in pronouncing a name that is riddled with such meaning. At some level, human society is fascinated with the notion of a vampire: a revenant that returns from beyond the grave to extract the blood of the living in order to extend its unholy life. It plays on our basic fears as humans, the fear of the dead, the fear of dying, the fear of the unknown, and a fascination with this substance consisting of plasma, platelets, and cells that runs through our veins. Bram Stoker took all of these fears to new heights when he wrote *Dracula*, one of the most enduring horror stories to ever be composed. The novel has generated enormous criticism that has chiefly been divided into the camps of Irishness, colonialism/imperialism, and sexuality.

Whether it was intentional or not, Stoker's novel is a breeding ground for almost every sexual fetish, deviance, and perversion that is known to mankind. Characters in the novel engage in mutilation, blood-drinking, perverted fellation, sexual acts in front of their spouse, female domination, male domination, group rape, homosexuality, male penetration, and sadomasochism. While we remain unsure of what exactly Stoker was intentionally putting in his novel, critics have feasted upon the novel's sexual overtones. Christopher Craft and numerous other critics have noted the gender inversion that is caused not only by the vampiric bite, but by the mere presence of vampire sexuality. This sexuality is so overwhelming, so insistent, that it blurs the distinctions of gender and reverses male and female roles. Michael Moses, Franco Moretti, and Nina Auerbach, and others have explored Dracula's Freudian aspects, as well as the effect that vampire sexuality has on Victorian England. These critics have noted that Dracula's powerful

libido threatens to destroy the “repressed” sexual culture of Victorian England in a landslide of sexual deviance. Although these critics have extensively studied the sexual aspects of the *Dracula* novel, they have largely ignored the relation that sexuality has to the Celtic nature. Matthew Arnold has described the Celts as being of feminine persuasion, lovers of beauty, sensuality, and colors while the Saxons are more masculine in their desire for structure. Dracula feminizes the men in the novel through vamping their women, thereby Celticizing the Victorian English.

Franco Moretti and Stephen Arata have focused extensively on the mercantile and colonial aspects of *Dracula*, with Moretti focusing largely on Dracula’s capitalistic aspects and Marxist social theory. Moretti portrays Dracula as at once the personification of capitalism and as its staunch opponent, in keeping with Dracula’s shifting associations with money and capitalism in the novel. Arata’s work examines Dracula as an agent of reverse colonization and the realization of the fears of the English regarding the threat of imperial decline and racial compromise. These readings mesh well with the reading of Dracula’s mytho-Celtic nature, portraying him as a dangerous representative of colonial people who threatens to colonize the colonizers

This project is heavily influenced by Joseph Valente’s theories regarding Irishness, blood, and hybridization. In his groundbreaking and innovative book, *Dracula’s Crypt*, Valente delves into Bram Stoker’s personal history as well as Ireland’s own socio-political past and present. He places *Dracula* in context of Stoker’s origins and personal experiences as both a subject and an agent of British colonialism, or, a metrocolonial person. He explores notions of blood, blood sacrifice, and female sexuality as well as Dracula’s imperialist and colonial aspects, all within an Irish context. Although

Valente examines almost every aspect of Irish society, including language, religion, nationalism, and martyrdom, he pays almost no attention to pagan Irish texts and mythological cycles. In keeping with Valente's line of criticism, I hope to expand on the current understanding of Dracula's Irishness by including the pre-Christian sources, as well as the pagan Irish laws and customs.

One of the key features of vampirism is ambiguity, whether that is racial ambiguity caused by hybridization, sexual ambiguity caused by reversed gender roles, or the thin line between the vampiric and the human. Just as Dracula's agenda remains ambiguous, so too do Dracula's many roles—conqueror, imperialist, vampire, sexual liberator, mythological Celt, and Anglo-Irish landlord. Many of these roles are contradictory and as such have not been fully explored by current criticism. This project seeks to explore the numerous guises that Dracula assumes, regardless of whether or not some of these guises are contradictory or counterintuitive. Just as Jonathan Harker is conflicted when he first sees the vampire women, feeling "longing and at the same time some deadly fear" (37), so too are Dracula's multiple conceptualizations ambiguous and contradictory. Through this work, I intend to explore Dracula's identity as a mythological Celtic figure while at the same time acknowledging his role as an Anglo-Irish landlord, representing at once a latent threat to imperialist England and the image of its failure and decline. I will examine popular conceptions of the Celtic people by engaging in conversation with prominent modern critics such as Joseph Valente and Michael Moses, while at the same time examining Stoker's own writings on the subject as well as those of his contemporary, Matthew Arnold. Breaking from current avenues of criticism, these

notions will be supported by a close reading of Old Irish mythological texts and heroic cycles, as well as Old Irish laws and customs.

In addition to the mytho-Celtic and metrocolonial material, this project's scope will expand to include Dracula's many roles as an ancient conqueror, an agent of Arata's reverse colonization, a sexual deviant and liberator, and a hybrid who threatens racial pollution. Using Dracula as this multi-faceted figure, I intend to explore how his mytho-Celtic threat is compounded by his abundant sexuality and fecundity, as well as how Dracula's blood functions as an agent of racial conquest and hybridization. Unlike the sexual critics or those who have taken up the issue of Dracula's capitalist, colonialist, and imperialist leanings, I intend to explore Dracula as all of these things at once and to examine how these multiple-threats were perceived by the so-called heroes of the novel. This project is, in short, an exploration of Dracula's identity fitting into the larger scope of his mytho-Celtic background, an examination of the threats caused by Dracula's many faces, and the exploration of Dracula as *droch fhola*, "of evil blood."

# Chapter 1: The Mythical Dracula and His Celtic Origins

Dracula has been called many things over the years. It has been thought that his name means, “Son of the Devil,” an apt title considering the nature in which the Count feeds himself. The original title, *Dracul* means “dragon,” an epithet bestowed by membership in the Holy Roman Order of the Dragon, a sect of Christian knights that fought against the invasion of Islam (Farson, 129). These two interpretations of Dracula’s name are accurate descriptions of the Count’s dual nature as ancient, conquering hero and modern blood-drinking vampire. What if Dracula is more than these two monikers? What if Dracula’s identity is not the Eastern, heroic/evil figure of a tumultuous time period in an equally tumultuous region? Through his status as a ruined aristocrat and his need to plunder the countryside looking for living blood, Dracula has decidedly Irish characteristics. He is far more than a vampire and a Romanian noble: he is at once a figure of the Ascendancy aristocrat, the ancient Celtic warrior, and a mirror for Stoker’s own muddled personal identity.

While most scholars and critics believe that the character of Dracula was based on Stoker’s knowledge of vampire myths and the real-life persona of Vlad Tepes, his mythological knowledge might have provided him with different inspiration. Among the more popularly known Irish tales are of Finn MacCumhaill and the band of young brigands that served him. These warriors, called the *fíana*, consisted of young men, according to Ann Dooley, were “males of free birth who had left fosterage but had not yet inherited the property needed to settle down” (Dooley, XI). She goes on to note that the behavior of the *fíana* resembles a “young warrior cult.” The focus of the group was simple: engage in as much plundering and violence as humanly possible and enjoy the

experience with your brethren. The *fíana* were a permanently liminal group: always occupying the borders between counties, always finding themselves in the otherworld,[1] and never being able to fit properly into what was seen in early Ireland as a normal hierarchical government structure. Celtic scholars note that each time a member of the *fíana* attempts to leave the group and therefore leave his state of permanent liminality, it results in death. In the Irish epic, *Acallam na Senórach*, St. Patrick converses with one of the few remaining *fíana* and asks him about how a particular member of the band died. The response from the *fíana* is "He was….one of the four men of the *fíana* to die in bed. While in the Plain of Meeting… a poisonous worm entered into his head and he died within the hour" (Dooley, 109) The moment that this member of the *fíana* settles into a non-liminal life, he expires, showing that once a person has become a member of this liminal group, he must remain as such for the rest of his life. Dracula, although seemingly hailing from a remote region of Europe, bears a striking resemblance to a member of the *fíana*, and the group that he belongs to is quite possibly the Romanian equivalent.

Dracula refers to his people as the "Szekelys," a tribal nation living in the Wallachian, Carpathian, and Transylvanian sections of Romania. He is proud of his heritage, stating, "We Szekelys have a right to be proud, for in our veins flows the blood of many brave races who fought as the lion fights" (33). The name, "Szekely," according to Joseph Valente, means "at the frontier or beyond," (Valente, 51), indicative of not only the Szekely's role as a nomadic tribal nation, but also of their region's remoteness and location on the frontiers of Europe. The name alone, *Transylvania*, comes from the Latin "trans" meaning across or beyond, and "sylvan," meaning forest. Transylvania is literally

[1] The "otherworld" is a pagan Irish literary device. In the old tales, characters frequently stumble into the otherworld, a place that appears physically different from the normal world where time has little meaning and everything is not as it seems to be. It rings strikingly of Dracula's stronghold in the Carpathians.

the land beyond the forest, a wild frontier of Europe that is inhabited by a group whose very name is liminal. As Valente points out, "the literal meaning of the name *Transylvania*, "beyond the forest" irresistibly suggests "beyond the Pale," which historically refers to the broad expanse of Ireland that remained outside and resistant to British military and political control for most of the colonial epoch" (Valente, 51). This area, of course, is the area occupied by the *fíana* and the native Irish who escaped Cromwell's persecution. Dracula, therefore, can seen as a mythical figure that arises not out of the new English reality for the Irish people, but as a figure of a pre-English past who threatens the current English present. Dracula is a man who comes from the frontiers of Europe into what can arguably be termed its very center: the bustling metropolis of London. His immediate goal is one of plunder, in tune with the ancient *fíana*, although he is not interested in gold. Blood is Dracula's currency, and he literally plunders the London city streets by extracting it from its citizens. Dracula, as a representative of this Irish group, is not only threatening because of his association with raiding, taking plunder, and capturing prisoners, but because his existence and the existence of his tribal group represents a constant outside threat against organized government. The land "beyond the forest," of Transylvania becomes the land "beyond the Pale," the border regions of Ireland, inhabited by a group that is inherently threatening to the established government.

Although the parallels between Dracula and the *fíana* are compelling, it is important to note that these warriors were young men who basically ran amok until they calmed down and assumed normal roles in Irish society. Why is it, then, that Dracula still acts as a member of the *fíana* when he has clearly outgrown this position? Interestingly

enough, according to early Irish law, there are several exceptions to the rule that a member of the *fíana* must cease his plunder and brigandry once he has matured and received his land. In the event of an inter-territorial feud or a blood feud, the person in question can be appointed as *aire échta*, or "Lord of the Slaughter," who is "licensed to exact a limited vengeance" (Dooley, XII) in aforementioned feud. That man's sole purpose, therefore, would be to kill all those who have been identified as his enemies, whether they are blood enemies or merely invaders. If we are to see Dracula as a member of the Irish *fíana* in a modern, Victorian era, then quite naturally the enemy whom he would be fighting is the English invaders of his Irish homeland. Indeed, the suppression of the native Irish in their own land would be a striking example of an "inter-territorial blood feud," and Dracula would be licensed by the Irish people themselves to exact revenge upon the English. He naturally attacks London, first going after a member of the British aristocracy in Lucy Westenra, and then attempting to undermine the increasingly cosmopolitan and wealthy middle class in the form of Mina Harker. His successful vamping of Lucy results in her attacks on children, typically the urban poor. At one instant, Dracula is mounting a three-fold attack on all levels of English society. According to Valente, he comes "into direct confrontation with Jonathan Harker, Van Helsing, and the rest, whom I shall henceforth dominate 'Little England[2]'" (Valente, 52). They fear Dracula and are diametrically opposed to him, because as *aire échta*, he displays an "indomitable Gaelic or Celtic opposition to the invader" (Valente, 52), a grave threat to the English presence in Ireland and to their own people in England. RJ

[2] Joseph Valente and many of the other prominent Dracula critics refer to the main characters of the Dracula novel as "Little England," while Christopher Craft and others refer to them as "The Crew of Light." I shall use Valente's moniker in describing the group consisting of Jonathan Harker, Lord (Arthur) Godalming, Dr. Van Helsing, Mina (Murray) Harker, Jack Seward, and Quincy Morris.

Clougherty notes that they oppose Dracula because he is nothing other than "un-British" (Clougherty, 141), a representative of the colony that they take for granted. Dracula's attack, then, becomes not just a method of propagating a race of demons, but of taking the literal lifeblood of English society, as the English had for so long done to the Irish. Just as the English landlords sucked every last ounce of wealth out of the nation, Dracula sets out to get it back.

The second condition for a man to remain a member of the *fíana* beyond the normal age is if he is appointed as *fer-gniae*, or "The King's Champion." This champion engages in "single combat on behalf of the king," a solitary warrior perhaps in the form of CuChulainn battering back the Connachta or, more pointedly, as Dracula himself. In reference to his heroic past, Dracula states,

> "Was not this Dracula, indeed, who inspired that other of his race who in a later age again and again brought his forces over the great river… who, when he was beaten back, came again, and again, and again, though he had to come alone from the bloody field where his troops were being slaughtered, since he knew that he alone could ultimately triumph?" (35).

Is the "great river" that Dracula speaks of the Danube, or is it a colloquialism for the Irish Sea? It is ambiguous here whether Dracula is speaking of times past or the "later age" that is to come when he voyages to England to subjugate their society, since he alone possesses the power to do so. In addition to this, Dracula's statement about the blood-soaked battlefields around his castle suggests Irish counterparts. He states, "there is hardly a foot of soil in all this region that has not been enriched by the blood of men, patriots, or invaders" (27). This passage alludes the Boyne valley region of Ireland, home to the ancient Celtic capital of Tara and bloody battles that raged for over 4,000 years. In addition to being soaked in blood from the battles of over four millennia, the treasures

and archaeological troves that litter the valley seem remarkably like the treasure that Dracula seeks buried beneath the blue flames. Dracula, therefore, may not necessarily be a demon whose desire is to enter into London solely for the purpose of feeding upon the masses. He is the modern image of the *fer-gniae*, sent under mandate of the oppressed Irish people and perhaps even the exiled Jacobite king to engage in single combat with the entire English nation. He crosses the "great river," despite his own people being slaughtered and starving in Ireland, fulfilling his role as the sword-arm of the oppressed Irish, single-handedly battling an insurmountable foe.

While the evidence for Dracula's mythical origins is indeed compelling, it is necessary to examine his dual nature as such a figure. He simultaneously resembles a pure Celt seeking to overthrow the English yoke and a member of the ruined Anglo-Irish Ascendancy class that had been in command of Ireland since Cromwell's invasion. While the members of the *fíana* were men without property to speak of, their practices of plundering were seen as a method of subsisting until their property was established. Dracula has already inherited his fortune and it seems that he has squandered it. Dracula is, as Valente terms it, the "ruined aristocrat." In Ascendancy Ireland, many of the Anglo-Irish landlords found that their estates were crumbling due to absenteeism and free spending. Michael Moses notes that the "image of this decaying class is reinforced by the count's precarious financial status. Harker is shocked by his discovery at Castle Dracula that the count must live entirely without servants. The noble *boyar* performs the most 'menial offices'" (Moses, 79). This notion of the ruined aristocrat is further explored in one of the many film adaptations of the vampire myth, Elias Merhige's *Shadow of the Vampire*. In this film he explores the making of the famous silent film *Nosferatu* but casts

a real vampire to play the part of the Count. The vampire is asked at one point if he read Stoker's novel and he replies that he has, and that he feels sorry for Dracula. He states,

> Dracula hasn't had servants in 400 years and then a man comes to his ancestral home, and he must convince him that he—that he is like [Harker]. He has to feed him, when he himself hasn't eaten food in centuries. Can he even remember how to buy bread? How to select cheese and wine? And then he remembers the rest of it. How to prepare a meal, how to make a bed. He remembers his first glory, his armies, his retainers, and what he is reduced to. The loneliest part of the book comes when [Harker] accidentally sees Dracula setting his table.

Dracula's once glorious castle is broken, his servants are dead, and the man that was once the heroic lord of the entire region is reduced to being not only servant, butler, and maid, but cook and valet as well. His armies lie beneath the earth, his servants have long since turned to dust, and all that is left is Dracula and his three brides, living deep within the bowels of a shattered fortress.

One of Dracula's more puzzling habits is his search for buried treasure in the fields surrounding his castle. Dracula, the man who was once "boyar," lord of his region, has been reduced to digging up treasure that was left on the battlefield on St. George's eve. Although one would be inclined to see this activity as a way of increasing one's wealth, for Dracula this should not be the case. He is an old aristocrat, in terms of both his age and the age of his line. At this point in his life, he should be living comfortably off his lands, surrounded by servants, and living a life of extreme ease. Yet he is not. He searches old battlefields for lost treasure: literally, plunder, and hauls it back to his ruined castle. As Harker rides through Transylvania with Dracula at the helm of the carriage, although unbeknownst to him, he notes, "on our left, I saw a faint flickering blue flame. The driver saw it at the same moment; he at once checked the horses and, jumping the

ground, disappeared into the darkness" (19). Dracula's dire financial situation is exemplified with the sheer haste of his action. The moment he sees the blue flame, he responds by stopping the horses "at once." Harker is startled by the immediacy of the act, as well as the manner in which the driver dismounts. He does not step down from the carriage, but he jumps, disappearing almost immediately into the darkness. Dracula's financial situation is so bleak that the moment he sees a blue flame, he must go and find the treasure with all possible haste. As the reader wonders why Dracula needs this treasure so badly, Harker and the rider/Count arrive at the castle, which is in a tremendous state of dilapidation. Dracula himself states, "The walls of my castle are broken; the shadows are many, and the wind breathes cold through the broken battlements and casements" (29). Valente describes Dracula's castle as a mirror of the traditional Anglo-Irish manor. He states, "Castle Dracula, grand but grim, dominant but desolate, recalls the Big House of latter day Anglo-Irish literature, a monument to misrule, now slowly lapsing into genteel squalor and social obsolescence" (Valente, 53). With a decaying house, no servants, and no serfs, Dracula is left with no estate whatsoever. The house, of course, is still there, but there is no income being generated nor is there an opportunity to sell the land. Dracula, as a ruined member of the Ascendancy, must resort to unconventional measures to fund his lapsing estate. The answer is to search the countryside for treasure that was buried there from ages past. He, in effect, robs the soil of its material wealth, taking Turkish, Byzantine, Roman, and any other types of coins that he can find in order to survive.

In addition to caring for his estate and increasing his wealth, a prime goal of an aristocrat is to pass on his legacy and further his lineage, which is accomplished foremost

by feeding one's family, something that Dracula cannot do. A particularly disturbing scene takes place in Dracula's castle, where Jonathan is about to be bitten by the vampire women, before a last-minute reprieve by the count. It is here that the extent of Dracula's poverty is evident not only because his house is in ruins, but because of the fact that he is unable to feed his "family" from the income he gets from his estate. When he informs his vampiric brides that they cannot feast upon Jonathan Harker, they whine, "Are we to have nothing tonight?" (43). The question seems to suggest that the women go hungry with a fair amount of frequency. They are half-starving and are decidedly excited at the prospect of biting Jonathan, because there "are kisses for us all" (42), or enough food to feed all three of them. Dracula, of course, produces a child for the women to eat, motioning to a small bag that he has brought with him. Harker recalls, "One of the women jumped forward and opened it. If my ears did not deceive me there was a gasp and a low wail, as of a half-smothered child" (44). It is interesting to note that one of the women jumps forward when Dracula produces the child, showing the tenacity of her hunger and her excitement at the prospect of food. The child, however, is not a fully grown human. It is as if a father had three starving children at home and brings back a squirrel instead of a deer. The vampire women are denied a grown male, presumably full of blood, and asked to make do with a meager portion. He is a man that uses anything that he can get his hands on, even if it means consuming the blood of children. Dracula has become so impoverished that he must resort to stealing children in order to keep his brides alive.

Dracula has two separate, conflicting Irish identities. On one side of the equation, he represents the ancient Celt, the indomitable warrior that loathes conquerors and will

fight for his freedom until his last breath, while on the other; he represents the agent of the conquerors, holding the Irish people in virtual slavery. He is at once colonizer and colonized, patriot and tyrant. These distinct identities mirror in many ways the conflicting nationalities that Bram Stoker himself was comprised of. Joseph Valente notes, "Stoker has generally been regarded as a member in good standing of the creole Anglo-Protestant garrison class in Ireland: a man of English ancestry on both sides of his family… linked closely with the Ascendancy" (Valente, 15). This passage would seem to suggest that Stoker was using Dracula as a figure of his own social class, but we are not exactly sure what class that is. Although his father, a civil servant in Dublin castle, was English by birth, his mother was from a decidedly Irish background, having been born in the rural west near county Galway. Valente states that Stoker's mother "hailed from the Galway Blakes on her distaff side—not, however, from the famous Norman Caddel family, renamed La Blaca and then Blake, but from a *native Irish family* whose original Connacht moniker was O Blathnhaic" (Valente, 16). Stoker's Irishness, once thought merely a loose association, a distant relation to people that he must have undoubtedly looked down upon, is distinct. His mother came from staunch Gaelic roots and was quite possibly familiar or even fluent in the ancient Irish language that was still spoken in the rural west, conflicting sharply with the Englishness of his father.

With such polar elements in his heritage, it is no wonder that Dracula's dual Irish identities are conflicting. One can imagine such conflict even within Stoker's own house. Stoker's mother was described by Farson as "not a fanciful woman" and he notes that "the family [was] in awe of [her], if not afraid of her" (Farson, 13). Even after the Anglicization of Ireland had begun to take place, the regions in the country with the

strongest Gaelic influences were obviously the western regions. Stoker's mother grew up in these regions and it is quite possible that she was well-versed in the mythology of her ancestors. Valente notes that while young Bram heard his father's "heroic tales of the Williamite invasion," his Irish mother "nurtured Stoker's nativist adherences on all manner of Irish myth, on Celtic folklore, and, most conspicuously, on macabre accounts of the Great Famine just passed" (Valente, 16) Stoker's stance, then, as an "Anglo-Irishman" is complicated by the strength and tenacity of his Celtic mother, so much so that Valente refers to Stoker as "Anglo-Celtic." As an Anglo-Celt, Stoker has given his main character an Anglo-Celtic disposition and possibly set the "Transylvanian" scenes in Ireland itself.

Whether Dracula is the ancient Celtic brigand, the ruined aristocrat, or both, there is further textual evidence to suggest that Harker journeyed not to Romania but to Ireland. In Stoker's "Transylvania," there are several instances of Irish words being spoken. When Harker is in a Transylvanian inn, he overhears five words, "Ordog," "pokol," "stregoica," "vrolok" and "vlkoslak," (13), words that he translates as Satan, hell, witch, and werewolf/vampire, respectively. Yet what if he is not in Transylvania at all? What if the words that he is hearing are not Serbian, Slovak, or Magyar? What if he is actually hearing the Irish language for the first time, and is spelling the words phonetically? As R.J. Clougherty states, "Notably, Harker provides no key to pronunciation, especially aspiration, or stress. What if the word that Harker spells as 'pokol' was actually *pocáil*; the word he heard as 'stregoica' were *treáigh*; or that 'vrolok' were *brollach*; and the word he heard as 'vlkoslak' were *bloscadh*?" (Clougherty, 146). These are the Irish words for "thumb," "strike," "penetrate," "breast,"

and “explosion.” Harker has not journeyed to a Romanian inn, but perhaps has discovered a tavern in the rural west of Ireland, in the areas where there are no Ordnance Survey Maps (10) to give him the slightest clue as to where he is. Has Jonathan, therefore, passed not into the land beyond the forest, but the land beyond the pale? Has Stoker used Transylvania as an allegory for rural Ireland and the land that his vampire inhabits is really only a short distance from London? The evidence indeed points in this direction, but cannot be conclusively proven. Taken into account with Dracula’s mythical Irish stature, it is indeed a plausible theory. Bram Stoker, through his Anglo-Celtic birth, would certainly have the knowledge of the Irish language and familiarity with the Irish myths. Dracula’s own name can be Gaelicized into *droch fhola*, translated either as “bad blood” or as a title, “of evil blood.” Dracula, therefore, can be seen as a totally Irish figure, a mythical member of the *fíana*, a member of the ruined aristocracy, and, metonymically, the vengeful arm of the oppressed Irish people.

# Chapter 2: The Celts, Imperialism, and Reverse Colonization

With Dracula as a figure of the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy, the indomitable mythical Celts, and a mirror of Stoker himself, something needs to be said regarding not only the way the Celts were viewed in Victorian England, but how the English would react to a figure such as Dracula. He at once represents an image of what the English fear and what they need: a strong Celtic influence that threatens to overwhelm the English nature but at the same time augments it with characteristics to ensure its continued survival. He is familiar to the Victorians as an image of the Anglo-Irish but threatening as not only a figure of ancient "empire-building" imperialism, but as an agent of reverse colonization. Through his monopolistic alignment against modern Victorian free market capitalism, Dracula represents every perceived threat to Victorian society all at once. He is the Celt, lashing out at his conquerors; he is an agent of primitive empire building, a representative of a feudal past, and the astounding threat of reverse colonization.

English Critic Matthew Arnold was a contemporary of Stoker, publishing his essay titled "On The Study of Celtic Literature," five years before Stoker elucidated his racial arguments in his *Address to the Historical Society*. In Arnold's work, he explores racial relations in Europe and specifically the British islands. His viewpoint is from, as he describes it, a "Saxon's" eyes in the Victorian Period in England. He speaks extensively of the Welsh, describing how in order to assimilate fully into the British empire and to be accepted as British citizens, they must "speak English" and if they find themselves needing to write, they must also "write English" (Arnold, 21). In the whirlpool of races that inhabited the British islands, only the Welsh and the Scots remain as obstacles to the

Anglo-Saxon dominance, with the Picts, Northumbrians, Mercians, and Cornish all having fallen by the wayside. Arnold notes that "It may cause a moment's distress to one's imagination when one hears that the last Cornish peasant who spoke the old tongue of Cornwall is dead, but, no doubt, Cornwall is the better for adopting English, for becoming thoroughly one with the rest of the country" (Arnold, 20). Arnold is not just one man articulating his own views on the Celtic peoples, but a representative of the English viewpoint during the Victorian Era. The Celts have their place in the English empire but it is not as equals. Arnold believes that by assimilating the Celts, England will be made stronger as will the lot of the Celtic people.

Yet Arnold and the Victorians fear the Celts. He spends extensive amounts of time noting the differences between the Celts and the Saxons, but there is a sense of fear penetrating all of his so-called rational arguments. He undoubtedly believes in Saxon superiority or, "genius" as he calls it, but something about the Celts unnerves him. He states, "I know my brother Saxons, I know their strength, and I know that the Celtic genius will make nothing of trying to set up barriers against them in the world of fact and brute force, of trying to hold its own against them as a political and social counter-power, as the soul of a hostile nationality" (Arnold, 22). Arnold takes the common disdain and distrust of the Celts to a different level, insinuating that they are the counter-culture to refined English, Saxon culture. Yet Arnold does not remain true to this vision of the Celtic people. While he undoubtedly mistrusts them, he admires their spirituality, their sensual nature, and their ability to see beauty in their surroundings. He states that the "essence" of the Celtic spirit is "to aspire ardently after life, light, and emotion, to be expansive, adventurous, and gay" (Arnold, 81). The Saxon lacks these qualities, and

implicit in the fear that the Saxons feel towards the Celts is a sense of admiration and respect. This sentiment was progressive for its day and was not lost on Bram Stoker.

Bram Stoker was undoubtedly influenced by Matthew Arnold and attempted to elucidate his own racial agenda during his college years at Trinity. Stoker was a member of the prestigious Historical Society that was comprised of only the most intellectually gifted students and professors. Among the more popular topics were those that hinged not only on the British Empire and the roles of its colonies, but the notion of the English as a race apart from the Celts and the other people of Europe. In a series of addresses, Stoker delivers striking statements that at once seem to be supporting the rights of the Irish and upholding England's imperial rule. His views are remarkably similar to Arnold's, so much so that Valente notes "the ethnological profile of Ireland in Stoker's [*Address to the Historical Society*], unmistakably recalls the hybrid ethnological vision of Great Britain that Matthew Arnold had set forth just five years earlier" (Valente, 25). In Stoker's *Address*, he "contrives simultaneously to presuppose and to undermine the radically sectarian view of Irish civilization" (Valente, 23). Stoker's position in the Historical Society debates was incredibly ambivalent as voted repeatedly against the dissolution of British imperial rule in Ireland while at the same time pushing for Home Rule (Valente, 22). He was at once a champion of Irish rights and a staunch supporter of British imperialism. Valente notes that this is in line with the conflicting feelings of the time regarding the Celtic people and their role in the declining British Empire. They are at once an "antidote" to the "effete decline of Western civilization and an instance of evolutionary arrest, hence a possible totem and agency of such decline" (Valente, 23). Matthew Arnold notes that the Celts, while bent on the destruction of the Saxon people,

are extraordinarily sentimental. He states, "*Sentiment* is, however, the word which marks where the Celtic races really touch and are one… quick to feel impressions and feeling them very strongly; a lively personality… keenly sensitive to joy and to sorrow" (Arnold, 80). This sense of beauty and sentimentality is something that the Saxon lacks and can possibly augment British society in an area it is deficient in. It is here that the binary breaks down. While the Celts are definitely a threat to the English, they also are extraordinarily sentimental and sensual people whose influence could be beneficial to the cold Saxons. Arnold believed that the mixing of Saxon and Celtic blood would be "amalgamated 'back' into Englishness, forming in effect a higher or greater breed of Anglo Saxon" (Valente, 26). Thus, the Celts are at once the bane and the salvation of the English: they have in their very nature something that the English lack, but they also have the capability to destroy English society through their violent and unpredictable behavior.

Valente notes that while the Celtic question remains ambivalent in Stoker's address, he also "plainly relies upon primitivist typologies of subject peoples" which critics believe reflects "a predictable Anglo-Protestant uncertainty and anxiety at the anticipated rise of the 'Celtic Race…' in the 1870's, the prospect of a 'half-barbarous' Celtic race returning 'amid an age of luxury' to claim its position was a prospect to be viewed with mixed emotion" (Valente, 24). Stoker was influenced by Arnold and his contemporaries' lines of thinking, and incorporated it into his own views. As Stoker was, according to Valente, an "Anglo-Celt," it is not surprising that he writes in his *Address* that the "Irish race has all the elements of greatness; the Anglo-Saxon race is dwindling" (Valente, 24) Stoker had a personal stake in this new breed of Anglo-Celt as he was Anglo-Celtic himself, but the key difference between Stoker's racial dogma and Arnold's

is that Stoker believed that the mixing of the Saxon and Celtic races would be "compounded in 'the Irish people'" (Valente, 26). In this battle between Saxon and Celt, Stoker believes that the blending of the two would result in the Irish blood's domination over the Saxon's—that is, this new breed would be Irish/Celtic with a small number of Saxon tendencies and skills. Through this fusion, the Celts would gain the organization and structure that they require while augmenting their own personal strengths. To Stoker, the Celtic race was advancing day by day, although his vision for his race was muddled by contradicting sentiments and rhetoric. Stoker's take on Arnold's work undoubtedly plays a key role in *Dracula* as we are left with a notion of an ever-present Celtic threat that is constantly on the minds of the citizens of the declining British Victorian Empire. Dracula represents the realization of that threat: a mytho-Celtic figure emerging from beyond the Pale to endanger English citizens.

Language is a powerful element of any culture, and to assert linguistic control over a region is to have broken and subjugated that region. We have already seen the glee with which Arnold notes that the Cornish language has been eliminated, and the desire that he holds that the Welsh should lose their language and begin to speak English entirely. The English language was used as a cultural weapon in Ireland as within a few generations of Cromwell's conquest, English had replaced Irish as the main language of the country. The Irish, however, did not speak proper Victorian English, preferring instead to blend their native language into a sort of Hiberno-English that more accurately captured the spirit of their Celtic tongue. This hybridization of the English language is startling to Arnold, who believes that English is in peril from Celtic influence. He states that English has been influenced, if not invaded, by certain Celtic words. While the

English language has its share of racy and inappropriate words, Arnold asserts that "our raciest, most idiomatic, popular words—for example, *bam, kick, whop, twaddle, fudge, hitch, muggy*—are Celtic" (Arnold, 74). It is as if the Celtic language is a threat from within: a way for them to take over the English way of speaking and thereby change the way English people operate. The Celtic language, in a way, threatens to slowly transform the average English person into a hybridized Celt. Arnold states that these words are "popular" and "idiomatic," noting with alarm that these Celtic invaders are incredibly popular among the people. Arnold's notion of the assimilated Anglo-Celt is challenged by this linguistic conglomeration as the Celtic words become increasingly popular with the people. The English dominance over the Celt is being slowly subverted as the English language begins to change towards a more Celtic form. It is a manner of stealth attack on English society: rather than forcefully invading England and turning it into a Gaelic-speaking nation, the Celtic attack seeks to slowly transform the English language into a Celtic one, thus slowly transforming the English into hybridized Celts.

This notion of language as a means of asserting power is described in Harker's account of a conversation with Dracula in Transylvania. Dracula states "Here I am noble, I am *boyar*; the common people know me and I am master…. I am content if I am like the rest, so that no man stops if he see me, or pause in his speaking if he hear my words, to say 'Ha, ha! a stranger!'" (Stoker, 26) Language for Dracula is a method of asserting his power and sovereignty. He seeks "to be master still" through a thorough knowledge of English and thereby blend into English society in an easier fashion. To the Victorians, this is a dangerous combination. While Irish figures such as Edmund Burke[3] enjoyed

[3] Edmund Burke (1729-1797) was a prominent Irish member of the British parliament and a staunch advocate of the rights of British colonies. Born and educated in Dublin, Burke had a thick Irish accent

enormous political and social success in the English parliamentary system, there was no doubt as to Burke's true origins. He did very little, if anything at all, to hide his considerable Irish accent; some of his contemporaries believed that he made his accent heavier than it actually was. Burke's identity as an Irishman was clear, however, due to the heavy accent that he never lost. Dracula, through the use of Jonathan Harker, seeks to lose his hybridized Romanian/Irish-English way of speaking, thereby being able to disappear into English society. This is an alarming prospect for Harker and indeed all Victorians: a powerful, resourceful, and dangerous Celt passing unnoticed through the streets of London, slowly but surely effecting the domination of the English people. The very notion of not being able to identify the Count as foreign, or, in this case, Celtic, makes him profoundly more dangerous. The threat of the Celts and their use of language is two-fold. From a more subversive standpoint, the invasion of Celtic words could in theory become so complete that the English language no longer represents its true Latin, Saxon origins but becomes a bastardized Celtic language. The second threat results from a powerful Celt, like Dracula, becoming so masterful in the English language that he cannot be identified as "other" and can pass as an Englishman. With a hidden Celt among the English, reproducing, growing stronger and more influential, the worse fears of Victorian society would have been realized.

To a member of Victorian society, what would be one of the most terrifying things to even conceptualize? While initial answers might be a return of sexuality to society, or a crumbing of the British empire, the most immediate threat would be an uprising of the Irish and the other Celtic peoples. The uprising that they fear is possibly

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which he did little to hide. Scholars have suggested that this is possibly a result of Burke's identification with and sympathy for the colonial subjects of the British Empire.

of the Irish rebelling against their English overlords or even of the Scots rising in the Highlands and storming down to England like Bannockburn in 1314, yet it goes far deeper than that. In Tobias Smollett's 18th Century novel "Humphrey Clinker," a member of the English aristocracy muses upon the role of the Scots in the unified kingdom. He notes the ferocity of the Highlanders who still owe their allegiance to their ancient chieftains, and believes "If all the Highlanders, including the inhabitants of the Isles, were united, they could bring into the field an army of forty thousand fighting men, capable of undertaking the most dangerous enterprize" (Smollett, 235). He then goes on to note "what dangerous neighbors the Scots [are] to the counties… of England" (Smollett, 207). The Scots, a Celtic people, were undoubtedly a constant worry to the English as they were instantly capable of fielding a large army and posing a direct physical and societal threat to the English. Indeed, the memory of the Jacobite rebellion under Charles Stuart that saw Scottish troops invading England was far too recent for the majority of English citizens. The solution to this problem is subjugation of the Scots and their continued oppression. The solution for the Celts is a new method of assaulting English citizens and society.

The new method, of course, is Dracula. The Count is himself a figure of imperialism as his dual Celtic-Romanian nature sees him not only as an oppressed Celt, but part of the imperial machine as well. The difference between the modern English imperialism and Dracula's imperialism is that he represents the old method of empire-building. The Victorians represent an economic, mercantile empire that is largely based in colonies in key trading sectors across the globe. These colonies then ship goods and capital back to the mother country, thereby enriching it and making it more powerful.

Dracula's empire is different. The Count is a figure from a previous era, a heroic warrior noble that *conquers* other nations rather than just turning them into mercantile outposts. We see the evidence of Dracula's form of empire-building the moment Harker steps foot in Dracula's castle. Harker sits with rapt interest as the Count relates to him the various heroic stories of the Carpathian region and Dracula's ethnic tribe, the Szekelys. He states, "Ah, young sir, the Szekelys—and the Dracula as their heart's blood, their brains, and their swords—can boast a record that mushroom growths like the Hapsburgs and Romanoffs can never reach" (35). Dracula is himself an imperial figure as his own line was part of the ruling dynasties that fought, as Dracula describes it, "for lordship." This was not a battle for colonial holdings or trading routes, but a battle for supremacy in a literal sense: the vanquished in these conflicts finds himself either dead or in virtual slavery. Unlike capitalism, which speaks in terms of limited contracts, to be conquered by the Count, according to Moretti, is to be "bound to Dracula… for life" (Moretti, 433). With such power, it is no wonder that modern imperial forces like the Hapsburgs of Germany or the Romanoffs of Russia seem to be mere "mushroom growths" to the ancient imperial line of the Draculas.

Arata notes that "vampires are intimately linked to military conquest and to the rise and fall of empires. According to Dr. Van Helsing, the vampire is the unavoidable consequence of any invasion: 'He have follow the wake of the berserker Icelander, the devil begotten Hun, the Slav, the Saxon, the Magyar" (Arata, 463). Interestingly enough, Van Helsing makes mention of the Saxons as one of the races that was in the Carpathian region, yet the Saxons originated from northwest Germany, an exceedingly remote area in terms of Transylvanian geography. Is this perceived conflict with the Saxons,

therefore, Van Helsing's way of explaining Dracula's latest invasion of England? Michael Moses believes "once vampirism gets a foothold in Britain, it will grow vigorously without limit, rapidly claiming one imperial subject after another as its own" (Moses, 103). Vampirism, therefore, is another form of imperial conquest. Instead of forcing the imperial culture upon the conquered, the vampiric culture simply transforms its subjects into a member of the oppressing class. Arata contends that Dracula's role as a vampire is to follow in the wake of imperial decay, to attack a society when it is in its decline and therefore most vulnerable. Arata continues to state that "Dracula represents the nobleman as warrior. His activities after death carry on his activities in life, in both cases he has successfully engaged in forms of conquest and domination." (Arata, 464). Tiring of the endless racial and ethnic strife in the Transylvanian region, Dracula relocates to the center of the largest modern empire, eager to "share its life, its change, its death, and all that makes it what it is" (26). Here, in the center of the English empire, Dracula is able to continue his constant struggle for lordship, this time seeking to overthrow the most powerful empire in the world.

Dracula's outdated mode of imperialism is threatening to the Victorians not only because it represents the literal conquering of Britain, but because it represents an attack on modern bourgeois culture. With the exception of Arthur Holmwood who later becomes Lord Gadalming with the death of his father, Little England is made up of upwardly mobile middle class citizens. Mina is "an assistant schoolmistress" (55), Seward is a respectable doctor, Van Helsing is a professor, doctor, and lawyer, Harker is a solicitor, and Morris is the image of the pioneering middle class in America. Where the free market economy of Victorian England thrives on not only the industriousness of the

middle mercantile class, but on competition between other countries and other markets. Dracula, as an old-style imperialist bent on conquest, is aligned not with the free market, but with monopoly. He can thus be seen as the opposite of the capitalist economic system. According to Moretti, "Dracula is a true monopolist: solitary and despotic, he will not brook competition… his ambition is to subjugate the last vestiges of the liberal era" (Moretti, 433). Dracula's outdated mode of imperialism and empire building threatens bourgeois society by attempting to monopolize it. In the free market economy, contracts are written for a specific duration of time, thereby ensuring the freedom of both parties that sign the contract. According to Moretti, Dracula frightens the Bourgeoisie because "One is bound to Dracula, as one is bound to the devil, for *life*… the vampire, like monopoly, destroys the hope that one's freedom can be bought back" (Moretti, 433). The idea of an eternal contract coupled with the elimination of market competition represents the end of the newfound freedom and affluence that British imperialism allows and is therefore extremely frightening to the largely middle class Little England.

While the vampire hunters fear Dracula because of his threat to bourgeois culture, they also fear him as a figure of the pre-mercantile past that threatens to send England back into a previous age. This devolution would bring about a previous form of government that the middle class Little England does not want to consider: feudalism. The bourgeois of the 19$^{th}$ century, according to Moretti, is only able to conceptualize monopoly and feudalism in the form of Dracula, "the aristocrat, the figure of the past, the relic of distant lands and dark ages." Moretti goes on to state that "the nineteenth-century bourgeois believes in free trade, and he knows that in order to become established, free competition had to destroy the tyranny of feudal monopoly… monopoly is the *past* of

competition, the middle ages" (Moretti, 433). In a capitalistic sense, Little England fears Dracula because he represents previous socioeconomic system. Carol Senf has referred to Dracula as an "anachronism," and she states that "[i]t is only when Harker realizes that he is assisting to take this anachronism to England that he becomes frightened" (Senf, 426). He is frightened, of course, because Dracula threatens to destroy Victorian England's mercantile exploits and turn it into a monopolistic, medieval form of feudalism.

In addition to Dracula's old-style imperialism, he poses a colonial threat as well. His method of infecting and transforming English citizens into vampires is, in effect, a form of reverse colonization. Arata notes that Stoker placed Dracula's homeland in the Carpathians as "nowhere else in the Europe of 1897 could provide more fertile a breeding ground for the undead" (Arata, 463). With its whirlpool of races engaged not in peaceful co-existence but often appalling slaughter and genocide, it would seem to the affluent English to be the antithesis of their own society. Although the British Isles themselves are their own whirlpool of Saxons, Anglos, Picts, Northumbrians, Mercians, Normans, and many others, they look to the Carpathians and see how far they have come and at the same time fear degeneration into this disordered state. Arata notes, "with vampirism marking the intersection of racial strife, political upheaval, and the fall of empire, Dracula's move to London indicates that Great Britain, rather than the Carpathians, is now the scene of these connected struggles" (Arata, 465). The British Empire, at this point in history, was in the twilight of its greatness, soon to be overtaken by more modern imperialist powers like the United States. Arata believes that "Vampires are generated by... the decline of empire. They are produced, in other words, by the very conditions characterizing late-Victorian Britain" (Arata, 465).

What is it about Dracula as a colonizing force that frightens Little England so profoundly? Harker notes with great alarm that he was helping to "transfer to London" a threat that will "create a new and ever widening circle of semi-demons" (53). Arata believes that "the late-Victorian nightmare of reverse colonization is expressed succinctly [by Harker's speech]," as these semi-demons would undoubtedly spread through England, colonizing land and bodies with frightening rapidity. If we are to see Dracula as a figure of colonialism, then his appropriation of English bodies through vampirism represents a colonization not only of the nation, but a biological colonization of the body as well. Dracula "imperils not simply his victims' personal identities, but also their cultural, political, and racial selves" (Arata, 465). For a reverse colonial attack, Dracula's first victim must be of great significance to the English, and that victim is Lucy Westenra. It is no mistake, therefore, that her name, *Lucy Westenra* means "Lucy, the light of the West." Valente notes that this is "an emblematic phrase frequently seen to enshrine her as an icon of English racial superiority and cultural refinement and thus of the resulting legitimacy of British world-historical domination" (Valente, 65). Dracula attacks Lucy because she is a powerful symbol of all that makes the British Empire and the English people superior. By bending her to his will and adding her to his "circle of semi-demons," Dracula is turning the tables on the colonizers, turning the advanced, powerful nation of Britain into a client kingdom under Dracula's rule.

Dracula is an unfathomably dangerous individual to English society. He is the manifestation of all of their fears, as he at once represents all the threats posed to the English in a single individual. As a modern member of the *fíana*, he is the figurehead of the perceived Celtic threat of uprising and reverse colonization. Along similar lines, as an

Eastern, feudal aristocrat, he threatens to transform English society back into an earlier state of feudalism, ending the vast imperial and mercantile holdings that the nation currently enjoys. He is a man that makes the colonizer the colonized, the empire a client kingdom, and the subjects the rulers.

# Chapter 3: Blood is Thicker Than Anything

English society in the Victorian era was concerned with purity, whether it was sexual purity, religious purity, or purity of blood. We have already seen in chapter two how Matthew Arnold and Bram Stoker viewed the different natures of the Celts and the Saxons, as well as the possible benefits and disadvantages to the blending of the two. Blood is so much more than what keeps us alive by oxygenating our organs: it is our very life-force as well as the source of our perceived identity. When one speaks of where he lives, his blood ties him not only to a specific national identity, but to the very land of that nation. Yet the concept of blood, race, and hybridization goes far deeper. Blood represents not only the critical life-force of a person or people, but is a source of wealth, purity, racial and societal identity, and racial superiority.

In Arnold's work, he spends extensive amounts of time asserting the superiority of the Saxon race and how even in the event of a mixing between a Saxon and a Celt, the Saxon blood would dominate, adding the best of the Celtic nature to the Saxon nature. This would produce, in effect, a superior Saxon. He states that the Saxon is "disciplinable and steadily obedient within certain limits, but retaining an inalienable part of freedom and self-dependence" where the Celt is "undisciplinable, anarchical, and turbulent by nature" (Arnold, 86). Arnold viewed the Saxons and the Celts as sharing the same destiny, just as the last Cornish peasant became part of English society, so too was the Cornish nature and tradition absorbed into the Saxon bloodlines. Valente notes that this mixing of blood results in an amalgamation "back into Englishness, forming in effect a higher breed of Anglo-Saxon, which remains the controlling element in the racial composite" (Valente, 26) Yet Arnold's views were met with criticism from his

contemporaries for being too favorable to the Celtic people. At this point, the Victorian English were simply too indoctrinated with the notion of English superiority that they were unable to fathom that a mixing with the Celts would produce any sort of higher breed.

The mixing of different blood types, therefore, was a major concern for the Victorians. The vampire is a being that is not unique to any particular region of the world. Although Stoker's model for the count was loosely based upon Prince Vlad of Wallachia, the influence of Le Fanu's *Carmilla* (1872) and the notion of blood sacrifice in Fenianism[4] also played critical roles in Stoker's profile of the Count. Critic Joseph Bierman notes that Stoker, in a nod to Le Fanu, had originally placed Dracula's castle in Styria, which was the location of Le Fanu's earlier novel (Arata, 462). The shift to Romania was a conscious effort on the part of Stoker to muddle Dracula's origins among the "whirlpool" of races and bloodlines that inhabited the Carpathian region. Arata notes "Victorian readers knew the Carpathians largely for its endemic cultural upheaval and its fostering of a dizzying succession of empires" (Arata, 463). Arata goes on to say that Stoker undoubtedly had a political motive for placing Dracula's castle in this region as it conjured images of racial mixing, constant battles, and a never-ending fight, as Dracula puts it, "for lordship." To the Victorians, who are often characterized as fearing outside influence, the notion of a region that is so torn by racial strife and constant warfare is nothing short of repugnant; there is no sense of racial purity with that many peoples

[1] Fenianism was a movement begun in the late 18th century where Irish patriots immortalized martyrs of their cause in terms of the blood that they shed for the freedom of the Irish nation. Robert Emmet was typically idolized as the first Irish martyr. Valente states, "The Fenian cult of blood sacrifice and resurrection held Ireland's martyrs to be immortalized by the blood they enthusiastically shed, which would bring forth successive generations of nationalist heroes to eulogize and emulate them" (56). The Fenian movement was based upon the pre-Christian Celtic stories about the exploits of Finn MacCumhaill and his band of brigands, the *fíana*.

interacting, breeding, and mixing. The Count speaks of "the Magyar, the Lombard, the Avar, the Bulgar… the Turk" (34) as all inhabiting this region, and Van Helsing adds the "berserker Icelander, the devil-begotten Hun, the Slav… the Saxon" (286) to the list. The sheer number of races that have lived, fought, and died in this region is astounding and greatly concerns the English. The Victorians would most likely look upon such a conglomeration of races as something to be avoided as it would result in extensive amounts of racial mixing, thereby blurring the boundaries between different ethnic groups.

Romania is a nation that is saturated in blood. Dracula tells Harker that "there is hardly a foot of soil in all this region that has not been enriched by the blood of men, patriots, or invaders" (27). It is of particular interest to note the verb Dracula uses to describe the blood saturation. The soil has not been soaked, saturated, or dampened by blood, but it has been "enriched," implying that there is a sort of vitality associated with the spilled blood of the invading/occupying races. The very soil of Dracula's home is a mixture of the blood of countless races and it is described by Dracula as a treasure. He states, "When the invader was triumphant, he found but little, for whatever there was had been sheltered in the friendly soil" (27). Dracula's invaders seek the blood of the people they conquer, but are disappointed to find that the blood that they sought has been absorbed by the soil. Thus, in order to fully experience Romania's richness of blood, one would have to take the soil with him. This, of course, is exactly what Dracula does when he journeys to England. Dracula tells Jonathan that "we Transylvanian nobles love not to think that our bones may be amongst the common dead" (29), possibly implying that somehow the soil in which they lay is important, because it is all that separates them from

"the common dead." The coffin-like boxes contain the soil from Dracula's home, the same soil that has been stained by the blood of thousands of warriors, the blood that separates him from the commoners.

Dracula himself ostensibly contains the same mixture of blood that is in the soil within his veins, and it is only right that in order to regain his strength, he must rest in soil that shares the same properties. Michael Valdez Moses states, "Dracula's identity as a vampire depends as much upon his nightly proximity to the soil of his ancestors as upon the ancient blood running through his veins" (Moses, 101) The soil is not only Dracula's source of wealth, but the source of his existence. Although the view of Dracula as an Ascendancy landlord hinges in part upon his need for money, the purely vampiric Dracula does not need gold or money to survive; what he needs is the soil of his homeland and the blood of living people. While it may seem that Dracula wants gold very badly due to the haste with which he goes after the hidden treasure, another view is possible. What if Dracula was actually *ignoring* all of the gold that is seen in the novel? When Harker rides through Romania towards Castle Dracula, he notes how the carriage driver stops every time he sees a blue flame. "Once the flame appeared so near the road, that even in the darkness around us I could watch the driver's motions. He went rapidly to where the blue flame arose… and gathering a few stones, formed them into some device" (19). While outwardly it seems that Dracula is attempting to recover the gold that is marked by these blue flames, it is possible that it has some other significance to it. These blue flames, as the Count himself describes are "seen over any place where treasure has been concealed… it was the ground fought over for centuries by the Wallachian, the Saxon, and the Turk" (27). These buried treasures mark the sites of

ancient battles, locations where blood was spilled and soaked the soil. What if Dracula's interest is not in the gold, but in the earth that covers the gold? The evidence within the text is compelling. When Harker breaks into Dracula's burial vault, he notes the extraordinary amount of gold that is heaped upon the ground, "Roman, and British, and Austrian, and Hungarian, and Greek, and Turkish" gold, all "covered with a film of dust" (50). The gold is lying unused but "the ground had recently been dug over, and the earth placed in great wooden boxes" (50). It seems as if Dracula merely stacked the gold in the corner while bringing the far more valuable commodity—the earth—with him; his coffers contain not gold but soil. When Dracula's departure is imminent, Harker again steals into the Count's chapel, he sees that the boxes of earth are ready to be shipped, but "the heap of gold remained" (53). The gold is not important to Dracula, whose currency is blood. Common sense dictates that when traveling to a foreign country, one must bring suitable amounts of currency to ensure survival, and the Count does this. Harker describes Dracula's body as "simply gorged with blood" (54); he is indeed taking his riches with him. Dracula transports the riches of his native country in the wooden boxes and departs for England, seeking new blood.

The English, who enjoyed the status of the world's premier power, would quite naturally fear any sort of racial mixing that might compromise their superior nature. Dracula's attacks on Lucy and Mina signal the realization of these fears as both women have their English blood removed from their bodies and added to the "whirlpool" of mixing bloods that course through Dracula's ancient veins. With Lucy, the immediate solution is to give her a transfusion of blood, first from Lord Godalming, a man who is her fiancé but also a member of the Aristocracy, then from Seward, a member of the

rising middle class, then from Van Helsing, then from Morris. Although Van Helsing is not English, his ancient Teutonic blood is seemingly pure enough to offset the Count's attacks. Ironically, this infusion of blood from the four men accomplishes the same goal that Dracula seeks: although the men have given Lucy back some of the blood she has lost, her English blood has been tainted by the American and Teutonic blood, no matter how pure it may seem. The Germanic people were participants in the great wars that Dracula refers to in his heroic accounts, and America has become the first modern nation of immigrants. Quincy's English blood could have very well been mixed with the countless other racial groups that moved to America in order to make a new life. Lucy's blood therefore is far from pure. Regenia Gagnier notes that "Lucy functions as the conduit through which the men's blood reaches the Count, who duly claims the English women as his link to the men" (Gagnier, 145). In their efforts to save Lucy though the infusion of new, pure blood, the men have inadvertently given Dracula more of the fluid he needs to survive and at a certain level gave the Count some of their own life-force to continue in his unholy mission.

The male characters' attempts to save Lucy through a therapeutic transfusion ultimately fail as Dracula completes his task and Lucy completes her transformation into a vampire. One is inclined to ask *how* Dracula was able to vamp Lucy, despite the repeated transfusions of blood from strong men. The answer, of course, lies within the blood itself. After Mina's vamping, she recalls in horror "[The Count] opened his shirt, and with his long sharp nails opened a vein in his breast. When the blood began to spurt out… [he] pressed my mouth to the wound, so that I must either suffocate or swallow some of the—Oh my God… what have I done?" (252). Blood becomes not only a source

of identity, but the agent of transformation: by either having their blood consumed or consuming Dracula's blood, Lucy and Mina have opened their own veins to the blood that the Count is a receptacle for. That is, they now share in the whirlpool of races found in the Carpathians: they become at once Avar, Magyar, Turkish, Viking, Byzantine, Roman, and a motley of other races that Dracula has preyed upon in the past. Their English blood which makes them prim, proper, and civilized is overcome by the onslaught of Dracula's blood. As many critics have noted, Dracula's Gaelicized name, *droch fhola*, means "bad blood" or "of evil blood" but it can be argued that this is not the case at all. Dracula's blood is bad only in the sense that it is *superior*. The blood in Dracula's veins is so powerful that it completely consumes English blood, leaving the person who received Dracula's blood totally transformed. Arata states that "horror arises not because Dracula destroys bodies, but because he appropriates and transforms them. Having yielded to his assault, one literally 'goes native' by becoming a vampire oneself." Arata goes on to say that "If blood is a sign of racial identity, Dracula effectively deracinates his victims. In turn they receive a new racial identity. Miscegenation leads, not to the mixing of races, but to the biological and political annihilation of the weaker race by the stronger" (Arata, 465-466). The Saxon blood that the English believe is of such strength, purity, and vigor turns out in the end to be subordinate to Dracula's vampire blood, threatening to turn the English into just one more bloodline swirling inside Dracula's body.

When Dracula arrives in London, Harker has already voiced his concerns that he will attack the helpless and propagate his species of semi-demons. Dracula's threat is a threat of racial tainting, of the dissolution of the English bloodlines, and the destruction

of English society from within. Coming from Romania, Dracula is all the more dangerous. Arata notes that Stoker was profoundly influenced by Emily Gerard and took her notion of deracination and racial dissolution to heart when writing *Dracula*. Gerard states,

> The Hungarian woman who weds a Roumanian (sic) husband will necessarily adopt the dress and manners of his people, and her children will be as good Roumanians as though they had not drop of Magyar blood in their veins; while the Magyar who takes a Roumanian girl for his wife will not only fail to convert her to his ideas, but himself, subdued by her influence, will imperceptibly begin to lose his nationality. This is a fact well known and much lamented by the Hungarians themselves, who live in anticipated apprehension of seeing their people ultimately dissolving into Roumanians (Arata, 466).

Arata then goes on to state that the "inevitable" loss of identity sounds quite similar to the transformations suffered by Lucy and Mina under the influence of the Count. When Lucy first begins to show the signs of transformation, the immediate reaction of Van Helsing is to put more blood back into her body in order to "re-racinate her" (Arata, 467), but this blood is inferior to the Count's and does nothing for Lucy, who then completes her transformation. Moses believes that Lucy loses any semblance of her Englishness and instead becomes part of a vampiric nation that is diametrically opposed to "the living" (Moses, 102). Lucy's blood has been invaded by the Count's, who can "attest that through him the blood of his heroic ancestors flows in an unbroken stream into the veins of contemporary adherents" (Moses, 102).

Why is Dracula so powerful? Why is it that his blood is so vastly superior to the English blood that he attacks? The answer lies in hybridization, a concept that the Victorians feared due to the supposed impurity of the blood of other races. Dracula represents racial hybridization because he is the ultimate racial hybrid. While the so-

called “Dracula blood” (35) that the Count speaks of is tied to the ruling class in Romania, there is also something about Dracula’s activity of consuming blood that provides him with eternal life. In addition to this prolonged life, Dracula’s consumption of blood serves to energize him, making him vibrant, vigorous, and energetic, compared to the English men who are portrayed as weak and without power (Arata, 466). Arata notes that while Dracula is always seen as energetic and powerful, “the corresponding enervation that marks the British men is most clearly visible in Harker… [he] and Dracula in fact switch places during the novel; Harker becomes tired and white-haired… Dracula, whose white hair grows progressively darker, becomes more vigorous” (Arata, 467). The crucial difference between these two men is the content of their veins. Dracula consumes the blood of others and allows their racial strengths to invigorate him: in other words, he embraces hybridity and actively seeks it out. Harker, whose Victorian English mind fears hybridization, is weak compared to Dracula because he lacks the strength of mixed blood. Ironically, the thing that the Victorians feared—blood pollution and hybridity—is the very thing that is making Dracula so powerful.

The solution to this unique form of attack by Dracula is not the actual killing of his character, but the domination of his blood. That is, in order to repulse Dracula’s attack, one needs to fight blood with blood. The Victorians feared hybridization, but in the end, it is hybridization that saves them. Lucy was doomed from the beginning: her therapy was the infusion of relatively untainted English blood, mixed slightly with the Teutonic, but it did not have the sufficient strength to overcome Dracula’s vampiric blood. Dracula’s second victim proved to be his undoing. Wilhelmina (Murray) Harker is a remarkable conglomeration of racial backgrounds, with her family name, Murray,

affiliating her with “native Celts of the name O’Muireadhaigh” (Valente, 66), while her given name, Wilhelmina, strongly resembles that of William of Orange, the Dutch monarch who brought about the end of the Irish nobility and the establishment of Ireland as a British colony. Mina’s married name, Harker, immediately associates her with the prosperous English middle class. Mina can be seen, therefore, as encompassing the best that Western European society has to offer: the Celtic fire, the English spirit, and the Dutch practicality. Through this amalgamation of blood, Mina is able to resist the pollution of the Count’s vampiric blood and actually use her link with the Count to track his whereabouts. She insists that Van Helsing must “hypnotize me before the dawn, and then I shall be able to speak” (271). Mina begins to blend her own nature with her new vampiric nature, thereby assuming some sort of control over the latter and using its power to achieve her ends. Without Mina’s vamping and the subsequent visions that result from it, the men of Little England would have never been able to track the Count back to his homeland. Jonathan traveled to the castle in darkness and has no idea how to return there, nor do any of the other characters know the way to Dracula’s castle. Through her melding of the human and the vampiric, Mina provides the all-important bridge between the men of Little England and the Count that enables their mission against the Count to continue.

When Dracula is finally destroyed at the gates of his castle, the scar on Mina’s forehead, seen as her own “mark of the beast” disappears. The dying Morris exclaims “See! the snow is not more stainless than her forehead!” (326). While it seems that, as Morris states, “the curse has passed away,” this is not necessarily the case. Mina has still been vamped; her veins still hold the blood of Dracula and his ancestors. The “look of peace” (325) that Mina sees on Dracula’s face shortly before he is destroyed is not

necessarily the peace of a soul finally being released, but the almost fatherly look of peace that comes from knowing that one's bloodline is secure. She states, "I shall be glad as long as I live that even in that moment of final dissolution, there was in the face a look of peace, such as I never could have imagined might have been there" (325). We do not know why Mina is so happy about the look of peace. The most obvious reading of this passage would be that Mina is happy to see Dracula's soul finally released, but perhaps it is instead happiness resulting from the fact that the Count is not totally dead. While the curse has passed away, the presence of Dracula's blood in Mina's body certainly has not, meaning that Mina has become the ultimate racial hybrid.

The question remains as to whether Dracula is dead at all. When Van Helsing sets out to dispatch the vampiric Lucy, he tells Seward that "I shall cut off her head and fill her mouth with garlic, and I shall drive a stake through her body" (179). This is the prescribed method of killing a vampire, but none of this happens with Dracula. Mina Harker states, "I shrieked as I saw [Jonathan's knife] shear through the throat; whilst at the same moment Mr. Morris' bowie knife plunged into the heart" (325). Auerbach believes that "this is not the ritual communal killing the vampire hunters had planned. Dracula's supposed death is riddled with ambiguity" (Auerbach, 325). Mina notes how Dracula's eyes had turned to a "look of triumph," perhaps as a result of the sun setting and him reaching his full power with darkness, but this may not be the case. Dracula's eyes show triumph because he realizes that the forces of Little England do not have the proper equipment to slay him. What if the "look of peace" on his face was the result of knowing that he was not going to be defeated? It is of paramount interest to note that Dracula's body "crumbled into dust" and passed from the sight of Little England. Dracula

not only hoards the blood-soaked earth and needs to rest in it to regain his strength, but he has the ability to *become* the earth. Dracula's looks of peace and triumph can very well be the result of his transforming, much as he transformed into mist, into dust and passing from the sight of his hunters.

After Dracula's supposed "death," Mina notes that "The Castle of Dracula now stood out against the red sky, and every stone of its broken battlements was articulated" (325). While Dracula has passed from their sight, his castle remains, as well as the sacred earth that was "scattered" as his box fell from the carriage it was being transported upon. Auerbach notes that in a previous version of *Dracula*, Stoker had made the final scene much more concrete than the current version and it is worth quoting the final paragraph in its entirety:

> As we looked there came a terrible convulsion of the earth so that we seemed to rock to and fro and fell to our knees. At the same moment, with a roar which seemed to shake the very heavens, the whole castle and the rock and even the hill on which it stood seemed to rise into the air and scatter in fragments while a mighty cloud of black and yellow smoke volume on volume in rolling grandeur was shot upwards with inconceivable rapidity. There was a stillness in nature as the echoes of that thunderous report seemed to come as with the hollow boom of a thunder clap—the long reverberating roll which seems as though the floors of heaven shook. Then down in a mighty ruin falling whence they shot the fragments that had been tossed skywards in the cataclysm.
>
> From where we stood it seemed as though the once fierce volcano burst had satisfied the need of nature and the castle and the structure of the hill had sank again into the void. We were so appalled with the suddenness and the grandeur that we forgot to think of ourselves (325)

This paragraph was the original ending in Stoker's first manuscript and it provides a more definitive account of Dracula's death. With the death of the Count, his grip over even the

region's landscape is destroyed: the castle, the rock on which it was built, and the hill that contained the rock were all sucked back into the earth as though their continued presence would somehow perpetuate the Count's influence. The "need of nature" is fulfilled as Dracula's tomb, his earth, the corpses of his brides, and all of his possessions are sucked down into the void. When the cataclysm has ended, Dracula's castle has been so thoroughly destroyed that there is no trace of his existence left on earth. Why Stoker changed the ending is unclear, but it is entirely possible that he wanted Dracula's death to remain riddled with ambiguity. The castle remains, its battlements clearly visible in the twilight, a foreboding reminder of the power of the Count.

If we choose to accept the method in which Dracula was dispatched, how then are we to interpret the look of peace on his face as he dies? Despite the supposed freeing of the Count's soul, perhaps it is because he knows that in addition to Mina holding his blood, he knows that her son will carry his vampiric blood as well. Interestingly enough, Mina's son is born on "the day… which Quincey Morris died" (326), but this is also the day on which Dracula died; the boy is, in effect, the son of Dracula. This child born of Mina's womb is invigorated by the ancient blood of Dracula and his line, and as long as that child lives and reproduces, Dracula will never die. The boy is named Quincey, bringing together all of the major bloodlines in Europe into a single being. He is Irish, English, Romanian, Teutonic, Avar, Magyar, and countless other races, adding American to the mix through his given name. Nina Auerbach states in a footnote that Victorians, especially Max Nordau believed that "the human race, especially the Anglo-Saxons, was deteriorating and was thus fated to endure cultural decay. Nordau's prophecy of doom had a great influence… on Victorian assumptions" (296). This child is the solution to this

problem and the future of the English race as he has taken the normally dominant vampiric blood and, as Valente states, “amalgamated back into Englishness,” creating, in *actuality*, a higher breed. The child is the fulfillment of both Stoker and Arnold’s belief that a mixing of races will produce a superior Celt or a superior Saxon, infused with the desirable characteristics of every type of blood that flows through his veins.

Arata notes that through securing “an heir,” the Harkers and Little England are able to “master” the vampiric threat posed by Dracula, yet this may not be the case. Throughout the novel, the men of Little England are described as weak in comparison to Dracula, and there is indeed a short supply of fathers. The patriarchs of the Harker, Westenra, and Murray family are dead, while Mr. Hawkins and Lord Godalming the elder are both dying. Jonathan is too weak to produce a son, and Lucy and Arthur never have the required sexual relations to produce a child. The only person that is doing any sort of reproduction is Dracula, who reproduces by vamping Lucy and Mina. Although Arata contends that with Dracula’s apparent demise and young Quincey’s birth, the threat is mastered, he acknowledges that it is still tenuous. Little England has been able to produce an heir, but, as Jonathan notes, “his son is named after each of the men in the novel, making them all figurative fathers, yet Quincey’s multiple parentage only underscores the original problem” (Arata, 467). The original problem, of course, is the weakness of the English men in comparison to Dracula’s bountiful fertility and the possible destruction of English blood at the hands of the hybridized vampiric blood. How strong can the future of England be if five fathers are needed to produce a single son? The answer to this question is overlooked by Arata. Dracula’s blood also flows through young Quincey’s veins, effectively giving him six fathers. It is an image of the new

future for the Victorians: a hybridized future that blends the best characteristics of multiple blood types (in this case, fathers) and secures heirs that will continue to strengthen the empire. Thus, the fact that Quincey is the son of six men is not something that demonstrates his weakness, but the strength that comes from hybridity.

The racial impurities that the Victorians feared so vehemently in the end may have been their salvation. Although we are never sure whether or not Dracula has really died or whether he survived Little England's attack, the birth of Mina's child finally secures an heir for Little England and hope for the future. Through hybridization, Little England was able to incorporate the eternal vampiric blood into their own, halting Dracula's threat of racial tainting in its tracks and in the process strengthening English blood against a powerful invader. Although Dracula may not be dead, the immediate goals of Little England have been satisfied: the blood has been protected and strengthened, and Dracula's threat of racial and imperial conquest, if not totally destroyed, has at the very least been delayed.

# Chapter 4: Gender Inversion and the Fluidic Vampire

If one were asked to characterize Victorian English society in one phrase, the most common answer would likely be “repressed sexuality.” Dracula’s vampiric bite signals the realization of all of these fears, especially the fear of sexuality. The vampire bite clouds the sexuality of the victim to such an extent that gender roles begin to blur, the difference between humans and vampires becomes fluidic and ambivalent, and morality is thrown to the side. Dracula does what to the Victorians is unthinkable: he brings sexual freedom, deviance, and perversion.

Dracula’s first victim, while outwardly appearing to be Lucy Westenra, is actually Jonathan Harker. Harker is the first character to encounter Dracula and the first of the men of Little England to experience vampirism and the vampiric lure firsthand. While sleeping in the library, against the Count’s explicit instructions, Harker has a decidedly erotic encounter with the three vampire women. He notes the redness of their lips, the voluptuousness of their figures, and the overall desire that they elicit in him. When he realizes how much he wants the women to kiss him, he notes, "It is not good to note this down, lest some day it should meet Mina’s eyes and cause her pain; but it is the truth” (42). The conflict that is going on within Harker’s mind is exemplified between the two statements which come immediately after one another: the desire to be kissed with the red lips, and then the sudden realization of the pain that it might cause Harker’s Victorian wife. To Harker, Mina serves as a metonymic conceptualization of the Victorian social theory. The vampire women represent sex and liberation, while Mina is the Victorian ideal. He wants to record the attraction he feels towards these women, but does not want

his words to be seen as it would jeopardize his image as a Victorian male and his marriage to a Victorian woman. This conflict consumes Harker, and it is furthered by his inability to put the vampire women's physical attributes in words that are not contradictory: their laugh is "musical" yet "hard," their breath is "honey-sweet" yet "bitter[ly] offensive," and he felt "longing" while at the same time "deadly fear" (Stoker, 42). Harker's confusion is the result of the indoctrination of the sexual vampiric nature coming into conflict with the Victorian viewpoint that one's sexuality should remain repressed.

Harker seemingly rejects the liberation of vampirism and the wanton sexuality that it brings, despite the "languorous ecstasy" that he felt when in contact with the vampires. Upon being left alone in Dracula's castle with the women, he laments, "I am alone in the castle with those awful women. Faugh! Mina is a woman, and there is naught in common" (55). While Harker's rejection of the vampires as "women" can be seen as the rejection of the freed sexuality that Dracula and his cohorts bring with their vampiric nature, it is ambiguous. The vampire women, as completely sexual beings, do not fit the description of "woman" that Harker holds dear and that he seemingly rejects. The "woman" that Harker speaks of is his idealized Victorian wife, but his exclamation that "Mina is a woman, and there is naught in common" has a double meaning. While he does reject the vampires as women, perhaps he no longer wants what he terms, "a woman." Perhaps Harker has been so excited by the concept of these vampires that he wants to be vampiric himself. Craft states that "Dracula's daughters offer Harker a feminine form but a masculine penetration" (Craft, 446), and Harker has already written down the "wicked burning desire" that he felt to be kissed by the vampire women. Thus, in the desire for

sexual deviance, the boundaries between humans and vampires blur. Does Harker want to remain as a Victorian male and pine for his matronly fiancé, or does he want to experiment in the illicit vampiric lifestyle?

This ambiguity between Harker and vampires is present throughout his stay in Dracula's castle. While Harker is there, he becomes a sort of doppelganger for the Count, taking on many of the Count's physical attributes. He notes that Dracula "had on the suit of clothes which I had worn whilst travelling here, and slung over his shoulder the terrible bag which I had seen the women take away" (47), and believes with a great deal of horror that he will be mistaken for the Count. Jonathan states, "any wickedness which [Dracula] may do shall by the local people be attributed to me" (47). The boundaries that separate Jonathan from Dracula have begun to blur, as Dracula is now posing as Jonathan as he hunts for fresh blood. This fluidity between Jonathan and the Count is furthered by the mother of the child that was taken by Dracula, who accosts Jonathan at the castle. Harker notes, "When she saw my face at the window she threw herself forward, and shouted in a voice laden with menace:—'Monster, give me my child!'" (48). The question remains as to whether or not Jonathan has been vamped, or even if he needs to be vamped. When Jonathan looks in the mirror while shaving, he notices that Dracula does not cast a reflection. Thus, with a vampire in the room, all that Jonathan sees in the mirror is himself as "there was no reflection of him in the mirror" (31). Who, then, is the vampire?

In addition to Jonathan's vampiric ambiguity, the bite (or promise of a bite) from the vampire women threatens to subvert traditional notions of gender. While traditional patriarchal sexual ideals were, of course, male-dominated, the vampire sexuality

promises a reversal of that convention. Shortly before he has his encounter with the vampire brides, he lies on a couch, the same place where “ladies had sat and sung and lived sweet lives whilst their gentle breasts were sad for their menfolk away in the midst of remorseless wars” (41). Thus, Jonathan has arranged himself on a sort of bed like the noble ladies of old had done, waiting for their men to return. When the vampires enter the room where he lies, he finds himself irresistibly attracted to them. He knows that there is something inherently appealing about the vampire women, that he can feel the “dent” of their sharp teeth on his neck but he has no desire to get away. Like a bride awaiting her husband on her wedding night, or the ladies waiting for their men to return from war, Jonathan writes, “I lay quiet, looking out under my eyelashes in an agony of delightful anticipation” (42). Jonathan has become not the groom in this perverted scene, but the bride. He waits in a passive position for the vampire women, who bring him the promise of an illicit penetration. Christopher Craft deals with the sexuality aroused by the vampiric kiss, and he believes that “the vampiric kiss excites a sexuality so mobile, so insistent, that it threatens to overwhelm the distinctions of gender” (Craft, 449). Such is indeed the case with Jonathan as the encounter with the vampire brides leaves him frightened and uncertain. The clouding of gender roles leaves the male victim of the vampiric bite confused as to his position. Am I a man or a woman? Do I penetrate or am I penetrated? Craft believes that Jonathan’s experience in the castle is an example “the explicit representation of a male’s desire to be penetrated” (Craft, 447). Although this penetration is denied at the last moment, the effect on Jonathan is profound. Jonathan's “languorous ecstasy” is interrupted by Dracula, and his male penetration is not allowed to take place. His frustration at having been given this illicit opportunity and then having it

denied is palpable, as he and this is exemplified when he thereafter refuses to acknowledge the vampire women as women at all. A combination of sexual frustration and personal societal shame at having yielded to his sexual side result in a continued conflict within Harker between his Victorian ideals and the liberation that Dracula and his vampire brides promise.

In addition to the men being feminized by vampires, women in the novel find themselves placed in a more masculine role. Lucy Westenra, Dracula's first victim, was a woman who was already beginning to realize the power she had over the men in her life. She is assertive, flirtatious, and wants to experiment in the realm of social sexual relations. Her experiences with the triple proposal of Arthur Holmwood, Quincy Morris, and Dr. Seward leads to her statements of why is it that she cannot marry all three of them. "Why can't they let a girl marry three men, or as many as want her?" (60) is her exclamation. She also bursts, "Three proposals in one day! I feel sorry, really and truly sorry, for two of the poor fellows" (Stoker, 56). She does not specify which men she will let down, but merely states that she feels bad for two of them, the two that she does not decide to marry. This is a profound statement of power on her part, for within her control is the emotional well-being of three fine men. She loves Morris for his use of "American slang" because it is something different than typical Victorian ways of speaking. It is informal, it sounds unintelligent, for Lucy has to explain to Mina that Morris is "really well educated and has exquisite manners" (Stoker, 59), despite his use of slang. At this early juncture, we see that Lucy is already rebelling against the aspects of Victorian society that are holding her in. She wishes to be more sexually active through her desire to marry "as many [men] as want her," and the American Morris provides a diversion

from typical Victorian men. It is no surprise; therefore, that Lucy is Dracula's first target when he reaches English shores. Moretti states "Lucy awaits her wedding day with impatience. It is on this restlessness—on her 'somnambulism'—that Dracula exerts leverage to win her" (Moretti, 439). She already has an unnatural amount of power by controlling the hearts of three men, but her desire to be more masculine in power and control is displayed in Dracula's interest in Lucy. Dracula sees in Lucy what can only be described as a willing receptacle of the vampiric nature. She wants to experiment in the realm of sexuality and, as evidenced by her inquiries into bigamy, is less than happy with the Victorian social laws. Through her upcoming transformation, Lucy's gender role is about to be changed from female-passive to masculine-aggressive.

This masculine-aggressive role that Lucy undertakes is soon displayed in her attempted seduction of her fiancé, Arthur. He finds his masculinity subverted when faced with the vampiric Lucy in her tomb, shortly after her death. Arthur succumbs to Lucy's advances; despite the fact that he clearly knows that she is no longer a creature of this world. Seward describes, "When [Lucy] advanced to [Arthur] with outstretched arms and a wanton smile, he fell back and hid his face in his hands" (188), alluding to Harker's own scene in the castle where he waited for the vampire women to approach him. Arthur's act of falling back and hiding his face can be construed as an act of embarrassment in the face of Lucy's powerful sexuality. She continues to advance, with "languorous, voluptuous grace," and invites Arthur to come with her. "Come to me, Arthur. Leave these others and come to me. My arms are hungry for you. Come and we can rest together. Come, my husband, come!" (188). Implicit in Lucy's speech is her frequent use of the imperative as she commands her husband to come to her. Her arms,

described as “hungry,” indicate the sort of consumption he will face if he goes with Lucy. Lucy yields considerable sexual power, so much so that it frightens Arthur, who cowers in a corner. In one instant, the female has snatched all of the power from her fiancé, turning him into a trembling coward, hiding his face from her voluptuous gaze.

With her new status as a vampire, Lucy is everything that Victorian society would not let her be. She is described as having had “sweetness turned to adamantine, heartless cruelty, and the purity to voluptuous wantonness...the face became wreathed with a voluptuous smile...she advanced...with outstretched arms and a wanton smile...with a languorous and voluptuous grace” (187-188). As we have already seen, Lucy’s allure overrides both Arthur’s sense of danger and his sense of masculinity, leaving him in a sort of trance as Lucy approaches him. Dracula, therefore, does not have to turn everyone in England into vampires in order to subjugate its society. The sheer absurdity of Arthur’s attraction to the undead Lucy demonstrates the incredible power that the vampiric sexuality exudes. Arthur becomes conflicted within himself as to what he should do about the decidedly demonic Lucy. Lucy invites Arthur to “leave these others” and join her. Her invitation is not merely an invitation to become a vampire and share in the freedom it brings, but to also reject the others as a symbol of British society and join her in her sexual lust. She tells Arthur to “Come, and we can rest together,” implying that he join her in her tomb and possibly suggesting the sexual intercourse that was never permitted between the two, as they had never been married. The vampiric Lucy has thrown free the sexual shackles of Victorian English society and has become something completely different. Her blood identity has been muddled, her earthly life has ended, and she is free to experience all of the carnal pleasures that she had been denied before. Moretti believes

that through Lucy, Dracula is seen to "liberate and exalt sexual desire" (Moretti, 439), and Arthur finds himself giving into Lucy's sexuality before he is halted by Van Helsing.

Lucy's death is fitting, however, for her newly awakened masculine sexuality. In the novel's sexual politics, the aggressive female must be punished and the submissive male must be restored to his previous state of dominance. Lucy has been acting as the penetrator and by doing so has "threaten[ed] patriarchal hegemony" (Arata, 468) and thus the solution is "a corrective penetration" (Craft, 450). Arthur takes the stake and hammer and "He looked like a figure of Thor as his untrembling arm *rose* and *fell*, driving *deeper* and *deeper* (my italics) the mercy-bearing stake, whist the blood from the pierced heart welled and spurted up from around it" (Stoker, 191). This scene, though outwardly seeming bloody and cruel, is a sort of perverted deflowering scene, where the italicized words can easily be used to describe sexual intercourse. The blood and the satisfaction that Arthur gets out of this are similar to, if not the same as the satisfaction that he would have gotten from sexual relations with Lucy. Thus through this spearing with the stake, Lucy is restored to a state of submission by Arthur, who once again assumes the role of the male, although with a pseudo-phallus. The intercourse parallel is furthered by Lucy's reaction to the stake being driven through her body. Moretti believes that "Lucy dies... in the throes of what, to the "public" mind of the Victorians, must have seemed like an orgasm" (Moretti, 439), and indeed this appears to be the case.

> The thing in the coffin writhed; and a hideous, blood curdling screech came from the opened red lips. The body shook and quivered and twisted in wild contortions; the sharp white teeth clamped together till the lips were cut and the mouth was smeared with a crimson foam (192)

If, then, we view the killing of Lucy as correcting her distorted sexuality, the mission was a success, although not in totality. Through Lucy's impaling, she is returned to a state of silence and submissiveness but at great expense to Arthur's health. As Arthur finishes dispatching the vampiric Lucy in her family crypt, Seward notes, "[Arthur] reeled and would have fallen had we not caught him. The great drops of sweat sprang out on his forehead, and his breath came in broken gasps" (Stoker, 192). Although Arthur has restored, albeit momentarily, the patriarchal hegemony, he is left weakened and exhausted after the fact. His strength, then, is still in question.

Yet Arthur is not the last of the men to experience the monstrous sexuality of the vampiric woman. Even Dr. Van Helsing, the arch-nemesis of Dracula finds himself momentarily stunned by the beauty and sexuality exuded by the trio of vampire women. As he steals into the bowels of Dracula's castle to dispatch the three vampire brides, he finds his task difficult. He states, "Then the beautiful eyes of the fair woman open and look love, and the voluptuous mouth present to a kiss—and man is weak" (319), and that when faced with this woman, she was "so full of life and voluptuous beauty that I shudder as though I have come to do murder" (319) Even with the fair vampire sleeping in her coffin, Van Helsing finds his masculine determination undermined by her beauty and sensuality. Van Helsing sees, like Jonathan before him, the red lips of the vampire and expressly desires a kiss. He acknowledges this power, for indeed "man is weak" when faced with such beauty. Although Van Helsing succeeds in killing the women, the temptation for the gender reversal of feminine penetration is still present and still unbelievably powerful. Present, too, is the beauty and vitality displayed by vampiric women. Lucy, the three brides, and even Mina are given an otherworldly beauty and

"voluptuousness" that stops men dead in their tracks. It helps Lucy to stupefy Arthur, helps the vampire brides to do the same to Harker and Van Helsing, and even the partially-vamped Mina is described by Van Helsing as "awake and more charming than ever" (316). The vamped woman, therefore, is amazingly sexual, stunningly beautiful, and possessing an allure so insistent, so powerful, that it has the ability to hypnotize men and turn them into babbling weaklings, the willing receptacles of their masculine penetration.

It is difficult for a woman in Mina's position to be submissive to the men in her life. While she is the only character that is married, she is continually a source of motherly comfort for the men of Little England, who, rather paradoxically, act like hysterical women. When Mina heads to the convent after Jonathan's ordeal in Romania, she describes Jonathan as being incredibly week. His hands are "poor" and "weak," and even his hair has turned white after his experience at Castle Dracula; Jonathan is in a position of extreme emasculation. Even after a month of being back in England, Mina writes "Jonathan wants looking after still…Even now he awakes all trembling until I can coax him back to his usual placidity" (141). The notion of a trembling, weakened, and comfort-seeking husband not only undermines the sexual hierarchy of Victorian England, but brings Dracula's sexual politics into focus. Jonathan had been the equivalent of the vampire brides' sex toy, penetrating him at will and leaving him weakened after the experience. Jonathan, therefore, has been feminized by the vampiric attack and is in need of comfort and security. He seeks this from his wife, resulting in a blurring of traditional gender roles. Even the prominent, aristocratic Lord Godalming is overcome with feminine hysterical crying shortly after Lucy's death. Mina relates, "In an instant the poor

dear fellow was overwhelmed with grief… He grew quite hysterical… the tears rained down his cheeks. I felt an infinite pity for him, and opened my arms unthinkingly. With a sob he laid his head on my shoulder, and cried like a wearied child, whilst he shook with emotion." She goes on to state how Arthur's head is like that of a "baby" and that she "stroked his hair as though he were [her] own child" (203). Arthur is feminized, infantilized, and emasculated, demonstrating how one does not necessarily have to be bitten by a vampire in order to feel the effects of his bite. Through his experience with Lucy, Arthur has become an entirely different man. In much the same way, Quincy Morris is consumed by his grief and after Mina's offer of comfort, "the tears rose in his eyes and there was a momentary choking in his throat" (204). Three of the novel's main male protagonists display serious vulnerability and emotion as a result, whether direct or indirect, of Dracula's attack. With all of the men in her life so broken and in need of comfort, it is no surprise that Mina falls victim to Dracula's advances and is a willing receptacle of the vampire blood.

Mina's view of sex and sexuality changes profoundly from before she was bitten by Dracula and afterwards. Where before the vamping took place, she viewed marriage in incredibly desexualized terms: "I had nothing to give him except myself, my life, and my trust, and that with these went my love and duty for all the days of my life" (101). This passage further underlies Jonathan's emasculation as he is lying in bed when his marriage takes place. Yet once Mina is bitten by Dracula, this changes profoundly and his highlighted in a frighteningly sexual scene in Mina and Jonathan's bed. The Count invades the marital bedroom and ostensibly performs the sexual act that had been missing from Mina and Jonathan's marriage. Dracula then physically dominates her and taunts

her for her resistance. He states, “You may as well be quiet; it is not the first time, or the second, that your veins have appeased my thirst!” Mina relates in her diary, “I was bewildered, and, strangely enough, I did not want to hinder him” (Stoker, 251). Why would Mina not want to hinder the Count? The text suggests willing compliance with the Count possibly out of the same perverse sexual desire that was evidenced with Jonathan in the castle with the vampire brides. Another strong possibility is that given the emasculated male figures in Little England, Mina yearns for a man that will dominate her and restore her to her feminine-passive sexual position and this is indeed what the Count provides. It is of paramount importance that Jonathan is *in the bed with Mina* as Dracula dominates her, although he is described as being in a “stupor.” Perhaps it is the stupor that results from being under Dracula’s spell, or perhaps still it is because he is submissive to the Count and bows to the Count’s display of masculine power. Dracula opens one of his veins and Mina drinks his blood, and she describes it with utter terror, “When the blood began to spurt out, he took my hands in one of his, and with the other seized my neck and pressed my mouth to the wound, so that I might either suffocate or swallow some of the- Oh my God! what have I done?” (Stoker, 252). The terror is two-fold: not only has she consumed Dracula’s bodily fluids, which remain ambiguous here, but she is also lying with Dracula in her husband’s bed engaging in a wantonly sexual act.

It is never clear what fluid Mina is forced to drink, whether it is in fact the Count’s blood or whether it is semen, but the underlying sexuality of this distorted marital bed is the very thing which Mina is resisting. Mina’s shame perhaps is not merely rooted in the fact that she was forced into a perverted fellation, but that it can be read that

she enjoyed the experience. She said that she "did not want to hinder him," and she is engaging in this act with her husband in the bed next to her. She asks, "Oh my God, *what have I done*" (my italics), instead of "My God, what did he *make me do*." This ambiguity leaves room for interpretation that Mina's drinking of Dracula's bodily fluids was voluntary. Dracula's forcing of Mina's head to his breast is a forced liberation: a way of making Mina realize her sexual side, and despite being in bed with her emasculated Victorian husband, she does not "want to hinder" the Count. Roth picks up on the erotic nature of Mina's pseudo-rape at the hands of Dracula, and she states that this scene is, "[T]he scene which Joseph Bierman has described quite correctly as a 'primal scene in oral terms'" (Roth, 415). Indeed, it is an extremely primal, physical, almost pornographic situation, a sort of forced fellation that would have been reprehensible to Victorian society. Mina feels intense guilt and shame over this occurrence, and this is mirrored by the scene with the Communion. "As [Van Helsing] placed the wafer on Mina's forehead, it had seared it- had burned into the flesh as though it had been a piece of white-hot metal... 'Unclean! Unclean! Even the Almighty shuns my polluted flesh!'" (Stoker, 259). Mina's mark upon her forehead is her scarlet letter: her visual sign of not only the sexual sin she has committed, but the pollution of her blood with Dracula's vampiric blood.

Dracula's monstrous sexuality tore through Little England like a tornado. He sexualized the Victorian women, turning them into powerful masculine figures that blurred gender roles and stupefied and feminized the Victorian men. This feminizing is doubly threatening because it rings of the Celtic nature that Dracula brings with him. Arnold notes the Celts "have something feminine in them, and the Celt is thus peculiarly disposed to feel the spell of feminine idiosyncrasy" (Arnold 86). Not only were the

English men relegated to the role of the feminine, but this role aligned them with the Celtic influence that was so greatly feared by Victorian England. In an age of sexual repression, the destruction of the patriarchal supremacy and the establishment of female dominance posed the greatest threat that Little England had ever faced.

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