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**FOLKLÓRTÓL FIKCIÓIG: DRACULA EVOLÚCIÓJA, MINT
ARCHETIPUS**

**FROM FOLKLORE TO FICTION: THE EVOLUTION OF DRACULA
AS AN ARCHETYPE**

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Introduction

The archetype of the vampire we are familiar with today in literature or visual media went through many changes to arrive where it is now. People often think that the vampire as a character was present for a longer time than it is; in reality, the vampire appeared in literature around the eighteenth century. Some specific works of literature helped it reach the popularity it has today. The most important one is John William Polidori's '*The Vampyre*' (1819), which redefined the folkloric undead, followed closely by James Malcolm Rymer and Thomas Peckett Prest's '*Varney the Vampire*' (1845), which made the vampire a popular character to use in literature. Of course, Bram Stoker's '*Dracula*' (1897) was the work which established the vampire in popular culture as it is today. Most on-screen or literary vampires own their traits to Dracula. This research aims to explore how Stoker crafted his vampire into the iconic Count we know today.

My research can be divided into two chapters. In the first chapter, I will explore the vampire in both folklore and literature. I will focus on the folkloric vampire as depicted in European folklore. To conduct this research, I have read several books on folkloric vampires and relevant literary works, which I will analyse. These literary works include '*A Fragment*' by Lord Byron (1819), '*The Vampyre*' by John Polidori (1819), and '*Carmilla*' by Sheridan Le Fanu (1872). I will compare the origins of the vampire, its characteristics, and what it represented in both superstition and literary contexts. My research question relates to how vampires evolved from folklore to literature from the early seventeenth century to the early eighteenth century. The folkloric vampire served as the foundation for the literary archetype, which Bram Stoker further developed with distinct traits. Initially, the vampire was conceived as an evil spirit, a demon, or a servant of Satan that possessed the dead and terrorized the living. Many of its characteristics were rooted in Christian beliefs and customs that emerged after the hysteria that gripped Europe in the eighteenth century.

In the next chapter, in my analysis of '*Dracula*', I will explore the vampire characters in the novel and examine how their appearances and traits evolved from their folkloric and literary predecessors. I will discuss how Bram Stoker utilized superstition and characteristics of other literary vampires to craft the character of Dracula, as well as what the vampire archetype can represent. Traditionally, vampires were seldom depicted as mere creatures of the night;

instead, they often served as metaphors for human relationships, eroticism, or the societal taboos of their time. In literature, vampire imagery not only aimed to instil fear but also sought to entertain and provide deeper insights into human nature. My thesis will delve into the transformation of Dracula from a figure feared by the masses to a dark gothic villain.

The Vampire from Folklore to Literature

1.1 The Vampire in European Folklore

As an archetype, Dracula is a careful mixture of folklore and literature. This research aims to explore how Stoker crafted this archetype. Thus, I will begin by exploring the origins of vampires in folklore. In this chapter, I will analyse the portrayal of vampires as literary characters, tracing their evolution and examining their symbolic significance in various literary works.

The vampire is one of the oldest creature folklores have to offer, but the modern version we all know very well through *Dracula* (Bram Stoker, 1897) and twentieth-century movies is entirely different from what it used to be. As James B. Twitchell said in *The Living Dead: A Study of the Vampire in Romantic Literature* (1981), each civilisation and generation reshapes and reinvents the vampire, ultimately leading to the well-known Western monster we see today (Twitchell 7). Every culture has a creature with vampiric characteristics: the Dogirs in Egypt, the Gayal in India, the Ch'ing Shih in China, and the Ker in Greece. These are just a few examples of vampires around the world; all the variants have the potential to be expanded into a comprehensive book, and it certainly did in the *Encyclopedia of Vampire Mythology* written by Theresa Bane (2020). The vampire folklore spread from these ancient civilisations to Europe, where the vampire epidemic (a hysterical period where superstition and fear of the unknown led people to believe that vampires were attacking them) in the Balkans during the seventeenth century reshaped the mythology and created the base for the vampire in literature. Before it was called a vampire, it was known as a demon or spirit who came back to haunt and feast on the life force of the living. In the ancient world, vampirism was connected to black magic (e.g. Hecate, the 'Queen of the phantom world' in Greece), and even in the European version of the myth, it kept its occult ties.

The question ultimately is what exactly constitutes a vampire. According to *Webster's International Dictionary*, a vampire is "A blood-sucking ghost or re-animated body of a dead person", which was rooted in ancient civilisations (e.g. Egypt, Greece). In *Whitney's Century Dictionary*, it is "A kind of a spectral body which, according to a superstition existing among the Slavic and other races on the Lower Danube, leaves the grave during the night and maintains a semblance of life by sucking the warm blood of living men and women while they sleep.", which is closer to the vampire which is ultimately borrowed in literature. The earliest use of the word can be traced back to the seventeenth century when it entered the English vocabulary. The word vampire originates from the Hungarian term "*vampir*" and its Slavic variations, such as "*vampir*" in Bulgaria and "*upuir*" in Russia (Leatherdale 17). Long before it had a universal name, this creature was where humans settled, representing the deepest fears of these societies. The task of tracing the origins and evolution of the vampire is quite extensive. As such, I will focus my thesis on the European vampire in folklore.

Due to the challenges between the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox Church and the bloodthirsty rulers of Europe in the seventeenth century, it is clear why the vampire myth could flourish in eastern Europe (Cuffe 51). Europe has the most extensive culture of vampirism, as it was well-documented from around the fifteenth century, surviving for us to study it. Superstition and culture greatly impacted how the vampire was seen. Therefore, I will examine it before I move on to how the Christian faith has changed the myth of this immortal creature. Even in Europe, the mythology differed in every country, varying from region to region in the same nation. In Romania, the 'vampire country', the *Drakul* (meaning both "the dragon" and "demon nearby") is a vampiric demon who possesses the corpse of a deceased person and reanimates it. The *Moroi* are living vampires; when someone is born with any physical defect (a tail, for example), they are considered vampires. They have the powers vampires possess, but they are very much alive. When they die, they will rise as a *Strigoica* (a revenant vampire) unless a stake has been driven through their heart. In Hungary, the *Farkaskoldus* is a kind of vampire that can shapeshift into a cat, dog, or goat. It drinks the blood of its victim, and with the sunrise, it returns to its grave. In Poland, the *Boginki* attacks mothers with their newborn children to replace the baby with a changeling. In Ireland, the *Abhartach* is the oldest known vampire story recorded in Western Europe. It comes from ancient Celtic lore, where a powerful sorcerer with dwarfism and physical defect dies and comes back to terrorise the townspeople, whose tyranny is ended by a druid. The druid drove a sword of yew wood through the *Abhartach* and buried him upside down. As he is immortal,

the story goes that he still attacks anyone who goes near his grave (Bane 54, 96, 127, 62, 36). These creatures share the characteristics of being undead, terrorising the living, and/or having some physical defects, and differ in minor details only. People in the Middle Ages had a folk story for every unknown occurrence or seemingly unexplainable event; they explained weather changes (e.g. thunderstorms are created by gods), natural disasters, or how the world was created. Countless strange events around death, such as hair and nails growing after death or bodies being preserved, were explained by vampires of all kinds. Thus, it was used as a tool for coping with the unfamiliar aspects of their lives and especially their demise.

Superstition and having limited knowledge created the mythology of vampirism, then Christianity further developed it. Without a doubt, religion affected not only the characteristics of the vampire but also the lives of people. As I mentioned, a spiritual war was waged between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century. It was due to the battle in Central and Eastern Europe between the Christians and the Turks. Both of these churches were preying on the innocents and exploited the hysteria to keep people from leading a sinful life. The threat of eternal damnation was more than enough for peasants to behave. By specifying the vampire, the Church confirmed its existence at the same time as it took upon itself to counter the epidemic of vampirism thus “taken from its pagan origins and updated with church embellishments, vampirism was the fate that awaited for errors of prescribed belief.” (Leatherdale 21). The vampire was merged with pagan and Christian characteristics to serve the Church as best as possible. I would like to present two examples that illustrate how individuals faced consequences for their transgressions in ways linked to the concept of vampirism or the transformation into a vampire. First and foremost, excommunication was already a fate nobody would have wanted, but fusing it with the vampire myth, their bodies would not decompose in their unholy grave, their souls trapped, damning it inside the corpse and allowing it to reanimate as a vampire (Leatherdale 23). In this manner, people not only lost their spiritual privileges and were condemned to eternal damnation, but also, they would become vampires. This also gave the Church power over their souls and bodies. Another sin which led to vampirism was suicide. In the Christian faith, man is not responsible for his birth. Therefore, he has no right to his death. It is up to God to decide when a person dies, so with suicide, one would commit a great sin. The deserving punishment for suicide is immortal life.

Next let me examine what was the typical appearance of vampires in folklore. When we think about it, we all picture the mysterious aristocrats living in their secluded castle alone, but in reality, it was far from how they looked to peasants. This quotation from Leatherdale exemplifies my point: “Vampires are more usually depicted as lean, gaunt, hollow-eyed, and with scabs on their arms and legs” (Leatherdale 26). Hair and nails appear to be longer, but we nowadays know it is because of the decomposition of the body which makes it appear like that (Fenn 41). Therefore, the vampire in folklore looked like a dead body; which it was essentially. In some folklore, vampires can eat human food or drink the blood of animals, but most popular theories are about drinking only human blood. As for their powers, they are as fast as the wind and possess physical strength. I already mentioned their ability to transform into animals, and of course, there is the question if they can go out in the sun. In folklore, most cases of vampire attacks happen in the early hours, as they thought that’s when the psychological resistance is the lowest. But other than this, there is no mention that they cannot be out under the sun. In Romanian folktales, the *Strigoi* attacks more than once daily, once at noon, for example (Bane 18). This weakness of them was popularized in literature. A myth about them whose origin is questionable is their inability to enter a dwelling without being invited in. According to Leatherdale, it comes from the Christian tradition of the devil’s shortcoming of commerce with unwilling people (Leatherdale 27). Another source states that this tradition perhaps comes from the Greek folklore of the Barabarlakos, a vampire who goes from door to door at dawn, knocking once on the door and moving on if no one answers quickly (Bane 31-32). Comparing the Christian faith to Greek folklore, it is obvious which one could spread in Europe quicker in terms of the vampire myth. Another contradictory trait of a vampire is the inability to cast reflection: “It is deeply ingrained in folk-belief that a reflection in a mirror or in a pond (nowadays on camera film) is that of the person’s soul.” (Leatherdale 28). But if the Christian church said that, for example, a person who commits suicide will come back as a vampire, their soul trapped in their body, then why are vampires not casting reflection? One source says they have souls; another says they do not, as they are evil creatures. However, in literature and later movies, vampires never seem to have reflections.

Amid the vampire epidemic of the early eighteenth century, scholars and theologians started the first systematic study of vampirism and desperately tried to make sense of it. Some people thought the origin of the vampiric beasts was the work of Satan; others thought it was Satan, but scholars were seeking out medical or scientific explanations instead of the paranormal

causes. Much of our knowledge of the folkloric vampire comes from these reports. Medical explanations of being a vampire, collected in Christopher Frayling's *Vampres: Lord Byron to Count Dracula* (Frayling 25), were: premature burial, unnaturally well-preserved corpses, natural growth of hair and nails after death, the plague, and rabies. In many cases, corpses were found with 'fresh blood' in their mouth, proving that they were vampires. This could be disproved easily with today's medical knowledge: blood is forced into the mouth when the body starts decomposing due to the gases produced by this process. When a plague hit and people started dying, they always dug up the first victim; if the dead body had blood in his mouth and was bloated, that meant it was a vampire full of its victim's blood (Barber 3). This explanation is similar to the basic idea of the modern spreading of disease. Still, without our current resources, people relied on superstition and their faith to deal with the unknown. This hysteria surrounding vampire attacks affected many Eastern European countries, such as Hungary, Austrian Serbia, East Prussia, Silesia, Wallachia (modern-day Romania) and Russia. Reports from Austrian Serbia were so severe that the Austrian government had to get involved. These so-called vampire stories became such sensations that Dom Augustin Calmet (Benedictine Abbot of Senones) collected all the articles regards these incidents into the *Treatise on the Vampires of Hungary and Surrounding Regions* (Paris, 1746, originally published as '*Dissertations sur les apparitions des anges, des démons et des esprits, et sur les revenants et vampires de Hongrie, de Bohême, de Moravie et de Silésie*') (Frayling 23).

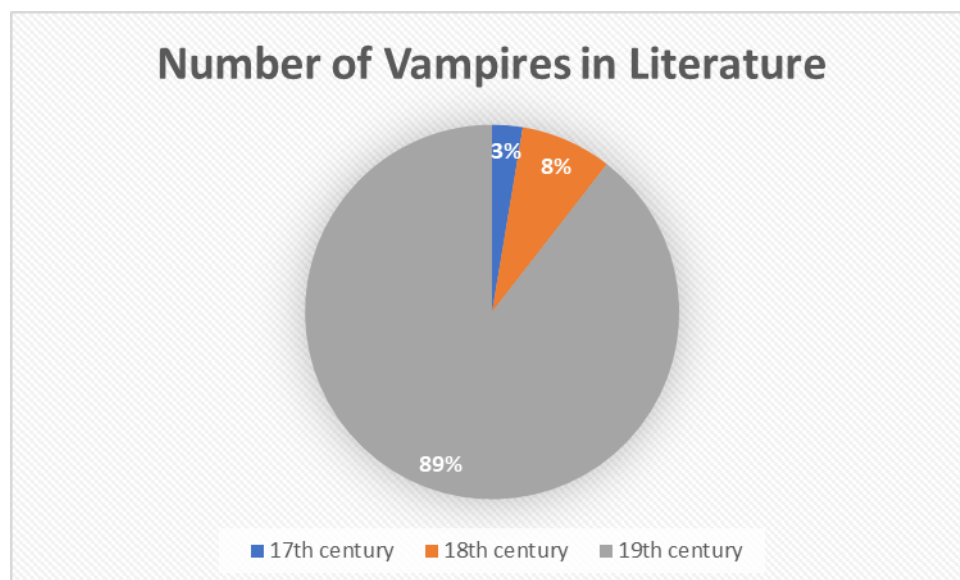
I will conclude this chapter by recounting some ways to kill a vampire, which will become relevant while analysing *Dracula* (1897) later. The method which became the most popular through media is, without doubt, the staking of the vampire. It is usually done with a wooden stake. Though in superstition, it does not matter what kind of wood they use, in Christianity, they used whichever was believed locally to be the wood used for the Cross on which Jesus Christ was crucified (Leatherdale 33). Garlic was good for warding vampires off and preventing them from entering the house. According to some lore, filling the mouth of the vampire will restrict them from rising from their grave (Cuffe 66). From my grandparents, I know garlic has healing properties, and I eat it whenever I am sick. If we look at vampirism as a spreading disease, it makes sense to use garlic to battle it. Holy objects could also ward evil creatures off, and as people in the Middle Ages were truly God-fearing, it is no surprise they believed in the effect of these blessed objects to work. It is magnified in literature and media portrayal, but it is not rooted there.

The vampire in folklore stems from superstition and fear of the unknown. Strange deaths, disease, and preserved corpses in the grave were all explained with vampirism. Christian faith further developed the lore, encouraging people to accept the undead as real. Through the hysteria which spread in Eastern Europe like wildfire (due to people believing that vampire attacks are on the rise), the news of vampirism travelled all around Europe. Scientists and scholars investigated and tried to find an explanation, which led to the vampire's recognition and later appearing in literary works.

Now that the foundation of the folkloric vampire has been examined, I will continue my examination of the vampire as a character in literature.

1.2 The Vampire in literature between the 17th and 19th century

The vampire we are all familiar with today was moulded from folklore beliefs and the rise of Gothic literature, later romanticised further by novels and films. “It would take a century for the transformation to be complete, but the folkloric vampire of central and eastern Europe eventually metamorphosed into the British-built vampire of Romantic literature.” (Leatherdale 40). The work that is considered to popularise the vampire genre in literature is *The Vampyre* by John William Polidori (1819). Still, even before him, there were poems and novels that had characters carrying vampiric traits. I will examine literary works based on their vampire characters to reveal how they evolved from folklore.



As seen on this chart, the presence of vampires in literature escalated in the 19th century. This was the time when not only *The Vampyre* (John William Polidori, 1819) but also *Carmilla* (Sheridan Le Fanu, 1872) and *Varney the Vampire* (James Malcolm Rymer and Thomas Peckett Prest, 1845) were published. These are the most influential works which shaped the

genre, and paved the way for *Dracula* (1897). In this subchapter, I will analyse them briefly to see how the vampire as a character was portrayed in them and how it evolved along the way from the folkloric beast to the upper-class seducer.

First, there are two works I would like to briefly mention due to their significance to my research. *The Giaour* (Lord Byron, 1813) “is one of the first known printed references to vampires in the English language” (Fenn 14), and *Christabel* (Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 1816) is a story with a homosexual undertone which, although does not feature a vampire, still stands as one of the most significant literary predecessors to *Carmilla* (1872). The English Romantics exhibited little concern for the monstrous figures present in folklore; they “rarely if ever wrote about vampires as vampires; instead, the vampire was the means to achieve various ends.” (Twitchell 38). For them, the vampire was a metaphor, an allegory for human emotions. There are many works by English Romantics (e.g. Percy B. Shelley’s *The Cenci* (1819), Oscar Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Grey* (1890) or John Keats’ *The Eve of St. Agnes* (1819)) which use the vampire allegory to discuss various issues; to maintain clarity and focus, I will refrain from exploring those further.

The Giaour (1813) uses the vampire as a vampire. It is used as a punishment for a heinous crime; to become a vampire, having his soul trapped in his body, damning it inside his remains (Leatherdale 23). The curse of the Giaour is the curse of vampirism:

- But first, on earth as vampire sent,
Thy corse shall from its tomb be rent:
Then ghastly haunt thy native place,
And suck the blood of all thy race;
There from thy daughter, sister, wife,

At midnight drain the stream of life; (Byron, lines 752-762)

Lord Byron came in contact with the vampire folklore on his Grand Tour and after writing *The Giaour*. He later wrote but never finished *A Fragment* (1819), which was the inspiration behind Polidori’s *The Vampyre* (or rather, he stole the idea from Lord Byron). Lord Byron only published *A Fragment* after Polidori’s *The Vampyre* to once and for all make it clear that he did not write the latter. While Augustus Darvell in *A Fragment* (1819) is a middle-aged man, wealthy, and from a venerable family, he is still not the seductive English lord who became so popular in literature, but it helped lay the foundation for it. Perhaps if Lord Byron had finished this story, he would have been closer to the archetype, but nevertheless, it did the

groundwork for *The Vampyre*, which ultimately led to the renewal of interest in the vampire in literature.

John William Polidori's *The Vampyre* (1819) is important for my research, as Lord Ruthven will become the prototype of the literary vampire, later further developed by Stoker. Ruthven is described as having a "dead grey eye" and being pale; "In spite of the deadly hue of his face, which never gained a warmer tint, either from the blush of modesty or from the strong emotion of passion, though its form and outline were beautiful" (Polidori 10). Charming, he is sought out by women and men to be in his presence. An interesting fact is that Polidori took his name from Lady Caroline Lamb's *Glenarvon* (1816), in which it was used as a parody of Lord Byron (Frayling 7-8). In Polidori's novel, we see the vampire in a completely new light. "Gone were the ragged shrouds and ugly features, replaced by devilishly handsome upper-class men wearing formal suits and sharp smiles" (Fenn 75). By making Ruthven a nobleman, the vampire achieved more potential. He is more mobile; he can mingle with people without scaring them off; he is charming, and he can easily seduce his victims. These characteristics opened up new possibilities for the vampire in fiction. Some folklore elements are kept, for example, immortality, blood-sucking from the opposite sex, paleness and dead eyes, hunting at night, and the cross as a symbol to ward off evil. But a new element comes in; the character type of the young, innocent women, who are under the spell of Ruthven and are left for dead at the end of their fateful meeting. This archetype of a character comes from Gothic literature (e.g. Elizabeth in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, 1818), where the helpless, innocent, distressed young women are an important part of the narrative as they are prone to be victims of the dashing nobleman's charms. The character type which is born here is the Byronic vampire, combining the Byronic hero and the vampire as a character in literature. As Leatherdale said, "he is a stereotypical, misanthropic, moody, nocturnal libertine - a classic Byronic hero with a supernatural trappings." (46). Receiving its name after Lord Byron, who used this type of character in many of his works, the Byronic hero is a protagonist who is brooding, rebellious, and often carries his dark past with him. Some examples of the Byronic hero are Heathcliff in Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), Rochester in Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* (1847), and Edmon Dantes in Alexandre Duma's *The Count of Monte Cristo* (1844). Though it is clear that Lord Ruthven is a vampire, we never actually see him drain Aubrey's blood; the dynamic of these two characters resembles Christabel and Geraldine (Christabel, 1816), where only energy transfer happens. In this regard, could it be that the relationship between the two men was based on Byron's and Polidori's? As we know,

their relationship also soured during the Grand Tour in the summer of 1816 (Frayling 8). Lord Ruthven is a vampire, both in literary and folkloric means.

Varney the Vampire (James Malcolm Rymer and Thomas Peckett Prest, 1845) greatly increased the popularity of the vampire genre and even added new traits to it. It was published as a marathon penny-dreadful with a simple plot: Varney seduces a virtuous woman, the community realises that Varney is a vampire and prepares to run him out of the village, and finally, there is a wedding scene where they successfully chase him away (Frayling 39). This formula is repeated continuously, with Varney appearing in disguises throughout all plotlines, and that is the plot of the whole book. *Varney the Vampire* introduced some elements which became synonymous with the literary vampire's character, such as: "the maiden's sexual initiation and ambiguous responses; the vampire's roots in Central Europe; the quasi-medical-scientific methods of vampire disposal; and the Keystone-Cops-style hunt for the vampire." (Leatherdale 48). It was inventive, but unlike other vampires in the genre, Varney existed purely to entertain; he was so popular that a play was made of it when the penny dreadful was still running its course.

Moving on to Victorian literature, the last novel that made great impressions on the vampire archetype is Fanu's *Carmilla* (1872). It was originally serialized in the magazine *The Dark Blue* between 1871 and 1872. The plot of the novel is similar to *Christabel's*. *Carmilla* is a Gothic story with a misty environment, full moons, and central European locations (Frayling 48). The narrator is the young Laura, who recounts the event of that fateful day she met the mysterious Carmilla. Laura lives with his widowed father alone in Styria when a carriage accident outside of their castle left them with an injured girl. When first meeting her face to face, Laura immediately recognises her as the girl in the nursery she saw when she was six. Carmilla tells her side of the story, and they lament on this 'dream' or 'vision' both of them had. Of course, the reader already suspects that there is more to Carmilla, as at the beginning of the story, Laura reveals that on the very night she saw the other girl when they lay together in bed, "I was awakened by a sensation as if two needles ran into my breast very deep at the same moment, and I cried loudly." (Le Fanu 14). The act of biting the breast area is something the vampire inherited from folklore (Charles River Editors 9); literature later made the neck a more popular choice.

Laura notices through the time spent with Carmilla that she is acting strange; she sleeps till noon, eats nothing (Le Fanu 49), has sharp teeth (Le Fanu 55), never prays with them (Le Fanu 73), locks her bedchamber door at night (Le Fanu 41), and sleepwalks. The vampire's nocturnal trait is not uniform; some folklore has the vampire attack only at night, and according to other myths (e.g., the Romanian *Stigoi*) it can leave the grave during the daytime (Bane 18). There is also no specification in folk tales about the vampire's eating habits, only that they take blood. Perhaps authors took this lack of information as information; therefore, the vampire eats and drinks nothing, only blood. Not praying with the family is an obvious occurrence: as a vampire, Carmilla is unholy, therefore she would not want to pray. She is also irritated by the hymns sung at a funeral in the novel (Le Fanu 51). She explains the locked bedchamber door by some break in which has happened to her (Le Fanu 41), but it is to conceal her nightly sneaking out and preying on people.

Meanwhile, Laura begins to experience strange dreams of a shapeshifting creature who visits her at night, appearing as a "sooty-black animal that resembled a monstrous cat" (Le Fanu 74). She gets weaker day by day while young local girls are dying of mysterious deaths. The shapeshifting, of course, is a vampire trait, which is rooted in folklore and further developed in literature. It is used for the vampire to travel fast, or get into spaces it would not be possible in human form. The hunting of young girls is a usual trope for vampires, but it was the first time in literature that the vampire was also female. It was not subtle, in any way, that this story contains lesbian elements, with Laura and Carmilla developing a sensual relationship. But even so, Laura knows something is off; she is attracted and repelled by Carmilla at the same time and often feels she is under a spell. "Her murmured words sounded like a lullaby in my ear, and soothed my resistance into a trance." (Le Fanu 47-48). This is a trait the vampire gained in literature; Christabel and Lord Ruthven use the same charm to mislead innocent people around them. To add some comments to the topic of lesbian vampires, in the nineteenth century, same-sex relationships were far from being socially accepted. Therefore, this could terrify Victorian readers. It is not clear if Le Fanu was knowingly writing two women in this situation to represent it as evil (as it was thought at that time about same-sex relationships) or if it was unintentional. Regardless, this was just another point for the readers to chalk it up for the evilness of the vampire, as in the Victorian era, lesbianism was considered unnatural, against God's will, and therefore evil.

The last part of the narrative is the story's conclusion, where everything becomes clear. Carmilla is a vampire, who uses other names (Millarca or Mircalla) while she finds innocent young girls to prey on. This element is similar to how Varney puts on a disguise every time he is found out. At the end of *Carmilla*, the vampire is destroyed by staking and then beheading, and Laura is saved, unlike other girls in these vampire novels. When they find Carmilla, she lays in her coffin "tinted with the warm of life", "flesh elastic", and "the leaden coffin floated with blood, in which to a depth of seven inches, the body lay immersed." (Le Fanu 148). The blood in the coffin comes from the decomposing process of the corpse (Fenn 29), but here, it represents the vampire after a nightly hunt. The "piercing shriek" at the moment of the staking in folklore comes from the medical fact that the lungs release air when pierced, which may sound like a scream (Fenn 30). In literature, the vampire's agony at the moment of the staking is shown through this 'scream'. After beheading and burning the body, they throw the ashes into the river, which is an ancient practice of superstition. *Carmilla* blends the folklore and the literary traits of the vampire perfectly to achieve a chilling and deeply unsettling Gothic story. From these stories, it is clear that the vampire slowly outgrew his image of superstition and folklore to be an outlet for artistic expression. English Romantics (e.g. Percy B. Shelley, Emily Bronte) used it to entertain, but in Gothic works, the vampire became a tool of horror. In *Christabel* (1816), there is no mention of blood-sucking, but Christabel still seems weaker by the day after spending the night with Geraldine, thus "literary vampirism is frequently an expression of energy transfer, psychological as much as intravenous" (Leatherdale 44). I only mentioned vampires used as vampires for the most part, but they also were used to personify various psychological issues. Twitchell collected them in his book *The Living Dead: A Study of the Vampire in Romantic Literature* (1981) to highlight some of them: maternal attraction/repulsion, incest, struggle for power, sexual suppressions, homosexual attraction, and repressed sexuality. Therefore, in literature, the folklore monster becomes a vehicle for taboo issues of Victorian society. Authors could express various human relationships, their own relationships with family, friends and lovers, and even with art itself (Twitchell 4-5). It is evident that the vampire archetype in literature was not only used to entertain or to scare the audience but also to use as a vehicle to communicate issues which were not accepted in the delicate Victorian society.

1.3 The Difference Between the Folkloric and Literary Vampire

After inspecting the folkloric and literary vampire in greater detail, I will continue to investigate the difference.

The most notable difference is the physical appearance of the vampire; in folklore, it is a dead body, dirty, dishevelled, in torn rags, while in literature, it is a nobleman (or woman) dressed up in the nicest clothes, pale but equally beautiful, carrying themselves elegantly (Fenn 75). In folklore, it is not mentioned whether the vampire has sharp teeth, while the literary vampire always has fangs to punctuate the skin (e.g. *Carmilla* 55). The eyes in literature are always some strange colours: red (Stoker 46) or grey (Polidori 10); however, folklore does not mention eye colour. The folkloric vampire is usually a peasant (Frayling 5, 30), while its literary counterpart is from the ranks of nobility (Augustus Darwell from *A Fragment* or Lord Ruthven from *The Vampyre*). This gives them means to travel around the world, and mingle in any social gathering, charming people.

In folklore, the vampire always attacks its family and friends (Cuffe 26), while in literature, the vampire has no family; it goes after strangers, whoever he wants. The sexual element in fiction is magnified, and the attacks are sensual (Le Fanu 74), while in folklore, it is terrifying and aggressive. There is no mention of the folkloric vampire trying to seduce its victim into obedience. There is also a difference in the vampire's creation; in folklore, there are a hundred and one options for a person to become a vampire (e.g. Cuffe 54), in literature I examined here is no mention of a vampire turning a person. Neither in Lord Byron's or Polidori's work there is mention of changing. Le Fanu mentions in *Carmilla* that she was turned, but the process of it is not specified. Later in the twentieth century, the victim has to drink the vampire's blood after their blood was sucked to complete the transformation, for example, in Anne Rice's *Interview with the Vampire* (1991).

The vampire in fiction kept the inhuman strength from folklore and the skill to run like the wind (Leatherdale 27). Shapeshifting is also something popular in both folklore and literature; only the shape they can shift changes. In folklore, it is mostly cats, dogs, and even a butterfly (Frayling 410); in fiction, they can also transform into wolves and bats (which are the most popular forms for vampires) and even, in some cases, take the shape of mist (Stoker 104, 174). Controlling animals is a skill authors gave to the vampire (Stoker 252), there is no trace of it in folklore. Attacking only at night is the usual approach in both cases, except in folklore,

there is no clear rule of vampires leaving their coffins only at night, and in some folklore tales, they even during daytime (Bane 127). Fiction made the night hunts popular, and it since carried on with every novel and movie made. The vampire's issue with the mirror is something that comes from the unholy merge of folklore and Christian faith, and it was transferred to literature as a norm. Originally, vampires had no reflection because people believed the reflection was the person's soul; as vampires have no soul, they have no reflection (Leatherdale 28).

The killing of the vampire in literature borrows from folklore, therefore no notable differences there were found as the present chapter demonstrated.

In the upcoming chapter, I will conduct an analysis of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), drawing on the information presented in this chapter.

The Vampire as an Archetype in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*

2.1 Stoker's Inspiration for *Dracula*

Abraham 'Bram' Stoker was an Irish author famous for his Gothic horror novel *Dracula* (1897). He was born in 1847 in Dublin and died in 1912 in the United Kingdom; he was 64 years old. What we know about his personal life is only essential information. We know much about his works and how he planned his novels, but not about who he was. The only trusted source of his biography is his two-volume biography about the actor Henry Irving, with whom Stoker spent most of his life in friendship and work.

Stoker's father, Abraham, was a civil servant in Dublin Castle, and his mother, Charlotte, actively promoted women's rights. She knew a good deal about Gaelic mythology, as she was raised on it, and told folk tales to the kids, which Stoker later used in his works. Stoker was a sickly child and thus had plenty of time to read books from his father's well-stocked collection. We have little information about this childhood sickness; at times, Bram referred to it as 'he was close to death', but other times, it was a simple sickness. After his education concluded, he became a junior clerk in Dublin Castle, following his father into civil service. He provided private tutoring at the same time to help his parents with their debt.

2.2 Writing *Dracula*

While information on Stoker's personal life is scarce, the research behind *Dracula* (1897) is well-documented. Before his research was discovered, many thought the novel was a rushed project of his—they could not have been more wrong. This Gothic horror novel is deliberately planned; Stoker researched folklore and history to create the Count's background and character and give us a stunning description of Transylvania. In this subchapter, I will look at factors that affected the creation of this timeless classic.

In Stoker's time, many Irish authors were influenced by Gaelic superstition, Irish folk tradition and European influences. I already mentioned Stoker's mother, Charlotte, who told these folk tales to Bram, and Sir William Wilde and Lady Wilde, who both published collections of Irish folklore; this could very well have inspired Stoker's writing. Stories such as the recollection of the 1832 Sligo cholera epidemic (where premature burial and the fear and distrust of strangers were mentioned) and fairy tales Charlotte told him inspired precisely his works (Leatherdale 76). He came from a Protestant background, although Ireland was, and is, strongly Catholic (in chapter one, I already connected the vampire myth with the Catholic faith). The vampire is present in Ireland's folk tales, though it is not as dreadful as the European mythology. It is possible that Stoker used aspects of folk superstitions; his vampires can take the form of 'phosphorescent specks', like Irish omens of death, the 'water sheeries'. When Johnathan Harker sleeps in an abandoned part of Dracula's castle (which he precisely forbids him to do), he sees the brides in that form before they change back into their bodies (Dracula 53). Another example is the day Dracula is killed in the novel. The 6th of November, on the 11th of November in Ireland, is the feast of St. Martin's celebration. Families must shed blood during the festival, or they can prepare for lousy luck a year ahead. Thus, Dracula's destruction, which comes with bloodshed, fulfils the obligation to St. Martin (Leatherdale 78). Additionally, contemporary writers left their impression on Stoker's works. Wilkie Collins' *The Woman in White* (1860) was a famous novel in the nineteenth century. Its epistolary style is something Stoker used in *Dracula* (1897). Collins realised how, during a court trial, each witness gives testimony of their account, and these pieces of evidence come together towards a common goal. The switching of points of view was engaging the reader on a higher level. In Stoker's novel, the account of multiple people of a vampire cannot be dismissed as delusion;

it has to be honest (Leatherdale 79). This makes the novel's air eerie, giving another layer to the atmosphere

A real-life event which profoundly affected Stoker was the exhumation of Dante Gabriel Rossetti's late wife. A celebrated poet and artist, he was a neighbour of Stoker's in London. Rossetti's wife, Elizabeth Siddal, died in 1862 and was buried in Highgate cemetery with a volume of poems her husband wrote to her. Seven years later, Rossetti exhumed the body to get the volume back and was shocked at the sight that greeted them. The body was well preserved, and her red hair almost filled the coffin. Stoker adapted this event in his short story *The Secret of the Growing Gold* (1892) and modelled cemetery scenes after it in *Dracula*.

Early scholars and commentators took Stoker's 'bad dream', which inspired *Dracula*, at face value and relied on it when writing their books or essays. The origin of this statement comes from Harry Ludlam's suggestion in his book, *A Biography of Bram Stoker, Creator of Dracula* (1977). He wrote that in 1895, Stoker had nightmares after a big supper, and everybody used this allegation without doubting it (Ludlam, 112). As we now know, Stoker had been working on the novel for at least five years at that time, disproving this statement. Of course, this does not mean he could not have had a bad dream that could have influenced him. Proving this theory is not in the realm of possibilities; therefore, I will leave it as it is. Another example of scholars taking some information as fact without proof is Irving's reaction to the first stage production of *Dracula*, days before its publication (Leatherdale 82). Stoker wrote it hurriedly, only to protect the copyright. The rumour goes that Irving was unimpressed and even left the room. There is, however, nothing to prove this event.

While there are many speculations about the inspiration behind the novel, we can at least answer with clarity regarding the question of when it was initiated. Despite critics' presumption of *Dracula* as a promptly penned novel, thanks to Stoker's working notes found in the 1970s, we know today that the novel was set up around 1890. These notes were handwritten or typed on anything which was available to him. Dated on 14 March, the novel's plot is settled, and four sub-books are titled as follows: 'To London', 'Tragedy', 'Discovery' and 'Punishment'. Each of these contains seven, later nine chapters (Leatherdale 85-86, Frayling 298).

Stoker visited almost all the places in the U.K. that his characters visited. He went to Whitby, where Lucy was stalked by the Count. All the tombstone epitaphs are authentic, and he took names from tombstones to give them to the locals in the novel. He thoroughly researched Whitby; spoke to locals, read logbooks, and even looked at meteorological records. The shipwreck of the *Demeter*, Dracula's ship, is based on the real-life event of a Russian ship's tragedy called *Dimetry*. He kept a field research report from his visit to the Regent's Park Zoo in London, where he observed the behaviour of different animals. Stoker's brother was a surgeon who helped him with symptoms and treatment of some type of head injuries. From this information from his working notes, it is clear that Stoker put much work into carefully planning *Dracula* (Leatherdale 86-87, Frayling 298).

Regards the location of the novel, Stoker had some changes through the planning stage. First, he borrowed Le Fanu's location of Carmilla – Styria (which is now part of Eastern Austria). Perhaps due to the fact that people would have assumed he took more than the location from Le Fanu, Stoker changed the location to Transylvania (which is now part of northern Romania, but it was in Hungary when the novel is set). He read much about Romanian superstitions and history; according to his notes, he was familiar with Emily Gerard's article 'Transylvanian Superstitions', which included vampires and devilry. It's her who Stoker borrowed the word 'nosferatu', which does not mean anything in Romanian despite Stoker's belief (Fenn 54).

Many critics and scholars mention Professor Arminius Vambéry, an Orientalist from the University of Budapest. He is mentioned by Van Helsing in the novel when he is concluding his research on the Count; "my friend Arminius, of Buda-Pesth University" (Stoker 256). This, however, does not confirm that in real life Vambéry has given Stoker any information about vampires. Stoker's habit of taking real-life colleagues', friends', or family members' names confused many people who had tried to analyse the novel before. His notes do not mention Vambéry, therefore it could have been the case of borrowing a name without any further meaning (Leatherdale 88).

Stoker, while doing thorough research on topography, locations and superstitions, poorly represented the history of Count Dracula. It seems like he pieced information of his liking together and did not care for the authenticity. He did not strive to paint an accurate picture of Eastern Europe in medieval times; he was a novelist, not a historian.

2.3 The Timeless Vampire Archetype: *Dracula*

Dracula is a meticulously developed antagonist, firmly establishing himself as the archetype for vampires in both literature and media, a legacy that continues to this day. In this section, I will analyse his character, physical appearance, and motivations, comprehensively understanding his significance in the genre. As Twitchell said, Stoker “takes the vampire out of literature and returns him to folklore” (132).

Meeting the Count at first, he is described as “a tall old man, clean shaven save from a long white moustache, and clad in black from head to foot” (Stoker 22). He is not described as good-looking, like Polidori’s Lord Ruthven or Le Fanu’s *Carmilla*. He is not a handsome middle-aged man, and yet Harker describes him as having “a charming smile” and receiving a “courteous welcome” from him when he arrives at the castle (Stoker 23-24). Dracula’s hand is cold, “more like the hand of a dead than a living man” (Stoker 22), indicating that he is undead. Dead bodies have no blood circulation, which would tint the skin and warm the body; this is further proved as Harker notices that he is unusually pale (Stoker 25). He also has “peculiarly sharp white teeth” (Stoker 24), which in literature has only appeared in *Carmilla* (Le Fanu 55) before. In folklore, the mention of sharp teeth or fangs is scarce. One of the most interesting traits Stoker gave Dracula is the ability to renew his appearance when consuming blood continuously through a time period. When Harker sees him lying in his coffin he seems as “if his youth has been half renewed, for the white hair and moustache were changed to dark-iron grey” (Stoker 59). Feeding on human blood changes his physical appearance to a younger version of himself; this is why he is an old man at the beginning – he is starving in Romania.

Stoker conducted extensive research on Romanian superstitions for his novel but sometimes failed to confirm the authenticity of his sources. Although the historical aspects may not be entirely accurate, the portrayal of folklore is well-informed and carefully considered. The opening two chapters of the novel feature a rich collection of folktales. It appears that Stoker employed Dracula as a conduit through which he conveyed the extensive knowledge he acquired about Romania throughout his research. Choosing this location for Dracula was based on the superstition and the firm belief of Transylvanian people that vampires were in the country. As discussed in the first chapter, in the seventeenth century Eastern Europe had a

‘vampire craze’, when people connected every unexplainable death or occurrence to vampire attacks on the community.

Stoker carefully planned all the incidents happening to Harker on his way to the castle to build up suspense. In the Golden Krone Hotel, where he stays, the landlord and his wife refuse to speak when asked about the Count and even cross themselves (Stoker 10); furthermore, the woman begs him not to travel on the eve of St. George when “the clock strikes midnight, all evil things in the world will have full sway” (Stoker 11). St. George was the patron saint of England; his protection against evil was the lowest on his ‘Eve’ (Leatherdale 25). I could not find anything connecting this to Romanian superstition, therefore it is strange of Stoker to use it here. Nevertheless, the intention of it was clear; to warn Harker of his journey on that night. When leaving the hotel, the landlady gives him her crucifix, which, as an “English Churchman”, he does not appreciate but accepts it (Stoker 11). Even the locals he rides in the coach are acting strange towards him, and the coachman tries to persuade him to go with them. While parting, Harker receives blessings, and people cross themselves again. (Stoker 15-16). From these elaborate reactions of the locals, it is evident that they know about the Count being a vampire. They completely avoid both the castle and Dracula himself. I believe this is why he chooses to leave Transylvania for London. In the novel, the people of Romania are superstitious and well-prepared to defend themselves against vampires, making it nearly impossible for Dracula to feed on them. This isolation ultimately weakens him.

In the following section, I will conduct a comparative analysis of his strengths and weaknesses, drawing upon insights from folkloric and literary predecessors. We learn about vampire traits throughout the novel, but Van Helsing also recounts them multiple times for the other characters (and perhaps the reader, too). Stoker gave his vampires remarkable abilities, and with that, he had to give them some peculiar weaknesses too. The first few traits are shown when Harker stays with him. In the old castle, alone as a prisoner, trying to find a way out, Jonathan is a character from a Gothic novel. This is only magnified by the strange incidents around the Count. Harker notes that the castle seemingly has no servants or mirrors (Stoker 26). The Count has no employees, he does everything himself; and he needs no mirrors, as he does not cast reflection (Stoker 32). Dracula has no soul; therefore, he cannot have a reflection; this belief is rooted in superstition (Leatherdale 28). Other literary vampires before Dracula make no note of this. While after Dracula, every vampire was nocturnal,

sleeping all day in a coffin and going for a hunt at night, this was not the precedent before. Every literary vampire I mentioned before could go out in daylight – Byron’s Augustus Darwell, Polidori’s Lord Ruthven, and Le Fanu’s Carmilla. Darwell asks the narrator to bury him at the ruins “this evening” (Byron 6), which means they travelled there during daytime. Polidori’s Lord Ruthven accompanied the young Aubrey on his grand tour. While the novel scarcely mentions the time of day, we can assume that they were travelling during the day. Carmilla usually slept until late noon, but nevertheless, she could be out in the sunlight without any issues, as after waking up she accompanied Laura in walks outside (Le Fanu 49). Dracula could also be out during the day; the group led by Van Helsing chases him through London at one o’clock in the afternoon (Stoker 323), but he is not able to transform into any form, only after sundown; as Van Helsing says: “The sun that rose on our sorrow this morning guards us in its course. Until it sets tonight, that monster must retain whatever form he has now.” (Stoker 311). He is clearly able to walk among humans, as Mina and Jonathan see him one afternoon (Stoker 184).

Dracula can crawl down on walls similarly to a lizard, as Harker notes: “I saw the whole man slowly emerge from the window and begin to crawl down the castle wall over that dreadful abyss, face down, with his cloak spreading out around him like great wings” (Stoker 41). The cloak makes it appear that the Count is a big bat – which we later learn he can transform to. Harker keeps watching him leave the castle in this “lizard fashion” (Stoker 42), which makes no sense. He could leave the castle through the front door; it is a mystery as to why he chooses to do it in an inconvenient way.

The transformation ability of Stoker’s vampires is something that was never fully explored in other works in literature or any other media again. He takes on the shape of a bat (Stoker 104), a bird (or perhaps it was a bat, but Mina failed to identify it in the dark (Stoker 105)), mist (Stoker 274-275), and his movement is described as “panther-like” (Stoker 325). The other vampire before Stoker’s novel who could shapeshift was Carmilla. She snuck into Laura’s room in the disguise of a “sooty black animal that resembled a monstrous cat” (Le Fanu 74). As discussed in the previous chapter, the folkloric vampire could turn into a cat, dog, or even a butterfly (Frayling 410). From my viewpoint, these animals are linked to vampirism through Rabies. The symptoms are similar to those of the folkloric vampire: hypersensitivity to the sun or pungent foods like garlic, it could also cause irregular sleep patterns; thus, the animal can be seen as nocturnal (Cuffe 57). All these animals could carry

Rabies; therefore, in folk belief, they are linked to vampirism. Stoker, in giving his vampires the trait of shifting into many forms, equipped them to be more mobile and devastating than any undead before them in literature. As a bat, Dracula stalks Lucy relentlessly (Stoker 104). Lucy also returns her tomb in a small opening “where scarce a knife-blade could have gone” (Stoker 227). Furthermore, the three women Harker meets at Dracula’s castle appear as “phantom shapes” dancing in the moonlight, similar to the Irish folk creatures, the ‘water sheeries’ (Leatherdale 78). These three are seen as “phantom shapes” more than once throughout the novel. Perhaps Stoker came up with the restriction of the transformation after sundown because otherwise, these vampires would have been unstoppable.

Before Dracula, there was no vampire in folklore or literature who could control animals. He controls the wolves at the novel's beginning, when he is disguised as the coachman (Stoker 18), and again when Lucy is alone with her mother; they are startled by a wolf crashing his head through the window (Stoker 149-151). According to the logic of vampire transformations, it could have been Dracula himself that night, if not for the newspaper clippings about an escaped wolf from the Zoological Gardens (“The Pall Mall Gazette, 18 September, ‘The Escaped Wolf’, Stoker 146). Based on this, I conclude that Dracula controlled the escaped wolf to scare Lucy and her mother. We learn from Renfield that the Count was the one who sent him the flies and showed him that he could control rats too (Stoker 297). This is a versatile ability, which Stoker never used to its full potential, unfortunately.

Dracula’s inhuman strength is mentioned and shown multiple times, the first being when he shakes Harker’s hand: “holding out his hand grasped mine with a strength which made me wince” (Stoker 22), and Van Helsing says that Dracula is “strong in person as twenty men” (Stoker 252), which is something that is borrowed from the folkloric vampire (Leatherdale 27). The manipulation of the storm, fog and thunder is unique to Dracula; it may be something which he learned in life in Scholomance, from Romanian folklore, the school of wizards where “the devil claims the tenth scholar as his due” (Stoker 256). Dracula does not take human food or drink (Stoker 252), which is not widely mentioned in folklore; thus, it could be something Stoker decided based on the lack of information he had from the myths. Carmilla similarly never took food, just some hot chocolate (Le Fanu 49).

The fact that vampires have to be invited in a building by the inhabitants before they can enter was made popular in *Dracula* and used later in many books and movies. This is mentioned in some folklore (e.g. the Greek Barabarlakos, Bane 31), but generally is not universal. Poor Renfield is fooled by the Count with empty promises; thus, he invites him in: “Come in Lord and Master!” (Stoker 298). He was a rather peculiar character, eating flies and spiders and having attacks of rage, shouting, “The blood is the life” (Stoker 152). Seward calls him a “zoophagous (life-eating) maniac” due to his habit of eating every kind of creature to absorb their life force (Stoker 80). In this manner, he is similar to Dracula; they both require the life force of another creature to grant them immortality; of course, in this case, only one of them was really immortal. Renfield was a puppet of Dracula who helped him corrupt Mina.

From the novel, it seems like vampires have the ability to hypnotise characters to some degree. The three vampire women appeared as those sphere shapes to Harker, “danced in the moonlight,” and so he recognized what was happening: “I was becoming hypnotised!” (Stoker 53). Later in the novel, he sleeps through Dracula’s attack on Mina “in a stupor such as we know the vampire can produce” (Stoker 301). Another example is Lucy trying to bite Arthur by calling him to her, and as “he seemed under a spell” (Stoker 226), he would have gone if not for the interruption of Van Helsing. While the novel notes that Lucy was sleepwalking every time she was in contact with Dracula, in my opinion, she was easier to hypnotise due to this, but regardless, she was being manipulated. This vampire ability is used in *Christabel* and *Carmilla*, and there are folklore beliefs about the vampire’s ability to hypnotise people.

Blue flames are recurring objects in *Dracula*; we see it first while he takes Harker to his castle with the coach: “I saw a faint flickering blue flame” (Stoker 19), and later when he attacks Mina in the asylum, he burns their manuscript with it: “blue flames were flickering amongst the white ashes.” (Stoker 304). These blue flames are borrowed from Romanian superstition; if you see one in a forest, that marks the place of treasure and gold (Leatherdale 106). I found no further connection with the blue flames in folklore, and it was not used in literature before Stoker. In my opinion, he developed the folk tales further to give Dracula it as power.

An interesting discrepancy I noticed between Dracula and the other vampires in the novel is that Dracula can move in daylight, as discussed before, but the three women and Lucy cannot. Harker only sees them when the moonlight shines in, therefore, at night, and Lucy only goes to abduct children at sundown, too. Even Van Helsing mentions, “for at sundown the un-dead

can move” (Stoker 223). My theory is that as Dracula was created in a very different way from the other vampires, he is not only more powerful but not as restricted as the others. Van Helsing mentions Scholomance (“a mythical academy situated high in the Carpathian Mountains” (Leatherdale 106)). twice in the novel; first, he says that from the ten scholars going there, the tenth is always taken by the devil “as his due” (Stoker 256), and the second time when he says, “he dared even to attend the Scholomance” (Stoker 322). Based on the information provided, it can be inferred that Dracula was the tenth student, and it is suggested that his powers may have originated from his encounter with the devil. Van Helsing also says that “in him the brain powers survived the physical death” (Stoker 322). Stoker never explains how Dracula died, only making vague references to it. The Count, being the tenth scholar in Scholomance, would at least clarify his power over the elements.

The strengths of Stoker’s vampires were highlighted in the previous section, now I will focus on the weaknesses. The most obvious one is garlic, which Van Helsing uses generously in Lucy’s case, calling them “white flowers” (Stoker 140). The power of garlic is an ancient knowledge, and it is used in folklore to keep them at bay. It did not only ward them off, but if put in the mouth of the resting vampire, it could not leave his coffin (Cuffe 66). The other object, which is also something from folklore, is a wild rose (Leatherdale 30). Harker is given a wild rose by the locals (Stoker 35), and it appears again later in the novel when they plan to put a branch on Dracula’s coffin so he cannot rise (Stoker 348). Both originate from superstition and made no appearance in literature before *Dracula*. The crucifix and other holy objects are universal in the fight against vampires. These are supposed to keep them at arm’s length, and also, as we see with Mina, they can burn the vampire’s skin (Stoker 316). This also serves the purpose later when Dracula is killed; as the burn marks disappear, Mina is healed from this curse. I found no mention of this before, neither in folklore or literature; however, later, it became a staple weakness of the vampire archetype in movies.

In folklore, the vampire’s resting place is their coffin, which is where they were buried when they died. In literature, Dracula is the first vampire to rest in his coffin in daylight. Interestingly, Stoker added a twist to it: “Their hideous bodies could only rest in sacred earth” (Stoker 317). Thus, the coffin has to have sacred earth in it for him to be able to rest there. The Count is transferring boxes of sacred earth to London; therefore, he has plenty of places to rest when the sun comes up. As we learn much later in the novel, he purchases more than one property and plans to distribute the earthen boxes between them. The human characters of

the novel are ‘sterilising’ these boxes by putting sacred wafers in them, “banishing him from it” (Stoker 394). It is a quite interesting idea to use holy wafer to ‘sterilise’ holy earth. Van Helsing explains it as “we must sterilise this earth, so sacred of holy memories, that he has brought from a far distant land for such fell use. He has chosen this earth because it has been holy. Thus, we defeat him with his own weapon, for we make it more holy still.” (Stoker 317). According to this, the logic behind the sterilisation is making it more holy, therefore, Dracula cannot rest in it anymore. This is an interesting idea, but makes as much sense as Dracula crawling down the castle wall instead of leaving through the door. This, and the sacred wafer ring Van Helsing makes around Mina in Transylvania (Stoker 389) are Stoker’s original idea of vampire lore.

Stoker’s idea of vampire creation is not completely new but further developed. Vampires could, of course, create other vampires in folklore, spreading like a disease. In literature, there was only one reference to it in *Carmilla* (Le Fanu, 1872). Carmilla tells a story about a time she was sick, saying: “I was all but assassinated in my bed, wounded here, she touched her breast, and never was the same since.” (Le Fanu 72). It is evident that the incident that she recounts is the night she was turned. There is a similar scene in *Dracula*, when the Count attacks Mina in the asylum: “With his left hand he held both Mrs Harker’s hands, keeping them away with her arms at full tension; his right hand gripped her by the back of the neck, forcing her face down on his bosom” (Stoker 300). I will discuss the sexual allure of the vampires in the novel in more detail later on. In Stoker’s novel, vampires prey on people more and more; thus, they slowly lose all their blood and die to then become vampires. If the vampire is killed before the person dies of blood loss (or any other reason), then the transformation is stopped completely. This was not the case in folklore or in literature. For example, in *The Vampyre* (Polidori, 1819), Lord Ruthven kills his victims the same night he attacks them, but the young girls never become vampires. In *Carmilla* (Le Fanu, 1872), the local girls die after Carmilla sucked their blood, but there is no transformation there. Lastly, Van Helsing mentions that if they kill Lucy, her soul will be free from the devil (Stoker 229). In superstition, the devil uses the body of the dead, trapping their souls and preventing them from going to Heaven (Leatherdale 23). In other cases, becoming a vampire is a punishment with the same results of not moving on from this life to the other. It seems Stoker used this logic while creating his vampires. Staking the vampire and cutting his head off, filling it with garlic is a superstition of folklore (Cuffe 66), and most of the ways of dealing with a vampire was taken from there.

Stoker gives Dracula a rich history and a wealthy background, which he recounts to Harker when he goes into a long monologue about his bloodline, their accomplishments and the end of warlike days (Stoker 35-36). As a literary vampire, he takes pride in his distinguished noble lineage. He possesses charm and intelligence and is proficient in multiple languages, yet does not adhere to the conventional standards of high living. He does not have servants, lives in a crumbling castle and uses his room's window as a way out of the castle.

Dracula is the first vampire in literature to have motives. All his predecessors were preying on people while living for centuries, having no goals. The Count, however, has a well-thought-plan to move to England and spread vampirism while feeding on people: he learned the English language, studied England and the English culture, and even went as far as to learn about solicitors and how they deal in their crafts (so he can later have more to purchase more houses). As discussed before, he is starving in Romania; he starts to wither away and greets Harker as an old man. As the novel takes place in a time when science was just getting notions and faith was still something very important to people, it is the perfect setting for a Gothic horror with vampires. Characters have a hard time believing in their existence in the novel due to the century's scientific advancement; they believe that everything can be explained by it. As Van Helsing says: "it is the fault of our science that it wants to explain all" (Stoker 204). This is the exact reason that makes them vulnerable to Dracula and his creations; they dismiss the existence of such beasts, making them a perfect society to prey on. In Transylvania, where people are superstitious and believe in vampires and werewolves, Dracula has a hard time feeding on them. He looked old and weak, as probably he had not fed on anyone for some time; but in London, he regained his strength and youth after possibly consuming blood. When Jonahtan and Mina see him in London, he is stalking a young woman – probably his next victim (Stoker 183).

Frayling describes the characters' attempt to stop Dracula as "to prevent the Count from colonising England" (82). I find this an interesting standpoint and agree with it. Dracula learns whatever he can about England to blend in without the people noticing what is happening. He says to Harker when they are in Transylvania, "Here I am noble; I am boyar; the common people know me, and I am master" (Stoker 27); behind this sentence could be other meaning than his title and bloodline. In my opinion, he knows that he has outgrown Transylvania as a vampire, and he cannot achieve any more than he already has. He has a

reputation, as discussed before, therefore, the locals avoid him. They will not even talk about him. He follows up with “a stranger in a strange land, he is no one” and “I am content if I am like the rest, so that no man stops if he see me” (Stoker 27). From my point of view, he meant that if he is accustomed to the culture and language well enough, then he will have no problem charming people and spreading the disease of vampirism. According to this, Dracula may very well be called a coloniser; and the good Christian people who want to stop him represent perhaps the English people. As Thomas McLean writes in his essay *Dracula's Blood of Many Brave Races* (2013), xenophobia and fear of foreigners were on the rise in the time Dracula was set in Victorian Britain. The Count could represent the immigration of Russian and Eastern European Jews who arrived on Russian vessels, like Dracula. He does not attack England, like Transylvania, but rather uses ‘guerilla fashion’ to compromise society (McLean 341). There is no definitive evidence that Stoker purposely wrote Dracula this way; it may have been an unconscious choice. Nevertheless, it is an interesting angle to look at the novel.

The other metaphor that is worth discussing is the fear of disease in Victorian society. Every character refers to Lucy's condition as an illness, which is quite telling if we think about it. Vampirism is a kind of disease; it starts with one person, who will spread it to others, creating a never-ending circle. Even when Mina is in the process of changing, she is treated as if she is sick (“He have infect you” (Stoker 340) and the “Devil's illness” (Stoker 378)). If I go back to what I wrote about vampirism in folklore, for example, there is a belief that cholera disease is a sign of a vampire attacking the village (Cuffe 55). From this viewpoint, Dracula brings a disease to England to spread. In Martin Willis' essay “*The Invisible Giant, Dracula, and Disease* (2007), this theory is further explored. The germ theory emerged in the 1890s and could be applied to Dracula. He infects people, who are getting weaker and paler day by day until they die. The group of men, with the lead of Van Helsing, also go out to sterilize Dracula's coffins, which could be seen as a metaphor for destroying germs. The excessive use of garlic, which has antiseptic qualities, is also a part of the disease metaphor (312-313).

Dracula is a novel that has been over-analysed by scholars and critics since its publication. As Allen said, “it has been deconstructed by critics of the Freudian, feminist, queer theory, and Marxist persuasions” (282). Everybody sees something different in it, but I highly doubt Stoker was writing his novel with any of those groups in mind. In my opinion, a lot of these theories are farfetched. Late-Victorian fears were different from ours, and lacked the

knowledge that the people after them used to examine *Dracula*. The xenophobia and fear of disease are very real anxieties from that era, but some critics use analogies which are too modern for Stoker's time. One example is Richard Watson's theory in his article *The Politics of Dracula* (1966), in which he writes that Stoker "unconsciously realised the threat of the Axis powers". According to him, Dracula is a fascist, and he has to battle the 'Alliance of Free Men' – Van Helsing, a Catholic man; Lord Godalming, British nobility; Quency Morris, an American; Mina Harker, the motherly sister/friend; Jonathan Harker, an Englishmen representing Law; and John Seward, a scientist (Twitchell 139). Personally, I do not believe Stoker had this idea in his mind while writing *Dracula*. From the scarce information on his life, there is no clear evidence that he was politically active in a way that this theory could come from him.

The other theory I do not agree with is from Freud's *Totem and Taboo* (1913), the Oedipus complex. To keep it short and simple, I will use Twitchell's explanation: "The dominant male of the family, the father figure, subjugated the weaker males by hoarding the women" (134). I do not see Dracula as a father figure in any way in the novel; if I had to name one, that would be Van Helsing. In vampire folklore, the undead usually go after the opposite sex; of course, there are exceptions, like *Christabel* and *Carmilla*. From my viewpoint, the Count was attacking females because of their strategic places. As the vampire's victim is usually their closest friend or family in superstition (Twitchell 8), it is evident that Dracula was trying to spread his vampirism (or disease) through women – Lucy tried to 'kiss' Arthur in her undead state (Stoker 226), which would cause him to become undead as well. Turning Mina might as well serve the same reason, or it was the Count's revenge for Harker's escape. Nevertheless, I disagree with the idea that the Oedipus complex has a place in *Dracula*.

On the contrary, the sexual undertone of the novel is evident. It may have been that in the Victorian era, as it was nearly impossible to display any slight sexual content, it was taboo (Leatherdale 135). Therefore, Stoker expresses this through his vampires. The undead is not human. Thus, he could freely write about them sensually. When Harker meets the three mysterious women, they are written as having "voluptuous lips", and Jonathan feels "uneasy" with "longing at the same time". The women are full of red lips, "pearls white teeth", coming closer to "kiss" him (Stoker 45). This could be interpreted as a Victorian gentleman's secret fantasy – three women arguing about who gets him first. Harker even compares the incident to dreaming: "I thought at the time that I must be dreaming." (Stoker 44). This scene is also

interesting because Dracula interrupts the women with a strange reasoning: “How dare you touch him, any of you? How dare you cast eyes on him when I had forbidden it? Back, I tell you all! This man belongs to me!” (Stoker 46). There is a working note from Stoker with this exact scene from March 1890: “Young man goes out – sees girls one tries – to kiss him not on the lips but throat. Old Count interferes – rage and fury diabolical. This man belongs to me I want him.” (Frayling 301). This scene is similar to one of the scenes in Le Fanu’s *Carmilla*: “You are mine, you *shall* be mine, you and I are one forever” (Le Fanu 48). Perhaps Stoker was inspired by Le Fanu but was not brave enough to act on it further. As already discussed in the previous chapter, same-sex attraction was not accepted in the Victorian era. In the end, there is no resolution for Dracula’s outburst, as he never tries to turn Harker or kill him. He already did the Count’s bidding at that point, rendering him almost useless to him further.

Lucy’s change from human to vampire is another example of this Victorian idea of purity. In life, she is always described as sweet and lovely. In her undead state, however, she is the opposite. Her eyes are “unclean and full of hell-fire, instead of the pure, gentle orbs we knew” (Stoker 225), and she is “a devilish mockery of Lucy’s sweet purity” (Stoker 228). Before becoming a vampire, she was the perfect picture of a pure Victorian lady; as a vampire, she is described as ‘voluptuous’, the same as Jonathan Harker described the three women who wanted to feed on him in Dracula’s castle. This suggests repression of sexuality; while being human, the women are pure, and while they are undead, they are wanton and try to tempt man into sin. The blood transfusion could be further seen as a sexual act; Arthur even says that he feels as if he and Lucy were really married (Stoker 185). Van Helsing asks the other men not to tell Arthur about the other blood fusions so as not to accuse Lucy of promiscuity. In my opinion, this blood transfer was what pushed Lucy to complete the transformation. At night, Dracula took her blood, and the next day, Van Helsing and Seward gave her blood. Perhaps through these transfusions, they were feeding the already-changing Lucy. Perhaps they helped to complete the change. I think Lucy, at that point, was not entirely herself; after receiving Arthur’s blood, she writes in her diary, “Somehow Arthur feels very, very close to me.” (Stoker 136). This is not a normal reaction to receiving blood to save one’s life. From my standpoint, Lucy was already going through a transformation. She felt close to Arthur because she consumed his blood, which gave her life.

The final examples I would like to discuss are the staking of Lucy and the attacking of Mina. Allen compares it to “a terrible parody of the sex act, ending in the “little death” of orgasm.”

(494); it is suggestively written in the novel as: “And then the writhing and quivering of the body became less, and the teeth ceased to champ, and the face to quiver. Finally it lay still. The terrible task was over.” (Stoker 231). Perhaps this is why Arthur is the one who has to do it and not any of the other men. It is uncertain whether this portrayal was intentional. However, the vampires are depicted in a very sensual manner, and their actions can easily be interpreted as mimicking sexual acts. The Count and Mina are written in a similarly revealing, sensual position: “his right hand gripped her by the back of the neck, forcing her face down on his bosom.” (Stoker 300). As Allen notes, “No sexually experienced adult could fail to note that Dracula and Mina are mimicking the act of fellatio” (494). Indeed, how Mina describes it (“when the blood began to spurt out” Stoker 307) and her reaction (“oh my god! my god! what have I done? Stoker 307) confirm this furthermore, similarly how she refuses to kiss her husband with the exclamation “Unclean! Unclean!” (Stoker 303), meaning herself after drinking Dracula’s blood. The only time we see characters being sexualised is when they become vampires or are being seduced by vampires (Allen 507). Perhaps it was Stoker’s repressed sexuality which ended up manifesting in the novel, but this is just a presumption as it cannot be proved. It also could have been that Stoker saw no gender related to his vampires, but again, this is not a statement I could prove, therefore, it remains a theory.

The Count's physical appearance is a blend of both folkloric and literary vampire traits. He is cold to the touch and pale, a characteristic of the folkloric vampire. However, he presents himself as a well-spoken, wealthy gentleman with a noble lineage, which gives him an air of mobility, similar to the literary vampire. He is knowledgeable, having learned English from books (Stoker 27), and according to Harker, he speaks it fluently. Dracula also studied English culture and geography, preparing himself to conquer England. In folklore, the vampire is essentially a dead body, with the only goal in mind to hurt or kill others. It is neither intelligent nor reasonable. Dracula's sharp teeth and the fact that he does not consume human food are not mentioned in folklore; it is more likely from Le Fanu's *Carmilla*.

In terms of his attributes, he inherits his folkloric counterpart's strengths and weaknesses. He is weak to holy objects, garlic, and wild roses. He also cannot cast a reflection; before entering any household, he has to be invited in by the resident(s), and he can be killed by staking. Despite these weaknesses, the folkloric vampire possesses excellent physical strength and can transform into an animal, which Dracula can do. At the same time, Stoker adds his own traits, ultimately creating the vampire archetype that will endure and be adapted for

decades. The Count can crawl on walls, control animals (wolves, rats, flies), and control specific weather (fog, mist, thunder), which can transform into mist. To balance it out, Dracula cannot change his form in daylight and can only rest in the holy earth he brought from Transylvania. If he does not consume blood for an extended period, he visibly ages, but taking blood for a few days renews his appearance. He can create vampires by slowly draining a person's blood.

Most importantly, he is the first vampire in folklore and literature to have goals other than feeding on people. And his extensive research and accumulation of knowledge before moving to England makes this evident. Dracula is considered a classic novel for good reason. Stoker skilfully combines superstition, the fears of Victorian society, and suspense to create an engaging narrative. The vampire serves to frighten readers amid Gothic landscapes, enhanced by the novel's epistolary style.

Conclusion

The vampire archetype has undergone many changes, from folklore to fiction to Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. It is one of the oldest creatures in folklore, and its significance cannot be denied in popular culture. Each civilisation has its own creature equipped with vampiric features; however, the most detailed sightings and reports that survived are from Europe.

The vampire evolved from a demonic spirit to a walking corpse in folklore. It was rooted heavily in superstition and as discussed in the first chapter, later changed through the influence of the Christian faith. Due to a lack of knowledge, people in the Middle Ages explained the unexplainable with folktales – one of them being the vampire. Unusual deaths and their lack of proper burial customs lead people to believe that their village is under a vampire attack. The Church moreover encouraged the belief in the undead, as they used the vampire as a punishment; if they sin, instead of going to Hell, they will become a vampire, their souls trapped in their deceased bodies.

In literature, the vampire took on a more appealing form. Instead of a peasant from the village, the vampire became a nobleman or woman. Before Stoker's *Dracula*, most literary works used the vampire as an artistic vehicle instead of the folkloric undead. They used the vampiric characters to show relationships between lovers, families or friends. It was supposed to entertain and not scare the audience, the opposite of the folkloric vampire. The literary vampire changed with Polidori's *The Vampyre* (1819), which gave Lord Ruthven a charming personality and wealth to travel the world, as seen in my analysis. This mobility significantly increased the vampire's potential in following works, such as Le Fanu's *Carmilla* (1871), where Carmilla can move in higher social circles and find her new prey.

Stoker borrowed generously from folklore to create his vampires. According to the comparison made in the second chapter, most of their traits are from superstition, which makes sense as Stoker's mother, Charlotte, used to tell him folktales when he was a child. The vampires in *Dracula* can be killed by staking and beheading, are weak to holy objects, and can transform into animals; all these characteristics are rooted in folklore, already discussed in the first chapter. However, *Dracula* is also from a noble lineage, has wealth, and has a charming personality, everything a literary vampire possesses. Stoker furthermore created some unique characteristics, such as controlling animals and weather (fog, thunder, mist) or

hypnotising people. He made his vampires powerful but ensured they had weaknesses to balance it out. Dracula cannot change form during daylight and must rest in a coffin filled with holy earth. He is the first literary vampire to show his intelligence. He learns a foreign language, learns about culture and plans his move to England meticulously. He purchases more properties than one and plans to distribute coffins filled with holy earth for him. Thus, he can move freely around the city; he will have a place to rest. He also fools Renfield with false promises, showing how cunning he is.

Dracula is the perfect mixture of the folkloric and literary vampire as my second chapter points it out. He is a gothic villain who must be destroyed at the novel's end. His popularity in media is undeniable; the novel has many adaptations, and all vampire characters coming after him took some inspiration from Stoker's undead.

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