Bram Stoker's Dracula: Victorian anxieties and fears

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Bram Stoker's *Dracula*: Fears and Anxieties in the Victorian Society

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Abstract

Bram Stoker's *Dracula* is a Gothic novel written in the time of Victorian England. England was an imperial force then and almost one-quarter of the earth's land was part of the British Empire. The Victorian era is a transitional period saturated with old doctrines and a new lifestyle filled with technology. These created the predispositions for fears and anxieties among the Victorians. This paper discusses fears, anxieties, and attitudes of the Victorians towards the changes in their time as they were portrayed in Bram Stoker's gothic novel. Specifically, this refers to the contrast between science and superstition, the fear of the Foreign, sexuality and homosexuality, and the rise of the New Woman. The contrast between science and superstition was represented by the clash between Eastern European folklore and the industrialization of Britain. Furthermore, England's numerous colonies contributed to the contact with other nations which brought the fear of a possible reverse colonisation. Sexuality and homosexuality were taboo topics that Stoker approached through the metaphors related to blood. There is a particular focus on female sexuality as women's interests became the focus of interest in the male-dominated society which led to a change of traditional values and gender roles and the appearance of the so-called New Woman – an opponent to the patriarchal society.

Key words: Victorian Period, Bram Stoker, *Dracula*, superstition, New Woman

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Introduction

Bram Stoker's Gothic novel *Dracula* portrays the fears and anxieties of the Victorian society marked by the tension between the old and the new. England was at the time an imperial force and at the peak of its industrial development. Through their numerous colonies they came in touch with various nations which brought into question both the superiority of the white race and England's position in the world. This paper will analyse the dominant Victorian fears and anxieties as they appear in the novel which, despite being a piece of fiction, can be read from today's perspective as a document about certain parts of Victorian culture. The first chapter offers a brief look into the Victorian era and the most important events that shaped the nineteenth-century society. The second chapter will examine the contrast between modern science and folklore, and show how the legends of Eastern Europe fused with the objective science. The third chapter will discuss Victorian concerns with the Other/the foreign and their fear of a possible reverse colonialization. The fourth chapter deals with the taboo topic of that period, sexuality and homosexuality. Stoker uses blood as a device to demonstrate the ideas of sexual perversity which, despite being taboo, was still a popular topic. The fifth chapter will discuss the birth of the New Woman and the change of the social position and the role of women in the society.

1. A Brief introduction to the Victorian Era

The Victorian era began when Queen Victoria inherited the throne in 1837 and lasted till Victoria's death in 1901. Over those years, England underwent "technological, commercial, and social developments that fundamentally changed the English life, replacing the world into which Victoria was born with one that looks much more familiar to the twenty-first-century eye" (Nelson 1). According to Houghton, "never before had men thought of their own time as an era of change from the past to the future" (1). Since the time the Middle Ages gave way to the Modern Period, England was in a period of transition. This peaked in the late eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries as England reached a new milestone thanks to its industrial development. The old doctrines and institutions were attacked and modified and a new order was proposed. The Victorians had to live between two words, the old world that was losing clout and the new world that was gaining momentum. Houghton describes it as the age of science, new knowledge, searching criticism, followed by multiple doubts and shaken beliefs (11). The society was becoming aware of the fact that their beliefs were no longer quite secure due to the colossal increase of knowledge; they questioned "to great points in moral and intellectual matters; where things which have been settled for centuries seem to be again brought into discussion" (Houghton 9). As a consequence, the emerging capitalism led to "a growing sense of isolation and alienation" (Punter and Byron 20) and disturbed the notions of human identity. These notions became of particular interest to the Gothic writer. The Gothic novel originated as the result of changes in culture in the eighteenth century: "Gothic represented excess and exaggeration, the product of the wild and the uncivilized, a world that constantly tended to overflow cultural boundaries" (Punter and Byron 7). Stoker used the "fin de siècle Gothic literature, Imperial Gothic" (Senf 63) to present the cultural changes in the Victorian society. The novel *Dracula*, published in 1897, depicts the fears and anxieties of the society of that period. Bram Stoker found "the prototype of our modern vampire (q.v.) and created one of the most potent of all literary myths" (Punter and Byron 230). The fears and anxieties of that period were the fear of reverse colonisation and of the foreign, the contrast between science and folklore, breaking the taboo of sexuality and homosexuality, and the change of the traditional role of women. Stoker lets his characters use modern technological advances of that period such as phonograms and Kodak Cameras; he also emphasises the modernity of its settings by setting the plot in Transylvania and England. A special focus is set on London as the centre of the British society and imperialistic power. Conversely, Count Dracula symbolizes the threats for the British society

because “this ‘foreigner’ blends just a little too easily into the modern Victorian world, strolling down Piccadilly in full daylight and watching the pretty girls pass by” (Punter and Byron 232).

2. The Contrast of Science and Folklore

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

Victorian Britain moved from an agrarian into an industrial society and the industrialization brought new devices and technology that improved the Victorian lifestyle. Stoker’s *Dracula* is an example of the clash between the modernity and tradition. Stoker puts an emphasis on the newest technology of Britain and combines them with traditional and folkloric traits. He describes through Doctor Seward and Doctor Van Helsing two main attitudes towards science. Doctor Seward stands for modern science and reasoning and Doctor Van Helsing represents the superstitious beliefs.

Doctor John Seward is a British man who represents an objective and scientific approach. Seward runs an asylum and is aware of the newest scientific matters, keeps a diary on a phonograph, but most importantly, he is devoted to science: “Why not advance science in its most difficult and vital aspect, the knowledge of the brain? Had I even the secret of one such mind, did I hold the key to the fancy of even one lunatic, I might advance my own branch of science” (Stoker 83). He is Stoker’s most rational character who refuses to accept the presence of the mysterious. Seward cannot diagnose Lucy’s condition because her case is medically unfamiliar since her symptoms are of a supernatural origin – a consequence of the vampire bite, so he cannot use modern science to explain her situation. He lacks the knowledge about vampires and thinks of them as mere superstition. This is especially visible after Van Helsing spreads garlic all over Lucy’s room. Seward observes: “We went into the room, taking the flowers with us. The Professor’s actions were certainly odd and not to be found in any pharmacopeia that I ever heard of” (Stoker 152), and comments: “Well, Professor, I know you always have a reason for what you do, but this certainly puzzles me.

It is well we have no sceptic here, or he would say that you were working some spell to keep out an evil spirit" (Stoker 152).

Although Abraham Van Helsing is a man of many degrees, as it can be observed from his titles "ABRAHAM VAN HELSING, MD, DPh, D. Lit, ETC, ETC" (Stoker 130) and is using the newest technology, he is also knows a lot about vampires and methods how to destroy them. His knowledge of both medicine and folklore enable him to solve Lucy's condition as he explained to Harker: "You are a clever man, friend John. You reason well, and your wit is bold, but you are too prejudiced" (Stoker 202). He puts garlic flowers in Lucy's room and tells Arthur that the only way to kill a vampire is to drive a stake through its heart. Van Helsing explains to the group that there are forces that cannot be explained with science:

> You do not let your eyes see nor your ears hear, and that which is outside your daily life is not of account to you. Do you not think that there are things which you cannot understand, and yet which are, that some people see things that others cannot? (Stoker 220)

To a great extent, Van Helsing represents a sort of middle ground between Dracula and the English. He is a man of science, and thus a man of the West, and yet, like Dracula, he is, not a native speaker of English, since he is Dutch. Moreover, he proves that there is some truth in the superstitious beliefs, as his non-scientific methods turn out to be effective against the vampire. Thus, Stoker successfully connects the new and the old, science and superstition, resolving the tension that existed between the two. Senf explains that the enthusiasm for science and technology is a typical feature of England in that period (18). The modern ways of communication and transportation are often described in *Dracula;* telegraphs, typewriters, telephones, phonographs and Kodak cameras are all drawn upon in the struggle against the vampire.

3. The Fear of the Foreign

> "Transylvania is not England. Our ways are not your ways, and there shall be to you many strange things." (Stoker 23)

During Queen Victoria's reign Great Britain became a powerful nation and a global empire. It was the centre of banking and the source of the investment capital. As a result of

its colonial expansion, Britain came in touch with a variety of cultures, and for the most part the expansion was seen by the British as having a civilizing mission. The civilizing mission was based upon their own national, racial, and moral ideals and beliefs according to which non-Europeans were perceived as inferior in every sense.

Stoker describes the Szgany as uncivilized and primitive: "There are thousands of them in Hungary and Transylvania, who are almost outside all Law…They are fearless and without religion, save superstition, and they talk only their own varieties of the Romany tongue" (Stoker 47). Britain's touch with various cultures resulted in a fear of a reverse colonisation and a collapse of the British Empire which is one of the main themes in *Dracula*. Count Dracula serves "as a reminder to Britain of the undesirable "diversity" of Eastern nations" (Gelder 11). Stoker presents Britain's view on the foreign and unknown through Jonathan Harker's perspective. At the beginning, he notes in his journal: "It seems to me that the further east you go to the more unpunctual are the trains. What ought they to be in China?" (Stoker 2). The first thing Harker notices are the primitive conditions of the countries he is travelling through on his way to Dracula. The various races he notices in Transylvania on his journey to Dracula fascinate him:

> In the population of Transylvania there are four distinct nationalities: Saxons in the South, and mixed with them the Wallachs, who are the descendants of the Dacians; Magyars in the West, and Szekelys in the East and North. I am going among the latter, who claim to be descended from Attila and the Huns. (Stoker 2)

The downside of a country with multiple nations is predominantly the possibility of conflicts among them; the diversity thus leads to instability and can be seen as a potential threat to other nationalities. Britain feared that the diversity of nations would weaken their imperialistic power. According to Arata, the fear of dissolving into vampires is the fear of "dissolving into Roumanians" (qtd. in Gelder 12). Stoker's arrival of the vampire(s) symbolises colonisation, or more likely, reverse colonisation: "Stoker tackles the issue of colonization and the metaphoric revolt of the 'inferior' East visible through Count Dracula's desire to become a part of the English society" (Lukić and Matek, "Bella and the Beast" 85). Harker discovers Dracula's enthusiasm about England, apart from significant business interests: "The books were of the most varied kind, history, geography, politics, political economy, botany, geology, law, all relating to England and English life and customs and manners"(Stoker 22). He speaks German and "excellent English, but with a strange intonation" (Stoker 17). Stoker conveys that foreigners seem as enthusiastic about

conquering England as England is about other countries implying the possibility of a reversed colonialization, an idea unacceptable to the Victorian English and made even more threatening by the fact that the Eastern Europeans seem to be very proud of their heterogeneous heritage and history full of warfare; as Dracula explains, he is a proud Szekely in whose "veins flows the blood of many brave races" (Stoker 33). Stoker expressed Britain's worst nightmare through Jonathan Harker by saying:

> Then I stopped and looked at the Count. There was a mocking smile on the bloated face which seemed to drive me mad. This was the being I was helping to transfer to London, where, perhaps, for centuries to come he might, amongst its teeming millions, satiate his lust for blood, and create a new and ever-widening circle of semi-demons to batten on the helpless. (Stoker 59)

It is no wonder that the key person in fighting against Dracula, Van Helsing, is Dutch since they have experience in fighting against the Foreign. Stoker alludes here to the history that the Netherlands[1] shares with England and suggests that the Dutch have a wider knowledge about invasion and they know how to fight against the "Foreign Threat", just like Van Helsing has the much needed knowledge about vampires and how to destroy them.

4. The Meaning of Blood

> "She wants blood, and blood she must have or die."(Stoker 141)

Blood is a precious liquid that is both a substance and a cultural concept. It is a symbol for passion but also destruction, for cultural identity and family, or as Foucault says, "one is 'of the same blood'" (qtd. in Hughes 139). Stoker contributes to his by saying: "Blood is a too precious thing in these days of dishonourable peace; and he glories of the great races are as a tale that is told"(34). Consequently blood is one of the most powerful motifs in *Dracula* and Stoker uses it specifically to address the taboo topic of sexuality and homosexuality. The use of the exchange of blood as a symbol for sexual intercourse comes from a theory that was popular in the nineteenth century, "the Spermatic Economy" (Hughes

[1] In 1688 England was invaded by the Dutch – a most notable event in this transfer must be the revolution of 1688, when the Dutch stadtholder also became the King of England, William III (Prebensen 52).

140) where semen was regarded as a product of blood. Hughes points out that "Individual and racial health are dependent on pure and plentiful blood: depletion or contamination brings both personal illness and racial decline" (140). The topics of sexuality, rape and homosexuality are addressed through Lucy, Mina and Jonathan.

Lucy Westenra's sexual appetite is expressed through her medical condition. She is constantly loosing blood because Dracula feeds on her in her sleep. Stoker implies that while she was sleepwalking, she actually escapes to "enjoy the night's forbidden pleasures" (71). Victorians believed they should not fuse their blood with those of another race, but Lucy did so with Dracula. The blood transfusions seem to stand for sexual intercourse: "to transfer from full veins of one to the empty veins which pine for him" (Stoker 141). Moreover, it is always men who give blood, since, according to Nelson, a man's sexual drive was caused by nature and woman's sexual drive should be focused on pregnancy without pleasure (9). Hughes explains how "Lucy seemingly demands sperm, but wants blood" (141). She receives four blood transfusions: from Arthur Holmwood, John Seward, Abraham Van Helsing and Quincey Morris. Although men are the ones who are supposed to take pleasure from sex, that is from giving blood, Stoker allows Lucy to enjoy her sexual drive the same as her male donors: "As the transfusion went on, something like life seemed to come back to poor Lucy's cheeks, and through Arthur's growing pallor the joy of his face seemed absolutely to shine" (Stoker 143). After having received blood from Arthur, Lucy feels especially connected to him: "Somehow Arthur feels very, very close to me. I seem to feel his presence warm about me" (Stoker 147). Arthur's blood transfusion is particularly interesting since he is the only one who sees it as something special, as an act of matrimony: "Said he not that the transfusion of his blood to her veins had made her truly his bride?'" (Stoker 204). Lucy feels "his presence warm about" her but she also received blood from other men, suggesting that she had sex with all of them, and that makes her a polyandrist since the act of consummation was the ultimate act of validating a marriage before God: "Then this so sweet maid is a polyandrist, and me, with my poor wife dead to me, but alive by Church's law, though no wits, all gone, even I, who am faithful husband to this now-no-wife, am bigamist'"(Stoker 204). Stoker uses the blood transfusion to address the fact that women started to focus on pleasure and not only on pregnancy, but also to show that women can be promiscuous, just like men.

Stoker includes four rape scenes in the novel. The first scene is Arthur driving a stake through Lucy's heart. Gelder argues that the first scene is conventionally read as "a means of bringing Lucy to orgasm through 'phallic symbolism'" (70), but it seems as this is in fact

a demonstration of the power of men and the patriarchal society over women since they could treat them as they wished. Arthur had to "punish" Lucy, the "New Woman", for enjoying sex. Arthur's reaction to the proposal of driving a stake through her body shows his repulsion to what Lucy has become after having discovered her sexual appetite: "I was, in fact, beginning to shudder at the presence of this being, this UnDead, as Van Helsing called it, and to loathe it. Is it possible that love is all subjective, or all objective?" (Stoker 233). She becomes an Un-Dead since she is no longer a Victorian pure woman, but a threat to men. The second rape scene showing male dominance over women occurs when Van Helsing destroys the three vampire women: "could not have gone further with my butchery. I could not have endured the horrid screeching as the stake drove home, the plunging of writhing form, and lips of bloody foam" (Stoker 432). The third scene is when Dracula abuses Mina: "With his left hand he held both Mrs. Harker's hands, keeping them away with her arms at full tension. His right hand gripped her by the back of the neck, forcing her face down on his bosom. Her white nightdress was smeared with blood" (Stoker 327). Since Dracula represents the Foreign and Unknown, this rape scene represents an attack on Victorian values. This scene also depicts he Victorian fear of impure bloodlines as Mina shouts: "Unclean" (Stoker 331), illustrating the Victorian belief that they should not fuse their blood with that of other races because it would lead to impure blood and diseases. According to Senf:

> Stoker shared his characters' hostility towards assertive women because he created male characters who become anxious when women step outside traditional gender roles and revere women who adhere to them. Even Mina, in many ways the smartest of Dracula's opponents as well as someone who resembles the liberated New Woman, is appalled at her response to Dracula towards assertive women because he created male characters who become anxious when women step outside traditional gender roles and revere women who adhere to them. (65)

The fourth rape scene occurs between Jonathan and the three women: "There was something about them that made me uneasy, some longing and at the same time some deadly fear. I felt in my heart a wicked, burning desire that they would kiss me with those red lips" (Stoker 30). This scene symbolizes an attempt of a reverse rape. Harker "sees them as more animal than human" (Senf 67) and filled with fear and desire. He enjoys and fears the sexual aggression of the three vampire women which shows how uncomfortable he is with the

possibility of women being more assertive concerning their own sexual needs, as opposed to the expected notion of a woman simply satisfying her husband's sexual needs.

In addition to this, Stoker also hints at the third taboo topic: homosexuality. The possibility of homoeroticism is implied when Dracula prevents the three vampire women from attacking Jonathan by suggesting that Jonathan belongs to him: "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! Beware how you meddle with him, or you'll have to deal with me'" (Stoker 44). This becomes even clearer when Dracula utters in a soft voice: "Yes, I too can love. You yourselves can tell it from the past" (Stoker 44). According to Schaffer, through Dracula's homoerotic tendencies "Stoker's fear and anxiety as a closeted homosexual man during Oscar Wilde's trial[2]" (qtd. in Boudreau 55) come to expression. In any case, blood transfusion and sucking blood turned out to be convenient metaphors for sexual intercourse, a subject that was both taboo and an inevitable part of every Victorian's intimate life.

5. The Change of Traditional Values and the New Woman

"I believe we should have shocked the
'New Woman' with our appetites." (Stoker 103)

Bram Stoker's *Dracula* reflects the Victorian values and the Victorians' attitude towards the changing society. They were a conservative society with a strong emphasis put on traditional values. According to Punter and Byron, "the traditional values and family structures upon which the middle class had based its moral superiority were disintegrating" (39) and were challenged by the rise of the idea of the "New Woman", the subject of homosexuality, lust and promiscuous behaviour. Stoker portrays the concept of the "New Woman" through the changes that happened to Mina Murray and Lucy Westenra, because of Dracula's influence. Dracula and his Otherness were the trigger that allowed the women to show their true nature: "My revenge is just begun! I spread it over centuries, and time is on my side. Your girls that you all love are mine already. And through them you and others

[2] "The trial of Oscar Wilde ushered in the idea of the 'homosexual' as a label or identity, rather than simply an illegal act. The trial further placed the issue of same-sex love into the spotlight, and soon thereafter homosexuality entered into the 'collective consciousness' of Western thought" (qtd. in Boudreau 55).

shall yet be mine, my creatures, to do my bidding and to be my jackals when I want to feed" (Stoker 357).

Victorian women were expected to be "angels in the house"[3]: submissive wives who should love, honour, and amuse their husbands, manage the household and raise children. Gender roles were strictly determined and "aiming to control by defining and delimiting the nature and roles of the sexes in a manner that particularly constrained women" (Punter and Byron 231). Throughout the century, women struggled for the improvement of their rights, and by the late Victorian period the concept of the "New Woman"[4] was created. This idea represented a threat to the conservative society of that time:

> New Women were often described in terms of their likeness to men. Predominantly middle class, they aspired to higher education, to the vote, and to careers; they might ride bicycles, smoke cigarettes, or embrace dress reform, and they uniformly displayed an uncomfortable readiness to shock the sensibilities of traditionalists. (Nelson 67)

They were arguing for equal rights in terms of education, opportunities for professional careers, and the right to vote. Those rights would enable them to have a control over their personal and professional life; they would become independent. Such independent women were seen as a threat to the patriarchal society. Mina Murray and Lucy Westenra represent "New Women" but Stoker portrayed them in two different ways: Mina as pure and rational, and Lucy as rebellious and voluptuous.

Mina Murray receives the title "New Woman" due her rational mind and important contribution to the battle against Dracula. Stoker manages to depict her as a combination of tradition and modernity. By being a traditional Victorian woman, she "isn't really distancing herself from the New Woman trope but from the pejorative and stereotypical New Woman who threatened the male patriarchy"(Boyd 8). As Boyd suggested, she is a moderate New Woman (8), a practical woman who is interested in the field of technology and novelties. She has a strong will and is determined; therefore Dracula does not manage to seduce her so easily. Mina manages to fulfil both the Victorian and the modern standard. Victorian values are expressed through her emotions. She is the perfect wife – a loyal and pure woman who cares about her husband Jonathan: "You too, my dearest,' she said, with infinite yearning of pity in her voice and eyes. 'You must not shrink. You are nearest and dearest and all the

[3] The term comes form the title of a nineteenth-century narrative poem by Coventry Patmore which came to be seen as the description of the ideal Victorian middle-class woman (wife).
[4] Grand is credited for coining the phrase "New Woman" in 1894 (Senf 66).

world to me. Our souls are knit into one, for all life and all time" (Stoker 385). Even while Jonathan is trapped in Dracula's castle and is not able to write back, she remains faithful to him: "No news from Jonathan. I am getting quite uneasy about him, though why I should I do not know, but I do wish that he would write, if it were only a single line" (Stoker 84). Mina is a rational and intelligent, and not led by sexual lust as Lucy. Her aim is not only to be a good wife, but rather to be partners with her husband. She is learns how to write in shorthand, uses a typewriter and knows how to operate a phonogram, so she could understand and help Jonathan. Her will and interest in learning about the newest inventions and her career as an "assistant schoolmistress" (Stoker 62) make her a strong independent woman thinker who is avid to increase her knowledge in order to keep up with Jonathan. After Dracula almost kills her husband and destroys the life of her dear friend Lucy, she is willing to understand her opponent systematically: "In this matter dates are everything, and I think that if we get all our material ready, and have every item put in chronological order, we shall have done much" (Stoker 260), in contrast to her husband, who escapes back to England after his encounter with Dracula. Mina becomes the main organizer of the materials they need in the battle against Dracula: "Mina's career as a schoolmistress is significant as well, as her profession places her in the social role of leader and teacher" (Boyd 14) and in the end she becomes the leader of the group. Van Helsing describes her as a woman with a man's brain: "Ah, that wonderful Madam Mina! She has man's brain, a brain that a man should have were he much gifted, and a woman's heart" (Stoker 273). Thus, Mina does not only blend the traditional Victorian woman with the "New Woman" but also the male with the female world. She is "a symbol of development and empowerment" (Boyd 23) not only of women but also of the whole society. Although she is seduced by Dracula, she maintains persistent in destroying him until the very end.

Lucy also symbolises the new woman who is questioning traditional values and is driven by lust and sexual appetite, but she is the opposite type of Mina: "Through the sexually liberal character of Lucy Westenra, Stoker depicts the fear of his contemporaries concerning the increasingly dangerous familiarity of women with their sexuality" (Lukić and Matek, "Bella and the Beast" 86) since such women threatened the patriarchal society and the idea of "the angel in the house". In the beginning, Lucy is more of a traditional woman than Mina. She never realises what is happening around her, shows no interest in new technology and has no thoughts about her future life besides to get married. She seems as if she is always in her own world. Although she is "Lacking maturity and self-awareness, Lucy nonetheless shares the New Woman's desire for sexual equality" (Senf 68). This is clear

from her confession to Mina in her letters about the three proposals she has received: "Why can't they let a girl marry three men, or as many as want her, and save all this trouble?" (Stoker 69). Dracula visits her multiple times during the night to drink her blood. Dr Van Helsing tries to save her life with a blood transfusion and, as Lukić and Matek explain, the blood transfusion was the last chance to save her life, and an expression of the wish to regain control over the slow, but continuous collapse of the Victorian society[5] ("Vampir u popularnoj kulturi"137). Lucy's transformation into a vampire symbolises the transition of Victorian women into rebellious and self-confident "New Women". In other words: "The once shy and "pure" young woman, naive in her beliefs and attitudes was now replaced by a creature whose presence now emanated a raw, almost animal sexuality" (Lukić and Matek, "Bella and the Beast" 86). Victorian men feel intimidated by her new image, so they decide they need to kill her since she is endangering the patriarchal society. Similarly, Dracula's three brides have almost the same impact on Harker as Lucy on the vampire hunters; they frighten and excite Harker at same time. Senf sees them as "archaic forces returning to disrupt modern life" (68). Lucy, Mina and the three vampire women have one trait in common, and that is their rebelliousness:

> Dracula's brides resent his authority and talk back whenever they can while Lucy, dreaming of marrying three men, slips out to enjoy the night's forbidden pleasures. The biggest difference between Mina and the others is that she is aware of her rebellion against male authority, and subsequent events prove her right. (Senf 71)

They represent the liberation of women's interests and will in a male dominant society which is why they must be punished. While Mina accepts her position of a devoted wife, and thus survives, Lucy is punished by death for her promiscuous behaviour, and the three vampire women are literally depicted as monsters because of their unorthodox lifestyle.

[5] Original text: "To je istodobno posljednji pokušaj spašavanja njezina života, želje za ponovnim stjecanjem kontrole te dokaz sporog, ali konstantnog rastakanja racionalnih i logičnih granica viktorijanskog društva suočenog s vampirskom prijetnjom" (Lukić and Matek, "Vampir u popularnoj kulturi" 137).

Conclusion

Bram Stoker's novel *Dracula* offers an inside look into the Victorian society and their beliefs, fears and anxieties. Victorian England was an imperial and industrial power which is how they came in touch with many nations and cultures signalled in this novel by the depictions of Eastern Europe. The rapid social, political, and economic changes as well as contact with the Other (the foreign nations and cultures) caused fears and anxieties in the Victorian society. The four main issues depicted in the novel include the tension between science and superstition, the fear of the Foreign, sexuality, particularly female sexuality and homosexuality, and the rise of the New Woman who is perceived to be a threat to the patriarchal society. Consequently, although it is also an exciting story about the supernatural, Stoker's novel *Dracula* offers a valuable glimpse into the mind of Victorian women and men.

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