Chapter 3

Sexual Subversion in Nineteenth Century Vampire Narratives of Great Britain

3.0. Introduction

The Victorian age witnessed a resurgence of the Gothic towards the end of the nineteenth century. The Gothic form appeared as a response to the Victorian policy of disciplining and regulating sexuality and to establish heteronormativity as the only sanctioned system. The Gothic emerged as a subversive genre to interrogate and often displace the sexual norms constructed and promoted by heteronormativity. The revival of the vampire narrative, the most popular and influential sub-genre of the Gothic is the culmination of the process of subversion. In this chapter, I shall discuss the Gothic and vampire narratives, especially Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) to show the strategies of subversion manifested in their form and content.

3.1. Gothic Literature in the Eighteenth Century: Political and Economic Context

In his *From Dickens to Dracula: Gothic, Economics and Victorian Fiction* (CUP: 2005), Gail Turley Houston identified "panic" (1) as an integral part of the Victorian economy. The shifting terrain of economy from management of domestic expenses by household women, to the individual entrepreneurship and its expansion into the part of global capital, enhanced the aspirations of the middle classes for social elevation through financial gain. The aspirations were accompanied by a panic and anxiety concerning the feasibility of them. Moreover, the shift in economic orientation of Victorian society marks a cultural dichotomy between the remnants of the diminishing domestic economy and the growing professional economy of emerging capitalism. According to Houston, "Gothic tropes register, manage, and assess the intense panic produced and elided by the unstable Victorian economy" (1). As in economy, the anxiety concerning transition pervades in the realm of culture as well. The anxiety emanates from the nostalgia for the decadent feudal past and the unprecedented growth of monopoly capitalism that thrives on individualism, rationality, material growth and proliferation of capital.

Moreover, the transformation of capitalism into imperialism has expanded British colonialism into the British Empire, which implies increasing correspondence and cross-cultural encounter

with colonies. Such an encounter raises anxiety and concern for the retention of the sanctity of European blood as British personnel posted in colonies are seen as vulnerable to degeneration into colonised subject for their vulnerability to debauchery and irresistible charm of the exotic orient. Late Victorian Gothic and vampiric tales seem to embody the fear of contamination through negotiation with colonies and ironically, they lead to the Victorian fascination with subversive desire embedded underneath the façade of all-pervasive heteronormativity.

Historically, the term 'Gothic' has originated from the Goths, one of the tribes instrumental in the collapse of the Roman Empire in the 4th century AD. Since then, the British historians are keen on identifying every Germanic settlement with Gothic influence as opposed to the Classical tradition. The Gothic tradition emerged in the eighteenth century as a counter discourse of the Enlightenment. The eighteenth-century Enlightenment, in its prioritisation of empiricism consists of reason, argument, rationality and scientific experiments, is shaped by the values of the Greco-Roman classical tradition like the Renaissance in England in the sixteenth century. This revival of reason is a consequence of the industrial revolution of England, which propels the change from feudalism to capitalism.

Gothic tradition emerged perhaps from the anxiety of this transition in values, cultural nuances and the shifting paradigms of morality due to the overemphasis on reason. The term 'Gothic' becomes associated with the medieval age, an age of barbarism, as considered by eighteenth century critics. Hence, as a reminiscent of the medieval age, Gothic appears to be a viable threat to the supposed unity of the soul constructed by the air of rationality in the eighteenth century. However, the Gothic, as Fred Botting shows in his book *Gothic*, in its preoccupation with obscure figures of the age of feudal barbarism, gives Enlightenment a positive shape by virtue of its own air of negativity (3). In fact, the Gothic offers an antithesis to the Enlightenment as a reminder of its own existence. As Fred Botting notes:

> The movement remains sensitive to other times and places and thus retains traces of instability where further disorientations, ambivalence and dislocations can arise. Returns of the past, in an opposite direction, involve the very characteristics- superstition, tyranny, violence – supposedly banished by the light of reason. (3)

I think, the Gothic has brought the censored and prohibited ideas of the present age in the form of a long-forgotten past. The return of the pre- Enlightenment past created an uneasiness in the rational mind of middle classes shaped by the empirical ideas of the Enlightenment. The

structure of family shaped by a set of normative codes of sexuality and social behaviour seemed to have been threatened by the charm of the proscribed desires that occasionally haunted the self.

3.2. Gothic Novels: Literary Context

In their representation of the uncanny, Gothic novels not only interrogate the all-pervasive empirical hypotheses of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, but also unsettle the structures that hold those hypotheses. In fact, the eighteenth-century Gothic endeavours to evoke a sense of the sublime, which had been undermined by the Enlightenment. The Gothic aspires to explore the aesthetic domains and philosophical questions left unexplained by the Enlightenment and its preference of dark medieval castles, secret chambers, and horrible dungeons as the setting of the novels appear to be re-evocative of an eerie sensation, disappeared from the literary scene long ago. As Fred Botting reflects:

> The marvellous incidents and chivalric customs of romances, the description of wild and elemental natural settings, the gloom of graveyard and ruin, the scale and permanence of the architecture, the terror and wonder of the sublime, all become important features of the eighteenth-century Gothic novel (23)

The evocation of the sublime by elements of the Gothic, by virtue of its insistence on imagination in an endeavour to liberate and transcend fiction from the essentialist assumptions of the Enlightenment reality. The Gothic creation of the past as mysterious, shadowy and characteristic of a haze of uncertainty also interrogate the Enlightenment project of the systematising the past to render a continuity in the process of historical development. By virtue of its de-familiarisation of the past, the eighteenth-century Gothic resists the Enlightenment endeavour to construct history as a linear, systematic narrative of progress. The eighteenth-century Gothic conceives history as memory. In his “Preface to the First Edition” (Fairclough 39-42) of *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) Horace Walpole anachronistically identifies a medieval manuscript printed in Naples in 1529, found in the library of a Catholic family in the north of England as the source of his novel.

The novel therefore, appears to be a memoir of the medieval age, obscured by the Enlightenment history and reiterated by Walpole as the "darkest ages" (Fairclough 39)[59] of Christianity. Walpole assumes the approximated dates of occurrence of the events narrated in the story and their subsequent composition in between 1095 to 1243, the period between the First and the Last Crusade (Fairclough 39). The historical allusions referred to by Walpole endow the novel with an aura of historicity. However, *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) presents a history, which is non-archival and appears to be a memory narrative. In his essay "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History", Michel Foucault interrogates the construction of traditional (read Enlightenment) history as essentially linear. He presents an alternative history, which comprises memory as a component to project history as non-linear, consisting of gaps and indeterminacies.

According to Foucault in "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History":

> Effective history […] shortens its vision to those things nearest to it - the body, the nervous system, nutrition, digestion, and energies; it unearths the periods of decadence, and if it chances upon lofty epochs, it is with the suspicion – not vindictive but joyous – of finding a barbarous and shameful confusion. It has no fear of looking down, so long as it is understood that it looks from above and descends to seize the various perspectives, to disclose dispersions and differences, to leave things undisturbed in their own dimension and intensity. (Rabinow 89)[60]

In the above process, I think, Foucault conceives a reversal of the approach of the traditional historiography. The eighteenth-century Gothic, in its evocation of history as memory narrative, has subverted the linear form of history conceived by the Enlightenment historians. The endeavour of Walpole in the "Preface" (Fairclough 39-42) of *The Castle of Otranto* to conceive it as a memory narrative belonging to a half-forgotten age in history corresponds to the definition of genealogy by Foucault in "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History":

> Genealogy is gray, meticulous, and patiently documentary. It operates on a field of entangled and confused parchments, on documents that have been scratched over and recopied many times. (Rabinow 76)[61]

---

[59] Three Gothic Novels. Edited by Peter Fairclough. Penguin Books, 1986.
[60] "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History". *The Foucault Reader*, edited by Paul Rainbow. Pantheon Books, 1984, pp. 76-100.
[61] "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History". *The Foucault Reader*, edited by Paul Rainbow. Pantheon Books, 1984, pp. 76-100.

In his "Preface to the Second Edition" written in 1765 (Fairclough 43-48) of *The Castle of Otranto,* Walpole expresses his desire to employ fancy for inventions and explorations in order to create interesting situations (Fairclough 43). The "interesting situations" (Fairclough 43) referred by Walpole implies novelty to excite the imagination of the reader. For evocation of imagination and the sublime, terror of the uncanny appears to be the most potent device in Gothic novels. This is inspired by the idea of terror as evocative of the sublime illustrated in the *Philosophical Enquire* (1757) by Edmund Burke: "Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible […] is a source of the sublime"[62] (Quoted in Fairclough 10). The aspirations of the Gothic novels to go beyond the limits of reality defined by the Enlightenment is not only constrained within their desire to redefine history, but extended to the domains of the pleasure normative as well.

In his book *Gothic* (2014), Fred Botting aptly comments:

> Gothic texts operate ambivalently: the dynamic inter-relation of limit and transgression, prohibition and desire suggests that norms, limits, boundaries and foundations are neither natural nor absolutely fixed as stable despite the fears they engender. (9)

The monsters, vampires, animated corpses and Lamiae[63] present a complex case of transgression. Transgression, I think, suggests a journey beyond the limits of the norms. By virtue of this movement, transgression not only implies liberation from stipulated norms, but also, I think, interrogates the validity and relevance of the norms.

The monsters and other uncanny creatures in Gothic novels, in their strange incongruity, reveal traits that oppose as well as help to outline the limits set by norms. These creatures are constructed and subsequently pushed to the margin by the leading institutions as part of their

---

[62] Part I Section VII *of A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin Of Our Ideas of the Sublime and* Beautiful, Second Edition 1759. Quoted in Mario Praz. "Introductory Essay." *Three Gothic Novels*. Edited by Peter Fairclough. Penguin Books, 1986, pp. 7-36.

[63]"Lamia, in Classical mythology, a female daemon who devoured children. The ancient commentaries on Aristophanes' Peace say she was a queen of Libya who was beloved by Zeus. When Hera robbed her of her children from this union, Lamia killed every child she could get into her power. Athenian mothers used her as a threat to frighten naughty children. Flavius Philostratus's Life of Apollonius of Tyana described her as a fiend who, in the form of a beautiful woman, seduced young men in order to devour them. John Keats's Lamia (1819) was inspired by reading Philostratus's story in Robert Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy (1621)." Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Lamia". Encyclopedia Britannica, 9 May. 2022, www.britannica.com/topic/Lamia-Greek-mythology. Accessed 8 December 2022. Accessed 8 December 2022.

strategy of marginalization[64]. They evoke a sense of anxiety followed by fear, disgust and repulsion. The fear, however, originates from the anxiety of losing importance by the looming threat posed by the monstrous, of blurring the borders between 'normal' and 'non-normal'. Moreover, monstrosity not only interrogates the legitimacy of the sanctioned norms, but also the structures and the institutions, which construct and define them. According to Fred Botting:

> Alterity involves structural relationships: the maintenance of orders based on patterns of exclusion requires hierarchies of difference to maintain divisions. Others are often acceptable, though derogated and degraded, if they remain in a designated and subordinate position: monstrosity marks a refusal to stay in an allotted place, a destabilisation of power relations. (10)

Therefore, I think, manifestation of monstrosity in the Gothic novels produced in late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, surpassed the boundaries of empiricism by embracing imagination on the one hand, while on the other, it upset heteronormativity projected by the eighteenth century Enlightenment by virtue of its representation of the non-conformist, non-normative forms of sexuality. In his painting "The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters", the Spanish artist Goya[65] portrayed the possibility of the appearance of the monstrous as a result of the repression imposed by Reason (Stevens 10). His own manuscript notes on trial evidence endorses this view: "Fantasy abandoned by reason produces impossible monsters; united with it, she is the mother of the arts and origin of its marvels." (Quoted in Stevens 12)[66]. Similar representation of the emergence of monstrosity in dreams appear in "The Nightmare" (1782) by the Swiss-English painter Henry Fuseli[67] as well. The painting demonstrates a demonic figure placed on the genitalia of a female body. Although it suggests that the woman is sleeping

---

[64] Marginalization, in this context, implies the strategy of segregation of the non-conformist elements and the groups constituting of it by the dominant normative group. For a detailed discussion, see. Joan G. Mowat. "Towards a new conceptualisation of marginalisation". European Educational Research Journal, Vol. 14(5), 2015, pp. 454–476. sagepub.co.uk/journalsPermissions.nav DOI: 10.1177/1474904115589864 eerj.sagepub.com. Accessed 9 December 2022.

[65] "Francisco José de Goya y Lucientes, (born March 30, 1746, Fuendetodos, Spain—died April 16, 1828, Bordeaux, France), Spanish artist whose paintings, drawings, and engravings reflected contemporary historical upheavals and influenced important 19th- and 20th-century painters. The series of etchings The Disasters of War (1810–14) records the horrors of the Napoleonic invasion. His masterpieces in painting include The Naked Maja, The Clothed Maja (c. 1800–05), and The 3rd of May 1808 in Madrid, or "The Executions" (1814)." Harris-Frankfort, Enriqueta. "Francisco Goya". Encyclopedia Britannica, 18 Nov. 2022, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Francisco-Goya. Accessed 9 December 2022.

[66] David Stevens. The Gothic Tradition. CUP, 2015.

[67] "Henry Fuseli, original name Johann Heinrich Füssli, (born February 7, 1741, Zürich, Switzerland—died April 16, 1825, Putney Hill, London, England), Swiss-born artist whose paintings are among the most dramatic, original, and sensual works of his time." Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Henry Fuseli". Encyclopedia Britannica, 12 Apr. 2022, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Henry-Fuseli. Accessed 9 December 2022.

and has a subsequent nightmare, the erotic implications are unmistakable. The sitting posture of the monstrous imp and the black horse (perhaps suggestive of virile sex and bestiality) neighing from behind, may be suggestive of sexual fantasy[68] restricted by the Enlightenment.

3.3. Freudian Assumptions of the Gothic

In his essay "The "Uncanny"" (1919) published in 1919, Sigmund Freud conceives uncanny as objects and ideas, which lead us back to something with which we had been familiar in the past (1-2) and kept secret and hidden from us (4). Freud attributes the fear of the uncanny to the fear of "the doppelganger" (the double),[69] which "leads us back to a stage of narcissism when the ego could not differentiate between the self and the external world, a self and other selves" ("The "Uncanny"" 10). The uncanny effect, according to Freud, can also be generated from the desire to rule the pleasure principle by the instincts, which endow the mind with demonic characteristics ("The "Uncanny"" 11). This is in consonance with the Freudian idea of the belief that the "animistic world" is still ruling the real world ("The "Uncanny"" 13).

The belief in the principles of magic, supernatural emanates from the animist[70] tradition only. The Freudian hypothesis of uncanny rests on the principle of anxiety due to repression of desire, which manifests itself in the recurrence of repression imparting the feeling of uncanny.

---

[68] "The Nightmare was one of the first paintings to depict an idea rather than an event, a story or a person. Indeed, it may even be a complicated visual pun on the word "nightmare". Thus, the canvas shows a sleeping woman - draped helplessly over the end of her bed - as well as the content of her "nightmare" - namely, an ape-like incubus squatting on top of her. In addition, the image of a horse protruding from the shadows may illustrate a second meaning of the picture's title - "night-mare". Thirdly, the demon may be intended to represent a "mara" - that is, a spirit sent to torment and/or suffocate innocent sleepers. The point is, the word "nightmare" derives from "mara" the Old English word for "incubus". [Source: Concise Oxford English Dictionary.]". www.visual-arts-cork.com/famous-paintings/nightmare-fuseli.htm. Accessed 9 December 2022.

[69] "The German word translates to "double-goer," a name given to the specter of a human being seen while the one it resembles still lives. While the term "doppelgänger" was coined in the late 18th century, myths of spirit doubles have persisted for thousands of years. In ancient Egypt, the ka was one aspect of the soul, depicted as a spirit identical to the body. Throughout Europe and parts of Africa, changelings were thought to be supernatural children left in place of human infants." Tom Little. Tracing the Development of the Doppelgänger. "From ancient Egypt to the Victorian era, an encounter with one's double has proven inevitably unsettling". Atlasobscura.com. November 6 2017. www.atlasobscura.com/articles/history-doppelganger. Accessed 9 December 2022.

[70] "Animism is a religious and ontological perspective common to many indigenous cultures across the globe. According to an oft-quoted definition from the Victorian anthropologist E. B. Tylor, animists believe in the "animation of all nature", and are characterized as having "a sense of spiritual beings…inhabiting trees and rocks and waterfalls"." Tiddy Smith. Animism. //iep.utm.edu/animism/. Accessed 9 December 2022.

As Freud sums up:

> (Animism), magic and witchcraft, the omnipotence of thoughts, man's attitude to death, involuntary repetition and the castration-complex comprise practically all the factors which turn something fearful into an uncanny thing. ("The "Uncanny"" 14)

For Freud, while the image of the "fragmented body" evokes the fear of castration, the idea of being "buried alive" ("The "Uncanny"" 13) relishes the pleasure of "intra-uterine existence" ("The "Uncanny"" 14). Uncanny, therefore, refers to familiar things, which become hidden, tabooed and obsolete due to repression, reappear in recurrence. In "The "Uncanny"", Freud has devoted his critical interest to the image of the re-animated corpse, the fulfilment of boon or bane, magic as sources of the uncanny. He has identified them as the revival of either repressed infantile complexes or the primitive beliefs by some impression (Freud, "The "Uncanny"" 17). According to Freud, the fictional representation of the uncanny creates its desired effect of terror by virtue of either its multiplication or its representation of the uncanny as a real-life phenomenon ("The "Uncanny"" 19).

3.4. Publication of Gothic Literature

The observations of Sigmund Freud in 'The "Uncanny," appear to hold relevance when we study Gothic literature of late eighteenth century. Gothic Novels, written in late eighteenth century England, abound in the representation of headless spirits, fragmented bodies, animated corpses, boons and curses, eerie incidents, magic and mystery. Such an abundance, I think, of the non-normative bodies and uncanny events portrays the Enlightenment anxiety of the return of the feudal past. The end of the century witnessed a transition in every domain of European society.

As it appears to me, the French Revolution in 1789, followed by the 'Reign of Terror', political upheavals throughout the continent, the proliferation of science, technology and rationalism following the industrial revolution, re-formation of morality— everything had an impact upon the poets, novelists, artists inclined more to imagination than reason, seem to disrupt the status quo pervading British society for over a century. The emerging bourgeoisie perceives threat of the return of the feudal order on the one hand, and the common people fear the consequences of the change as disruptive, anarchical and nihilistic. The fear of uncertainty coupled with the

repression of the instinct by the monopoly of the ego, manifests itself in the form of the uncanny that dominates Gothic Literature.

The eighteenth-century Gothic, I think, along with its manifestation of the anxiety of political and social uncertainty, dwells on sexual norms and pleasures, repressed under the moralistic façade of the Enlightenment. Gothic novels deal explicitly with themes (primarily jealousy and revenge) embedded with forms of sexuality, which are forbidden, restricted, and subversive as the codes of heteronormativity. It is surprising to note that the publication houses and lending libraries, such as William Lane's *Minerva Press*, which played a pivotal role in publication and proliferation of the Gothic Literature, had also earned notoriety for their collection and distribution of pornographic literature (Stevens 26-27). The themes of Gothic novels such as incest, homosexuality, orgy, voyeurism etc. also serve as the chosen subjects of the pornographic texts[71] (Stevens 26-27). Britain in the nineteenth century observed a sharp decline and the subsequent rise of the gothic in the milieu of the changing role of the publication houses and lending libraries, which played formative role in the popularisation of the genre in the late eighteenth century (Stevens 27)

3.5. *The Castle of Otranto*

Gothic novels interrogate the heteronormative paradigm by virtue of their representation of subversive sexuality. In *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) I think, the theme of incest lies under the surface narrative of the supernatural blended with gruesome episodes of violence. The ghastly image of the corpse of the young prince Conrad "dashed to pieces, and almost buried under an enormous helmet" (Fairclough 52) leads to the incestuous implications in the primary response of Manfred, the father of the deceased son: "Take care of the lady Isabella" (Fairclough 53). The marriage proposed by Manfred with his supposed to be daughter-in-law, I think, is undoubtedly incestuous. However, Manfred attempted to validate his incestuous desire by

[71] "Both the canonical literature and the eroto-pornographic literature of the long 18th century concentrate on private experience and on sexuality as the secret, defining truth of the private self; indeed these two types or strains of literature are so intertwined that it is impossible to disentangle them. With the emergence of Romanticism and the Gothic in the later 18th century, sexual danger and desire are brought into even greater literary prominence; and while persistent stereotypes might lead us to suppose that the coming of the Victorian age (1830s–1901) signaled a retreat to propriety and repression, in fact it was (also) a period of pornographic exuberance and unprecedented interest, across a range of discourses, in the diversity of sexual feelings and practices." Hal Gladfelder. "Erotic, Obscene, and Pornographic Writing, 1660-1900". In *obo* in British and Irish Literature. www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199846719/obo-9780199846719-0121.xml>. Accessed 10 Dec. 2022.

virtue of his anxiety about the old curse, which warns him about succession. I think that Manfred's anxiety concerning the uncertainty of his own lineage, which grows deeper with the sudden inexplicable death of his son, replicates the anxiety of feudalism regarding the shifting terrains of the economic, political and social power.

The evocation of the uncanny, I think, and the terror it produces in the novel seem to emanate from the fear of the return of the obsolete, remote past, discarded, dreaded and demonised by the Enlightenment. The novel, however, hardly demonstrates any fundamental change in the socio-political order. Theodore, who succeeded Manfred, is a feudal descendent clad in a peasant's garb. The catastrophic end of Manfred and the succession of Theodore render a reassertion of heteronormativity that eliminates the deviant, who indulged in incest, a forbidden sexual desire.

Instead of his claim of the creation of "a new species of romance" (Fairclough 48) in the "Preface to the Second Edition" (Fairclough 43-48), I think, Walpole's exoticisation and de-familiarisation of the feudal past and his association of the Catholic order with the supernatural, magic and unreal, have rendered them superstitious, unrealistic and obscure to the readers living in the milieu of Enlightenment rationalism. Such construction of the feudal past as an 'undesirable other' has only validated the principles of the Enlightenment.

3.6. *Vathek: An Arabian Tale*

Vathek: An Arabian Tale (1786) by William Beckford, published in English translation in 1786, as I see, evokes the oriental exoticism in its presentation of a passionate Caliph who renounced his faith to achieve supernatural power in order to indulge in sensuality. The nomenclature of the five wings of his palace, "*The Eternal or Unsatiating Banquet"* (Fairclough 151), "*The Temple of Melody or the Nectar of the Soul*" (Fairclough 152), "*The Delight of the Eyes or the Support of Memory"* (Fairclough 152), "*The Palace of Perfumes or the Incentive to Pleasure*" (Fairclough 152), and "*The Retreat of Mirth or the Dangerous*" (Fairclough 152), as I think, suggest his preoccupation with sensual pleasure.

The first wing offers uninterrupted supply of sumptuous dishes and delicious wine (Fairclough 151); the second comprises musicians and poets to compose delightful songs (Fairclough 152); the third consists of sculptures and paintings and rare species and artefacts from various parts of the world to function as a museum (Fairclough 152); the fourth houses a scented garden of

flowers emitting perfumed air (Fairclough 152); the fifth offers a harem of seductive females ready to provide carnal pleasure to the Caliph (Fairclough 152). Together they threaten the distinction between heaven and earth by replicating the pleasures of the former. Characterised by his preoccupation with sensual pleasure, fascination of sexual orgy, his phallic obsession manifested in the high tower with fifteen hundred stairs, Vathek undoubtedly demonstrates a complex sexuality by virtue of his non-conformity with the norm of heterosexual monogamy. Moreover, his insatiable thirst of knowledge, which finally resorts to necromancy, adds a Faustian dimension to his character. It is significant to note that the Faustian thirst for knowledge is often combined with an attraction of non-normative sexuality (remember the necrophiliac desire to kiss the spirit of Helen in human form)[72].

Although his phallocentric ambition endorses heteronormativity, his indulgence in licentious orgies and obsession with sensuality seem to pose a viable threat to the moralistic structure constructed in eighteenth century England. As an imaginative creator, Vathek thwarts the limits of Enlightenment order in his indulgence of "the imaginative pleasures of supernatural and fantastic events for the sublime emotions they produce" (Botting, 55). As I see, the dangers are twofold: first, his transgressive oriental imagination poses a counter-discourse to the empirical façade of the Enlightenment; second, his preoccupation with polygamy and orgy, characteristics of the 'immoral orient' appears to threaten the moralistic presumptions of Christianity as well as the disciplined monogamy promoted by heteronormativity, endorsed by the ecclesiastical order. Vathek, in his combined manifestation of phallic pride and forbidden desires, seems to embody a complex sexuality, which, if not subversive as a whole, is essentially non-normative.

3.7. *The Monk: A Romance*

The Monk: A Romance (1796) by Matthew Gregory Lewis dwells in the Gothic realm of mystery and magic, dream and reality. The novel presents witches, ghosts and other nocturnal creatures and extra-terrestrial beings to produce a sensation of terror. This popularly acclaimed Gothic tale displays the sacrilegious acts of sexual assault, incest, matricide and sex with a succubus committed by the monk Ambrosio. In spite of the moralistic structure of the novel, which ends with the eternal damnation of Ambrosio, the narrative demonstrates the

[72] Act V, Scene I, L. 100-117. Christopher Marlowe. *Doctor Faustus*. Edited by Kitty Datta, OUP, 2014, pp. 146-147.

degeneration of the ecclesiastical order in late medieval Europe. In its abundance of non-normative and sacrilegious sexual acts, the novel implicates the vulnerability of monastic life in medieval Europe to sexual temptation.

The homoerotic suggestion of Matilda, the succubus, disguised as a monk and the closest friend of Ambrosio to remain close to Ambrosio is unmistakable. It also implicates the widespread homosexuality among the monks of the ecclesiastical order. The damnation of the debauched monk Ambrosio and his companion succubus implicates the moral decadence of the ecclesiastical order implicating perhaps the need of reformation of the order.

According to Fred Botting, "*The Monk* is about excess, about excesses of passion concealed beneath veils of respectability and propriety" (71). In fact, the novel exposes not only the hypocrisy of the ecclesiastical order, but also of the superstitious, regressive nature of contemporary society. It is interesting to note that according to folklore, the succubus, the sexually active female demon is believed to be a descendant of Lilith[73] (Grover et al. 148), and not only held responsible for degenerating the moral character of men by luring them into illegitimate sexual encounters, but also for sexually transmitted diseases.

In their psychiatric examination regarding the popular belief of sexual encounter with succubi, "Unusual cases of succubus: A cultural phenomenon manifesting as part of psychopathology" (2018), Sandeep Grover, Aseem Mehra, and Devakshi Dua point out that "Lilith is blamed for diseases "inflicted" on men but also for "wandering about at night time, vexing the sons of men, and causing them to defile themselves"" (148). Such anxiety about contacting sexually transmitted diseases emanates from the threat of non-normative sexuality and sexually active women as the potential offenders of sexual and moral contamination.

[73] "In rabbinic literature Lilith is variously depicted as the mother of Adam's demonic offspring following his separation from Eve or as his first wife [….] Insolently refusing to be subservient to her husband, Lilith left Adam and the perfection of the Garden of Eden; three angels tried in vain to force her return. According to some mythologies, her demonic offspring were sired by an archangel named Samael and were not Adam's progeny. Those children are sometimes identified as incubi and succubi." Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Lilith". Encyclopedia Britannica, 16 Aug. 2022, www.britannica.com/topic/Lilith-Jewish-folklore. Accessed 10 December 2022.

3.8. Emergence of Victorian Gothic

The Gothic novels of eighteenth century and the vampire narratives of nineteenth century present sexually active women as demons, female vampires and possessed by devils and emerging as threats, and therefore, must be eliminated.

The critical survey of the theme of the Gothic novels displays a curious manifestation of sexuality that appears to be in conflict with the Enlightenment endeavour to systematize heterosexuality as the norm. The Gothic dwells in non-normative sexuality and thereby poses an alternative to heteronormativity. Such representation of alternative sexuality interrogates the validity of the idea of heteronormativity as the only legitimate domain of sexuality and in the process, presents itself as subversive, threatening to dismantle heteronormativity. In the words of Fred Botting, "From being a way of containing and warning against vices, evils and anti-social behaviour, Gothic romances became advocates of subversion" (82). Such a subversive tradition of the Gothic gained momentum in the restricted milieu of the Victorian age, which witnessed a resurgence of the Gothic with a new dimension in the popular figure of the literary vampires culminated in the figure of Count Dracula in the novel of Bram Stoker.

The end of the nineteenth century in Britain renders a paradox in the domain of literature in terms of the development of science fiction on the one hand, and at the same time, the resurgence of the Gothic on the other. The science fiction written by H. G. Wells explores and anticipates the endless possibilities posed by the development of science and technology in the Victorian period as part of the British imperial venture to rule over the world. The fictional works of H. G. Wells, such as *The Time Machine* (1895), *The Island of Dr Moreau* (1896), *The Invisible Man: A Grotesque Romance* (1897), demonstrate the agenda of imperialism to reconstruct the world by virtue of its technological supremacy over the colonies.

The futuristic novels anticipate in the vision and aspiration of Britain to acquire absolute control over the continents. Such an aspiration not only consists of economic and political control, but also entails a desire of clinical[74] and psychological control over the human mind

[74] In his *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception*, Michel Foucault commented: "Disease, which can be mapped out on the picture, becomes apparent in the body. There it meets a space with a quite different configuration: the concrete space of perception. Its laws define the visible forms assumed by disease in a sick organism: the way in which disease is distributed in the organism, manifests its presence there, progresses by altering solids, movements, or functions, causes lesions that become visible under autopsy, triggers off, at one point or another, the interplay of symptoms, causes reactions, and thus moves towards a fatal, and for it favourable, outcome". Michel Foucault. *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception*. Translated by A. M. Sheridan.

and body. Thus, it was necessary to set up political as well as medical espionage to maintain surveillance on the public and private domains of the individual respectively and on the bodies of the postcolonial subject too.

3.9. Fear of Epidemics and the Colonial Anxiety

The British government has set up political espionage in the colonies crucial for military strategic control such as north-western part of India as represented in Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* (1901). The British imperial aspiration of acquisition of absolute control over the colonies were, however, complemented with the growing anxiety of the supposed influence of the colonial culture over Britain. In view of the growing inquisitiveness about and fascination for the colonial culture among the British officials posted in colonies, the British government seemed to be conscious of protecting the hallowed imperial culture against the looming threat of native contamination. The anxiety of the British Empire was primarily concerned about protecting the sanctity of imperial blood, which was vulnerable to contamination due to the sexual intimacy between the British officials and the colonial natives. The anxiety about supposed colonial contamination was supplemented by the growing threats of pandemics and death, which severely affected Britain in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

In his critical survey entitled "Sexually transmitted diseases in nineteenth and twentieth century India" (1993) David Arnold has provided a statistical record of the rate of contamination of sexually transmitted diseases among the British soldiers posted in India. According to him:

> The number of hospital admissions (identified in almost equal proportion with primary syphilis and with gonorrhoea) rose to 205 per 1,000 in 1875 and peaked at 522 per 1,000 in 1895. This was equivalent to more than half the army being hospitalised each year and the loss of more than a million military man-days. Although the number of deaths directly attributed to STDs was very small (less than 1% of the total in 1890), they were a significant cause of invaliding from the army (13-2%). (Arnold 2)

The British government attributed this enhancement in the rate of contamination of sexually transmitted diseases to the prevalent practice of visiting infected Indian prostitutes by the

---

Routledge, 2003. E-book. monoskop.org/images/9/92/Foucault_Michel_The_Birth_of_the_Clinic_1976.pdf. Accessed 10 December 2022.

British soldiers. Such hypothesis had obviously been motivated by the imperial notion of the corrupting influence of the colonial culture. According to Arnold:

> In colonial medical and administrative culture Indian prostitutes were condemned not just for the "immoral" nature of their profession but also in the belief that they were the means by which venereal and other diseases (such as typhoid) were communicated to otherwise "innocent" European soldiers and civilians. (7)

The steady enhancement of venereal diseases among the European soldiers residing in Army barracks in India generated anxiety in Britain and motivated the British government to pass the notorious *Contagious Diseases Acts* in Britain in 1864, 1866 and 1869 complemented by The *Indian Contagious Disease Act (Act XIV of 1868)*[75]. The purpose of those acts was primarily to protect the British soldiers from contamination from venereal diseases and to treat female sex workers suffering from sexually transmitted diseases. As part of the provisions of these acts, "Lock hospitals" (Rana 30) had been established in Britain as well as in India for medical care of the sex workers. As Subir Rana states in his article "Public Women' and Prostitution in 19th Century British India: Issue of Race, Sex, Class and Gender During the 'Limited Raj" (2011):

> The term *'Lock Hospital'* was first used for the London lock hospital and according to William Acton, the name always implied some form of restraint as it did in its initial days when it was meant to confine lepers. Lock Hospital established in the three Presidencies-Madras, Bombay and Bengal was a corporeal body in a carceral state meant for 'housing' and 'treating' prostitutes who were suspected of suffering from venereal disease. (30)

Similar "lock hospitals" (Rana 45) were established in Britain for treatment of sex workers. The purpose, however, was to bring them under state surveillance in order to monitor and regulate their sexuality. Such lock hospitals received severe criticism from the women activists of contemporary Britain such as Josephine Butler for their gendered perceptions of women as

[75] Subir Rana. "Public Women' and Prostitution in 19th Century British India: Issue of Race, Sex, Class and Gender During the 'Limited Raj". (SWS-SRTT occasional paper 13). School of Women's Studies, JU. June 2011. P. 29 .
www.academia.edu/32444546/Public_Women_and_Prostitution_in_19th_Century_British_India_Issue_of_Race_Sex_Class_and_Gender_During_the_Limited_Raj. Accessed 5 December 2022.

the sole carriers of sexually transmitted diseases and immoral corruptors of men. In India, however, “lock hospitals” (Rana 45) contributed to the racial discrimination.

According to Subir Rana in in his article “Public Women' and Prostitution in 19th Century British India: Issue of Race, Sex, Class and Gender During the 'Limited Raj” (2011):

> Lock Hospitals were charged with immorality of the state sponsored ‘harlotry’, evasion of medical examination by prostitution, cursory and inaccurate medical examination by the doctors and offensive and coercive manner of inspecting then patients. (45)

Thus, the whole paradigm of “Contagious Diseases Acts” (Rana 29) and the “lock hospitals” (Rana 45) provided twofold strategies of British imperialism to deal with the crisis generated by the fear and anxiety of a supposed pandemic of sexually transmitted diseases. On the one hand, the British government passed the Cantonment Acts to monitor and regulate sexuality and desires of the British soldiers posted in colonies, especially in India.

Such measures include classification and categorization of sex workers based on class, race and colour, introduction of moral education for the young British soldiers and establishment of safe bawdy houses within the cantonment sponsored by the British government. On the other hand, female sexuality in Britain was brought under strict surveillance as part of Victorian mechanisms and control of sexuality. The inception of such strategies of control and surveillance seems to have originated in colonial anxiety about the contamination of pure and sanctified colonial blood by the seductive colonized females and the ‘aggressive sexuality’ in the orient.

Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*, the seminal vampire narrative published in 1897, seems to embody the Victorian anxiety about the prevailing threats of pandemics of venereal and dermatological diseases in Britain as well as in colonies supposedly originated by the colonial encounter with non-normative sexuality of the orient. The novel seems to allude to the threats posed by non-normative sexuality and the imperial strategies to neutralize them.

In October 1347, the deadly Black Death reached the shores of Europe. It first reached Sicily in Italy from the Black Sea. The ships carried the bodies of dead soldiers with unknown black boils over their bodies. Although the Sicilian Port Authority pushed the ships, but it could not

avert the catastrophe of the Black Death. The pandemic eradicated almost one third of the whole population of Europe in the next few years.[76]

In Stoker's novel, Count Dracula reached Whitby on a stormy night on the ship of the dead. His arrival had been followed by the series of deaths in Whitby and London. The arrival of the Count followed as well as anticipated the deadliest pandemics of European history that changed the fate of the continent.

Throughout the narrative, *Dracula* (1897) imparts a claustrophobic ambiance burdened with the odour of sickness, anaemia, lunacy and death, which bear a resemblance to the stifling uneasiness of a clinic. The paradigm of reason and normative sophistication are threatened by the madness of Renfield, the first victim of Dracula in London. His masochistic desire to be the slave of Dracula appears to transgress the limits of heteronormativity. His uncanny appetite seems to supplement his subversive sexual desire. What baffles Dr. Seward is not only his irresistible urge to meet his master, but also his weird appetite. His resort to poisonous insects as food seems to thwart the balance maintained by the food chain on the one hand, and marks a deviation from colonial etiquette by mimicking the customs of the colonized subject. Such a deviation poses a viable threat to the imperial power, which, as Dr. Seward sums up, seems to be dangerous as it may blur the line of cultural as well as racial segregation between the colonizer and the colonized:

> Sanguine temperament; great physical strength; morbidly excitable; periods of gloom ending in some fixed idea which I cannot make out. I presume that the sanguine temperament itself and the disturbing influence end in a mentally-accomplished finish; a possibly dangerous man, probably dangerous if unselfish. (Stoker 78)

This, as Moreno Tiziani says in the article entitled "Vampires and vampirism: pathological roots of a myth" (2009) is known as "Renfield syndrome", which demonstrates "thoroughly schizophrenic attitudes, the syndrome shows itself by deviant and obsessive behaviour. This pathology itself is quite rare and it rather consists of behaviour belonging to pathologies associable to cannibalism" (136). Such potentially 'dangerous men' have to be brought under clinical surveillance.

---

[76] Chetan Suthar. "Black Death: The Greatest Catastrophe Ever". The Times of India, July 27, 2020. timesofindia.indiatimes.com/readersblog/blogifybro/black-death-the-greatest-catastrophe-ever-23651/. Accessed 10 December 2022.

In fact, as I think, the lunatic asylums in nineteenth century serve the functions similar to that of the Panopticon to keep surveillance on the non-normative individual as well as the sanctified spaces to perform rituals. The patients in Dr. Seward's asylum, as I think, undergo therapeutic treatment, which resemble Christian rituals of penance to attain redemption. The death of Renfield symbolizes elimination of transgressors, who refuse to return to the domain of reason. The entire mechanism of treatment of madness correspond to the strategic isolation, surveillance, domination and occasional elimination of aggressive females in lock hospitals. Hence, in *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (1964), Foucault rightly says:

> (General Hospital) is not a medical establishment. It is rather a sort of semijudicial structure, an administrative entity, which along with the already constituted powers, and outside of the courts, decides, judges, and executes. (40)

The looming threat of epidemic of venereal diseases in the army barracks in British colonies had generated anxiety about aggressive and non-normative female sexuality in Britain. The British Empire felt an immediate need to monitor, regulate and restrict female sexuality. The brothel had been conceived as the space to be taken under scrutiny and state surveillance as it practice to valorise forms of sexualities beyond the purview of sanctioned Victorian codes of sexuality, which excludes every sexual act unrelated to the serious business of reproduction. Such 'policing of sex' (Foucault, *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality Volume 1* 25) and 'medicalization' (Foucault, *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality Volume 1* 44) became components of the Victorian agenda of exercising power over pleasure. As Michel Foucault comments:

> The medical examination, the psychiatric investigation, the pedagogical report, and family controls may have the apparent objective of saying no to all wayward or unproductive sexualities, but the fact is that they function as mechanisms with a double impetus: pleasure and power. (*The Will to Knowledge: History of Sexuality Volume 1* 45)

The representation of devouring and aggressive female sexuality in *Dracula* appears to have originated in the colonial anxiety of the threat of a sexual pandemic supposedly disseminated by the oriental courtesans. The oriental courtesans and sex workers represent non-marital,

polygamous, orgiastic and aggressive female sexuality beyond the limits of monogamous, productive, marital dimensions of heteronormativity celebrated and sanctioned by Victorian society.

Moreover, by virtue of its insistence on the principle of pleasure, the brothels in Britain and its colonies seem to thwart the Victorian grand narrative of sexuality as the sole instrument of reproduction, maintenance of family structure and population. The sexually aggressive female vampires of *Dracula* (1897) seem to pose a serious threat to the paradigm of heteronormativity hailed by Victorian society and its growing anxiety about colonial contamination of sanctified European blood. Count Dracula's threat to possess white women to seduce and exert control over white men allude to the threat of a pandemic looming large in nineteenth century Britain:

> 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 shall yet be mine – my creatures, to do my bidding and to be my jackals when I want to feed. (Stoker 365)

The encounter of Jonathan Harker with the three female vampires at the Dracula castle leads to the intrusion of a Victorian man into a forbidden space, where "old ladies had sat and sung and lived sweet lives" (Stoker 50). This description alludes to women in medieval castles awaiting return of their husbands from the Crusades. However, its association with the royal harems in India and Arabia is unmistakable. The medieval harems dwell in the realm of uninhibited and non-normative sexuality and anticipate the brothels in British India. In that room, Jonathan meets "three young women, ladies by their dress and manner." (Stoker 51). The erotic description that follows parallels the description of courtesans in Moghul harems:

> Two were dark, and had… dark piercing eyes…. The other was fair… with great, wavy masses of golden hair and eyes like pale sapphire…. All three had brilliant white teeth that shone like pearls against the ruby of their voluptuous lips…. They whispered together, and then all three laughed – such a silvery, musical laugh (Stoker 51)

The erotic description of the uncanny seductresses is complemented by the signs associated with the gestures of the sex workers in Brothels. They offered forbidden sexual orgies consisting of pleasure and polygamy. Jonathan's response was that of an irresistible urge of union coupled with the fear of a familiar, yet dreadful past:

> I seemed somehow to know her face, and to know it in connection with some dreamy fear, but I could not recollect at the moment how or where [….] 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 51)

The response of Jonathan replays the irresistible desire of an exiled European to have an orgasmic sexual encounter with the strange seductresses. He falls prey to their irresistible charm like the British soldiers, who, according to common European belief, without wives or mistresses had no option but to visit sex workers. His anxiety and fear replicate Victorian anxiety about the threat of pandemics of venereal diseases believed to have been imported from the Indian as well as oriental sex workers. Such anxiety contributes to the formation of Victorian heterosexual monogamy as the sanctioned form of sexuality performed with the social responsibility of procreation. The polygamy of sex workers was identified as debauchery and soldiers were asked to practice celibacy and self-control (Baker 92). The identification of sex workers as debauchers culminated in the demonization of aggressive female sexuality and it was brought under medical examination and state surveillance. In "The Contagious Diseases Acts and the Prostitutes: How Disease and the Law Controlled the Female Body" (2011), Kimeya Baker observes:

> A similarly valuable tool to the cause of the CD (Contagious Diseases)[77]Acts was the medicalisation of sexuality and prostitution. By its very definition in various textbooks, venereal disease was 'the contagious disease that men are apt to catch by dealing with infected women' [….] The connection between their diseased bodies and diseased morality was a powerful one and the language used in the discussion of prostitution, infection and morality picked up on the metaphor as a significant instrument of coercion. (98)

Such moralistic notions drove Victorian society towards a constraint upon aggressive female sexuality.

According to Kimeya Baker in "The Contagious Diseases Acts and the Prostitutes: How Disease and the Law Controlled the Female Body" (2011):

[77] Bracketed full form of the abbreviation is mine.

> The gendered constructs prevalent within the CD (Contagious Diseases)[78] Acts saw the behaviour of prostitutes as corrupting, and autonomous sexuality as something to be feared [….] Men were not to be blamed for attempting to fulfil their natural sexual urges. Conversely, prostitutes were deviant, unnatural, and sick. (95)

The strategy adopted by Victorian society to deal with aggressive female sexuality visible in the 'prostitutes', as Baker called them in the article entitled "The Contagious Diseases Acts and the Prostitutes: How Disease and the Law Controlled the Female Body" (2011), and the polygamous, licentious females, was to keep them under scrutiny and clinical test in order to defuse them, and if a non-normative female goes too far, eradicate them.

It is significant to observe that in *Dracula* (1897) Lucy Westenra became the primary and an easy prey of Count Dracula because of her love of polygamy, orgiastic pleasure and fancies of orgasm. The examination and methods of her treatment by Dr. Seward and later Dr. Van Helsing, the scientist-exorcist, resemble the treatment of sex workers in the lock hospitals. In the novel, Lucy has been confined within a single room with closed door and windows and compelled to wear a garland of garlic. She has been put under surveillance of her male companions and physicians and not been allowed to go out (Stoker 159-160). Such a closeted space with a claustrophobic ambiance alludes to the repressive structure of the hospitals to 'treat' the infected sex workers. Her brutal elimination was necessary to protect, as Christopher Craft calls them in ""Kiss Me with Those Red Lips": Gender and Inversion in Bram Stoker's Dracula", the "Crew of Light" (Bloom 63), who were on their mission to counter the oriental threat posed by Count Dracula.

3.10. Liminality, Denial of Coevalness and Heterotopic Spaces

In his Essay "Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" (1984) Michel Foucault has identified an anxiety about space, nurtured by society since the eighteenth century. According to Foucault, in spite of the "desanctification" of a space to certain extent, we cannot get rid of the "inviolable" status and classification of certain spaces ("Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" 2). Foucault defines the living spaces as relational and heterogeneous and therefore, cannot be superimposed on one another ("Of Other Spaces: Utopias and

[78] Bracketed full form of the abbreviation is mine.

Heterotopias" 3). Foucault classifies spaces as utopia, unreal space that either to present a perfect or inverted form of real space and heterotopia, which exists outside the real space yet it is possible to locate it. Foucault conceives heterotopia as an "effectively enacted utopia" ("Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" 3) where the real sites and their cultures "are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted" ("Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" 3).

In fact, heterotopia enacts and projects interrogation, inversion, and contestation in spaces, which appear to be outside the familiar, yet seem to be real when one is actually in it ("Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" 3). *Dracula* (1897), I think, represents an anxiety about the heterotopic space where the codes of heteronormativity face contestation and subversion. While browsing through the maps of and books on Europe at the British Museum and library, Jonathan Harker is perplexed by the obscurity of the location of Dracula Castle referred by Count Dracula (Stoker 10). He finds this place situated in the "wildest and least known' portions of Europe" (Stoker 10).

There is however, a dilemma in the novel concerning the obscurity of this place as the nearby town Bistritz, named by Count Dracula, as a landmark to reach his castle is a familiar place (Stoker 10). The dilemma of identification springs from the uncertainty concerning the identification of the Balkan region of Eastern Europe. In his *Dracula and the Eastern Question: British and French Vampire Narratives of the Nineteenth-Century near East* (2006), Matthew Gibson discussed the nineteenth century trend of Western Europe to designate the Balkan region as "Oriental" (1). According to Gibson, the area has been identified as a dangerous zone because of its close proximity to Asia Minor and as the eye of dispute between Christian and Turkish conflict (3).

Since the area had been under Islamic rule of the Ottoman Empire, the customs of the region appear to be different, strange and unfamiliar to Western Europeans. The place is neither conceived as the 'Oriental other', nor does it seem to be like Western Europe (Gibson 3-4). Such dichotomy, as I think, concerning the identification of the space makes it vulnerable to hold cultural phenomena that seem to contest the standardized cultural codes of Britain in the nineteenth century. In *Dracula* (1897), Jonathan finds it exciting to visit the area inhabited by the descendent of Attila, the general of the warrior Huns.

He designates the region as the hoard of imagination and superstition. As the train leaves Budapest and progresses towards Romania, Jonathan has the impression that he is gradually

entering the "East" (Stoker 9). The train journey appears to be a spatial as well as cultural transition as it represents movement; shift and medium of transition at the same time (See Foucault, "Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" 3). The Eastern space appears to be exotic in its picturesque landscape, colourful attire of the inhabitants and delicious unfamiliar cuisine to Jonathan. However, the use of words and expressions such as "clumsy", "barbarian", not "prepossessing" "old Oriental band of brigands" (Stoker 11) used by Jonathan to classify the local inhabitants, mostly Slovaks, suggests his lack of comfortability and suspicion. His arrival at Bistritz at the twilight suggests a transitory point where time and space meet and he seems to enter the 'dark East' leaving behind the 'Enlightened West'.

He is reminded of the dark history of the place consisting of natural and human calamities such as storm, disease, famine, war and the subsequent loss of innumerable lives. Moreover, the sceptical and hesitant reception by the locals at Golden Krone hotel and their anxious gestures make him sceptical about his journey (Stoker 10-13). As the narrative progresses and Jonathan proceeds towards his destination, the anxiety deepens, culminated in the scene of encounter with wolves on the way to Dracula castle by the carriage. The expression "dark side of the twilight" (Stoker 11) represents a Eurocentric view of the Balkan as medieval, regressive, away from enlightenment and superstitious on the one hand. However, on the other hand, Bistritz represents the liminal space, which segregates heterotopic from the real.

3.10.1. Liminality in *Dracula*

In *Rites of Passage* (1960), Arnold Van Gennep has defined liminality as an "intermediate stage" (1), between the worlds of sacred and profane (1). The liminal space is characterized by ambiguity, dubiousness and anxiety concerning the transition from the familiar to the unfamiliar. According to Gennep, the passage from a space to another entails performance of rituals or rites (8). The rites comprise positive and negative rites (Gennep 8) and the negative rites implicate prohibitions and restrictions corresponding to "negative volitions" (Gennep 8).

Gennep observes the characteristic of the rites of prohibition as "magico-religious" (16). Jonathan's journey from the enlightened London to the obscure Dracula castle is not only a journey from occident to orient, but also a voyage from a heteronormative space to a queer[79] domain that comprises subversive non-heteronormative sexuality and thereby poses a threat to the former. Bistritz serves as the liminal space where the local inhabitants perform gestures,

[79] 'Queer' in its sexual connotations implies a rejection to be placed in the 'normal' category concerning sexual preference and orientation, that is, heterosexuality.

which appear to be magical. The ritualistic mannerism, half-heard voices praying in cryptic language, repeated warnings, fearful gestures and recurrent persuasion to abandon the journey suggest prohibitions. Jonathan seems to be perplexed by the incidents happening around him as everything appears to be incomprehensible, yet the ill omen implicated appears to be unmistakable. The negative vibes emanating from the gestures and warnings implicate the fear of the unknown, unfamiliar and unconventional pervading the mind of the individual situated at the threshold to enter another space.

Jonathan's Harker's movement in *Dracula* (1897), from the domain of heteronormativity in which sexual intercourse between heterosexual married couple is the only legitimate form of sexuality to a realm of sexual pluralism consisting of all forms of non-normative sexuality (homosexuality, paedophilia, necrophilia, incest, orgy), seems to be that of a problematic one as it entails, first, a perplexed interrogation, and then, a willful subversion (Jonathan's sexual encounter with the three weird sisters is not a forced one; see Stoker 51). In "Liminality and Communitas" (1969) Victor Turner considers liminality as an ambiguous state that elude any form of classification (359). Such ambiguity, according to him, manifests itself through a "rich proliferation of liminal symbols" (Turner 360). Such ambiguity is often "likened to intermediary sexuality" such as bisexuality (Turner 359). Bistritz demonstrates itself as an intermediary space between tradition and modernity. Although Western enlightenment has made inroads here through science and technology (railways), yet it harbours the beliefs that have already eroded enlightened Western Europe. Such liminality is required to segregate heterotopias from the domains of heteronormativity.

In his "Liminality and Communitas" (1969), as I see, Victor Turner reiterated Gennep to divide the process of transition of an individual from one stage to another into three phases: "separation, margin and […] aggregation" (359). According to him, in the last phase, "aggregation", the individual is expected to behave in accordance with the customary norms of the given space (Turner 359). The last phase of Jonathan's journey to the Dracula Castle on the mysterious carriage driven by the uncanny driver renders his gradual acclimatization with the customs and phenomena of his destination, a domain he had come to never before. The "dreadful fear" (Stoker 24) of the "uncanny" (Stoker 24) seems to have withered away as he entered the cosy banquet hall of the Dracula castle. His initial response to the castle, its interior and the customs is more of amazement and perplexity than of fear and anxiety. To him, the castle appears to be a space rooted in the past. He feels like he has made a retreat to the past by time travel.

3.10.2. Denial of Coevalness in *Dracula*

In the book *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (2014), Johannes Fabian observes that Judeo-Christian tradition has conceived time as linear, and modernity brought by the European Renaissance has secularized the tradition by making time sequential, universal and general to construct the history of the progress of human civilization (2-3). Fabian interrogates the evolutionary theories of Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer by arguing that the locations of different cultures are in different temporal frameworks. Such conception, as Fabian thinks, undoubtedly poses a viable challenge to the nineteenth century scientific theories of the universal progress with passage of time (Fabian 13-16).

Johannes Fabian conceives "Typological Time" (23), which, instead of measuring movement, suggests "quality of states" (23). It is, according to him, non-linear and unequal instead of being linear and universal documenting the theory of evolution (Fabian 30). He criticizes the idea of coevalness in nineteenth century discourse as social anthropologists employ it to distinguish between modernity and primitivism, represented by Western Europe and Africa or Asia respectively (Fabian 32-33). Fabian proposes the theory of the "Denial of coevalness" (31) as a tool to show the existence of different cultures in the same time frame. In this context, as I perceive, history is a living continuity, forever present. As I think, Count Dracula, alive for more than five hundred years, appears to be a threat to Enlightened and superior Western Europe in his denial of coevalness. Dracula, as a living creature in the Mediterranean region, considered a "hub of history by the Victorian England" (Fabian 17) refuses to be considered as archaeological remains of the past. Moreover, his involvement in and promotion of non-normative sexuality seem to contest the self-claimed supremacy and modernity of Western Europe and its stipulation of heteronormativity.

In course of his conversation with Jonathan Harker, Dracula proudly declares, "We are in Transylvania; and Transylvania is not England. Our ways are not your ways, and there shall be to you many strange things." (Stoker 32). As long as Dracula, the symbol of the denial of coevalness remains in the historical hub of the Mediterranean, the West does not consider him a threat. However, his transgression of the temporal border and his endeavour to extend his norms into the space of modernity and heteronormativity compels the scientific West to confront and eliminate him.

Dracula's tale of the legendary treasure hidden in the region and the mysterious blue flame pointing to the locations of the secret hoard of treasure on the night of the evil, narrated to Jonathan, perhaps implicates the truth that has deliberately been suppressed by the West under the forbidden nomenclature of the 'Dark Age'. The "nausea" of Jonathan Harker caused by the "rank" smell of the Count's breath at the time of their first close encounter (Stoker 29), as I see it, reminds him of the musty odour emanating from an archaeological site while unearthed for the first time after centuries. The Count is supposed to sleep in his coffin filled with earth as an archaeological specimen. However, he rises at night with the catastrophic purpose of mastering over humankind forever, subverting Western theories of evolution and progress of civilization.

3.10.3. Heterotopic Spaces in *Dracula*

In his essay "Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" (1984), Michel Foucault has characterized six principles of heterotopia. The "crisis heterotopia" ("Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" 4), as defined by Foucault, represents forbidden or scared places ("Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" 4) and according to him, it gives way to "heterotopias of deviation" ("Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" 5) where "individuals whose behavior is deviant in relation to the required mean or norm are placed" ("Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" 5). Dracula castle appears to be such a "crisis heterotopia" (Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" 4), a profane space and therefore forbidden. This is a space inhabited by strange creatures as vampires and werewolves. Although to the enlightened, rational mind of the Englishman Jonathan, these creatures appear to be superstitious and legendary, to the inhabitants of that region, they seem to be real. Its existence is real as well as unreal, depending upon belief and perception. As Jonathan encounters the inhabitants, their anxiety transmits into his mind and he feels "ghostly fears" (Stoker 15). His inability to comprehend the language of the inhabitants symbolizes the semantic failure or perhaps refusal of Western Europe to recognize the heterotopic space, which comprises deviants and therefore, has the potential to unsettle the socio-cultural as well as sexual codes stipulated and nurtured by the Enlightenment. Jonathan could barely decode few words such as "Satan", "hell", "witch" (Stoker 14-15), which only contribute to his anxiety and bafflement about his destination. The incommunicability of the locals or perhaps conscious denial to reveal the secret to Jonathan renders their fear of Western intrusion and discovery of their secrets, reciprocated by the fear of the Westerners concerning the threat of Eastern invasions into London symbolized by the arrival of Count Dracula to Whitby on a Russian ship.

In the second principle of the heterotopias, Foucault observes the shifting function of an existing heterotopia with the changing course of history ("Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" 4). He has given the example of the cemetery to elucidate his argument ("Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" 4). According to him, cemeteries were mostly situated at the centre of the city until the end of eighteenth century. Since the nineteenth century, they were shifted to the margins of the city, away from locality. Such shift from the centre to the margin, evident in an existing heterotopia, according to Foucault, resulted from a paradigm shift from belief in the immortality of soul and the anticipation of a prospective resurrection to a scepticism concerning the existence of soul itself ("Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" 5-6). Moreover, a growing anxiety about death as an "illness" and concern about health and hygiene pushed cemeteries away from the locality ("Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" 5-6). Count Dracula brought an estate called Carfax in London and abandoned churches at the heart of the city as the places of his repose during the day.

The presence of the coffin along with his 'corpse' at the centre of the city is not only a reversal of the process of appropriation of an existing heterotopia by the bourgeoisie, but also an evocation of death and illness that make the bourgeois uncomfortable. His usurpation and appropriation of abandoned churches as his own abode appears to be a gesture of revenge against the normative order, represented by the Christian churches, which has excommunicated him for his defiance of the norms of Christianity, such as essential heterosexual monogamy. When the league of Victorian young men led by Dr Van Helsing met the Count at such a chapel for a moment only, they found the earth in the coffin smelling "all the ills of mortality" and "acrid smell of blood" (Stoker 299). The use of words to narrate the ambiance such as "corruption", "sickens", "loathsomeness", "stench", "nauseous" (Stoker 300) appear to heighten the sense of illness associated with the dead. Yet Victorian prudishness towards sexual orgy and eroticism is unmistakable as the description is replete with sexual innuendoes implicating a visit to a bed post-enactment of a sexual orgy.

The third principle of heterotopia, defined by Foucault, conceives it as a space "capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible" ('Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias' 6). The room of Lucy Westenra has turned into a heterotopic space following her encounter with Dracula (Stoker 121). The room has been transformed into a non-heteronormative space, where Dracula metaphorically performs sexual acts with Lucy. As her health begins to deteriorate, Dr Seward invites his mentor Dr Van Helsing, an expert on "obscure diseases" (Stoker 137). As Dracula continues

to drain Lucy's blood, she becomes weaker and proceeds towards her transformation into a vampire. With the inception of her treatment by Van Helsing, as I think, the room functions as a modern clinic with contemporary medical aid such as blood transfusion and continuous medical surveillance and at the same time a medieval space where a ritual with garlic unknown to the young men present on the scene, is performed to treat a diseased patient (Stoker 159-160). Thus, here heterotopia becomes a multi-functional space with normative and non-normative attributes.

The last trait of heterotopia conceived by Foucault in his "Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" (2011), is to create an intermediate space, which functions either "to create a space of illusion that exposes every real space, all the sites inside of which human life is partitioned" (8) or "to create a space that is other, another real space, as perfect, as meticulous, as well arranged as ours is messy, ill constructed, and jumbled" (8). The magical room in the Dracula castle, where Jonathan had an erotic encounter with the three weird women, functions as a heterotopia with multiple roles and dimensions. As Jonathan was desperately searching for an escape route from this dreadful castle, he finds a room in the southern wing of it. The room appears to be an abode of the past with its quietness and dreadful, yet serene silence. This room, partly saved from the ravages of time, enlivens the imagination of Jonathan as he began to imagine a past, recorded perhaps in some old romances, narrating to him the tale of a melancholic princess writing a love letter to his prince who went far away.

Jonathan Harker finds the space containing power of the past centuries, "which mere "modernity" cannot kill" (Stoker 49). The space, by virtue of its refusal and resistance to subscribe to the 'modernity' sponsored by the Enlightenment, emerges to be a "heterochrony" (Foucault, "Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" 6), a defiant of evolution. The space does not evolve, but remain in its archaic form obtainable only by imagination.

3.10.4. *Dracula* as a Retreat to the Medieval Age

Michel Foucault observes in the "fifth principle" of "heterotopias" ("Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" 7) that "heterotopias" "always presuppose a system of opening and closing that both isolates them and makes them penetrable" ("Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" 7). The space is not accessible to anyone, but one needs to perform some "rites" to enter it (Foucault, "Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" 7). Troubled by his claustrophobic present, Jonathan dwells on imagination to enter a time zone, an imaginative

space, by virtue of his retrospective fancy and wishful imaginings. He went into the space in a state of reverie, a state of semi-consciousness, appropriate to dwell in an antique land. The evocation of a dreaded medieval past in the mind of Jonathan opened up the Pandora's Box closed by Victorian society but revived in Victorian Gothic literature, as dark, forbidden, savage, taboo. The erotic encounter that follows converts the space into a palace of illusion, made familiar in romances, yet too perfect and pleasing to be real. As Jonathan entered the forbidden room in spite of the warning of the Count, he ironically finds "a sense of freedom" that "refreshed" him (Stoker 50).

3.11. Reversal of Sexual Roles in *Dracula*

Jonathan Harker's decision to visit the forbidden room is a conscious one, an emancipating endeavour to liberate himself from the claustrophobia of imprisonment stipulated by the authority of space he inhabits (Dracula Castle owned and ruled by the Count). Does it represent an involuntary act? It does not. This is a symbolic gesture of the resistance of an individual to fit in the norms of sexuality postulated by Victorian heteronormativity. His fancies began to encompass the memories of the old women living with remembrance of their faraway husbands, who went to participate in wars, perhaps the Crusades in the medieval age. The desire of Jonathan to re-live the past is in fact both a resistance to accept the principles of evolution charted in Enlightenment discourse on history and a rejection of the codes of heteronormativity postulated by Victorian society. The whole scene of sexual encounter takes place in a semi-conscious state as if in a dream perhaps, because it implicates a journey to and embracement of the unconscious away from consciousness formed by the discourse of modern science concerning history (Theory of Evolution) and heteronormative sexuality.

As the three enigmatic women made a sexual advance towards him, he feels a "wicked, burning desire" (Stoker 51) to be kissed by them. His response to the erotic scene appears to be in between fear and fascination, unfamiliarity and familiarity. He seems to know one of them "in connection with some dreamy fear" (Stoker 51), but could not recollect "how or where" (Stoker 51).

The erotic encounter can be divided into four phases: cherished anticipation, confused reception, pleasurable submission and dreadful awakening. This episode appears to be one of the most intriguing sections in the novel. It has been explored and interpreted from the

perspectives of gender studies and psychoanalysis[80]. The encounter of Jonathan in the state of slumber enhances the ambiguity of his experience, which entails identification of gender and dissolution of gender roles. His confused reception of the three creatures advancing towards him, ("I must be dreaming [….] For, though the moonlight was behind them, they threw no shadow on the floor", Stoker 51) implicates his uneasiness to identify them as women because their gestures and body language do not subscribe to the traits of femininity stipulated by Victorian society, though they appear to be "ladies by their dress and manner" (Stoker 51). Moreover, while two of them have "dark" (Stoker 51) complexion, "high aquiline noses", "dark piercing eyes" (Stoker 51) that seem "to be almost red" (Stoker 51), the third one is of "fair" (Stoker 51) complexion and has "great, wavy masses of golden hair and eyes like pale sapphires" (Stoker 51). All of them have "brilliant white teeth, that shone like pearls against the ruby of their voluptuous lips" (Stoker 51).

The physical description corresponds more with the oriental than the occidental features and renders an oriental charm associated with uninhibited sexuality according to Victorian imagination. Jonathan lies on bed "in an agony of delightful anticipation". Such a gesture of moaning with pleasure represents a passive reception of penetration. As Christopher Craft comments in the essay ""Kiss Me with Those Red Lips": Gender and Inversion in Bram Stoker's Dracula" (1984):

> Harker awaits an erotic fulfilment that entails both the dissolution of the boundaries of the self and the thorough subversion of conventional Victorian gender codes, which constrained the mobility of sexual desire and varieties of genital behaviour (Bloom 41)

The episode that follows entails initiation of penetration. The erotic description comprises awakening of the receptive organ by the "soft, shivering touch of the lips on the supersensitive skin" (Stoker 52) and the penetration, painful, yet pleasurable ("hard dents of two sharp teeth", Stoker 52). The "languorous ecstasy" (Stoker 52) with which Jonathan awaited penetration is undoubtedly female in nature. This is the culminating point of Jonathan's departure from heteronormativity following his arrival in Dracula's castle. Since his arrival, Jonathan appears to subscribe to the traits of character, more female than male. He is shaken with fear and seems

[80]psychoanalysis, method of treating mental disorders, shaped by psychoanalytic theory, which emphasizes unconscious mental processes and is sometimes described as "depth psychology." Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "psychoanalysis". Encyclopedia Britannica, 15 Sep. 2022, https://www.britannica.com/science/psychoanalysis. Accessed 6 December 2022.

to be imprisoned by the Count like a heroine of the Romances. Like a damsel in distress, he seems to await emancipation, confined within a magical chamber by a sorcerer ("The castle is a veritable prison, and I am a prisoner", Stoker 38). Count Dracula takes care of him like a companion and protector.

In the famous mirror scene in the castle (Stoker 37-38), Dracula has demonstrated a strange affection and sense of possession throughout towards Jonathan in spite of confining him in the castle. In the episode of his encounter with the three weird sisters, pleasurable submission of Jonathan to the subversive penetration, however, has been interrupted by the dreadful awakening with the sudden arrival of Count Dracula who pushed the weird sisters away forcibly with a warning. Jonathan sees the anger and fury in his face. His declaration reiterates his sense of possession over Jonathan: "This man belongs to me" (Stoker 53).

3.12. Same-Sex Desire in *Dracula*

The relationship between Jonathan Harker and Count Dracula appears to be ambiguous and evolves through the course of the narrative. The relationship, I think, problematizes the heteronormative assumptions of relationship between males. As Jonathan arrives in Dracula castle, the Count receives him with warmth and affection and keeps him under his supervision. Unlike Renfield, Count has never enslaved Jonathan, yet kept him under his control. He gives Jonathan comfort, but imposes restrictions on his movement and snaps his ties with the external world by destroying his letters written to Mina (Stoker 56-57). In his screen adaptation of *Dracula*, *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992)[81], Francis Ford Coppola shows the Count shaving the beard of Jonathan. The erotic suggestion, I see, is unmistakable. Although the scene is not there in the novel, but I think that the erotic fascination of Dracula for Jonathan could be inferred from his attitude to the latter.

It is significant to note that Dracula warned Jonathan not to intrude in the areas of the castle restricted by closed doors: "(S)hould[82] you leave these rooms you will not by any chance go to sleep in any other part of the castle […] there are bad dreams for those who sleep unwisely" (Stoker 46). His warning to the three women comprises similar restriction: "How dare you cast eyes on him when I had forbidden it?" (Stoker 53). The same restrictions issued to both parties

[81] *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, directed by Francis Ford Coppola, released in 1992, distributed by Columbia Pictures
[82] 'S' capsized by me.

involved in sexual encounter triggers speculations concerning homosexual desire of Dracula towards Jonathan.

Is Dracula a homosexual? Does he nurture secret erotic fascination and love towards Jonathan? Does Jonathan reciprocate it by implication when he receives the penetration by the weird women? I think that these issues have not been explicitly answered in the narrative. Instead, the cryptic reply of the Count to the weird women only heightens the ambiguity ("Yes, I too can love; you yourselves can tell it from the past. Is it not so?" Stoker 53).

The acknowledgement of Dracula's own inclination to love is followed by his promise to let the women have Jonathan for their sexual orgy: "I promise you that when I am done with him, you shall kiss him at your will" (Stoker 53). However, his answer comes in a compassionate manner, which enhances further speculation: "Then the Count turned, after looking at my face attentively, and said in a soft whisper" (Stoker 53). Is spite of the disobedience of Jonathan, Dracula does not cause any physical harm to him. His problem with Jonathan begins with the latter's marriage with Mina and Dracula's arrival in Whitby. Jonathan's primary uneasiness and repulsion to Count Dracula (mostly physical) transform into rivalry for Mina and he joins Dr. Van Helsing's army to resist the vampire.

Is the opposition between Jonathan Harker and Count Dracula a social one? Or, there is a personal cause inherent in it? It is worth remembering that despite being a non-conformist and subversive figure according to Victorian parameters of sexuality, Count Dracula has employed the Victorian strategy of surveillance upon Jonathan. For Jonathan, the Dracula Castle becomes a veritable prison, a Panopticon, where his movements are restricted, desires are constricted and under a scanner.

The prohibition on the three weird women to have sexual intimacy with Jonathan and vice versa, implicates the desire of Count Dracula to have Jonathan in his sole possession. His desperation to have Mina in his possession can therefore be considered a revengeful act against Jonathan, who deserted him for Mina. His menacing prophesy validates the observation: "My revenge is just begun [….] Your girls that you all love are mine already; and through them, you and others shall yet be mine – my creatures" (Stoker 365). Although this apocalyptic intimidation exposes the sinister design of Count Dracula to unsettle the moral structure and heteronormative fabric of the conservative Victorian society, yet the pain and desperation to take revenge upon his disobedient minion is unmistakable. Dracula's motive behind his plan to contaminate the blood of Mina with his own vampiric blood and turn her into a vampire can

be a strategy to have Jonathan under his control. No wonder that Lucy, following her transformation into a vampire, has made several attempts to lure Arthur sexually:

> She still advanced, however, and with a languorous, voluptuous grace, said: - "Come to me Arthur. Leave these others and come to me. My arms are hungry for you. Come, and we can rest together. Come, my husband, come! (Stoker 253)

The elimination of Lucy by the Dr. Van Helsing and his co-warriors has temporarily thwarted the plan of the Count. However, he refuses to bow down and initiates a fresh assault on his opponents to avenge his setback. His strategy to possess 'pious' Mina is more threatening to the heteronormative order than the possession of 'voluptuous' Lucy easily vulnerable to temptation. His act of contaminating the blood of Mina is the strategy to make Mina a medium messenger to draw the Dr. Van Helsing and his co-warriors into his own castle. The final assassination of the Count by "Jonathan's great knife […] shear through the throat" (Stoker 447) and "Morris's bowie knife plunged into the heart" (Stoker 447) does not correspond to the ritualistic mode of the assassination of vampires.

The dead Count, before his dissolution in Nature as dust, appears to be content. As Mina observes: "even in that moment of final dissolution, there was in the face a look of peace, such as I never could have imagined might have rested there" (Stoker 447). Such serenity, apparent in the face of the Count, apart from its redemptive implications, resembles ease of mind and body post consummation.

The penetration of his heart by Jonathan can be considered as a symbolic act of sexual penetration that completes the long-cherished desire of Dracula. Did Dracula deliberately draw Dr. Van Helsing and his co-warriors to his own castle in order to fulfil his desire? The answer, however, appears to be difficult and uncertain in spite of the strong homoerotic suggestions.

In ""A Wilde Desire Took Me": The Homoerotic History of Dracula" (1994), Talia Schaffer has drawn a parallel between Count Dracula and Oscar Wilde in order to substantiate her hypothesis of *Dracula* as a text replete with homoerotic suggestions (Auerbach and Skal 471) According to her:

> Dracula reproduces Wilde in all his apparent monstrosity and evil, in order to work through this painful popular image of the homosexual and eventually transform it into a viable identity model. (Auerbach and Skal 471)

The infamous trial of Oscar Wilde that preceded the publication of *Dracula* in 1897 seems to have a formative influence upon the character of Dracula as well as the interrelationship between Dracula and Jonathan. Apart from the physical parallels drawn between Dracula and Wilde by Salli J. Kline (Kline 188-191, quoted in Auerbach and Skal 473)[83], Dracula becomes a homoerotic icon in his irresistible charm, his eternal youth and his erotic physical attributes. Jonathan's primary description of the Count is unmistakably physical, loaded with amazed admiration and confused adoration. What astonishes, rather fascinates Jonathan during his first meeting with the Count is the "marked physiognomy" (Stoker 28). What follows is a description of Dracula in minute detail with marked admiration of his masculinity on the one hand: a strong and sharp-featured face, massive eyebrows, wide forehead, thick moustache, "sharp white teeth" (Stoker 28) and "strong chin and firm cheeks" (Stoker 28), and a secret temptation for his lips with "remarkable ruddiness" (Stoker 28) suggesting a craving for the extraordinary vitality manifested by Dracula even at this age.

What I perceive in the representation of Dracula in the account of Jonathan while residing in the castle is a problematisation of gender identity and the supposed sexual preference of the former. In his physical attributes Dracula appears to be an aggressive male although the red lips resemble the attributes of femininity. His care for and attachment with Jonathan is almost maternal in nature although he boasts of his masculinity by referring to his heroic lineage. In *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992), film adaptation of the novel by Francis Ford Coppola, Dracula is shown to be flaunting his sword (appears to be a phallic symbol), while speaking about the glorious past of their ancestors.

The text says that the initial admiration of Jonathan of the physical attributes of Dracula has turned into a fearful repulsion as the Count approaches near him. The "rank" (Stoker, 29) breath of the Count generates in him a "horrible feeling of nausea" (Stoker 29). I think that this damp, coarse smell smacks of death as one can assume. Also, the smell symbolically resembles, as I think, the damp, coarse smell of post-ejaculation semen as well. The smell follows a shaky

[83] Salli J. Kline. "The Degeneration of Women". Rheinbach – Merzbach: CMZ-Verlag, 1992, pp. 188-191. Quoted in Talia Schaffer. '"A Wild Desire Took Me": The Homoerotic History of *Dracula*.' *Dracula: A Norton Critical Edition*, edited by Nina Auerbach, and David J. Skal, W. W. Norton & Company, 1997, pp. 470-482.

response from Jonathan as Dracula's hand accidentally touches his body: "As the Count leaned over me and his hands touched me, I could not repress a shudder" (Stoker 28).

The reference to the repellent smell has been brought by Jonathan to explain the reason behind his shuddering response to the body contact with the Count. The nauseating smell, therefore, functions as a perfect alibi to conceal the secret delight, which he felt by his 'accidental' intimacy with the Count. Later, in the episode of searching for the key, a phallic symbol, in the coffin of the Count, Jonathan's fascination with Dracula's body is unmistakable: "There lay the Count… his youth had been half-renewed […] the cheeks were fuller, and the white skin seemed ruby-red underneath; the mouth was redder than ever" (Stoker 67). As Jonathan leans over him to search his body for the key, he "shuddered" (Stoker 67). The response resembles his previous experience of physical contact with the Count. The shudder in the body followed by a repulsion and revolt perhaps suggests a secret delight followed by a fear of prohibition.

His imagined construction of his own body as a banquet to be fed by the three weird sisters makes him frustrated. The image of the male body as a banquet prepared for the consummation of desire by the 'sexually active' women suggests fear of castration[84]. As Phyllis A. Roth points out in "Suddenly Sexual Women in Bram Stoker's Dracula" (1977):

> For his part, Jonathan appears far more concerned about the vampire women than about Dracula – they are more horrible and fascinating to him. Indeed, Harker is relieved to be saved from the women by Dracula. (Bloom 9)

What Jonathan seems to be afraid of is the chance of the revelation of his own secret sexual fantasy about the Count and the resultant nullification of his own masculinity. As Michel Foucault has observed in *The Use of Pleasure: The History of Sexuality: Volume 2* (1978)

> No one would be tempted to label as effeminate a man whose love for women leads him to immoderation on his part; that is, short of doing a whole job of decipherment that would uncover the 'latent homosexuality' that secretly inhabits his unstable and promiscuous relation to them. (85)

[84]"Castration anxiety is a psychoanalytic concept introduced by Sigmund Freud to describe a boy's fear of loss of or damage to the genital organ as punishment for incestuous wishes toward the mother and murderous fantasies toward the rival father. The anxiety is validated by the boy's discovery of the anatomical difference between the sexes." G. Taylor. Castration Anxiety. In: Zeigler-Hill, V., Shackelford, T. (eds) Encyclopedia of Personality and Individual Differences. Springer, 2016, Cham. //doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-28099-8_1365-1. Accessed 10 December 2022.

Jonathan's attempt to hurt the body of the Count with the shovel can therefore be considered as a desperate stance to exercise and assert his masculinity. Such a desperation emanates from the fear of the emergence of a race in 'enlightened and modern' London, subordinated by Dracula.

The primary challenge before Dr. Van Helsing and his comrades, as evidenced in the text, is to sanitize the city from the contamination of Dracula. The fear of contamination represents the Victorian anxiety concerning the proliferation of homosexuality that has the potential to unsettle the heteronormative design of Victorian sexuality. It is significant to note that apart from Jonathan, no other character in the novel manifests such an intimacy with the Count. The bodies of Lucy and Mina have been used as mediums to exercise control over the men in Dr. Van Helsing's army to fight against Dracula. The female body has been transformed into a trope of sexual inversion, a potent medium through which Dracula accomplishes his agenda of subverting heteronormativity in order to resist the dominant paradigm of Victorian sexuality.

In the Dracula Castle, Jonathan Harker appears to suffer more from gynophobia than the fear of the Count: "I am alone in the castle with those awful women. Faugh! Mina is a woman, and there is not in common. They are devils of the pit!" (Stoker 69). On the contrary, as soon as he discovers that he has been made a veritable prisoner in Dracula's Castle, he feels a "sort of wild feeling" (Stoker 39). The subsequent feeling of horror, which overpowers the mind of Jonathan emanates from the narratives heard from the people of Transylvania and the rituals performed by them (Jonathan refers to the crucifix, garlic etc.). The fear appears to be more about a supposedly alien creature shared with the community.

The sexual subversion evident in the threatening figure of Dracula is not only limited to his ambivalent sexual orientation and gender traits, but gets manifested in his agenda to establish a counter-discourse of sexuality in opposition with heteronormativity to construct an image of the self and the parameters to gaze on and define himself. The anxiety of Jonathan and the other men in Dr. Van Helsing's army, not only emanates from the fear of disruption caused by the non-normal sexual preferences of Dracula, but also his ability to renew his youth, which registers a defiance of the 'Natural Law' of the gradual reduction of sexual desire with the advent of old age.

Dracula projects himself not only as undead, but also as a possessor of eternal youth. Moreover, he threatens to create a race of his own progeny who would have eternal life and imperishable

youth: “Your girls that you all love are mine already; and through them you and others shall yet be mine-my creatures, to do my bidding and to be my jackals when I want to feed” (Stoker 365). Such a dangerous prophesy, apart from its devilish anticipation, implies a promise to set up an army of vampires with eternal youth and charm to lure the rest of the population to become their slaves.

3.13. Geriatric Sexuality in *Dracula*

What appears to be the matter of concern is the menace of the proliferation of the race without the natural cycle of birth, growth, procreation through heterosexual intercourse, asexual old age and death. The whole façade of heteronormativity becomes vulnerable to such perilous prospect. The grave prospect of the renewal of youth by consumption of blood vis a vis non-procreative consummation appears to be a severe blow to unsettle the normative structure of heteronormativity. On the one hand, this ever-renewed youth of Dracula has brought sexual anxiety in the mind of Jonathan concerning his own ability to hold the attraction of Mina towards himself as well as the relevance of his own advantage as a young man, a desired and conventionally preferable sexual icon in the heteronormative order. Such an anxiety compels Jonathan to resume his journal that he dared not open following his escape from Dracula’s Castle:

> I thought never to write in this diary again, but the time has come [….] I felt impotent, and in the dark, and distrustful [….] He has succeeded after all, in his design in getting to London, and it was he I saw. He has got younger, and how? (Stoker 225-26)

Jonathan’s fear of impotence and distrust emanates from his anxiety about the superiority of the Count with renewed youth, in terms of sexual desirability.

The resurgence of youth, sexual desire to be specific appears to be a threat to the monopoly of the youth over sexuality in the heteronormative order. It is pertinent to remember that during their first meeting in London, what makes Jonathan hysteric with fear, is the renewed youth and charm of Count Dracula: “I believe it is the Count, but he has grown young. My God, if this be so […] if I only knew!” (Stoker 208). The fear of Jonathan becomes apparent when Mina, in spite of her observation of the fear of Jonathan, could not fail to notice the Count:

> He was very pale, and his eyes seemed bulging out as, half in terror and half in amazement, he gazed at a tall, thin man, with a beaky nose and black moustache and pointed beard…his face was not a good face; it was hard, and cruel, and sensual…his big white teeth, that looked all the whiter because his lips were so red, were pointed like an animal's. (Stoker 207)

The reason behind this fear and anxiety of Jonathan, as I perceive, is twofold. Firstly, the Count with a renewed youth can emerge as a potent rival to contest the claim of youth regarding their socially sanctioned monopoly over sexuality, endorsed and valorised in the heteronormative order. Secondly, Jonathan fears that the renewed youth of the Count may revive his own secret temptation for him, a non-normative desire he has suppressed with great efforts. We need to keep in mind Jonathan's reluctance to open the pages of the journal written in Dracula Castle once again. His restlessness and anxiety are explicit, although the source is not clarified. As Mina records: "The poor dear was evidently terrified at something – very greatly terrified; I do believe that if he had not had me to lean on and to support him, he would have sunk down" (Stoker 207)

Hence, the resolved Jonathan expresses his determination of unmasking the Count with the assistance of a virtuous old guard Dr Van Helsing: "Van Helsing is the man to unmask him and hunt him out, if he is anything like what Mina says" (Stoker 226). It is important to note that in order to defeat and destroy a defiant patriarch, Jonathan and the other young men in the army of Dracula, need a virtuous veteran leader, who is ascetic and therefore, immune to sexual temptation. Dracula and Van Helsing, as I observe, manifest the popular Victorian model of Virtue/Vice represented in the characters of two siblings as manifested in the characters of Lizzie and Laura in *Goblin Market* (1862) by Christina Rossetti. Count Dracula, in his contestation of heteronormativity through renewed youth and non-procreative sexuality as well as generation and proliferation of a race without a heteronormative procreative model appears to be a damned old man subscribing to anti-Christian principles.

The task of Van Helsing, the virtuous 'sibling' is to resist the onslaught of evil manifested in the non-normative orientation of his 'fallen brother' and to redeem him by virtue of his own victory over temptation and evil forces. Van Helsing, like Dracula, has to pass through the temptation trial. Dracula failed, for his lustful encounters with Lucy, Mina and other women including his incestuous bond with the three female vampires as well as his sexual fascination for Jonathan, but Van Helsing succeeded as he encountered the three strange women in course of their final journey to Dracula's Castle: "They drew back before me, and laughed their horrid

laugh. I fed the fire, and feared them not; for I knew that we were safe within our protections" (Stoker 436). The victory of Van Helsing propels the salvation of the Count: "even in that moment of final dissolution there was in the face a look of peace, such as I never could have imagined might have rested there" (Stoker 447).

In his "Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality" (1905), Sigmund Freud pointed out that

> it is not possible to adopt the view that the form to be taken by sexual life is unambiguously decided, once and for all, with the inception of the different components of the sexual constitution. On the contrary, the determining process continues, and further possibilities arise according to the vicissitudes of the tributary streams of sexuality springing from their separate sources. (237)

Such an ambivalence in the shaping and sustainability of sexual behaviour interrogates the deterministic constraints of the dimensions of sexuality stipulated and maintained by heteronormativity. Victorian insistence on self-control has been primarily extended to the domain of sexuality where not only the modalities of sexuality, but also the span of sexual desire have been determined. Sexual behaviour of children in pre-puberty and that of old people in post-menopause (in case of women) and post-fifty, with the decline in the level of testosterone (in case of men) have been exempted from the consideration of heteronormative assumptions and codification of sexuality. Such deterministic views emanate from the utilitarian conception of sexuality, namely its function in the process of procreation. Pleasure principle[85] is by and large, undermined. Instead, sexual behaviour has been associated with morality and ethical principles.

In her PhD dissertation entitled "Victorian Fiction and the Psychology of Self-Control, 1855-1885" (2011), Anne E. Ryan says that the term "Self-Control" (Ryan 10) refers to that:

> '[…] capacity of individuals to regulate their actions, emotions, and thoughts—a capacity that for many Victorians was closely linked both to emotional restraint and to self-determination, the ability to shape one's future character and circumstances.' (10-11).

[85] "Freud described the pleasure principle in terms of the need to discharge or reduce tensions—experienced as pain or discomfort— created internally or by external stimuli. The id, which operates on the pleasure principle, is the instrument for discharging these tensions. However, it is held in check by the ego, operating on the opposed reality principle, which mediates between the primitive desires of the id and the constraints of the external world". "Pleasure Principle." Gale Encyclopedia of Psychology. Encyclopedia.com. 29 Nov. 2022. www.encyclopedia.com>. Accessed 10 December 2022.

What is significant to infer from the above observation is the prioritisation of "emotional restraint" (Ryan 11) as the principal determinant to regulate sexual desire. Contemporary studies on Geriatric sexuality has identified emotional and cultural quotients as crucial external factors to determine sexual behaviour of older people. As Supriya Mathur et al. have observed in "Contemporary Vistas in Geriatric Sexuality" (2019):

> Various factors affect sexuality in elderly, for example, marital status, primary sexual attitudes and values inculcated from childhood, religious background, intrapsychic conflicts like performance anxiety, interpersonal issues, awareness about sexuality, and educational status. (2)

Victorian heteronormativity endeavours to restrain sexuality of the older people by constructing them as essentially ascetic. The compulsive asceticism has been conceived as a component of moral behaviour ascribed to an ideal old person. Moreover, the other behavioural traits attributed to the older men are indolence, passive resignation, lack of physical energy implying lack of sexual appetite.

The primary problem to categorize and define the age of Dracula is his unbelievable physical strength, inexhaustible energy and desire to live forever. What surprises Jonathan is the virile masculinity of Dracula corresponding more with a young rather than an old man. Dracula's confession problematizes his own age and sexual preference: "I am no longer young [….] Moreover, the walls of my castle are broken; the shadows are many [….] I love the shade and the shadow […]" (Stoker 35). His preference of "the shade and the shadow" (Stoker 35), as I think, refers to the sexuality of Dracula with its multiple shades (homosexuality, polygamy, incest, necrophilia, sadism etc.) and shadowy indeterminism. The dilapidated Medieval Dracula's Castle with broken walls stands as a metaphor of the Count as an old transgressor, who has dismantled the restraining walls of heteronormativity.

3.14. Conclusion

Written in the last decade of the nineteenth century, *Dracula* (1897) appears to represent the elements of Victorian heteronormativity in their culminating form through subtle use of metaphor. Non-normative sexualities have been projected as monstrous, bizarre and fearful replicating the collective social sentiment of Victorian society. However, for me, the charm of

Dracula (1897) lies in its problematisation of heteronormativity by virtue of its resistance to subscribe to the notion of sexuality as monolithic, one-dimensional, singular in form and manifestation. The popularity of the novel even after one hundred and twenty-five years of its publication may be attributed to its exploration of sexualities secretly nurtured by many but hardly gets manifested because of social restrictions, taboos and prohibitions.

Dracula (1897) by Bram Stoker, in spite of its subversion of the norms of heteronormativity in its exercise of different forms of non-normative sexuality, as I find, seems to present a curious case of compromise with heteronormativity. Despite his resistance to embrace asceticism prescribed by heteronormativity, as the desired destination of the aged men and women, the regenerated body of the old Count into a handsome and masculine man perhaps suggests a tacit acceptance of the criteria of a desired suitor in a society governed by heterosexual monogamy. Such a compromise, although presented as a strategic camouflage to deceive the Londoners, ironically anticipates the normative vampires, who would be dominating the vampiric order in late twentieth and twenty-first centuries.