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An Evolution of Evil: the Cycle of the Vampire

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AN EVOLUTION OF EVIL: THE CYCLE OF THE VAMPIRE

by

Edward R. Wenskus

A Thesis

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MASTER OF ARTS

1994

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Introduction

Vampires have existed historically throughout world culture in a plethora of different forms. Although the word vampire is a derivative of the Slavic word vampir (Summers 20), the concept of vampirism dates well back to ancient civilizations around the globe. The Chinese vampire, Ch'Shih, was regarded as a demon who took "possession of a dead body" and preserved it "from corruption owing to its . . . preying on other corpses or upon the living" (Summers 237). Malayans of Indonesia performed a number of magic rites to protect themselves against a spirit which was "supposed to resemble a trunkless human head with the sac of the stomach attached thereto" (Summers 251) and flew about at night in search of the blood of infants. Mexican vampires, the Ciuateteo, were women who died during their first labor and who sought to afflict humanity with blight and disease. The lamia of ancient Greece and Rome were a group of female monsters who lived on the flesh and blood of children and youths. In Yugoslavia, Moslem gypsies are said to believe that a vampire is a "dead man's shadow" (Barber 188), and the Ovambo, a Bantu tribe of South Africa, believe that every individual that dies has power over the living, sometimes benevolently, sometimes malevolently (Summers 10).

Although the surface similarities between these cultures' undead are easy to find (that is, the vampire originates from a dead individual and takes on predatory

habits towards the living), one of the most important aspects that they share is their mutability. Through both the barriers of time and culture, vampires are ever in the process of changing. At times they may be seen as a threat to the very structure of community, while at other times they are simply a nuisance that needs to be dealt with. Though the practical belief in vampires in Western culture has largely been abandoned for centuries, the vampire, in all of its variant forms, lives strongly on in our literature.

From the very first fragment of Lord Byron's vampire story to the dozens of novels that are currently published every year, the literary vampire continues to evolve in its own peculiar manner. The mutability that characterizes nosferatu, a German word meaning "not dead" or undead (Ryan xv), in folklore remains one of the most fascinating aspects of the vampire today. As each culture in the ancient world described and interpreted this predatory hunter of the living, modern-day authors with their own unique perceptions redefine, extrapolate and ultimately aid in the process of vampire evolution every time they write a work that concerns these undead denizens. One would assume that with the varied talents of hundreds of writers, each possessing a mind capable of its own unique imaginings, the vampire would have been fragmented into numerous interpretations that had very little in common with one another, random stories scattered throughout literature. Yet, despite the fact that

writers have very specific personal views that they instill into their vampire creation, a very definite pattern has emerged through the years which illustrates that the vampire's manifestations in literature are anything but random.

The very nature of this pattern is based on the vampire's duality -- that is, the "good" and "evil" images that nosferatu have been portrayed in. When the trends of these characteristics are chronologically examined, a cyclic pattern clearly emerges. The very first vampires were developed in a mixture of sympathetic and unsympathetic portrayals. A vampire in one work could be cruel and hateful while, in another, it could be a suffering soul locked in an undead body. As time wore on, both of these portrayals were eventually fused into the same vampire of a particular work, providing an internal balance in the vampiric character. With the publication of Dracula in 1897, however, the sympathetic side of the vampire's character was lost and the nosferatu became seen solely as an embodiment of evil. For the next seventy or eighty years, there was much development of vampires themselves, as they modernized to a century that was growing increasingly farther from the Gothic tradition, but the malevolent nature of these creatures remained basically the same. It wasn't until the 1970's that the sympathetic side of the vampire was rediscovered and both vampiric types once again co-existed with each other, completing one full cycle of the

vampire's evolution.

This pattern will be established by examining the characterizations and actions of these undead creatures in several major works spanning two centuries. The vampires in each will be compared and contrasted to one another in order to exemplify their sympathetic or unsympathetic natures. In addition to this, a brief analysis of the influences of these works on each other will be dealt with, detailing the creation of specific traits that have evolved alongside the vampire's character. By examining the chosen vampire tales in these manners, the cyclic pattern of the vampire's evolution becomes evident.

The Early Nineteenth Century

Though vampiric beliefs and stories had been recorded for centuries before the Romantic Era, it wasn't until the early nineteenth century that the vampire appeared in prose form. The two very first vampire stories ever to be written in this medium were penned by John Polidori and the notable Romantic poet Lord Byron. Although Polidori must be credited for the actual completion and publication of the first story, "The Vampyre" (1819), the inspiration behind this piece may be largely attributed to Byron, in more ways than one (Carter xxxii). On a basic level, Byron concocted the very framework and a portion of the plot-line when he, Polidori, and Mary and Percy Bysshe Shelley swapped ghost stories one June night in Geneva 1816, coincidentally the same night that Frankenstein was conceived (Ryan 1). Both Byron's and Polidori's works take place in a Grecian setting and each tells of similar circumstances surrounding the "death" of the main hero/villain. Although Byron's character, Augustus Darvell, is moved to a resting place bathed with the beams of the full moon (which is a folkloric revival method for vampires), the fragment ends before he arises again. When Polidori's Lord Ruthven suffers a similar end at the hands of brigands, he commands his companion, Aubrey, to perform the same task for him; only months later, Aubrey is shocked to find his acquaintance reanimated and walking about in high society again. But

apart from these surface similarities, these two works are, indeed, as different from each other as night is from day.

When these two tales are examined, the origins of the vampire's double nature as both protagonist and antagonist become clear. Byron, as he was wont to do, modeled Darvell as yet another one of his "Byronic heroes." Like many of his other characters, Darvell possesses an "air of enigmatic fatality that later becomes the hallmark of the Undead," (Carter xxxii). The sympathetic portrayal that Byron assigns to Darvell may be seen in the narrator's observations of his traveling companion.

It was evident that he was prey to some cureless disquiet; but whether it arose from ambition, love, remorse, grief, from one or all of these, or merely from a morbid temperament akin to disease, I could not discover . . . (3).

As the narrator follows the brooding Darvell through the wilds of Greece, it becomes quite evident that Darvell's suffering is rooted deep within his being. Not only is his psychological stability in rapid decline, but his physical condition inevitably follows:

The constitution of Darvell . . . had been for some time gradually giving away, without the intervention of any apparent disease; he had neither cough nor hectic, yet he became daily more enfeebled; . . . he was evidently wasting away (3).

The sufferings that Byron attributes to this undead figure are clearly sympathetic in their handling. Indeed, the mental sufferings and discordant condition of Darvell are perhaps the most recognizable attributes of the Byronic vampire that are prevalent in vampire tales, even as recently as the 1990's. But despite the artistic merit that Byron possessed, the reign of the Byronic vampire owes its popularity primarily to his audience.

Byron himself was one of the most popular individuals of the Romantic period. Not only did his "celebrity during his lifetime outshine that of all the [other Romantic writers and poets] put together" (Altick 3), but his popularity increased even more after his death in 1824. His intensely popular status "can be explained partly by the romantic interest in his poetry for that generation, and partly by his death in the Greek struggle for independence" (Perkins 785). In the eyes of his adoring public, he died the death of a hero, valiant and daring as the exploits of some of his own characters. But in addition to the admiration of Byron's poetry and his public life, there was also keen interest in Byron as a private individual (though it could be argued that anything he did in private became public whether he wanted it to or not).

Aspects of Byron's eccentric personality were, in fact, quite similar to those of some of Darvell. Both often stayed up all night and were "given to moods, hysteria, and strange rages" (Perkins 781). Both the writer and his

character have been described in almost apparitional terms, and each was incessantly dogged by a "shadowy guilt, the allure of a fallen Lucifer . . . and secret woe that proved irresistible" (Perkins 780) to the public. Even though Byron's "Fragment of a Novel" was a very minor literary excursion in his career, the combination of its topicality and the public's enamorment with Byron himself breathed vibrant immortality into the still lungs of the vampire, making it one of the first links in its undead evolution.

The success of Polidori's darker and more sinister vampire owes its popularity to many of the same origins, namely the characteristics of Byron himself. Polidori, who "flirted alternately with medicine and literature" (Varma xxiii), traveled with Byron for some time as a personal physician to the occasionally unstable poet. Despite the educated conversations that Byron and Polidori often engaged in, the two men "quarreled often and tension was high by the time they reached Geneva" (Ryan 1), where they met the Shelleys on May 27. Polidori took an instant dislike to Shelley, which embittered him towards Byron, who spent much of his duration in Geneva talking about poetry and alienating Polidori, who until then had been "his" companion. As the summer drew on, the quarrels grew worse and "Polidori even challenged Shelley to a duel" (Ryan 1) before he was disgustedly dismissed at the end of the summer.

The fragment that Polidori based his story on was not

published until 1819, when it appeared in the April issue of New Monthly Magazine. Though it was billed at the time as "a Tale by Lord Byron" (Summers 280), even with a cursory glance it was determined that this was clearly not the work of Byron, and in next month's issue, a letter from Polidori appeared in which he detailed the true origins of the story.

Polidori's work was easily recognized as not having been written by Byron for several reasons, the most obvious evidence of this being Byron's own letter to New Monthly Magazine in 1819 which lambasted Polidori's version and brought to light his own fragment. But secondly, and more importantly, "The Vampyre" lacked the Byronic qualities that appealed so much to the section of the public that adored every sentence produced by this poet. Examination of the vampiric character, Lord Ruthven, attests to this.

Instead of presenting Ruthven in a sympathetic light, Polidori presents this Lord as an absolute villain for whom the reader feels no pity whatsoever. From his "dead grey eye" to "the deadly hue of his face" (7), Ruthven is a predator of the innocent, searching out naive and unsuspecting victims, lulling them into a false sense of security with his "winning tongue" (7) and then slaking his thirst on their blood and their purity. His traveling companion, Aubrey, perceives him thus:

. . . [he] was always with the same unchanging face, with which he watched the society around: it was not, however, so when he encountered the rash

youthful novice . . . then this apparent abstractedness of mind was laid aside, and his eyes sparkled with more fire than that of the cat whilst dallying with the half-dead mouse (10).

Throughout his travels on the Continent, Ruthven seduces numerous "innocent, though thoughtless girl[s]" (11) until Aubrey cannot stand the company of his Lordship any longer. They separate and follow their own agendas.

But time and time again, the shadow of Lord Ruthven falls across the path of Aubrey. In Greece, a young girl named Ianthe is attacked and drained of blood, leaving neither "colour upon her cheek" nor life within her body (15); Lord Ruthven coincidentally happens to be in the same part of the country at that time. After this episode, Ruthven's fateful encounter with brigands renders him almost lifeless. He makes Aubrey, who also coincidentally happens to be going through the same mountain pass, swear not to ". . . impart [the] knowledge of [his] crimes or death to any living being" (17) until a year after this event. Aubrey agrees to this. He then returns to England a couple of months later and attends a social gathering in company with his sister. Much to his shock, though, he discovers that the once-dead Ruthven is engaged to Ms. Aubrey; as a result of this news, Aubrey immediately succumbs to a violent brain fever from which he never fully recovers. He attempts to warn his guardians of the impending danger that

his sister is in, but Ruthven calmly reminds him to "remember your oath, and know, if not my bride today, your sister is dishonoured. Women are frail!" (23). Only on his deathbed does Aubrey relate the entire tale; when the guardians hasten to protect his sister, they find that only the sinister echoes of Ruthven's cold laughter are present and that Ms. Aubrey had already "glutted the thirst of a VAMPYRE!" (24).

Unlike Darvell, Ruthven does not suffer from his vampiric state and instead glories in it. Ruthven's colorless and dispassionate expressions, even during the midst of the triumphant seductions of his victims, add to the true feeling of animated lifelessness that surrounds him. Polidori's antithetical treatment of the vampire is clearly contrasted by the visual suffering that Darvell undergoes as he "supports himself, in a half-reclining position, with great difficulty" (Byron 4), during his walk with the narrator through an abandoned cemetery. The reasons behind Polidori's choice in depicting his vampire in such a manner lie within his own antithetical relationship with Byron.

Instead of developing his vampire from Byron's own point of view, Polidori created a vampiric figure that was "based on . . . Byron's public image" (Rose 4D) within a certain sect of society. Despite Byron's numerous and enamored admirers, many people looked upon Byron's exploits with utter contempt; he was seen as a seducer of the

innocent and his works were considered to be the rough, gravelly surface on the road to ruin. By 1816, dogged by a scandalous rumor that he had a more than platonic acquaintance with his half-sister, Byron's arrival at social gatherings would prompt "Countesses and Ladies of fashion" to leave "in crowds" (Perkins 781). He eventually left England and traveled abroad, Greece being one of his favorite locations and, not surprisingly, one of the major settings of "The Vampyre." To add even more insult to injury, Polidori concocted Ruthven's name from that of Lord Grey de Ruthyn, a nobleman who pressed his attentions quite successfully upon Byron's mother, much to Byron's violent protestations, when Byron was only fourteen (Moore 75). Furthermore, and most important, those who disapproved of this poet's habits could do nothing to stop both the popularity and success of Byron in his endeavors, much in the same way that Aubrey failed to stop Lord Ruthven's activities. By combining all of these elements of Byron's own life in an unsympathetic satire of this Romantic poet, Polidori's story not only attracted an audience to equal Byron's, but he created a vampiric character that held the public's imagination and acceptance even to this day.

The Middle Nineteenth Century

The popularity of "The Vampire" in the years following its publication was staggering. By 1821, it had been translated into French (Le Vampire, nouvelle traduite de l'anglais de Lord Byron), German (Der Vampyr. Eine Erzählung aus dem Englischen des Lord Byron) and Italian (Il vampiro). A version adapted by Charles Nodier made its stage debut in Paris on June 13th, 1820 which immediately became an overnight success and "packed the doors of the Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Martin nightly" (Summers 293). In 1828, Polidori/Byron's story was produced as a German opera in Leipzig entitled Der Vampyr and was received with similar praise (Carter xxxiv). Though the French version was first seen in England in 1820, it wasn't until 1829 that an original English adaptation of "The Vampire" was performed at the Lyceum Theatre; despite the delay, the English public were enamored with it to such a degree that the story was re-adapted by Dion Boucicault in 1852 and again in 1860 as The Phantom (Summers 312). The popular interest in vampires had spread like wildfire through the public.

Though there was an abundance of stage performances concerned with vampires and/or vampiric themes throughout the 1820's and 1830's, it wasn't until 1847 that the next major work in vampiric literature came into existence. As the first vampire novel in English as well as the "first really extended treatment of the theme [of vampirism]"

(Wilson viii), James Malcolm Rymer's Varney the Vampire or the Feast of Blood was a pivotal step in the evolution of the nosferatu.

Varney the Vampire, a mammoth work containing no less than two hundred and twenty chapters squeezed onto 868 double-columned pages, "exemplifies the inflationary processes at work in the period of the vampire industry's peak production" (Frayling 39). Not only did this work illustrate the "more is better" mentality that was pervasive at that time, but Varney's immediate success proved that, for once, it was right. This "penny dreadful" proved so popular that it was reprinted in 1853 in penny installments, and thus made it obtainable to the less wealthy members of Victorian society. It was this combination of wide-spread distribution and mass popular interest in vampires themselves that Rymer was banking on when he wrote this work in the manner in which he did.

Despite its length, the plot of Varney is fairly straight forward. Sir Francis Varney attempts to seduce a beautiful young heroine, but before he can do so the local villagers discover (or guess) at Varney's true nature, and they begin to organize against him. Just as Varney is about to be wed to the endangered young woman in question, his plans are foiled in the nick of time, and he is chased out of the area. A disguised Varney then appears again in a different locale and starts his scheme all over again. This basic pattern is repeated no less than five times

throughout the book, with each section bringing in new subplots that quite often have little to do with the main story. Though this sequence of events evoked a fair degree of interest from the readers at that time, it was the character of Sir Francis Varney that captured the public's imagination (Carter xxxviii).

Unlike either Byron's or Polidori's vampire characterizations, Rymer's Sir Francis Varney is a hybridized combination of the two. Varney is, on the one hand, a fearsome figure who is remorseless in the pursuit of his desires; he strikes fear into the hearts of his victims with a monstrous glee and cannot be swayed from his intentions once they've been set. For instance, his endeavor to rid his ancestral home of its current inhabitants, the Bannerworths, is both unrelenting and ruthless as he preys on the innocent Flora Bannerworth in an attempt to terrify her and her brothers into abandoning the manor. It is this single-mindedness that is comparable to Polidori's vampiric character, as Varney appears to be an uncaring and unsympathetic figure, bent on the ruination of all who inhibit his wishes. Indeed, the very description of Varney during his first attack on Flora is highly reminiscent of Lord Ruthven himself:

The figure turns half around, and the light falls upon the face. It is perfectly white -- perfectly bloodless. The eyes look like polished tin; the lips are drawn back, and the principal

feature next to those dreadful eyes is the teeth -- the fearful looking teeth -- projecting like those of some wild animal, hideously, glaringly white, and fang-like (Rymer 3).

Although Lord Ruthven does not share the animal-like animation that Varney possesses, both characters are unmistakably of the same mold; they are both wrapped in pale, dead features and stare out at the world with dull, non-reflective eyes that proclaim their undead condition to the realm of the living. Like Ruthven, Varney seems to care only about himself as he completely disregards any pleas for mercy in the midst of his actions. But all is not what it seems.

Although Polidori's influence on Rymer may be seen throughout Varney the Vampire, especially in regard to the descriptions of Varney's dark and evil deeds, Rymer also writes of Varney also in a manner that is very similar to Byron's vampiric characterizations. Varney is, at points, as sympathetic a character as Darvell is, as he suffers both internally and externally for his existence. This is evident, for example, directly after he kills a blacksmith who was on the verge of ending Varney's own life. Not only does he go out of his way to bury his victim while hampered by an on-going storm, he also gives a short but solemn eulogy to him as he does so. He then is discovered by a passing clergyman, but, instead of attacking him or running away, Varney lays his inner sorrow open to the bone:

I pray? What should I pray for but that death which whenever it seems to be in my grasp has then flitted from me in mockery, leaving me still a stranded wretch upon the shores of this world. Perhaps you have at times fancied you have suffered some great amount of mental agony. Perhaps you have stood by the bed-side of dying creatures, and heard them howl their hopelessness of Heaven's mercy, but you cannot know -- you cannot imagine -- what I have suffered (845).

Varney's dark, solitary suffering is clearly as intense as that of Darvell and thus illustrates a distinct Byronic tie between these two vampiric figures. But to even further protract this sympathy, Rymer pits "disorderly and vicious mob[s]" (Rymer 230) against the lone vampire which chase, beat, shoot and, indeed, "kill" him at regular intervals. Though Varney's thirst for the "undefiled" blood of maidens' veins places a number of beautiful, young women in danger, his threat to upper-middle-class households is overshadowed by the mob "that threatens private property, law and order, and ultimately society itself" (Waller 278) when it rampages through the countryside leaving destruction and disorder in its wake. The crowd's glee as Varney's residence is being burned with the hope that he is still inside attests to this:

Those who stood around, and within the influence of the red glare of the flames, looked

like so many demons in the infernal regions, watching the progress . . . of the fire, which we are told by good Christians is the doom of the unfortunate in spirit, and the woefully unlucky in circumstances (235).

Varney is clearly both villain and victim in this work; though by his very nature he causes suffering, he in turn has to endure his share of agony as a result. By doing this, Rymer, in essence, created a character that possesses very human qualities, though on a somewhat exaggerated scale. Both the good and evil of a single individual are embodied within Varney's frame, and this aspect above all endears him to the reader. In fact, it was this characteristic that made Varney the Vampire one of the most popular tales of its time.

When Rymer instilled his vampire character with both Byronic and Polidorian characteristics, he undoubtedly knew at the time that the public would not be dissatisfied with the results. Since Byron's fragment and Polidori's "The Vampire" had been for some time issued in a single volume (Summers 290), readers were already primed for a work that dealt with both vampiric interpretations under the same cover. Whether a reader preferred Byronic hero or Polidorian villain, both were present within Varney (and even a Count Polidori who makes a brief appearance near the end of the book.) A purchaser of the work who was undecided as to which view he/she preferred would still be satisfied.

The great success which Varney the Vampire enjoyed affirmed this supposition.

In the years directly following Rymer's work, anonymous imitations of Varney flooded the market, often "with nothing more [changed] than the names of the key characters and the titles before republication" (Frayling 41). But, as in the wake of "The Vampire," only a few of these stories were written in English for many years, despite the fact that articles about the "epidemic superstition among ignorant persons" saturated popular "weekly and monthly magazines of the Victorian era" (Dalby 10). It wasn't until after the fervor surrounding Varney had died down that the next major vampiric work made its appearance.

Carmilla, written in 1872 by Anglo-Irish author Sheridan J. LeFanu, has been considered to be one of "the best of the English vampire stories" (Summers 321) concocted in the nineteenth century for several reasons. Not only did it raise the status of the vampire story above the "shilling shocker" level which it had wallowed in for years, but it established "all of the rituals and set pieces common to the modern formula" (Wolf, Dracula v) for vampire fiction. Indeed, this story would have the greatest impression upon a fellow Dubliner who would later write what would become the most popular contribution to vampire literature in the form of Dracula (Wilson ix). Though Carmilla itself wasn't as popular as Varney the Vampire, its success basically still drew on the double nature of the vampire that Rymer

utilized.

Unlike Sir Francis Varney, Carmilla Karnstein does not fluctuate schizophrenically between vampiric portrayals; instead, her behavior starts out in a most sympathetic fashion and then slowly declines into her true vampiric nature, as perceived by the tale's narrator, Laura.

Laura, the young daughter of an Englishman who has retired to a small castle in Styria, first encounters this story's title character when she witnesses Carmilla's carriage racing out of control down the road that winds past her family's residence. It is here that her sympathy (and the reader's) is aroused as Laura relates how "the scene was made more painful by the clear, long-drawn screams of a female voice from the carriage window" (79). As expected, the vehicle finally overturns, and Laura accompanies her father to survey the scene where they find the unconscious Carmilla amid the wreckage. They take her back to the Manor to await her recovery.

Throughout the rest of the novel, Carmilla's state of health remains unstable at best as she suffers from extreme fits of exhaustion. A mere saunter outside with Laura leaves her "almost completely exhausted" (91), much as Darvell suffers during his walk through the cemetery with his companion. Similarly, she also possesses a mental anxiety that is both reminiscent of Varney and Darvell, specifically in relation to the isolation it brings to her.

Between these passionate moments there were long

intervals of brooding melancholy, during which, I expect that I detected her eyes so full of melancholy fire, following me, at times I might have been as nothing to her (91).

The portrayal of Carmilla as a suffering individual, unable to share her anguish with others, is clearly a Byronic characteristic that elicits sympathy both from other characters as well as the reader. Laura is drawn to the enfeebled Carmilla like a moth to the flame, her heart "feel[ing] rather unaccountably towards the beautiful stranger" (87) who at first seems to share both her age and youthful outlook towards life. But, once again, all is not as it seems.

In spite of Laura's initial enamorment with her foreign companion, Carmilla remains staunchly secretive about her past and her family background -- a fact that Laura takes some offense to as she interprets it as a lack of "trust in [her] good sense and honor" (88). As Laura grows even closer to her, however, the barrier that separates them becomes even more defined as Laura begins to sense in Carmilla a "coldness . . . beyond her years in her smiling melancholy refusal to afford [her] the least ray of light" (89). It is soon after this statement that the true nature of Carmilla's icy soul becomes apparent.

On one of the many evening walks that Laura and Carmilla take together, they happen upon the funeral

procession of an elderly swineherd, who is mourning the sudden death of his only daughter. He is followed in step by a host of peasants from his village who solemnly chant an appropriate funeral hymn. When Laura, in an act of respect, begins singing as well, Carmilla lashes out at her, and tells Laura what a waste of time such activities are and spits out, ". . . I don't trouble my head about peasants" (92). Laura, taken aback, criticizes Carmilla for her opinion and continues to sing regardless. Carmilla reacts thus:

Her face underwent a change that alarmed and even terrified me for a moment. It darkened, and became horribly livid; her teeth and hands were clenched, and she frowned and compressed her lips while she stared down upon the ground at her feet . . . (92).

Carmilla's "fit" strains the increasingly erratic relationship that exists between her and Laura, and Laura seeks to distance herself from her companion's strange behavior. But only days after she does so, Laura herself begins to fall into the state of ill-health that afflicted Carmilla for some time, while, coincidentally, Carmilla appears to grow more vibrant and healthy each day. Soon Laura is confined almost solely to her bed, the captive of strange, nightly dreams of a "large, sooty-black animal" (102) that would spring upon her and plunge its teeth into

her. It is only a matter of time before Carmilla herself enters Laura's dreams "standing near the foot of [her] bed, in her white nightdress, bathed from her chin to her feet, in one great stain of blood" (106).

Luckily for Laura, her guardians are more steeped in superstitious folklore than Laura is, and after some lengthy research, they discover that similar occurrences happened some centuries ago in the very same area. The culprit that was blamed at that time was a Countess Millarca, who supposedly "died" from a similar affliction. It is discovered, though, that her death was but a ploy in order for her to outlive her hunters; having done so, she has seen fit to continue the exploits of her "ancestor" under a new name -- an anagram of Millarca. Forewarned with this knowledge, Laura's guardians watch over her at night to prevent the undead Carmilla from again sating her blood-lust on the innocent Laura. But Carmilla disappears.

Carmilla's transition from sympathetic friend to unholy abomination becomes complete when Laura's guardians discover and open the grave of the Countess Millarca:

The features, though a hundred and fifty years had passed since her funeral, were tinted with the warmth of life. The limbs were perfectly flexible, the flesh elastic; and the leaden coffin floated with blood, in which to a depth of seven inches, the body lay immersed (134).

This confirmation of Carmilla's nature is the final proof that ultimately marks Carmilla's shift into an unsympathetic portrayal. Her disinterment confirms that she has turned into an untrustworthy thief, someone who takes advantage of offered hospitality and steals what is not given to her. She has been given kindness and sympathy from Laura and her family, but at the first opportunity, she then leeches away their health and peace of mind. By the time Laura watches Carmilla be staked into her coffin, she can only see this action as the proper end to an undead creature's "atrocious lusts" (130).

Despite the emotions surrounding the end of Carmilla's unlife, the double nature of the vampire resurfaces in the conclusion of this tale. Laura has written the presented narrative well over a decade after the events have occurred. Whereas one would think that she has written this "with composure," she insists that she "cannot think of it without agitation" (135). The memory of Carmilla has stayed with her throughout her waking thoughts in the intervening years, and "the image of Carmilla returns to memory with ambiguous alternations -- sometimes the playful, languid, beautiful girl; sometimes the writhing fiend [she] saw in the ruined church" (137). LeFanu purposely leaves this last thought for the reader to reflect upon as a reminder of the ambiguous nature of evil in individuals: sometimes inviting, other times repulsive (Waller 54). With this in mind,

Carmilla may, indeed, be said to be the newly refined vampire that has evolved out of the ashes of its Romantic predecessors. She possesses the insidious nature of Lord Ruthven and the paroxysms of Varney's violent outbursts while harboring the melancholy, Byronic air that surrounds Darvell and the occasional mood of Rymer's creation. This refinement not only inspired numerous Victorian authors who copied LeFanu's format, but it also planted a dark seed in the mind of a Dublin-based Petty Sessions clerk who would eventually pen the most famous vampire tale ever written.

Dracula

As an offshoot of Carmilla's popularity, during the 1880's and early 1890's, female vampires substantially outnumbered male nosferatu for the first time (Frayling 55). The cycle of repetition that LeFanu's work created elevated women vampires to the same level as the imposing figures of Varney, Ruthven and Darvell. Anne Crawford wrote of the "perfect blossom" (Crawford 78) Vespertilia, a vampire who had been buried in a crypt since Roman times. Julian Hawthorne, son of the more celebrated Nathaniel Hawthorne, wrote of Ethelind Fionguala, a 300-year old vampire who haunts a graveyard in rural Ireland. Ambrose Bierce's Catherine Larue became one of the first vampires to slake her thirst in the New World as she cunningly victimizes all of her family members. Clearly, despite claims that the "straightforward and insatiable woman . . . virtually disappears from literature after [the time of] Fielding and Richardson" (Weissman 392), the female vampire enjoyed nearly a quarter century of unopposed equality.

When Bram Stoker published Dracula in 1897, however, its immediate and tremendous success changed the entire landscape of vampire fiction for decades to come (Fry 20). Not only did Stoker utilize and refine the conventions of vampire fiction set before him by his predecessors, but he also created an archetype that transcended time and place in

the process (Dziemianowicz 9).

The most notable characteristic that sets Count Dracula, alias Vlad Tepes or Vlad the Impaler (Florescu 24), apart from his nineteenth century counterparts is his completely antagonistic portrayal. All traces of the Byronic vampire have been stripped from Stoker's creation, leaving an undead creature that feels neither pity nor sorrow and instead wallows in hatred and maliciousness. Though this may be seen clearly throughout the entire book, the vampire's "evil" nature may be best seen in the following sequence.

Jonathan Harker, a young solicitor's clerk, is sent to Castle Dracula to conclude some important real-estate purchases for his firm. Though he is treated with the utmost hospitality at first, he begins to notice several oddities about his host. The Count is never seen before nightfall, he never eats in the presence of Harker and, as he explores his surroundings, Harker discovers:

. . . doors, doors, doors everywhere, and all locked and bolted. In no place save from the windows in the castle walls is there an available exit.

The castle is a veritable prison, and I am the prisoner! (27)

This prompts him to attempt an escape by crawling through one of the lofty windows and into a room in the closed-off part of the castle. He unfortunately stumbles upon the lair

of Dracula's three wives, who hypnotize him and prepare to feast on his blood. But before they can do so, Dracula appears. Harker relates:

. . . Never did I imagine such wrath and fury, even to the demons of the pit. His eyes were positively blazing. The red light in them was lurid, as if the flames of hell-fire blazed behind them (40).

Dracula is portrayed here as a demonic monstrosity. He is a devil, a master of evil who controls all in his dark dominion and will stand no challenge to his authority. He "hurdles" (53) the women away from Harker, and dares any to transgress his order. They plead with him in dark, thirsty voices to share Harker with them, but the Count instead tosses a large bag on the floor.

One of the women jumped forward and opened it. There was a gasp and a low wail, as if from a half smothered child. The women closed around, whilst I was aghast with horror; but as I looked they disappeared, and with them the dreadful bag. . . .

Then horror overcame me, and I sank into unconsciousness (40).

The evil of each vampire in this scene is clearly evident. Not only do Dracula's wives care only about their undying thirst for blood, whether it be from Harker or the nameless child, but Dracula himself only gives them his "dinner" because he still needs Harker alive "for there is work to be

done" (40). He promises them that, after the arrangements for his new residences in England are secured, that "[they] shall kiss him at [their] will" (40). Each vampire is self-serving to the point of excluding all respect for the living and even of their own kind. It is this characteristic that separates Stoker's vampires from others of the nineteenth century.

While Dracula is in many ways a striking departure from previous works, it still shares many similarities with them and is, indeed, "much indebted to earlier tales" (Ryan 163). For instance, Stoker followed in the footsteps of his predecessors by making his vampiric character a member of nobility, logically succeeding the precedents set forth by Polidori's Lord Ruthven, Rymer's Sir Francis Varney and LeFanu's Countess Millacra. (Though Byron's Darvell does not have a title, the simple fact that he has enough time and money to travel extensively through Europe is rather indicative of a noble's habits; it is also probable that since Polidori modeled Lord Ruthven after Lord Byron, the association of nobility and vampires may, indeed, be traced directly to Byron himself.) Though this may only be a surface resemblance, its presence is indicative of the influence of other works.

As far as physical evidence is concerned, Stoker's personal library contained several other vampire works as well as other relevant pieces such as Byron's Childe Harold's Pilgrimage and LeFanu's The Watcher and Other Weird

Stories (including Carmilla) (Frayling 346-47). It is not surprising to find Varney, the Vampire missing from this collection since, by the end of the nineteenth century, copies were almost impossible to procure. In the early 1900's, noted Gothic researcher Montague Summers attempted to obtain a copy by offering a huge and exorbitant price, but he met with no success (Summers 333). It wasn't until 1968 that a complete copy was found in an old New England library, from which all modern editions have been reprinted. Nevertheless, there is little doubt that Stoker read Varney in its penny-part reprints as its contributions, as well as those from other authors, are clearly evident in Stoker's vampires.

Though Byron's influence on Stoker was, indeed, limited, sections of his poetry did shape an important part of Dracula -- that of the presentation of the vampire's victim. Lucy Westenra fills the role of Dracula's first prey in England when she succumbs to his hypnotic gaze, and dies from blood loss several days after this first encounter. When she is tended to during her funeral, her fiance, Dr. Seward, notices that:

All Lucy's loveliness had come back to her in death, and the hours that had passed, instead of leaving traces of "decay's effacing fingers," had but restored the beauty of life, til positively I could not believe my eyes that I was looking at a corpse (172).

The quoted phrase originates from "Giaour," in which Byron likens Greece to a newly dead person. The "corpse" in question is described at that time before ". . . Decay's effacing fingers / have swept the lines where beauty lingers," (line 72,73). It is significant that Stoker used this particular passage because, though the body that Byron describes does rot away naturally, the corpse that Seward sees will not because of Lucy's undead state. Before Stoker's "standardization" of many facets of the vampire story, it wasn't uncommon to find vampires wandering around in various states of decay; in fact, the frontispiece of Varney depicts Sir Francis as a lumbering, emaciated monster complete with an exposed rib cage (Rymer 1). Though Byron's line could have simply been used here as an elegant piece of description, it is significant to know that the same poem also contains a famous vampire curse:

But first on earth, as Vampyre sent
 Thy corse shall from its tomb be rent;
 Then ghastly haunt thy native place,
 And suck the blood of all thy race;
 There from thy daughter, sister, wife,
 At midnight drain the stream of life;
 (755-60)

The allusion to this poem, which clearly contains vampiric overtones, cannot be accidental. It may, in fact, be viewed as an example of foreshadowing through which the reader is alerted that Lucy's preserved beauty is not natural as she

does not show the slightest sign of decomposition -- a phenomenon that set in rapidly in the days before refrigeration and embalming. Furthermore, if one were familiar with the aforementioned curse, this passage also would allude to the victims that Lucy chooses, particularly her husband whom she entreats "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 223). Thus the curse of "Giaour" comes to fruition, with only a slight change in its gender reference (husband instead of wife). By integrating this passage within the text of Dracula, Stoker is actively acknowledging Byron's contribution to the evolution of the vampire, by continuing a primary "set piece" of vampire literature -- the unmouldering, immutable physical shape of the vampire.

Rymer's influence on Dracula may be seen primarily in the strikingly similar descriptions that their vampires have in common. When Varney pays a polite visit to his neighbors, before his vampiric nature is discovered, Henry Bannerworth is struck by Sir Francis's distinctive features:

. . . There was the lofty stature, the long
sallow face, the slightly projecting teeth, the
dark, lustrous, although somewhat sombre eyes; the
expression of the features -- all were alike.

(Rymer 61)

The description of the noble vampire in this meeting is undeniably similar to Harker's first encounter with Dracula

himself. The young clerk paints the Count's portrait thus: His face was a strong -- a very strong -- aquiline, with high bridge of the thin nose and peculiarly arched nostrils. . . . The mouth . . . , was fixed and rather cruel-looking, with peculiarly sharp, white teeth; these protruded over the lips, whose remarkable ruddiness showed astonishing vitality in a man of his years. . . . The chin was broad and strong, and the cheeks firm though thin. The general effect was one of extraordinary pallor (Stoker 18).

The similarities between Varney and Dracula are clearly evident: the pale skin, the vampire's characteristic overbite, and the long, thin facial features were all "borrowed" by Stoker in order to capture the same unearthly atmosphere of dread that surrounded Varney. Had Stoker followed the strictures of the Byronic nosferatu, the Count would have looked exactly like a "normal" human being and would have been set apart from humanity by his awareness of his virtual immortality instead of his ominous physical appearance. Though it is possible that these shared characteristics are merely coincidental, such improbability dwindles when Varney's female vampire, Clara, and the undead Lucy of Dracula are compared.

In a concerted effort to seek out and destroy Varney, a hearty vampire hunter, Charles Ringwood, searches methodically for the parasite that exists among them.

Instead of finding Sir Francis, though, he discovers his own recently deceased daughter returning to her tomb:

He grasped the front of the pulpit with a frantic violence, and then slowly and solemnly there crossed his excited vision a figure all clothed in white. Yes, white flowing vestments, and he knew by their fashion that they were not worn by the living, and that it was some inhabitant of the tomb that he now looked upon. . . . Yes, it was his Clara. (Rymer 825)

This exact scene, with only a few alterations, occurs in Dracula when Arthur Holmwood (similar in name to Ringwood), Professor Van Helsing, and Dr. Seward discover Lucy returning to her mausoleum:

The figure stopped, and at the moment a ray of moonlight fell upon the masses of driving clouds and showed in startling prominence a dark-haired woman, dressed in the ceremonies of the grave. . . . then as we looked, the white figure moved forwards again. . . . My own heart grew cold as ice, and I could hear the gasp of Arthur as we recognized the features of Lucy Westenra (Stoker 222).

Stoker's use of this section of Varney established another important "set piece" of numerous vampire stories -- that of an observed vampire returning from its night's escapades. Though this, in itself, is more of a plot contribution to the vampire story, the particular descriptions of the

"whiteness" of each undead creature in their funeral garb have become hallmarks even to the present day (Waller 279).

Carmilla offered two important factors that contributed to Stoker's vampires. First of all, there was the matter of Dracula's home, located snugly in Transylvania's Borgo Pass. Though Stoker felt no qualms in "borrowing" sections of Varney, he felt compelled to omit the most blatant influences of LeFanu; consequently, he cut a chapter from Dracula itself which has since been called "Dracula's Guest." In this, Jonathan Harker comes across the tomb of "Countess Dolingen of Gratz in Styria" ("Guest" 169), an obvious copy of the Countess Milarca who also happened to live in Styria. It was probably Stoker's intent to write a story that directly echoed that of Carmilla, but he prudently changed his mind during the seven years it took him to write Dracula (Denman 153). Instead, Stoker changed the setting to Styria's close neighbor, Transylvania, and thus doomed this small country to be known from then on as a dwelling place for rampant vampires. Nevertheless, without LeFanu's influence, even this fact would not have been so.

The second and more interesting attribute that Stoker lifted from his Irish predecessor was the vampire's connection with animals. Though Varney and other earlier vampires had been described in animal terms, LeFanu took the next logical step and linked animals themselves with vampires. As mentioned earlier (p. 22), when Laura begins to have disturbing dreams, she first envisions that a

"sooty-black animal that resembled a monstrous cat. . . four to five feet in length" (LeFanu 102) preys on her as she lies helpless in bed. Only later does this beast materialize into her companion, Carmilla. This same type of scene may also be found in "Dracula's Guest," directly after Harker succumbs under a shower of hailstones when, on the hazy border of consciousness, he experiences the following:

A vast stillness enveloped me, as though all the world were asleep or dead -- only broken by the low panting as of some animal close to me. . . Then came a consciousness of the awful truth, which chilled me to the heart and sent blood surging up through my brain. Some great animal was lying on me and now licking my throat. . .

(171)

Once again, this scene was so close to the one in Carmilla that it contributed to Stoker's decision to omit this chapter from Dracula. Despite this omission, however, the vampire's association with animals did not end here. Indeed, by the last quarter of the novel, Van Helsing's lecture on the nature of vampires attests that nosferatu "can, within limitation, appear at will when, and where, and in any of the forms that are to him; . . . the rat, the owl, the bat and the wolf (250). Dracula utilizes this ability several times throughout the novel, most noticeably when he leaps from his shipwrecked transport vessel in the form of "an immense dog" (84). Even though the animal that Carmilla

changed into was different from any of those that Stoker listed among Dracula's pool of physical appearances, the fact that this ability was included at all was clearly the result of LeFanu's influence on Stoker.

The dark vitality of Stoker's vampires destined Dracula to become the most influential vampire tale to come out of the nineteenth century (Wolf, Ultimate 12). Not only were readers and other authors attracted by the "jolly good blood and thunder" (Ludham 106) of the story itself, but the concept of such evil and horror stalking about the modern world was equally as compelling (Demetrakopoulos 111). For the next seventy years, Dracula would overshadow all other tales of the nosferatu and serve as the master blueprint for the twentieth century vampire story.

But even though Dracula's influence would be far-reaching, it inevitably drew its success from nearly a century of earlier works which Stoker incorporated into his masterpiece. Primary elements of Byron, Polidori, Rymer and LeFanu managed to find their own form of un-life in Dracula's pages, even though these authors would be mostly forgotten (at least for their vampire tales) until the advent of the vampire anthology in the 1980's. Robert Bloch, screen writer and author of Psycho, once commented on the influence of these earlier works by stating "Carmilla is as assuredly Varney's sister as Dracula is his brother" (Bloch 25). Having examined the vampire's chain of progression through the nineteenth century by comparing

their shared attributes, one can conclude that Dracula is, indeed, the sum of its predecessors, and that any stories that were to be based on this work would by default be also based on the nineteenth century tradition of vampire stories.

The Pulp Era

By the middle 1920's, the vampire story made the transition from the Victorian era to the modern age in the pages of the pulp fiction magazine. Created in 1896, the pulp magazine was "the immediate successor to the nineteenth-century penny-dreadful and the dime-novel" (Weinberg 12), providing a cheap avenue of escapism for middle and working-class readers. Though the first of these periodicals consisted primarily of general action-adventure fiction, it wasn't long before pulps that specifically focused on mystery, science-fiction, fantasy and horror came into being. It was here that the vampire story "was given room to evolve" (Weinberg 12) into its next important stage.

The majority of vampires that appeared in pulp magazines were based quite closely on Dracula himself. These undead creatures exhibited the same ruthless characteristics as the Count and possessed many of the same supernatural abilities. The vampire in Seabury Quinn's "The Man Who Cast No Shadow" (1927), for instance, was almost a direct relation to the Count himself; not only did the Baron Lajos Czuczron share the same Transylvanian descent as Dracula, but his vampiric nature was also revealed to his visitors by his lack of a mirror image (Quinn 35) -- the same way in which Harker began to have his suspicion about Dracula.

Despite the rather unoriginal portrayals of vampires themselves, pulp writers contributed to the vampire's evolution by experimenting with other aspects of the vampire tale, such as setting. Quinn's story, in spite of its blatant similarities with Dracula, is set in Harrisonville, New Jersey, and thus departs from Stoker's work by examining the European vampire in a non-European society. Similarly, the vampire in Kirk Mashburn's "Placide's Wife" (1931) has its "base of operations" around the Louisiana bayous. Other authors, such as C.L. Moore, went even further; his nosferatu tale, "Shambleau" (1933), takes place in a remote part of Earth's latest colony on Mars (Moore 256).

But despite these surface changes in pre-war pulp magazines, the vampires themselves remained more or less the same: ravenous creatures that lacked morality, preying upon the living. If readers who expected their fiction to reflect the same basic structure as Dracula were not satisfied, issues would not sell and the pulps, as many did, would go under. Hugh B. Cave, a 1930's pulp writer, openly admits that the Count profoundly affected him to such a degree that when he "became a writer, three of [his] most successful early works were vampire tales" (Wolf, Essential 344). And in a time when one's entire livelihood depended on the sale of these Depression Era tales, it is clear why authors chose to write of vampires that were modeled distinctly after the most popular vampire of all time.

Of all the pulp magazines that were in existence,

though, one of the most famous and influential was Weird Tales. Founded in 1927, this periodical was the first of its kind, devoting its pages exclusively to the publication of weird fiction until it folded in 1954 (Greenberg xi). In the course of its thirty-one year run, Weird Tales published nearly a hundred vampire tales (an average of one every three issues (Weinberg 12)), making it the primary vehicle for the vampire's continuing evolution. Not surprisingly, between 1927 and 1937, six of Stoker's own short stories were reprinted within its pages, fueled by the public's interest in the 1931 film version of Dracula, starring Bela Lugosi, and its 1936 sequel, Dracula's Daughter, based in part on "Dracula's Guest" (Wolf, Ultimate 352). But despite Stoker's overshadowing presence in the horror and suspense field, Weird Tales's most distinguished authors -- Clark Ashton Smith, Robert E. Howard, Robert Bloch, August Derleth -- began to formulate their own ideas about the future of the horror/suspense tale, all having written a vampire story for the magazine at some time. It wouldn't be until Weird Tale's first glimpse of H.P. Lovecraft's fiction that their ideas would finally materialize.

Howard Phillips Lovecraft's work single-handedly changed the form of the modern horror tale. Instead of embracing the Gothic traditions that his other pulp proteges indulged in, Lovecraft "jettisoned [them] and all other carryovers . . . as inadequate for supporting weird fiction written in the age of modern scientific rationalism"

(Greenberg xii). By doing this, he in essence reinterpreted all fairy tales and superstitions as humanity's attempt to rationalize the unknown; it was with this mind-set that Lovecraft's theory of horror thrived.

Lovecraft himself stated in his well-known essay "Supernatural Horror in Literature" (1927) that "the oldest and strongest emotion is fear, and the oldest and strongest kind of fear is fear of the unknown" (1). This concept is clearly reflected throughout his fiction, as he converted the supernatural beings that were used prominently through the nineteenth century into true creatures of the unknown. No longer were ghosts, werewolves and other such phenomena merely folkloric tales and legends, but solid nightmare beings that were spawned aeons before the feeble advent of mankind. It was no wonder that one of Lovecraft's last stories, "The Shunned House," propelled the vampire's evolution into its next state.

"The Shunned House," published four months after Lovecraft's death in 1937, combines the best elements of the "haunted house" story and the vampire tale in one work. The house in question, located in Lovecraft's home city of Providence, is what its neighboring inhabitants call "unlucky" (113), but not haunted. There "were no widespread tales of rattling chains, cold currents of air, extinguished lights or faces at the window" (113) to lead to a superstitious conclusion. Not only does Lovecraft debunk the presence of supernatural beings in this residence by

disassociating any occurrences there with "standard" signs of haunting, but he goes further to mention that the house is "unlucky," thus bringing in the scientific realm of probability and statistics. It is never denied that "a frightful proportion of persons died there" (113), but the simple fact, that the deaths are not adequately explained does not automatically lead to the belief in the supernatural, as it often did in nineteenth century fiction.

The house's vampiric entity shares this scientific depiction. First of all, the death of its victims is described in the following manner:

These persons were not cut off suddenly by any one cause; rather did it seem that their vitality was insidiously sapped, so that each died the sooner from whatever tendency to weakness he may have naturally had. And those who did not die displayed in varying degree a type of anemia or consumption, and sometimes a decline of the mental facilities, which spoke ill for the salubrity of the building. Neighboring houses, it must be added, seemed entirely free of this noxious quality (113).

The effects of the vampire's thirst are likened to diseases of the blood and other maladies that naturally occur in people, and therefore contribute to the Lovecraftian scientific method of horror. To even further demonstrate this, he also makes it known that the house's

characteristics are unique unto itself, and thus eliminates the possibility of "factory waste dumped in the Providence River" (138), or other such blanket causalities that would affect everyone in the area. The narrator's method of observation proceeds in a completely logical manner.

After ample investigation into the history of this house, the narrator discovers two important facts; first, every structure, dating back to the early eighteenth century, has used the same building foundation, and secondly, all the inhabitants who lived at one time or another in those structures curiously suffered similar conditions and fatalities. It is at this point that the narrator and his adventurous uncle decide to examine the house in an attempt to discover the cause of the house's morbid history.

Naturally, it happens that some of the historical accounts that the narrator has read mention the occasional inhabitant's emphatic belief in vampires. As he and his uncle prepare to stay overnight in this abode, this point is addressed:

To say that we actually believed in vampires or werewolves would be a carelessly inclusive statement. Rather it must be said that we were not prepared to deny the possibility of certain unfamiliar and unclassified modifications of vital force and attenuated matter; existing very infrequently in three-dimensional space because of

its more intimate connection with other spatial units, yet close enough to the boundary of our own to furnish us occasional manifestations which we, for a lack of a proper vantage-point, may never hope to understand (128).

The narrator exposes several more theories on the possible extra-dimensional existence of vampiric beings in following paragraphs, but they all boil down to Lovecraft's basic premise -- that there is no supernatural, only the natural which we cannot comprehend (Joshi 228).

The vampire that the narrator and his uncle discover is like no other creature described in the history of vampire fiction. It is an abomination from the outer ether of this mortal coil and the horror that it creates is absolute:

Out of the fungus-ridden earth steamed up a vaporous corpse-light, yellow and diseased, which bubbled and lapped to a gigantic height in vague outlines half-human and half-monstrous, through which I could see the chimney and the fireplace beyond. It was all eyes -- wolfish and mocking -- and the rugose insect-like head dissolved at the top to a thin stream of mist which curled putridly about and finally vanished up the chimney (134).

The clearly alien portrayal of this vampire is a prime example of Lovecraft's rejection of the last century's tradition. No longer is the Old World vampire effective

enough in its human shape to elicit fear, but a new form for a new century must be chosen in its stead. Although this creature's departure from its folkloric origins is quite apparent in this passage, the consequences of its alien-ness becomes manifest just as strongly several pages later when the narrator has to destroy this monstrosity.

Since Lovecraft's vampire does not adhere to Gothic tradition, the "remedies" for a vampire's existence change rather radically. Traditional folkloric paraphernalia that was effective in past stories is no longer valid. What good would garlic be to something that has a nebulous existence in a different dimension? Does this creature even have a heart through which a wooden stake could be driven? Though the obvious answer to these questions is no, the ineffectiveness of these traditional items brings the new role of religion onto the center stage.

When Lovecraft discarded the vampiric depictions of old, one of the greatest weapons for the purgation of traditional vampires was lost -- Christian religion. When vampire tales first came into being, these mysterious, "Satanic" monstrosities were clearly created against the will of God, and therefore holy objects, such as crosses, crucifixes, and Communion wafers, could be used to repel these undead minions (Barber 47). But in Lovecraft's Godless world, the vampires are not of unnatural origins, simply extradimensional. The mysteries of God were useful

against the mysteries of Satan, but they are useless when confronted with, not the unknown, but the known. In accordance with this, the narrator dispatches the vampire of "The Shunned House" in the following manner:

Suddenly my spade struck something softer than earth. . . The surface I uncovered was fishy and glassy -- a kind of semi-putrid congealed jelly with suggestions of translucency. . . Still more I scraped, and then abruptly I leaped out of the hole and away from the filthy thing; frantically unstopping and tilting the heavy carboys, and precipitating their corrosive contents one after the other down the charnel gulf and upon the unthinkable abnormality . . .

The building maelstrom of greenish-yellow vapour which surged tempestuously up from that hole as the floods of acid descended, will never leave my memory (137-38).

No superstitious remedies are used whatsoever, in the vampire's dissolution -- only the working materials of science with their indisputable effects on material substances. The entire vampire story moves in cause-and-effect manner, with each scientific observation backed by a logical and rational action. Even though the narrator concludes that the being inhabiting the Providence house did not originate from this space or time,

its presence in the material world inevitably binds that creature to the physical laws of reality. Though the narrator didn't know for sure that the acid would destroy this vampire, his faith in science saw him through his ordeal. In essence, Lovecraft has basically concocted a new belief system, one which replaced the power of religion with the power of science. This aspect, above all, would become the most utilized concept in future vampire tales.

Though Lovecraft never retained a large following during his lifetime, in the years directly following his death, he became known as a world-class author of horror and the macabre, and "is frequently ranked as the equal of Poe" (Bloch 2). Despite Dracula's lingering presence in the horror field, Lovecraft would take his place next to Stoker as one of the most influential writers in the history of the vampire's evolution. "The Shunned House" provided a model for future authors of horror, fantasy and science fiction in that it illustrated how modern science can be used "as a sort of intellectual backbone for [future] conceptions" (Joshi 131). The advent of this "scientific vampire" would soon become the primary basis for the majority of these creatures in the years directly following World War II, when "the scientific sophistication of a readership familiar with the atom bomb [would] all but consign supernatural horror to the dustbin of literature" (Greenberg xiii). Nevertheless, even though most of the characteristics of Dracula and other

nineteenth century vampires were no longer "valid" to the reading public, Lovecraft, who "approvingly cited Poe . . . and Stoker" (Shepard 15) as influences, would retain the utter maliciousness that the Polidorian vampire possessed. It would be a combination of Stoker's and Lovecraft's vampires that would live on for several more decades until the rediscovery of the Byronic vampire would, once again, set the two basic types of vampires at odds with each other.

Contemporary Vampires

In the years directly following World War II, the horror market began to dwindle (Weinberg 16). With the advent of atomic warfare fresh in the minds of the reading public, the vampire, and other creatures (werewolves, ghosts, etc.) had to adapt to more sophisticated readers who would "no longer tolerate them" (Weinberg 16) in their current fictional medium. Consequently, writers embraced the scientific constructs of Lovecraft's devising, and found a new audience in science fiction pulps.

Though the horror and mystery pulps were reaching the end of their days, the realm of science fiction was just opening up. New magazines devoted solely to futuristic tales appeared almost overnight and vampires, in all shapes and sizes, appeared along with them. But the nosferatu in question were not simply "space opera's traditional bug-eyed monsters" (Weinberg 17); instead, they were well thought-out creations that reflected the pessimism of the Cold War era. Many dealt with the effects of radiation, such as Cyril M. Kornbluth's "The Mindworm" (1950), in which the vampire in question was a creature accidentally created in the human womb from radioactive exposure. Others, such as Charles Beaumont's "Place of Meeting" (1953), directly examined the role of vampires in a post-apocalyptic world. The outstanding contribution to vampire fiction at this time,

however, was Richard Matheson's I Am Legend.

Written in the midst of the McCarthy Era (1954), this novel was a variation on the "last-man-on-Earth" tale, in which the world has been taken over by vampires and the narrator, Robert Neville, struggles to survive in this impossible environment. Though this work, like the majority of vampire tales at this time, didn't offer much towards the nosferatu's continuing evolution, it did explain away the vampire's existence as the result of a biological disease. This idea would be used countless times in future works and ultimately became a primary hallmark of the updated Byronic vampire.

The sympathetic portrayal of the vampire came once again into prominence, not through a fictional medium, but through that of television. In a desperate attempt to inflate their sagging ratings, the day-time soap opera Dark Shadows introduced the character of Barnabus Collins into its 1967 season. Barnabus, a hundred-and-eighty-year-old vampire, soon became the star of the program, while the soap itself became one of the most popular ever in television history (Scott 10). The series essentially ended when Barnabus, who longed "in tortured solitude" (Frid 13) to again see his reflection and to walk around under the noon-time sun, undergoes a series of experiments that cure him of his vampirism. The series continued a while longer, but without its vampiric lead character, Dark Shadows folded soon after in 1971 (Scott 10).

Since the sympathetic vampire had been gone from public view for so long, the pitiable Barnabus rapidly became the model for a new wave of Byronic nosferatu. The new interest in works that possessed characters similar to Barnabus lead to "an explosive growth of contemporary horror fiction" (Greenberg xiii), which subsequently repopulated bookshelves with "as large a volume of weird fiction as what was published in the preceding century" (Greenberg xiii). With this ensuing volume in mind, several criteria have been used in selecting works for discussion below. Single works have been selected primarily because of their immense popularity and influence on the horror field. Other authors of lesser renown have been included because the sheer number of works that they have written have made them experts in the field of vampire fiction and any consideration of the vampire's evolution would be inevitably incomplete without their mention.

The first major novel to utilize the Byronic vampire to its fullest extent was Fred Saberhagen's The Dracula Tape in 1975. While the story essentially consists of the same plot as Dracula, it varies greatly from its noble predecessor in that Saberhagen's tale is told in first-person from Dracula's point of view. From this angle, Dracula's character is that of a regal prince, fair in his actions and slow to anger. Professor Van Helsing, on the other hand, is portrayed as a religious fanatic who is convinced that all vampires are evil, and that Dracula is the "king-devil"

himself (153). Furthermore, all the "evil" deeds that Dracula supposedly committed are logically explained, and his bad reputation is simply all a misunderstanding. The following exchange between Dracula and Van Helsing attests to this:

I tried fair, honest words again. "I have not come to London to make war, Van Helsing, but to make peace with all mankind --"

"Then, monster, what of the girl? This so sweet young miss who was put in those walls of cold stone; and, worse, who do not stay . . . You who forced that girl to yield to you her very life blood and life --"

"Not so, murderer!" Now did I move closer by a step. "You who drove those splintered stakes into the living breasts of my three friends in Brussels and in Paris! And as for Lucy, it was to save her life that I drank deep enough of her sweet blood to make her what she is -- it was really you who sent her to her tomb! . . . You have done it before, butcher," I pressed on . . . "And with some similar result. Is it not so? Has any victim of your blood-exchanging surgery yet lived?" (155-56)

Dracula is referring to the deadly effects of blood transfusion without cross-matching blood types beforehand, which Van Helsing failed to do before trying to aid Lucy.

To be fair, blood transfusions were relatively new and experimental in Stoker's time (Wolf, Essential 159), but Dracula, being a vampire, has had ample experience with blood-work and is intimately familiar with this topic. Examples such as this abound through this work, and clearly portray Dracula in a sympathetic light.

Dracula in this book is also a by-product of the Lovecraft vampire. Garlic and crucifixes do not affect him, and he is fully capable of walking about in the daytime. Saberhagen's vampires are only separated from humanity by prejudice, such as Van Helsing's, and rather long life-spans. Dracula does not seek to rule the world, but instead only wishes to co-exist without being harassed by vampire hunters, and to live with the love of his life, Mina.

All of Saberhagen's other works portray this King of the Vampires in a similar light. Dracula has teamed up with Sherlock Holmes in order to prevent another epidemic of the Plague being released in London (The Holmes-Dracula File, 1978) and he has battled the seemingly immortal evil of Morgan Le Fay (An Old Friend of the Family, 1979), while fighting off over five hundred years of accumulated enemies. In all of these, Dracula is a "witty, urbane and honorable" (Waller 78) character who still suffers "the continuation of earthly sorrows . . . unknown to those who merely breathe" (Saberhagen, Tape 280). There can be no doubt that this version of Dracula owes as much to Byron as it does to

Stoker, especially in terms of his sympathetic development.

The sympathetic vampire found its next outlet in the historical fiction of Chelsea Quinn Yarbro. Her Chronicles of Saint Germain are far-reaching expeditions of the vampire's existence in various societies, ranging from Renaissance Italy in The Palace (1978) to Ancient Rome in Blood Games (1980). Her first book, Hotel Transylvania (1978), however, encapsulates the very essence of the Byronic vampire.

Though le Comte de Saint Germain's origins have a rather Romantic basis, Yarbro borrowed her novel's basic structure from Stoker himself. Saint Germain, like Vlad Tepes, was a real individual who is historically shrouded in mystery. He was reputed to be the youngest son of Prinz Franz Leopold Ragoczy of Transylvania (Yarbro, Hotel 341), and first arrived in Paris in 1743, the year in which the novel begins. Like Saberhagen, Yarbro used the basic premise of Stoker's masterpiece and changed the variables in the formula -- a foreign prince arrives in Paris instead of London, and while this individual is, in fact, a vampire, he is of a beneficent nature, instead of belligerent.

Hotel Transylvania is essentially a love story in which the heroine, Madelaine de Montalia, falls in love with the mysterious Saint Germain. Though Germain tries to dissuade her interest in every manner, she nevertheless probes enough into his habits to find that he is a vampire. Germain knows, however, that the only way he can love Madelaine is

for her to become as he is -- a fate that he is not willing to bestow upon anyone:

"And you feel safer with me, knowing what I am?" He looked into her face, and he felt his resolution weakening. He broke away from her.

She gave a little cry of entreaty. "Saint-Germain. Saint-Germain, don't do this. . . What did you save me for, if you abandon me?"

His words were lightly ironic as he answered. "You know that what I want to do will not save you."

She reached out for him again. "But it is not so, Saint-Germain. You walk on consecrated ground. You are not damned if you do this."

"Not in the usual way, certainly," he agreed in a neutral voice. . . . "Oh, God," he said softly, in his private torment. "You are willing, but you do not know what may happen to you. . . Madelaine, I burn for you, but I cannot. I cannot." (161)

The Byronic nature of Saint-Germain is evident in his agonizing over this mortal love. Though he wishes to partake in what is freely offered, he refuses himself the opportunity. Just as Aubrey cannot understand the mental agonies of Darvell, Madelaine cannot fathom Germain's. As a result, this vampiric protagonist must face the impossible reality of loving someone who will fade away into old age while he remains unchanged through the years. Saberhagen's

Dracula suffers from the same circumstance, and though it is never revealed whether Darvell's mental anguish comes "from ambition, love, remorse [or] grief" (Byron 3), unconsummated love remains as a possibility for him as well. In combination with the ineffectualness of crucifixes, other religious items and most other folkloric beliefs (though he still needs to be in contact with the soil he was buried in to exist), this illustrates that Saint-Germain shows the major characteristics of the twentieth century Byronic vampire.

One of the more original depictions of the sympathetic vampire appears in Susan Petrey's Gifts of Blood which, though published in 1992, contains her published short stories written between 1979 and 1983. In this collection, Byronic vampires exist as a tribe, the Varkela, and live in solitude on the great Russian steppes. They are a dwindling race of healers who perform medical services for small amounts of blood. Since their ways are rather mysterious to outsiders, they have become the targets of increasing prejudice, and since the Varkela refuse to use force of any kind, even in self-defense, their numbers have decreased steadily over the years. Now only a handful survive, and they are slowly starving to death, their services unwanted by suspicious peasants.

The majority of these stories center around two brother healers, Vaylance and Spareen. Even though they foresee a future in which they are all but extinct, they continue in

their traditional ways, just as they have done so for centuries. They are gentle and considerate, taking not what they need, but what their "price" is for their work. The following scene exemplifies their blood-taking procedure:

I hope they've sent a healthy one, [Spareen] thought, and I hope this payment will be enough for me this month. But he knew it probably wouldn't.

"I've come to pay for the healing of one of my kinfolk," said the dark-skinned Tartar, dismounting and tying his horse to a tent stake.

. . . He noticed that the Tartar eyed him nervously. They always feared him, though he was only one among so many of them.

"Don't worry," said Spareen. "We never take too much."

He led the man into the tent and motioned him to sit on the Turkish rug. Then he began to sing softly in the old tongue, as he usually did before taking his rightful fee. The glazed expression in the Tartar's eyes told him his song was effective.

. . . He counted silently as the warmth flowed into him, and when he had reached the proper number for a scant half-cupful, he withdrew his teeth. . .

"A little will suffice for now," he thought. "It never pays to be greedy." He clapped his

hands and the Tartar came out of the trance.

"You've paid," said Spareen. "You can go home now."

"So quickly?" exclaimed the Tartar, owl-eyed.

"And it didn't even hurt at all . . ." (5-6)

The predicament of the Varkela is similar to the pessimism of 1950's vampire fiction. There seems to be no future for this race except dissolution - yet they continue about their lives. Even though Spareen and his race only wish to co-exist peacefully in this world, they are regarded with fear and distrust, at best. Yarbro's and Saberhagen's vampires may have suffered in a Byronic fashion for love, and even at the hands of vampire hunters, but they still possessed something that the Varkela do not have: hope. Even though the last story in this collection leaves the reader at a point where Spareen and Vaylance still peddle their services with some success, one cannot help but envision even these characters eventually starving like others of their race in this book. Martin Greenberg, a noted vampire anthologist, described the Byronic vampire as "a tragic victim of circumstance" (Greenberg xiv); considering the world Petrey has set her vampires in, there can be no doubt that the Varkela fill this requirement to the fullest extent.

Though the sympathetic vampire's popularity was well founded in this decade, not all horror authors looked kindly upon this contemporary phenomenon. Many thought that these

newly "sympathetic figures leach[ed] the horror from the image of the vampire" (Wolf, Essential xx), and preferred more traditional depictions, such as appeared in Dracula. As a result, a reactionary front to the "new" type of vampire was formed and malevolent vampires again began to appear on bookshelves alongside those of a Byronic nature.

The first truly successful venture in this vein (pardon the pun) was Stephen King's 'Salem's Lot (1975). In this novel, the small New England town of Jersalem's Lot becomes the hunting ground of a European vampire by the name of Straker (an obvious corruption of Stoker) who plans to use this rural area as a springboard towards world domination. He is only opposed by a typical group of unlikely heroes which, though consisting of several supporting characters, center around novelist Ben Mears and Mark Petrie, a twelve-year-old boy. It is through this pair's eyes that the characteristics of King's Stokerian vampires become evident.

Straker and his minions, for he essentially vampirizes most of the town, are true throwbacks to late nineteenth century vampiric depictions. They are unable to walk in daylight, they cannot enter a house without being invited in, they can hypnotize with a glance, and they are profoundly affected by religious objects, as the following passage illustrates:

The exhalation from that opening mouth was fetid, beyond description: a smell of charnel pits.

Cold, fish-white hands descended on Mark's shoulders. The head cocked, dog-like, the upper lip curled away from those shining canines.

Mark brought the plastic cross around in a vicious swipe and laid it against Danny Glick's cheek.

His scream was horrible, unearthly . . . and silent. . . The smile of triumph on the Glick-thing's mouth became a yawning grimace of agony. Smoke spurted from the pallid flesh, and for just a moment, before the creature twisted away and half dived, half fell out the window, Mark felt the flesh yield like smoke.

. . . But for a moment the cross shone with a fierce light, as if an inner wire had been ignited (241).

Danny Glick, one of Straker's first victims, displays all of the traits of a turn-of-the-century vampire and shows none of the characteristics of more modern depictions. Not only does a simple cross cause such intense damage to this nosferatu, but Danny's predatory advances are described in animal-like terms similar to those used when the Countess Millarca began syphoning Laura in Carmilla and when the Count himself burst through the window of Lucy's room in the form of a "great, gaunt grey wolf" (Stoker 151). There are no scientific explanations as to why vampires are affected by crosses, nor are the reasons as to why religious items

glow when they have been used to fend off nosferatu. There is no attempt to rationalize any of these experiences, as in Lovecraft's tales, and the vampires in question are undeniably malevolent and unsympathetic. With these facts in mind, we can see that King's role in the vampire's evolution clearly derives from the recreation of traditional undead as opposed to those designed from twentieth-century assumptions.

Even though King reestablished the Stokerian vampire to counterbalance the surge of sympathetic vampires, Saberhagen's Dracula Tape had substantially weakened the Count's position as the King of Vampires. If the traditional nosferatu was going to be able to compete with the Byronic vampire, the Count himself had to be resurrected. In 1977, two years after the publication of The Dracula Tape, a young author by the name of Peter Tremayne did just that.

Tremayne's Dracula books are a series of historical documents "discovered" by Tremayne that detail several new exploits of the Count himself. Though the settings vary, from fifteenth century Transylvania to middle nineteenth century England, Tremayne's Dracula is as malevolent as Stoker's original. The first and most representative book, Dracula Undead (1977), is a reprinted "fifteenth-century manuscript" written by Mircea, the youngest of the Count's three sons, who feels it is his duty to God to record the story of his encounter with his undead father. Summoned to

Wallachia (Transylvania) by his two older brothers, Vlad and Mihail, Mircea finds himself invited to become "one of the family" again, since Mircea had been whisked away from Castle Dracula by his mother many years before. He tentatively agrees to stay with his brothers awhile, but he soon finds that life in Wallachia is far from his liking, especially since his siblings constantly talk of their aspirations towards world domination. But before he can leave the castle, he is forcibly detained by Vlad and Mihail. They reveal their true undead nature to him and introduce him to their father and his, Dracula himself. The Count personally asks Mircea to join their cause, or suffer the consequences, the most immediate being the vampirization of Mircea's new-found love, Malvina. Being the bold Wallachian that he is, Mircea attempts to escape, but fails; Dracula consequently keeps his promise:

. . . Malvina's eyes widened, her spine arched and her lips opened; and then Dracula embraced her with a harsh bestial snarl, his cloak billowing like gigantic wings behind him. Then, revoltingly, his mouth fastened on her neck, and the two rapacious creatures, first struggling, now silent, were bound together in their perverted devil's rite. He drank of her blood (216).

Tremayne's depiction of Dracula is so accurately Stokerian that even the style that he uses is strikingly similar to Stoker's. This particular passage is, in itself,

reminiscent of Dracula's attack on Mina:

. . . With his left hand he held both Mrs. Harker's [Mina's] hands, keeping them away with her arms at full tension; his right hand gripped her by the back of the neck . . . and the white sharp teeth, behind the full lips of the blood-dripping mouth, clamped together like those of a wild beast (Stoker 298).

Each Dracula is equally as predatory as the other; not only do they attack their victims in a similar manner, but the victims themselves consist of the loved ones of those who would oppose them. They truly are vampiric twins. Even when they are forced to temporarily retreat in their endeavors, their gloating, promissory speeches contain the same material. Tremayne's Dracula calls unto Mircea:

You puny mortal! You will find that I am not thwarted yet, that I cannot be so easily destroyed! You will learn that my revenge has yet to begin, that I can spread it with impunity across the centuries! Time is my friend as it is your enemy . . . (220).

Stoker's Dracula speaks to Van Helsing, Dr. Seward and Jonathan Harker thus:

You shall be sorry yet, each one of you! You think you have left me without a place to rest; but I have more. My revenge is just begun! I spread it over the centuries and time is on my

side (324).

The similarities are in fact so close between these two passages that one cannot but think of the possibility of intentional allusion. Regardless, it remains that Tremayne's depiction of Dracula is exceedingly traditional and certainly derivative of Stoker's masterpiece. In the eyes of the reading audience that favored the unsympathetic portrayal of the vampire, Tremayne's Dracula books, which have been in print since they were written, provided an important base for the continuation of this type of nosferatu.

Brian Lumley's vampires, however, were by far the most original creations of the late 1970's and early 1980's. His best-selling Necroscope series, begun in 1980, not only established a race of vampires so ruthless and cunning that they even overshadow the Count's insidious plans, but he also updated the unsympathetic nosferatu to the twentieth century by giving them a scientific basis, unlike either King or Tremayne.

Lumley himself is a second generation Lovecraft affiliate. Though he had only recently arrived on this Earth as Lovecraft himself departed, his work was noticed at age eleven by one of Lovecraft's proteges, Robert Bloch (Dereleth 505). Since 1973, he has since published well over a dozen full-length novels and innumerable short stories that are fully set in the dark world of Lovecraft's fiction, and received the "blessing" of Lovecraft's closest

associate and literary executor, August Dereleth (Bloch, Introduction 9). With this in mind, it is not surprising that Lumley's vampires are rather similar to the creature that appeared in "The Shunned House."

The Wamphyri, as they call themselves, are not of this world. Those that have appeared on Earth have been exiled from The World of the Gate (it has no other name) for their "crimes" against the current ruling Wamphyri lord. The portal from which they exit is located in the Ural Mountains of Russia, thus offering an explanation as to why vampire legends have been rather prolific in Eastern Europe more than any other locale.

These creatures are of the purest evil and revel in their use of it. They are only opposed by Harry Keogh, Britain's most powerful psychic, who has the ability to talk to the dead. By using his ability to his utmost, and with the invaluable aid of the Great Majority (the Dead), he has made it his duty to seek out these Wamphyri and to stop their monstrous activities on this planet. In an encapsulated briefing by Keogh to his colleagues, he accurately describes these vampires thus:

"They're devious beyond the imagination of human beings. They're liars each and every one, who almost on every occasion would rather lie than tell the truth -- unless there's something of substantial value in it for them. . .

. . . They live on the blood of the host and

form a horrible symbiosis with him. The host is changed, mentally and physically. Sexless, the vampire 'adopts' the sex of the host, and it fosters in him -- or in her -- that lust for blood which eventually will sustain both of them. . .

. . . As the vampire matures within its host, so that host's strength and endurance increase enormously. Likewise his emotion. Except for love, whose concept is alien to the Wamphyri, all other passions become a rage! Hate, lust, the urge to war, to rape, to torture and destroy all peers or opponents (Deadspeak 225-26)."

Though this passage illustrates Lumley's disposition towards the traditional, unsympathetic portrayal of vampires, it also instills the very modern twentieth century base that had been lacking in these types of nosferatu. The vampires themselves are organic, biological creatures that possess their very own unique, parasitic characteristics and are, in themselves, evil beyond comprehension.

When compared, Stoker's Dracula does not even measure up to the stature of these alien entities, for he is only opposed, and successfully, by a handful of Victorian Londoners; the Wamphyri of Lumley's series are fought, and sometimes unsuccessfully, with the enormous resources of Britain's E-Branch, a world-wide intelligence agency comprised of the best psychic minds of England (the E

standing for ESP) of which Keogh is a member (Necroscope 383). Gothic devices used to destroy these Wamphyri are useless. The stake driven through the heart will only immobilize them long enough for them to be burned, the sole method of extermination for these creatures. The combination of this scientific basis along with the malevolent portrayals of the Wamphyri clearly demonstrate the profound influence of Lovecraft on Lumley. The vampires themselves are as real as the creature that inhabited the "Shunned House," and it is only through scientific methods that their evil may be fought. By contributing to the pool of unsympathetic vampire fiction, Lumley brought a much needed dose of realism to the Stoker-based nosferatu.

But by far, one of the best examples of the vampire's duality is Anne Rice's Interview With the Vampire (1976). Told in the form of, surprisingly, an interview between a nameless young man and Louis, a two hundred year-old vampire from New Orleans, a tale of conflict unfolds in which Louis finds himself regrettably associated with the book's other main character, Lestat de Lioncourt.

Louis is as peaceable a character as Lestat is cruel. While Lestat enjoys playing "cat-and-mouse" with his human prey, Louis only joins in the hunting process as a means of sustenance, opting for animal prey whenever he can. Though he realizes that the taking of another's blood is an integral part of existing as a vampire, he only feeds when it is necessary. His abhorrence to this aspect of his

unlife is evident in his reaction towards the first human prey he witnesses Lestat drain:

I had to watch the overseer awake with a start, try to throw off Lestat with both hands, fail, and finally go limp, drained of blood. And die. . . I was almost sick from this. Weak and feverish already, I had little reserve; and handling the dead body with such a purpose caused me nausea. Lestat was laughing, telling me callously that I would feel so different once I was a vampire that I would laugh, too. He was wrong about that. I never laugh at death, no matter how often and regularly I am the cause of it (15).

Though Louis has accepted his vampiric nature, he never forgets that he is taking the life of a being that he himself once was. Lestat, on the other hand, glories in his exploits, sardonically defending his view by telling Louis that his exhilaration in feeding is caused by his privilege of "having a hand in the divine plan" (83) in which death plays a natural role. Louis responds thusly:

"'That is how you see it!' I protested. The girl moaned again; her face was very white. Her head rolled against the back of the chair. .

"'That is the way it is,' he answered. 'Vampires are killers!' . . . He took the girl's wrist again, and she cried out as the knife cut. . . He picked her up and took her into the

bedroom. Our coffins rested on the carpet and against the wall; there was a velvet-draped bed. Lestat did not put her on the bed; he lowered her slowly into his coffin. 'What are you doing,' I asked him, coming to the door sill. The girl was looking around like a terrified child. 'No . . .' she was moaning. And then, as he closed the lid, she screamed. She continued to scream within the coffin.

"'Why do you do this, Lestat?' I asked.

"'I like to do it,' he said. 'I enjoy it.'

(83-84).

The differences between Louis's mindset and Lestat's are as plain to see as a vampire's non-reflection in a mirror. Both characters are of completely different molds; Louis's sympathetic portrayal originates from a Byronic background while Lestat's cruel nature is clearly Stokerian. Even though the story in this work is being told by Louis, the overall feeling that emanates from Interview's pages is one of duality -- a duality of good and evil, reminiscent of the very way Lord Ruthven contrasted Augustus Darvell. By including both character types in this single work, Rice helps advance the vampire's evolution by moving them closer to one another. The two major types of vampires no longer contrast with each other only in different tales by different authors, but they do so within a single source.

The world of Rice's vampires in Interview is a shared world where good and evil exist side by side. Interview With the Vampire, out of the plethora of stories that were written in the later 1970's, illustrates the completion of this most recent cycle. With this book, Rice has proven that, as with human nature, the lives of good and evil vampires are not insular, and that they must inevitably co-exist together. The vampire's return to this state of contrasting sympathetic and unsympathetic depictions attests to this.

Conclusion

With the evidence at hand, it is undeniable that the vampire's evolution to date has been cyclic. Though the nosferatu of the modern day have been "upgraded" to twentieth century standards, the basic sympathetic and unsympathetic attributes that they were originally created with have once again become a part of their fiction.

Interestingly enough, the vampire has already begun moving towards the next stage of its cyclic evolution; that is, both "good" and "evil" traits of vampires are more commonly becoming combined into a single character in a single work, just as Byron's and Polidori's vampires were combined in Rymer's creation. Anne Rice was the first to do this when she wrote later chapters in her Vampire Chronicles, specifically The Vampire Lestat (1985), Queen of the Damned (1988) and Tales of a Body Thief (1992), in which Lestat becomes the first-person narrator instead of Louis. From this perspective, Lestat comes across as a very "human" character, "alternately luxuriating of the dark perfection of his sin, then writhing in . . . shame for his moral awfulness" (Skow 72). The end result is a balanced individual who is not simply good or evil, or an erratic mixture of both, but a unified character who displays more humanity than any of his predecessors.

Brian Lumley has also gone down this path. In Déadspawn (1991), the last book in Lumley's first vampire series, Harry Keogh, the fearless, psychic vampire hunter, becomes vampirized himself and is relentlessly chased around the globe for simply being what he is. His vampiric nature incites him to kill several agents who had designs upon his life, but Harry soon regrets his actions and decides to relocate to the vampire world, both to protect himself and others whom he might hurt. Though Lumley's technique is slightly different from Rice's -- that is, he makes his human character more vampiric rather than making his vampire more human -- the result is basically the same. Keogh is part the monstrosity that has preyed upon the world and part the human who has lived in that same world. His combined double nature is just as convincing and well-balanced as Lestat's.

Finally, Fred Saberhagen, who championed the Byronic vampire from the start, wrote the novel version of the latest Hollywood production of Dracula in 1992. The Dracula that is portrayed in this work is neither the character the noble spirit of Saberhagen's earlier works nor the traditional being that Treymane made him out to be. Instead, the Count is both the romantic hero of sympathetic portrayals and the unsympathetic character who kills those who would destroy him. By writing this novelization, Saberhagen has accepted that Dracula is neither one nor the

other, but both. He freely admits that Dracula has a heart, and "that it is more than an organ to drive a stake into" (Corliss 71), but at the same time, that heart is but an inanimate part of an undead creature. Benevolence and malevolence exist equally in this newest version of Dracula and it, as well as the aforementioned nosferatu of these writers, illustrates that the vampire's cycle is certainly and inevitably advancing towards its next phase.

Though there is no concrete reason why the vampire has evolved in such a manner, the process may have been partially influenced by cultural context. The popularity of non-traditional vampires, for instance, coincides with the onset of liberal times; Byron's efforts emerged from the undeniably non-traditional Romantic Era, and the rekindling of interest in these same sympathetic nosferatu came out of the liberal 1960's and 1970's. Traditional vampires themselves follow a similar pattern. As mentioned earlier, Polidori's creation was fueled by anti-Byronic sentiment and a largely conservative force which sought to extinguish the flame of Romantic liberalism. Traditionalist movements in the 1970's sought similar ends, with the result of these efforts being reflected in a reassertion of the Stokerian vampire. As part of this pattern though, a certain amount of compromise was achieved by both sides, which resulted in the creation of a composite vampire infused with both liberal and conservative views (that is, sympathetic and

unsympathetic portrayals). Such was the case with Sir Francis Varney during the early Victorian Era and similarly with the aforementioned authors in the later 1980's and early 1990's.

Regardless of any specific treatment though, vampires will continue to evolve in their own manner. They have always been creatures that are "at once monstrous and definitely human" (Stade xiv), and it is precisely because they can assume so many forms that they continue to fascinate readers (Howes xiv). And even though specific portrayals will fall into and out of favor with the passing of time, the evolution of the vampire will inevitably continue with immortal persistence.

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