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Gothic Otherness: Exploring Gender, Race, Sexuality, Social Class, and Morality in *Frankenstein*, *Wuthering Heights*, and *Dracula*

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Signatura:

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To my parents and grandparents, who have sacrificed themselves to give me the universe.

To Cristo, who reminds me that soulmates do exist every time our souls gaze at each other.

To Ainhoa, who has taught me that sisters do not need to share the same blood.

To Pumi, whose soft purrs will forever reverberate in the depths of my heart.

To Gemma, whose enthusiasm for literature has inspired me more than she is aware of.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to illustrate how Mary Shelley, Emily Brontë, and Bram Stoker explore the creation of the figure of the Other by employing the use of the Gothic genre in their *magna opera Frankenstein* (1818), *Wuthering Heights* (1847), and *Dracula* (1897), which work as three instances of the representation of the transgressions of boundaries throughout nineteenth-century British literature. The paper examines the concept of the Other in these works, particularly focusing on their exploration of racial ambiguity, gender stereotypes, monstrous sexuality, upward mobility, and morality. Theoretical discussions specifically depart from and pivot around Edward W. Said's notion of 'Orientalism'; Homi K. Bhabha's understanding of 'mimicry' and 'ambivalence'; Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's discussion of 'male homosocial bonds', and Gayle S. Rubin's conception of 'traffic in women'.

Keywords: *nineteenth-century novels, the Gothic, Otherness, gender, racial ambiguity.*

RESUM

L'objectiu d'aquest treball és il·lustrar com Mary Shelley, Emily Brontë i Bram Stoker van explorar la creació de la figura de l'Altre utilitzant el generè Gòtic a les seves obres mestres *Frankenstein* (1818)*, Cims Borrascosos* (1847) i *Dràcula* (1897), que funcionen com a tres exemples de la representació de la transgressió de límits durant la literatura britànica del segle XIX. Aquest anàl·lisi de l'Altre s'ha dut a terme tenint en consideració els temes de l'ambigüitat racial, els estereotips de gènere, la sexualitat monstruosa, mobilitat ascendent i moralitat. Les nocions d''Orientalisme' d'Edward S. Said, d''imitació' i 'ambivalència' de Homi K. Bhabha, de 'vincles homosocials masculins' de Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick i de 'tràfic de dones' de Gayle S. Rubin.

Paraules clau: *novel·les del segle XIX, el Gòtic, alteritat, gènere, ambigüitat racial.*

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1. Introduction: Identity in Nineteenth-Century British Victorian, Romantic, and Gothic Novels in relation to Domesticity, Gender, Sexuality, Social Class, and Race

The exploration of identity in fiction throughout the distinct literary periods shifts, mirroring the sociocultural changes of each moment, but the texts that encompass Victorian, Romantic, and/or Gothic traits are crucial for this paper.

Victorian novels, more often than not, explored social issues like race, gender, sexuality, social class, domesticity, and religion, so the identity of Victorian characters was defined as intersecting with those issues; equally significant for this paper is the Romantic movement that rejected the Classicism and Neoclassicism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—and, to some extent, against the values of the Enlightenment, which was grounded in reason, balance, order, harmony, and scientific and technological progress (Enciclopædia Britannica, 2024). Domesticity was widely dealt with in nineteenth-century British literature: it not only illustrated a patriarchal organization within the household in which men were the breadwinners and rulers of the house while women brought up the children and had to submit to their husbands—which established a rigid dichotomy, as men were strong, brave, and authoritarian, whereas women strived to fit in the canonical idea of the 'angel in the house'—, but it also depicted the dwelling as a refuge which embodied the order and stability needed to protect its inhabitants from the swift arrival of modernity (Damkjær, 2016, as cited in Gregory, 2012 p. 446). Victorian texts also reflected one of the most significant events in the nineteenth century: propelled by the Industrial Revolution, the new social class of the bourgeoisie appeared, which was especially important during the 1840s (Poovey, 2002, as cited in Childers, 2012, p. 158). It must not be forgotten that the nineteenth century was when the British Empire reached its peak, and the ideology that it promoted was reflected in Victorian texts: pseudo-sciences were used to justify the widespread racism and enforced slavery, making racial hatred one of the most powerful tools of the Empire (Brantlinger, 2012, p. 133). Sexuality was also pivotal in Victorian society and literature, as Christianity associated lustfulness and its satisfaction with "disobedience to God;" moreover, if one focuses on female sexuality, it can be noted that women were supposed to lack sexual desire, and if they did engage in sexual intercourse, they became 'fallen women' who occupied the latter pole of the 'virgin-whore' dichotomy (Hindle, 2003, p. xviii). Victorian novels, hence, reflected all of the social changes aforementioned, which inevitably intersect with Romantic

traits: Romanticism rejected the social conventions of order and reasoning and instead focused on capturing the "passions and inner struggles" of a hero who refused to follow the established rules, as well as on irrationality and on how majestic and tumultuous nature could be (Enciclopædia Britannica, 2024). The Byronic or Romantic hero, for example, is the most illustrative Romantic character creation, as this figure tends to be tormented by guilt, melancholic, and proves to be ruthless, prideful, enigmatic, "heroic and villainous" (Hennessy, 1978, p. 36).

The Gothic, a Victorian subgenre, permeates the nineteenth century as well, and although it shared many elements with Romanticism, the transgression of boundaries was taken to the extreme. Female characters were shaped differently in Gothic novels, for they deviated from the archetypal construction of the 'angel in the house'; this phenomenon indeed appeared because the idea of the New Woman started to become popular in fictional texts and the groundbreaking Gothic subgenre called Female Gothic emerged as a means of challenging the patriarchal oppression (Armstrong, 2012, p. 173; Childers, 2012, p. 167; Al-Hilo and Gebreen, 2020, p. 280). But the Gothic not only questioned gender boundaries, as it also criticized the imperial mindset and explored the rise of the middle classes (Childers, 2012, p. 164).

Considering that the beginning of the century was Romantic and the ending of the century was Gothic, Otherness is the common element that links Victorian, Romantic, and Gothic novels, as this figure is a tool for authors to examine social conventions, as well as its transgressions. And this is precisely the focus of this paper, to analyze how the use of the Gothic in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), and Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) allows for the exploration and exploration of Otherness and the social implications that it had throughout the nineteenth century.

2. The Influence of Authors' Lives, Novels' Narrative Structure, and Main Genres in the Construction of Identity

2.1. The Authors' Gender and Nationality

In terms of gender and nationality, the three writers under discussion in this paper may be considered to fit the idea of 'the Other' at least in so far as they all deviated from the mainstream understanding of the nineteenth-century British writer. As women, Shelley and

Brontë were subjected to strict gender roles, which they did not fit completely. Shelley's parents were distinguished authors: Mary Wollstonecraft wrote "A Vindication of the Rights of Women" (1792) and William Golding wrote "Enquiry Concerning Political Justice and Its Influence on Morals and Happiness" (1793). Both texts were quite radical when they were published (Badalamenti, 2006, p. 421) and definitely very influential to their daughter's intellectual development. The "Cambridge-educated" Patrick Brontë wanted her daughters to be "equipped [with] education to make their own way in the world," so he made sure to provide them with that knowledge; moreover, the girls' "strong-minded and independent maiden aunt" was an example for them, their family did not pressure them in order to marry, contrary to what was commonly done, and their father did not control what his daughters wanted to read, which made them free of thought (Nestor, 2000, pp. xiii-xiv). Finally, Stoker's Irishness may have highly influenced the exploration of identity that he carries out in *Dracula*. He belongs to the cultural tradition of "Irish-thinking, English-speaking, English-writing" (O'Faolàin, cited in Hindle, 20003, p. xxvi), and his status as an Irishman is likely to have shaped the novel, as the English deemed the Irish inferior since they invaded Éire and thus often constructed them in discourse as the 'Other' at that time.

2.2. Shaping Identity Through Narrative Techniques

Narrative techniques are also key to understanding the texts. *Frankenstein* is constructed as a frame narrative at the core of which readers find the creature's unmediated voice; the fact that this revisited mise-en-abyme provides a space for the creature to share his story has two main consequences: readers notice that Victor is not as good as he tries to appear and the racially-ambiguous creature is not as evil as Victor/society has made him seem, which in turn makes readers shift their empathy from Victor towards the creature. *Wuthering Heights* is also told from the perspective of several narrators: if we focus on Nelly, not only is she the dominant narrator, but she is also highly unreliable, as her narrative shows her to be very prejudiced—which eases readers into disliking certain characters, as, for example, Heathcliff because he is not white and Catherine because she does not behave like a Victorian lady should—and always tries to impose order and rationality on the chaos that dominates the house. Last but not least, *Dracula*'s stitched-up and polyphonic narrative structure, shaped as letters, diary entries, or phonograph recordings, gives readers an indirect "narrative representation" of the Count's psyche and emotions as he is constructed through a variety of

Western voices: this results in a biased construction, often conditioned by the prevalence of certain negatively stereotyped characteristics, which is also highly unreliable as "[h]is voice and perspective are always mediated by other characters" (Viragh, 2013, p. 238).

2.3. The Effect of Genres and Subgenres on Character Construction

Equally important is considering the genres and subgenres that each of the novels fit. In *Frankenstein*, while science fiction speculates about the possibility of bringing the dead back to life through the obsessive pursuit of scientific knowledge, the influence of Romanticism exalts the individual and emphasizes the perception of nature as a mirror that reflects the characters' emotions. *Wuthering Heights* is also related to Romanticism due to its poetic style, the construction of Heathcliff as the Byronic Hero, and the other aforementioned elements, although it is also related to the Victorian domestic sphere. By imitating the travel narrative style, Stoker is able to explore how the West sees the East as a place of backwardness and superstition in *Dracula*, which differs from how the West perceived itself as a place of civilization, progress, and intelligence.

The Gothic genre is the one that the three novels share, as it is used to transgress the boundaries established by nineteenth-century society; it is also present through the novels' settings and supernatural events, as well as through the fear that they create in both characters and readers. The Gothic elements in *Frankenstein* are very noticeable and abundant, such as Victor's trips to cemeteries to steal body parts from the dead, the embodiment of the scientist's worst attributes in the figure of the creature, which is acting as Frankenstein's doppelgänger, and the murders that the creature commits out of revenge; these elements allow for the transgression of boundaries, like those between life and death. In *Wuthering Heights*, the established boundaries created by Victorian domestic realism are transgressed by the chaos unleashed by the Gothic; however, these two main genres are not so easily separated, as "the [...] narrative structure [...] tends to blur the boundaries between [...] genres" (Pykett, 1989, p. 92). *Dracula* also contains elements of the Gothic, the most evident one being the Count, for, through this figure, the constraining Victorian morals are transgressed: his difference and similarity in sexuality and race are both bewitching and menacing, which appears as a threat to the Crew of Light and Western societies. Therefore, it is through the use of the Gothic that Shelley, Brontë, and Stoker explore identity and otherness in their novels.

3. "Beware; for I Am Fearless, and therefore Powerful": Humanity, Monstrosity, Race, and Gender in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein; or the Modern Prometheus* (1818), written during the inception of the nineteenth century, not only explores the very prominent issues of the polarized monstrosity-humanity binomy but also significantly emphasizes the issues of race and gender.

3.1. The Exploration of the not-so-Dichotomized Humanity-Monstrosity Binomy in Victor, Society, and the Creature

Victor Frankenstein, the Byronic hero of the story, becomes an outstanding scientist whose major achievement is the infusion of life into a stitched-up corpse of extraordinary height, speed, and strength through a process of galvanization; however, once the breathing creature falls under the scrutiny of his creator, the later refuses to take responsibility for his deeds and 'bring up his son' solely because of the creature's physicality—which is clearly stated by the creature when he tells Victor: "[Y]ou, my creator, detest and spurn me [...]. [...] You, my creator, abhor me: what hope can I gather from your fellow creatures, who owe me nothing? they spurn and hate me. [...] If the multitude of mankind knew of my existence, they would do as you do, and arm themselves for my destruction." However, villagers also contribute to this hatred, as they attack the creature with stones and other weapons; as a consequence of persisting aversion and physical violence, the creature becomes the monster that society has repeatedly told him he is (Shelley, 2012, pp. 33, 41, 45, 50, 51, 96-99, 105).[1] So, even if Victor refers to the creature as "daemon," "monster," and "devil," society at large is also guilty of this dehumanization and demonization; hence, readers notice not only the creature's lack of inherent evil and violence but also society's prejudices (Cook, 2019, pp. 246-247; Shelley, 2012, p. 97; Shishido, 2011, pp. 114, 116; Wester, 2020, p. 742).

Yet the creature is revealed as extremely gifted and emotional: he finds birdsongs touching, manages to survive on his own in nature after Victor has abandoned him, learns how to speak, read, and write in French, is moved by the De Lacey's musical talent and kindness to one another, instructs himself in history, empires, and social class, and reads several influential books, such as *Paradise Lost* and *Sorrows of Werter* (pp. 102-105, 107-112, 116, 118-119, 127-129). These human attributes, however, are entirely overlooked by humanity, causing constant distress and despair to the creature. Such loneliness he feels because of

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[1] Within the section on *Frankenstein*, all further references will be to this edition.

Victor's hatred and lack of responsibility that not only establishes a dichotomy between Adam and himself, as the first was beautifully created by God and had a mate that the creature desires and lacks, but he also compares himself to Satan, the fallen angel who did not turn out the way God wanted (pp. 129-131).

The first reaction that society has is to mark the creature as the Other, shape his identity into that of a monster, feel absolutely terrified, and even physically hurt him; straightforward examples are when some villagers hit and shoot him, when Felix assumes that the creature will murder his blind father, and when little William, whom the creature wrongly assumes to be unprejudiced due to his young age, says hateful epithets to the creature (pp. 105, 134-135, 141-143). It is interesting to highlight, however, that the only person who does not prejudge the creature is the old De Lacey, as he is blind, and instead patiently listens to the creature's painful story and even offers him his help: with this figure, Shelley may be hinting at the need for a society that judges with its heart, and not its eyes (pp. 132-134).

The creature clearly and repeatedly states that he considers himself hideous, which implies the interiorization of the Othering discourse that society has been constructing and can thus be read as one type of self-fulfilling prophecy (pp. 112-113, 119, 130-131). Through his vengeful deeds, readers can observe a second self-fulfilling prophecy: he becomes the monster society says he is by committing revenge through murdering William, Elizabeth, and Henry Clerval, and condemning Justine to death; he acknowledges his new—yet imposed—identity when he says: "if I cannot inspire love, I will cause fear" (pp. 66, 73, 136, 146, 204).

Shelley, hence, I argue, may be directing the readers' attention in two ways through her text: she could be emphasizing that an excessive pursuit of knowledge can be detrimental through the figure of Victor, who dies after a wretched life, and she could be also remarking that Victor—and, by extension, society—"lack[s] ethical life" (Shishido, 2011, p. 122) when prejudging the creature without a valid reason other than looking physically different (Cook, 2019, p. 251). Furthermore, I consider that Shelley poses a key question to her readers through the figure of the creature: Who is the real monster in the story—and even in real life? (Shelley, 2012, p. 228; Wester, 2020, p. 746) Initially, Victor and the creature appear to be opposed figures: the former human, the latter monstrous; yet, the novel radically challenges that assumption because, through the figure of the doppelgänger, both are monsters in their own way. Victor both plays God by defying the natural cycle of life and death and ignores his

responsibilities as the creator of another being, all of which have detrimental consequences, whereas the creature kills four people who are very close to Victor out of revenge for all the hatred he has received from his creator.

3.2. The Racial Other, Reverse Colonialism, and the Roles of Enslaver and Enslaved

If analyzed through the lens of reverse colonization and the abolitionist movement, the issue of race in Shelley's novel is not less intricate than that of humanity-monstrosity. As Maisha Wester has indicated in the abstract of one of her articles, several "foundational studies [...] on race in *Frankenstein*" find it plausible that "the Creature is racially coded to align with stereotypes about Blacks in particular" (2020, p. 729). Similarly, Shishido argues that the text could stand as a critique of imperialism and slavery (2011, p. 112). These claims make perfect sense if other elements are taken into account both within the novel and about Shelley herself.

The "rising rate of slave rebellions in the West Indies" was crucial in nineteenth-century Britain and, as a result, the British had different views on the enslavement of thousands of peoples: some were pro-slavery, some were abolitionists, and some were ameliorists, who believed in a middle ground; Shelley's husband, parents, and probably some of her friends were positioned in the latter stance, so it is likely that Shelley herself was influenced by them and included this view in her text, specifically if some scenes are analyzed in-depth (Wester, 2020, pp. 736, 740).

One situation that catches the attention of a knowledgeable reader is when Felix reads *Ruins of Empires* to Safie, "herself a racial other," and the creature eavesdrops on everything: the book is one of the central elements to support the previous argument, as it is an anti-slavery text (Wester, 2020, p. 735). Other scholars, however, consider the novel as abolitionist instead (Bugg, 2005, as cited in Shishido, 2011, p. 115), and one of the elements that enables this reading is Shelley's "suggestion that the roles of enslaver and enslaved […] can be inverted" (Wester, 2020, p. 736). The scene that sparks this role reversal starts when the scientist does not comply with the creature's demand for a female mate out of fear since a new and menacing race could annihilate humanity. In turn, as the creature's goal is to "dominate and enslave Victor by murdering [his] loved ones," the scientist becomes obsessed with revenge and, consequently, falls under the creature's control, successfully illustrating

reverse colonization, as from now on, the creature will become the enslaver while Victor will become the enslaved (Shishido, 2011, pp. 116-117). Let us explore this more in-depth.

"Shall I create another like yourself, whose joint wickedness might desolate the world? [...] I will never consent," is what Victor initially tells the creature; the latter insists, and out of momentary empathy and under the condition that the two creatures would live in exile, Victor agrees to create the creature's female counterpart, but as the scientist thinks about it more thoroughly, he refuses (pp. 145-148). What Victor fears is further emphasized in another two scenes. He knows for a fact that he will not consent to the creature's desire, for he fears that the creature "will return [from his exile], and again seek [humanity's] kindness, and [he] will meet with their detestation; [his] evil passions will be renewed, and [he] will then have a companion to aid [him] in the task of destruction" (p. 147). Yet, even clearer is Victor's fear for reverse colonization when he thinks to himself that, if the two creatures reproduce, they and their offspring may start "a race of devils" that "would be propagated upon the earth" and "who might make the very existence of the species of man a condition precarious and full of terror" (pp. 170-171).

Going back to the abolitionist argument, Shelley may be warning England about the rage of the enslaved Blacks: they can mirror the empire's actions back and, thus, become menacing; it is from the combination of difference and resemblance that they become dangerous. In order to push this theory further, I will refer to Homi K. Bhabha's notions of 'ambivalence' and 'mimicry'. For him, "colonial mimicry" involves the existence of the Other *as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite*." In other words, "the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an *ambivalence,*" and "in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference." As he argues, 'mimicry' is "the sign of a double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline, which 'appropriates' the Other as it visualizes power." Moreover, as he says, "mimicry is at once resemblance and menace," the latter being "its double vision which in disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse also disrupts its authority" (2022, pp. 415-417). If Bhabha's arguments are applied to the theory of reverse colonization in *Frankenstein*, thus, it could be argued that the creature is, through the successful master-slave role reversal, the menacing Other who is able to bring Victor's fears to life: the scientist finds it plausible for the creature to adopt an imperialist ideology and transform his rage into

vengeful deeds, just like Britain had previously done and was still doing when Shelley wrote the novel.

3.3. Safie's Case: The Racial and Gender Other

Edward W. Said's notion of 'Orientalism' is also present in the novel and, concretely, intermingled with gender, as seen in Safie's story. For Said, one of the definitions of 'Orientalism' is "a way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient's special place in European Western experience," and he claims that this phenomenon was becoming more widespread "[f]rom the beginning of the nineteenth century" (2003, pp. 1, 4). If this is applied to Shelley's text, two things could be argued: firstly, that the date that Said sets for the Orientalist mindset to appear and spread over the West coincides with the years in which Shelley wrote *Frankenstein*, and secondly, that Safie's story is narrated through the Orientalist lens due to several reasons.

The most relevant moment in relation to 'Orientalism' is when the monster explains Safie's story, as he describes how his father, a Turk merchant, tricked Felix and his family: the young boy tried to liberate Safie's father from prison and find a safe place for him to live in while the youngsters fell in love with each other, but the Turk imprisoned the De Laceys and attempted to retain Safie against her will, hence not allowing Felix and Safie's love to flourish freely (pp. 121-124). Readers are told that Safie's mother "was a Christian Arab" who was enslaved by the Turks and taught her religion to her daughter: the lady was "born in freedom" and "spurned the bondage" which Safie's father imposed onto her when they got married, but before dying, she taught her daughter "the tenets of her religion," as well as "to aspire to higher powers and independence of spirit forbidden to the female followers of Mahomet" (pp. 122-123).

Safie's physicality is also key in the discussion concerning 'Orientalism', as she is described as having a musical voice and "a sweet accent," and wearing a black veil, which illustrates the exoticization employed by the Orientalist mindset; her beautiful facial features are also described, although the fact that her hue is "wondrously fair, each cheek tinged with a lovely pink," I would say, is not to be taken lightly, as it pretty much fits the Western European beauty standard of the epoch and could be one of the ways in which the racial Other might be accepted in the strict Western society of the time (p. 115). 'Mimicry' and 'ambivalence' are no sign of danger for the community that accepts Safie, as her goal, it

seems, is to detach herself from any links she has with her tyrannical Turk father and, thus, assimilate into the 'accepting' Western community.

These excerpts, then, contribute to the archetypal representations of the Eastern Other according to the way/s Western writers how writers often portrayed identity of those living in the 'East': the Oriental man is a tyrant and a liar (Spivak, 1985, p. 257), Islam is detrimental for women as it oppresses them, and hence, Christianity is a superior religion as it allows women to be freer and more independent. It is important to highlight, however, two other key issues here: on the one hand, Safie does not fully fit the canonical idea of a Western woman at that time, not only because she is, racially, an Other, but also because she breaks free from her father's chains and reunites with her lover; on the other hand, Shelley may have included her romantic relationship with Felix and their domestic life to show readers that the 'racial Other' should be accepted in society—although this acceptance may have been triggered by the exoticization aforementioned, as physically speaking, Safie does not look that different because of her whiter hue (Lew, 1991, as cited in Cook, 2019, p. 251).

3.4. The Cursed Gender: the Female Creature, Justine, and Elizabeth's Dooms

Other issues related to gender are also relevant and fascinating, especially if one analyzes them taking into account Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's notion of the 'male homosocial bonds' and Gayle S. Rubin's idea of the 'traffic in women.' According to Sedgwick, the different bonds that men can have are, among others, "friendship, mentorship, entitlement, *rivalry*, and hetero- and homosexuality," and according to Rubin, 'traffic in women' refers to the transaction of women in the hands of men since the former are seen by the latter as the "*conduct* of a relationship rather than a *partner* to it," thus being the "gifts" that the male "exchange partners" receive—in other words, women are circulated, and this system is based on kinship instead of on reciprocity as "women are in no position to realize the benefits of their own *circulation*" (2019, p. 1, my emphasis; 2012, pp. 44-45, my emphasis). These notions, if applied to *Frankenstein*, make absolute sense.

When the creature orders Victor to make him a female creature and Victor eventually refuses, it is evident that the female creature is an object that is supposed to be transacted among the two foes; yet, as she is not embedded with life, she is absolutely unable to decide for herself, and she has the same lack of autonomy when the scientist destroys her body in the laboratory (pp. 171, 175). Her 'doom' simultaneously brings joy and despair: the creature has

lost his only potential mate and is condemned to eternal solitude once again by his creator, and Victor has saved humanity from a new conquering "race of devils." So, even if she is objectified, the potential offspring that she would be able to birth is threatening to Victor/humanity (Spivak, 1985, p. 255), and this power of hers is what makes her a pivotal element in the plot. Similarly, yet not as relevant, the novel also provides another two instances of 'traffic in women' through the same male homosocial bond of rivalry between the creature and Victor—Elizabeth and Justine.

Justine is the first to be murdered—although indirectly—by the creature: she is found guilty of having murdered little William, although Frankenstein knows that it was the creature who committed the crime. Victor, however, does not tell the truth, which makes him guilty as well and further emphasizes his egotism and lack of morals (pp. 70-82). Key to this discussion is the fact that, because of not taking responsibility for his actions and admitting that Justine's murderer is the creation that he had made, Victor's distress increases, which in turn benefits the creature as it serves his purpose of painful revenge; thus, Justine has been objectified and transacted between the enemies, who try to inflict as much pain as possible to one another.

Elizabeth's demise works very similarly, but I would suggest that it is more relevant as, apart from illustrating once again the 'traffic in women', sharply shapes the identities of Victor and the creature: when the latter kills her on her wedding night at the very moment when Victor steps out of their room, the creature reminds the careless creator of his power and desire for revenge and inflicts more pain on him. Consequently, Elizabeth is transformed into an object that is also transacted to negotiate power relations, the creature fully becomes the monster that society thinks he is—which is the second self-fulfilling prophecy aforementioned—, and Victor's hatred towards the creature and desire for revenge are taken to the extreme.

4. "[Y]our Cruelty Arises from Your Greater Misery": Class, Race, and Gender in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*

As Susan Meyer puts it, *Wuthering Heights* (1847) needs to be read by taking into account class, race, and gender, as analyzing the novel through this combination of factors "helps to explain its potentially disruptive and threatening energy" (1996, p. 102).

4.1. Wuthering Heights, Thrushcross Grange, and Upward Mobility

Brontë's text presents two families, the richest of which is the one inhabiting Thrushcross Grange, for those living in Wuthering Heights work their own land; this economic difference is illustrated since the beginning of the novel: Lockwood describes the Heights as an unwelcoming dwelling, with its "old guns, and […] horse pistols" and a lack of the "glitter of copper saucepans and tin cullenders on the walls," and Heathcliff emphasizes the Grange's splendid decoration that he observe through one of its windows with Catherine (Eagleton, 1995, p. 4; Brontë, 2003, pp. 4-5, 48).[2] However, class distinction is also marked among residents of the Heights: Nelly, Joseph, and Zilla are servants, and Heathcliff is made to become one by working the land after Hindley inherits Mr Earnshaw's estate; but Hindley's hatred towards Heathcliff is evident since he is adopted.

As Hindley sees it, Heathcliff has not only stolen Mr Earnshaw's affection and poses a risk as a potential heir of his father's possessions, but has also engaged in mutual romantic interest with his sister Catherine Earnshaw, which is also dangerous for Hindley: if she marries Edgar, who is also in love with her and a better suitor, their marriage would propel the Earnshaws into the direction of upward mobility, but Hindley knows that Catherine could decline Edgar's marriage proposal and instead wed Heathcliff, which would likely ruin the Earnshaw family in economic terms (Crouse, 2008, p. 183); Catherine is also aware of the fact that, were she to marry Heathcliff, they "should be beggars," but if she instead marries Edgar, she would acquire more money and would be able to "aid Heathcliff to rise and place him out of [her] brother's power;" (p. 82) however, Hindley does not hate Heathcliff solely because of his lower social class, as he also despises him because of his racial difference, constantly reminding him about it by exerting physical and emotional violence.

As aforementioned, race is closely linked to class, for there is an apparent dichotomy between the white and wealthy colonizers and the non-white and poor colonized; yet, as the next section focuses on, Heathcliff is racially ambiguous as his origins are an unsolved mystery that the novel poses

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[2] Within the section on *Wuthering Heights*, all further references will be to this edition.

4.2. Traumatic Abuse, Racial Ambiguity, and Heathcliff's and Catherine's Reverse Colonialisms

Brontë describes him as a "dark-skinned gypsy in aspect" who, when younger, spoke "some gibberish" and was found by Mr Earnshaw "starving, and houseless […] in the streets of Liverpool" without an "owner," which has made scholars theorize that Heathcliff could be an Irish famished immigrant or the son of Black slaves, as the port of such city received a massive influx of both marginalized and oppressed groups; some scholars even theorize that he could be an illegitimate child of Mr Earnshaw, which would explain Mrs Earnshaw's intense scolding and Hindley's perception of the "dirty, ragged, black-haired child" as a potential inheritor who would steal his status of heir; Heathcliff is also described by Mr Linton as a "Lascar" and "American or Spanish castaway," and Nelly says that his skin is "as dark almost as if it came from the devil" and speculates that his father could have been "Emperor of China, and [his] mother an Indian queen" (Brontë, 2003, pp. 5, 36, 37, 50, 58; Eagleton, 1995, p. 3; Meyer, 1996, pp. 97-98; Solomon, 1959, p. 82).

Brontë may have created such a racially ambiguous character, profoundly hurt and traumatized, to expose Britain's deplorable attitude towards the non-whites, the effects it has on the colonized individuals, their potentiality to rebel against the oppressors, and how detrimental that revolution could be for the Empire; that is why it is not madness to think that Heathcliff could belong to any of the aforementioned racial groups, as several scholars have noted. Firstly, his brother Branwell visited Liverpool a few months before Emily began writing her novel, and the Great Famine started briefly after: these events could have inspired her to write about the atrocities the British were inflicting upon the Irish, as the former regarded the latter as an inferior race and let them perish of starvation; moreover, this coincides with the abuse inflicted upon Heathcliff at the hands of the white characters in the novel and the emotional hunger that he undergoes by not being able to marry the love of his life (Eagleton, 1995, p. 3). Secondly, as Liverpool's streets gave shelter to not only Irish immigrants but also enslaved Black people who were trafficked from the colonies, Heathcliff's dark complexion could also be explained if one is to believe that he is the offspring of an enslaved African couple (Meyer, 1996, pp. 97-98). Additionally, as Elsie Michie argues after reading "an unknown satiric writer in the punch in 1862," it is crucial to highlight that the British "linked [the Irish] to the same kind of racial stereotypes that were being used to describe [Black people]," so when told that his skin is dark, readers are to

consider the two racial possibilities (1992, p. 126). Lastly, although India was the most valuable colony of the British Empire, its control over China was much more limited: the British were victors in the first Opium War, and the Chinese were forced to cede Hong Kong and open five ports to the Empire; hence, both countries, although up to a very different extent, were under the control of the British (Meyer, 1996, pp. 113-114). There is a parallel with Heathcliff as well, as has been mentioned before, because of the oppressive environment that surrounds him because of the difference in his racial identity.

Due to his physicality, Heathcliff is constantly dehumanized, objectified, animalized, and demonized by those around him, as society constructs a discourse about him, which shapes his identity as the dangerously evil Other, justifies the physical, verbal, and emotional violence that it exerts on him, and causes such a severe trauma that triggers his subsequent revenge. For instance, when they were children, Hindley gave Heathcliff such a beating throughout a whole week that left the boy's arm "black to the shoulder" and also called him "dog," and later on, the Lintons and their servants called Heathcliff "foulmouthed thief," "frightful thing," "villain," and "strange acquisition" (pp. 39, 50).

The zenith of his emotional trauma, I would argue, is the impossibility of spending his life next to his beloved Catherine because of the oppressive social expectations caused by both her marriage with Edgar and her prompt death two hours after giving birth to Cathy: the night before Catherine's demise, Heathcliff tells her that, in marrying Edgar, she has broken both her and his heart, and the following morning, when she has already passed away, Heathcliff desperately screams at her ghost: "may you not rest, as long as I am living! […] haunt me! […] Be with me always — take any form — drive me mad! Only *do* not leave me in this abyss where I cannot find you! Oh, God, it is unutterable! I *cannot* live without my life! I *cannot* live without my soul!" (pp. 89, 163, 169) Catherine's loss is so painful for him that, in order to cope with it, he talks to or senses the presence of her ghost on other occasions as well. At the beginning of the novel, he begs her to "[c]ome in […] at last!" when she has previously communicated to Lockwood that "[she] has been a waif for twenty years," scene in which readers continue to notice how he is the primary representation of the 'Other:' while Lockwood refuses to accept the paranormal element as this unreliable narrator and outsider embodies the idea of rationality, Heathcliff passionately accepts it, which further strengthens his connection with the Gothic and its irrationality; towards the end of the book, Heathcliff confesses to Nelly that "the day [Catherine] was buried," he wanted to hold her cold corpse

but stopped himself when he felt her presence beside him (p. 25, 28, 288-290). His violent behavior throughout the second volume, thus, is Heathcliff's display of utter rage towards those who have ruined his life, which leads to his upward mobility and reverse colonialism through revengeful abuse.

Brontë may have created such a traumatized and racially ambiguous character to expose Britain's deplorable attitude towards the colonized non-whites, the effects it has on the colonized individuals, their potentiality to rebel against the oppressors, and how detrimental that revolution could be for the Empire. Therefore, if one is to take into account Bhabha's notion of 'mimicry' and Said's theory of 'Orientalism' when reading Heathcliff's story, there are evident similarities; if one accepts the plausibility of Heathcliff's ancestry being Indian, Chinese, or Romany, the hatred that he suffers should be understood as the stereotyped discourse of hatred that the Westerns created about the Orient; similarly, the non-white character mimicking the ruthless behavior of the wealthier whites both in order to rebel against and substitute them in the social order by purchasing their estates illustrates the colonizers' fear of the ability of the oppressed to exert reverse colonialism by copying the imperial mindset and tactics.

Reverse colonialism, ergo, is a threat that lingers throughout the entire novel and is mainly embodied by Heathcliff but also by Catherine. Quite early in the novel, Nelly anticipates Heathcliff's economic growth through reverse colonialism when she tells him: "Who knows, but your father was Emperor of China, and your mother an Indian queen, each of them able to buy up, with one week's income, Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange together?" (p. 58) As Meyer claims, "Nelly suggests to the nineteenth-century British reader a way in which dark-skinned people like Heathcliff might be able to take revenge for the subjugation they have suffered at British hand" when she fantasizes about the "alliance between the two countries [China and India] and the possibility of their joint occupation of Britain," as Heathcliff might start to initiate this process of reverse colonization in England through the acquisition of the Grange and the Heights (1996, p. 114). This is further emphasized when he departs from the Heights and does not return until three years have passed: this span of time historically coincides with the American Revolutionary War, and Nelly suggests that, during these years, Heathcliff may have been a soldier, associating him with the "archetypal war of successful colonial rebellion" (Brontë, 2003, p. 96; Meyer, 1996, p. 115). After his return, Heathcliff indeed becomes a self-made man, ceasing to be an

"exploited farm labourer" and instead becoming a "pitiless landlord" by using the tools of the upper classes to rebel and harm them; therefore, he not only poses a risk in terms of class but also of race, as it is the racial Other that buys up the properties of two white families (Brontë, 2003, p. 61; Eagleton, 1995, pp. 18-19).

Nevertheless, Nelly is not the only one who detects Heathcliff's potentiality for rebellion, for Edgar also senses his dangerous and defiant power, as illustrated when he dislikes the idea of his sister Isabella and Heathcliff getting married: it is possible that, if the couple has a male heir, the Lintons' properties and wealth—even if partially—might be eventually inherited by his brother-in-law because of how the legal system of that time worked (p. 101). Catherine Earnshaw also participates in this reversal of the colonizer-colonized roles when she holds Isabella captive, as the former attempts to ridicule the latter by exposing Isabella's romantic attraction to Heathcliff and making it evident that, as the bond that unites him and his adoptive sister is too strong to be broken, Heathcliff will never love Isabella. The Linton sister, consequently, "becomes the object [...] of imperialist discourse" while she is scrutinized with aversion by Heathcliff and dehumanized and animalized through Catherine's description: when Isabella tries to liberate herself from her captor's grip, she uses her fingernails which imprint "crescents of red" on Catherine's wrist, making her shake her hand in pain and call Isabella a "tigress" (Brontë, 2003, pp. 105-106; Meyer, 1996, p. 117). In addition, "Catherine's actions inspire Heathcliff's marriage to Isabella and Isabella's resulting confinement at Wuthering Heights, where she suffers greatly," as readers predict when Heathcliff tells Catherine that "[she would] hear of odd things, if [he] lived alone with that mawkish, waxen face; the most ordinary would be painting on its white the colours of the rainbow, and turning the blue eyes black, every day or two," and when Isabella writes a letter to Nelly where she questions Heathcliff's human nature and exposes the mistreatment endured at the Heights (Muller, 2012, p. 78; Brontë, 2003, pp. 106, 136-144).

4.3. Unleashing and Taming Female Rebellion

Gender is also a pivotal issue throughout the text, as the creation of some of the female characters' identities departs from the mainstream female representation in literature.

Catherine, for instance, is not passive nor submissive, as it has been previously exemplified and as it can be seen since the very inception of the novel. Since she is a child,

she does not comply with what she is told to do: this is illustrated by Nelly when she tells Lockwood that there was no "security that she wouldn't be in mischief," that "[Heathcliff and she] both promised fair to grow up as rude as savages" and "one of their chief amusements" was "to run away to the moors in the morning and stay there all day," and that she was the happiest when "[the servants] were all scolding her at once, [...] defying us with her bold, saucy look" (pp. 42, 43, 46).

However, as depicted by the bulldog biting her ankle in the Grange, Catherine is made to suppress her rebellious identity in order to fit the archetypal female behavior of the epoch, which was being much more tamed (Gilbert and Gubar, 2000, as cited in Crouse, 1008, p. 183): after the Lintons pamper and 'civilize' her, she returns to the Heights "dignified" and with "her manners much improved," as well as looking "like a lady" with her "brown ringlets" and "splendid garments" (pp. 51-53). Consequently, she has had to repress her desire for freedom, but her unruly nature has not been extinguished yet, as she tries to break free from the oppressive patriarchal hands that constantly try to mold her (Crouse, 2008, p. 184; Meyer, 1996, pp. 106-107).

She tells Nelly: "I *am* Heathcliff," implying that no matter how hard society tries to shape her into fitting a certain set of gender roles, her essence is rebellious and untameable, like that of her beloved (p. 82). Further emphasizing this identity construction, Nelly tells Lockwood that, once Catherine moved in with the Lintons after her marriage with Edgar, the Linton brothers were "the honeysuckles embracing the thorn" instead of "the thorn bending to the honeysuckles," and she became "the undeniable mistress of Thrushcross Grange" (Brontë, 2003, p. 92; Crouse, 2008, p. 185). She constantly tries not to lose her control over the other characters by gradually becoming more and more manipulative, and her struggle for power is clearly seen in her shifting moods and self-harm episodes, as they are the only ways through which she can reaffirm her power; this is the clearest when she "imprisons herself in her room at the Grange and starves herself for three days," which is her final attempt to maintain control, but her attempt is an utter failure: she tells Nelly and Heathcliff that her body is a "shattered prison" from which she is "wearying to escape," which she does when death takes her some hours after (Crouse, 2008, p. 186; Brontë, 2003, p. 288).

Catherine's daughter, Cathy, has definitely inherited her mother's rebellious nature, as is most craftily illustrated when she talks back to Heathcliff after he has been authoritative and manipulative again: "you have *nobody* to love you; and, however miserable you make us,

we shall still have the revenge of thinking that your cruelty rises from your greater misery! You *are* miserable, are you not? […] *Nobody* loves you - *nobody* will cry for you, when you die!" (Pykett, 1989, p. 95; Brontë, 2003, p. 288)

Crucial in my analysis of gender is taking into consideration Rubin's idea of 'traffic in women' and Sedgwick's notion of the male homosocial bonds as well, as the men in *Wuthering Heights* fight to impose themselves onto each other through controlling the women around them. Cathy is seen as an object by Heathcliff, as his goal is to emotionally hurt her father and to acquire the Grange, which is intrinsically linked to Edgar losing his daughter: he successfully does so, firstly, by kidnapping Cathy and imprisoning her in the Heights, which hastens Edgar's demise, and secondly by forcibly marrying the girl to her two cousins, first to Linton Heathcliff and then to Hareton Earnshaw, as both boys are under Heathcliff's control and the possessions and wealth that Cathy has inherited because of his father's doom are her husbands'—and Heathcliff's, consequently (Brontë, 2003, pp. 271, 283-284; Michie, 1992, p. 137; Pykett, 1989, pp. 90-91). Heathcliff perceives Isabella similarly, as the marriage between them causes intense emotional distress to Edgar—which is what Heathcliff intended—and also contributes to the obtention of the Grange (Brontë, 2003, p. 151; Crouse, 2008, p. 188; Michie, 1992, p. 137).

5. "Blood is Too Precious a Thing": Race, Sexuality, and Gender in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*

In *Dracula* (1897), issues of race, sexuality, and gender are irremediably combined: it is the Eastern racial Other, the Count, whom the Western Crew of Light regards as menacing and monstrous, and his danger does not only come from his potential to reverse colonialism but also from his potential for the sexual corruption of, initially, the Victorian ladies of England, generally speaking.

5.1. Questionable Ancestry, Reverse Colonialism, and 'Passing As'

It is clear that the Eastern European vampire Count is the racial Other in the novel; what is not so clear to readers, nevertheless, is his racial identity. According to Dracula's narration, he is a boyar—aristocrat—that descends from the Székelys, who "were a proud, conquering race whose roots can be found "in the whirlpool of European races"," which is the

Transylvania where the Count and Jonathan converse; moreover, the Count claims kinship with "the Huns," who had a "warlike fury" and emphasizes his connection with "Attila, whose blood is in [his] veins" (Koç & Demir, 2018, p. 432; Viragh, 2013, p. 232; Stoker, 2003, p. 36). Dracula tells Harker that his people drove "the Magyar, the Lombard, the Avar, the Bulgar, [and] the Turk" back when they tried to invade their lands; nevertheless, "the Székely were [eventually] claimed as kindred by the victorious Magyars" and made to become guardians "of the frontier of Turkey-land," which the Count considers a "great shame" (Stoker, 2003, p. 36).[3] This shame "was redeemed" when "one of [his] own race," like "the Voivode" did, "crossed the Danube and beat the Turk on [their] own ground;" here, hence, the Count "seems to affiliate with Romanian resistance fighters" (Stoker, 2003, p. 36; Gibson, 2004, Viragh, 2013, p. 236). This is further emphasized when focusing on the "Voivode" and the "crossing of the Danube," as these instances may cause knowledgeable readers to introduce in their minds the historical figure of Vlad III—also known as Vlad Drăculea and Vlad Țepeș—, who was Voivode—ruler—of Wallachia, and his surprise bloody night attack in the region directed towards his enemies, the Ottomans (Sedlar, 1994, as cited in Koç & Demir, 2018, p. 432).

However, Dracula cannot "properly articulate his cultural history," as seen in several parts of his monologue: firstly, as aforementioned, the Voivode to whom he refers is "Wallachian, not Székely;" secondly, he "seems to [also] claim affinity with the Turks themselves, as if the Székely were allied to them" when telling Jonathan that "after the Battle of Mohacs [battle in which the Turks were the victors], [they] threw off the Hungarian yoke, [they] of the Dracula blood were amongst its leaders," "[scoffing] any affiliation with the Hungarians," who are in fact "the closest actual relatives of the Székely" (Nandris, 1966, and Gibson, 2004, as cited in Viragh, 2013, p. 236; Stoker, 2003, p. 36).

What readers know for sure, nevertheless, is that the Count's narration about battles is so passionate and detailed that it looks "as if he had been present at them all," hinting towards his immortality and past as a conquering warrior and that his racial identity is ambiguous and polyracial (Stoker, 2003, p. 35; Arata, 1990, p. 628). Moreover, the novel illustrates how his thirst for invasion is not quenched yet if readers read the novel as a tale of reverse colonialism; in this reading, Bhabha's notions of 'mimicry' and 'ambivalence', as well as Said's notion of 'Orientalism', must be taken into account.

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[3] Within the section on *Dracula*, all further references will be to this edition.

Readers can easily detect the hatred discourse that the Westerns often spread about the Easterns in the apparent dichotomy that the text proposes: the Crew of Light–formed by Professor Van Helsing, Dr Seward, American Quincey Morris, Arthur Holmwood (later, Lord Godalming), and Jonathan Harker–represent the civilization, intelligence, progress, and rationality embodied by the West, whereas the Count and his vampiric race represent the backwardness, superstition, monstrosity, hypersexualization, and irrationality embodied by the East. However, because Stoker was "a transplanted Irishman," readers should not rule out the possibility that the hatred discourse that the British directed towards the Irish during the nineteenth century could be encapsulated around the figure of Dracula (Arata, 1990. p. 633).

Dracula's power resides in his combination of foreignness and insiderness, as he is racially different from the Western squad but is able to mimic them so well that he can "pass," so it could be argued that more than his status as an outsider, what truly terrifies the Crew of Light is Dracula's sameness, and the novel provides several illustrative instances (Arata, 1990, p. 638; McCrea, 2010, pp. 255-256). Lingering throughout the entire text, his knowledge of the English language, manners, customs, and legal system is remarkable: in his diary, Harker writes that he found "a vast number of English books, […] and bound volumes of magazines and newspapers" in the Count's library, and the books "were of the most varied kind—history, geography, politics, political economy, botany, geology, [and] law," and the Count desires his English to be "like the rest," as native as possible, "so that no man […] pause in his speaking if he hear my words" (Stoker, 2003, pp. 26-27; Arata, 1990, pp. 634, 637; Viragh, 2013, p. 234). One of the most undoubtedly shocking for the readers is the moment in which he impersonates Harker while still in Romania by wearing his garments: when a woman beats the door of the castle where Jonathan is imprisoned, desperately shouting at him to "give [her her] child," it becomes clear that Dracula has crawled down the castle wall impersonating him, as readers deduce that the child of this woman is the one that the Count brought to the three vampire women for them to feast on—issue which will be discussed in due time—, and that the vampire has worn Jonathan's clothes to make him appear guilty in the eyes of the inhabitants of the area (pp. 52-53, 41). Reminiscent of Bhabha's assertion, hence, the Count is clearly *almost the same, but not quite,* as the supernatural aura surrounding him and his racial identity permanently mark him as the Other; therefore, regardless of the vampire representing the Eastern Europan peoples or the Irish, the

imperial fear of reverse colonialism, which is "mirrored back as a kind of monstrosity," is inevitably present (Arata, 1990, p. 634).

5.2. Deracination and 'Re-racination': Sex and Blood, STI, Monstrous Female Sexuality, Male Homoeroticism, Bisexuality, and Polygamy

As Beth Shane concludes after reading a review on *Dracula*, the Count and his vampirism can also "be read through [the] medical lens as a […] contagious disease" that can only be cured by means of blood transfusions: racial identity, as well as sexuality, play a crucial role in this discussion (2016, p. 18).

Dracula is not dangerous because of "miscegenation," but instead because of his capacity for deracination: he effectively takes away his victims' Victorian identity by giving them a new one in terms of race; therefore, in order to "re-racinate" the Count's victims in time, blood transfusions are mandatory, since the Crew of Light fears that not performing this medical procedure would unleash the monstrous colonization of "bodies and land" (Stevenson, 1988, p. 144; Arata, 1990, pp. 632, 629-30). After the Count lures Lucy into the vampiric world by biting her and sucking her blood, the Western male characters of the novel aim to regain her non-vampiric self by becoming their blood donors, yet this is not only done in order to re-racinate her. The bite, the crimson substance, and the medical procedure are to be understood in relation to sex, so blood is semen, whereas bites and blood stand for sexual intercourse: after Arthur's transfusion, Lucy's first suitor and donor feels as if they were "married [...] in the sight of God," and Van Helsing labels himself a "bigamist" and Lucy a "polyandrist" after Dr Seward and Quincey Morris—her other two suitors—, as well as himself, have donated their blood to the vampire-to-be lady (Craft, 1984, p. 121; Stoker, 2003, pp. 185, 187).

Gender becomes crucial in understanding that these medical penetrations are corrective, as the female sexuality that the Count unleashes onto the Victorian ladies is regarded as monstrous by the Crew of Light; although the issue of gender will be discussed in due time, it must be mentioned here in order to understand the following reasonings. According to the Western male characters, the vampirism that Dracula introduces in England is menacing because it "[subverts the] gender definitions and behavioral expectations which keep the imperial subject in place," including female submissiveness, modesty, and marriage-limited engagement in sexual intercourse (Kwan-Wai Yu, 2006, p. 148). Once

reproduction happens outside of the bonds of marriage, as illustrated with Lucy's case, female sexuality becomes monstrous as it challenges the Victorian patriarchal ideology; thus, the male main characters perceive the sexual desire and freedom the Count embodies as a venereal disease such syphilis, hence their need to correct it through medical procedures (Arata, 1990, p. 632; Koç & Demir, 2018, p. 428).

In Lucy's case, however, blood transfusions are unsuccessful, so the lady's monstrous vampirism/sexual freedom must be punished with a much more radical measure, so Professor Van Helsing instructs Arthur to hammer a stake through her heart without faltering (p. 230). This extreme measure of eradication, for the men, is necessary, as Lucy's new seductive identity is horrifying and menacing: her "sweetness [has] turned to adamantine, heartless cruelty, and [her] purity to voluptuous wantonness," "[her] eyes [are] full of hell-fire" and "[blaze] with unholy light" instead of [being] the pure, gentle orbs" they recall, her smile has become "wanton" and her tones when saying to Arthur to "come to [her]" "with a languorous, voluptuous grace" are "diabolically sweet" (pp. 225-226). The passage of Lucy's killing can be easily read as an instance of gang rape, as illustrated by the Crew of Light's voyeuristic pleasure in observing how Arthur's mighty strikes the phallic stake "deeper and deeper" into Lucy's blood-spurting white chest, which can trigger the image of a forcibly penetrated bleeding vagina in the readers' minds, and how she shakes "in wild contortions" as if she was trying to escape the misogynistic and lethal sexual assault; hence, the Crew of Light thinks that she must be punished for "her transgressions of Van Helsing's gender code [because a] woman is better […] dead than sexual" (Kwan-Wai Yu, 2006, p. 152; Stoker, 2003, p. 230; Craft, 1984, p. 122). This female sexual monstrosity is also explored in numerous worth-analyzing instances.

The three vampire women inhabiting Castle Dracula seem to be "in the spirit of a gang-bang" when they approach the half-asleep Jonathan: displaying the archetypal sensuality attributed to vampires, "their white teeth […] [shine] like pearls against the ruby of their voluptuous lips," their laugh is "silvery [and] musical," and they act "coquettishly" (Demetrakopoulos, 1977, p. 106; Stoker, 2003, p. 45). "There was a deliberate voluptuousness" in them and their deeds that Jonathan sees as "both thrilling and repulsive:" even if he recognizes their monstrosity, he cannot help but surrender to their sensuality, "wait[ing] with a beating heart" and "in an agony of delightful anticipation" the blonde vampire woman's bite (pp. 45-46). Their willingness to be active during sex is depicted in the

form of fellatio in this passage: as aforementioned, bites equal penetration and blood equals semen, and here, the blonde vampire lady is "on her knees, [bents] over [Harker]" while "[arching] her neck" and "moving her head lower and lower" until she "[seems] to fasten on [his] throat;" this description clearly evokes a clear image of fellatio, which is only softened due to Stoker's use of the words "throat" and "neck" instead of any word referring to male genitalia (Kuzmanovic, 2009, p. 417; Stoker, 2003, p. 45).

None of the three vampire ladies can vampirize Harker, however, as Count Dracula harshly stops them; nonetheless, Jonathan "[feels] in [his] heart a wicked, burning desire that they would kiss [him] with those red lips," clearly illustrating that he does not resist at all (p. 45). What this particular moment illustrates is the Count's bisexuality and Jonathan's passivity, and both elements will be analyzed later in this paper. The key element to further understand the depiction of female sexuality as monstrous, however, is the fact that in order for the three women to quench their thirst for blood and sex, Dracula gives them a bag with a child inside, upon whom they feast: this portrays the vampire females as cannibals, pedophiles, and rapists, as they suck a child's blood, which again is a metaphor for sexual intercourse—and in this case, a non-consensual one with a minor—; these notions are reinforced later in the text with the depiction of Lucy as the "bloofer lady," who also takes sexual advantage of very young children by feasting on them (Demetrakopoulos, 1977, p. 107).

Another instance that reminds readers of oral sex is when Jonathan and Mina are in bed, he with "his face flushed and breathing as though in a stupor," and she kneeling on the mattress while the Count holds, with one hand, both of hers behind her back "at full tension," and with the other, "[grips] her by the back of the neck, forcing her face down on his bosom," from which Dracula's "blood began to spurt," and she had to "either suffocate or swallow some" (p. 300, 307). If the word "bosom" is replaced "with any of the words describing male genitalia," the passage can "operate as erotica" as readers could conclude that "Jonathan [is] aroused by watching Mina perform oral sex on Dracula" (Pikula, 2012, p. 295). Mina's willingness to partake in this sexual encounter has been read differently by scholars: some think that the passage illustrates rape in the shape of oral sex as Mina resists Dracula's tight grip (Craft, 1984, p. 125; Demetrakopoulos, 1977, p. 109; Kwan-Wai Yu, 2006, p. 148) while some others claim that she willingly participates in this sexual activity as she does not "want

to hinder him" (Koç & Demir, 2018, p. 436; Prescott & Giorgio, 2005, p. 504; Stoker, 2003, p. 306).

Apart from its focus on female sexuality, the novel also explores male homoerotic tendencies embodied by the Count, and as several scholars claim, "[t]he text's absent center, hinted at, approached, but always repressed" is "that Dracula will seduce, penetrate, drain another male" (Howes, 1988, p. 108; Craft, 1984, p. 110). For example, after Jonathan has settled in Castle Dracula, he shaves and accidentally cuts himself with the razor, and at that precise moment, the Count grabs Harker's throat, "his eyes [blazing] with a sort of demoniac fury" at seeing how "the blood [trickles] over [Jonathan's] chin," but when Dracula slightly touches "the string of beads which held [Jonathan's] crucifix," his attitude changes to normal (pp. 32-33); "[t]he suddenness and intensity of the incident," hence, can easily illustrate "a spontaneous eruption of desire and its swift suppression" (Howes, 1988, p. 108).

Later in the text, as aforementioned, Dracula wrathfully stops the three vampire women from biting his English guest: "*How dare you touch him* [...] when I had forbidden it? Back, I tell you all! *This man belongs to me!* Beware how you meddle with him, or you'll have to deal with me" (p. 46, my emphasis). To add another layer of depth to this analysis, the Count's possessiveness should not only be read in terms of homoerotic desire but also in terms of male-to-male romantic attraction. Furious because of having been forbidden to feast on/engage in sexual intercourse with Jonathan, the blonde vampire woman, backed up by the "soulless laughter" of the other two, yells at Dracula: "[y]ou yourself never loved; you never love" (p. 46). Almost melancholically, it seems, the Count "attentively" scans Harker's face and softly whispers, party to himself and partly to the female vampires, that he "too can love" and immediately tells the ladies that they "can tell it from the past," which may be hinting at the fact that, apart from wanting to have a sexual encounter with Jonathan, Dracula can easily be romantically attracted to him (p. 46). Moreover, cunning readers will also introduce the notions of polygamy and bisexuality in this conversation (Kwan-Wai Yu, 2006, p. 148). One could not only conclude that Dracula has more than one wife if the three vampire women are understood to be his brides, but also that he is both attracted to men and women—as he may have had a romantic and/or sexual relationship with these ladies, will completely seduce Lucy and partially Mina, and displays an evident attraction to Harker.

In the scenes that follow the passage above are other clues that should not be overlooked nor regarded as casual and that are linked to the Count's bisexuality and a sexual

relationship with his English guest—not directly explained in the text, although possible. Harker has "[sunk] down unconscious" after the female vampires' sexual insinuation and observing their cannibalistic tendencies, and even if he cannot "arrive at any unquestionable result," he thinks that Dracula "must have carried [him] there [and] undressed [him]" (p. 48). If this instance is not suspicious enough for readers, one should establish a connection between this instance and the following one. Jonathan enters the Count's room, "[goes] through the door in the corner and down the ending strait and along the dark passage to the old chapel," where "[t]he great box was:" [t]here [lays] the Count," who looks "half renewed," with his now "dark iron-grey" "hair and moustache," fuller cheeks, a tinge of "ruby-red" on his waxen skin, and crimson lips from which "gouts of fresh blood [...] [trickle] [...] and [run] over the chin and neck," and as Jonathan judges, it looks like Dracula is "gorged with blood" (pp. 59-60). What happened while Jonathan was asleep, no one knows, but it is more than feasible to think that "Dracula has feasted on somebody, and since there are no other humans in the castle," Harker may have become Dracula's victim" (Kuzmanovic, 2009, p. 418). This suggestion becomes stronger when Sister Agatha, a nurse working at the Hospital of St Joseph and Ste Mary in Buda-Pesth, sends a letter to Mina: "[Jonathan] has been [...] suffering from a violent brain fever [...], and in his delirium his ravings have been dreadful," she tells his wife-to-be, and she also warns her that "the traces of such an illness [...] do not lightly die away;" Mina reunites there with Jonathan, and she finds him "so thin and pale and weak looking" (pp. 109-110, 114). Jonathan and Dracula's appearances are opposite, and the "illness" that Sister Agatha mentions may not only be a "brain fever," for, as aforementioned, vampirism can be read through the medical lens as an infection transmitted through sex, which can have been passed onto Jonathan if the Count has drunk his blood during Harker's stay at the castle.

5.3. The Blurring "Vampire Mouth:" Male Passivity, Female Hypersexuality, the Subversion of Motherhood, Cognitive Development, and the Ambivalent Representation of the New Woman

Taking into account everything that has been analyzed until this point, it is mandatory to talk about gender in relation to the novel, as "Dracula presents a characteristic, if hyperbolic, instance of Victorian anxiety over the potential fluidity of gender roles" (Demetrakopoulos, 1977, as cited in Craft, 1984, pp. 111-112). Christopher Craft's emphasis

on the "Vampire Mouth" is of the utmost importance in this analysis: it lures and promises a red and soft orifice but instead delivers "a piercing bone," which in turn "fuses and confuses," as the polarized "gender-based categories" of penetrating and penetrated become unfixed, for "all vampires, male and female" simultaneously display the opposite characteristics in perfect unity (Craft, 1984, p. 109). This dissolution of gender boundaries has been thoroughly illustrated throughout the paper, and it is precisely why Van Helsing is afraid of vampires: if this monstrous vampiric race expands throughout Europe by ""infecting" the [...] Victorians," "the rigidly defined gender roles" will be blurred, which will, in turn, make "the patriarchal ideology on which the empire stands" to collapse (Koç & Demir, 2018, p. 429). In Castle Dracula, Jonathan is relegated to the passive role in sex—which has associated with that of women—, while he waits for the blonde vampire woman to perform fellatio on him—who is the one becoming active when taking the initiative—; in the case of Lucy, she repeatedly displays both her penetrating ability and hypersexuality, as she would like to "marry three men at once," tries to seduce Arthur into the vampire world, and feasts on children; as for Mina, as some scholars claim, she actively engages in oral sex with the Count when he opens a wound in his chest from which Mina can suck his blood (Craft, 1984, pp. 108, 109, 119; Prescott & Giorgio, 2005, pp. 500, 504).

Vampirism can also cause other consequences that affect gender roles but which are not directly linked to sexuality, such as the subversion of motherhood and exceptional cognitive development. Be it the three vampire women inhabiting Castle Dracula or the recently vampirized Lucy, all of them display this rejection of the archetypal notion of the Victorian woman as the 'angel in the house', for they do not only display lustfulness and are active when engaging in sexual activities, but they also depart from the expected idea of the loving and caring mother as they all cannibalistically feed on children (Craft, 1984, p. 120; Demetrakopoulos, 1977, p. 107; Pikula, 2012, p. 291). Mina's case radically differs from the bestiality that the other female vampires have developed. Prior to the bite, Van Helsing had told her that "she has man's brain," and it is precisely because she departs from the idea of the passive woman in terms of intellectual activity that she is excluded from participating in killing the Count: made to remain as the Crew of Light's idealized "star" and "hope" against her will, she becomes an easier target for Dracula (pp. 250, 258). Once the Count has bitten her, however, "Mina improves her intellectual power remarkably," as she starts to "[take] a growing interest in everything," and although her physicality undergoes the typical changes

that any other vampirized being suffers, she does not "[degenerate] into an animal-like existence" (Kwan-Wai Yu, 2006, p. 156; Stoker, 2003, pp. 313-314). The Crew of Light realizes that she has fallen into Dracula's temptation because they have ostracized her, and they understand that in order to deracinate her, they must take her under their wing. Notwithstanding, Mina is pivotal in the novel's plot, as her analytical abilities allow her to reduce the number of the possible routes that the Count may take to arrive in Transylvania safely: she discards the possibilities of Dracula traveling by road and rail and deduces that his journey will be by water, either by the rivers Pruth or the Sereth; in knowing her conclusions, the Crew of Light recognizes her exceptional intelligence in creating their plan of action, which makes Van Helsing call her "teacher," for [h]er eyes have seen where [they] were blinded [and now they] are on the track once again" (pp. 373-376).

Nonetheless, Mina's behavior challenges the gender notions of Victorian England even before she drinks Dracula's blood, as her identity is constructed around an ambivalence in the representation of the New Woman. "Rejecting the home and traditional motherhood as the only acceptable occupation for women, the New Woman actively sought educational fulfillment and work [...] in medicine, nursing, education, and the newly forming Typing Girl pools" (Ledger, 1997, and Mangum, 1998, as cited in Prescott & Giorgio, 2005, p. 488). Mina's connection with the New Woman is evident in terms of occupation and use of the typewriter, as she is an "assistant schoolmistress," strives to improve her typewriting abilities, and is willing to try what the "lady journalists do: interviewing and writing descriptions and trying to remember conversations" (p. 62). She also mentions the New Woman in relation to their sexual freedom, but scholars diverge on how she views their deeds: Mina reflects in her journal about "the idea that men and women should be allowed to see each other asleep before proposing or accepting" and concludes that the New Woman "will [probably] do the proposing herself" (pp. 99-100). Some scholars claim that Mina "accepts initiative in women as positive," while others think that she is against the sexual liberty that the New Woman seeks (Demetrakopoulos, 1977, p. 110; O'Connor, 2022, p. 2). Something else that may shock readers is the fact that Mina does not address the issue of motherhood; however, her qualities in relation to work and education "are ultimately muted as she assumes a maternal role" towards the end of the novel by giving birth to little Quincey, which positions Mrs Harker as the archetypal representation of the 'angel in the house' as a "caring wife and maternal figure" (Shane, 2016, p. 21; Stoker, 2003, p. 402; Kwan-Wai Yu, 2006, p. 157).

If the novel is read considering Rubin's notion of the 'traffic in women' and Sedgwick's notion of male homosocial bonds, another layer of analysis can be added to the discussion around gender in *Dracula*. The three vampire women, Lucy, and Mina are the trafficked objects between the Western and Eastern male characters—who are foes—, for their sexuality is/can be threatening, as it has been previously explored in this paper. The three vampire women and Lucy, with their cannibalistic and monstrous manifestation of lustfulness and participation in sexual activities that Dracula has equipped them with in order to spread vampirism throughout Western Europe, pose a threat to the Victorian values embodied by the Crew of Light; that is why Arthur drives a stake through the latter's heart and Van Helsing severs the formers' head (p. 395). Mina's case is different: although she also has Dracula's blood running through her veins and she also poses a potential threat to the Crew of Light and, by extension, Western Europe, she does not fully transform into a vampire, so she is not killed; instead, because Quincey and Jonathan kill Dracula, her potential vampirism fades (pp. 400-401).

Hence, Stoker might have decided to depict female sexuality as monstrous as a form of denouncing the strict gender conventions that were socially perceived as mandatory, for he may have considered it acceptable for women to be active and for men to be passive. This idea is even more feasible if one takes into account that the novel was published at the end of the century and the potentiality for social changes was very latent.

6. Conclusions: the Role of the Gothic in the Representations of the Other and the Open Endings

Through the use of the Gothic, nineteenth-century authors like Mary Shelley, Emilly Brontë, and Bram Stoker were able to explore, question, and transgress the strict boundaries of British society. These authors go beyond the social limits from beginning to end: intense emotions—like fear, sorrow, pain, violence, and revenge—permeate the plots, and certain characters embody the idea of the Other in several ways.

In *Frankenstein*, Victor breaks social conventions by bringing to life a stitched-up creature through galvanism, women are systematically killed in the midst of the foes' dispute, and morality is questioned through the figure of the inherently pure-hearted and rational creature, as he vows revenge against humanity for their violent behavior towards both his

physicality and existence, which in turn is regarded by society as a menace, being capable of exterminating humanity. In *Wuthering Heights*, while Catherine refuses to comply with gender norms and manipulates those around her, the racially ambiguous Heathcliff avenges the abuse that he has endured and his beloved's demise, which manifests in his upward mobility, acquisition of Wuthering Heights, and mistreatment towards the Earnshaws and the Lintons; nevertheless, despite female rebelliousness, women become objects in the hands of the male enemies. In *Dracula*, racial ambiguity and the threat of reverse colonialism are also present, and Mina's embodiment of an ambivalent representation of the New Woman and Jonathan's passivity contribute to shattering gender expectations; similarly, women infected with vampirism are also trafficked between the male foes and sexuality becomes a central issue in the text, as the female vampires display an insatiable sexual appetite—becoming *femme fatale*—and the Count seems to be bisexual and polygamous.

Nonetheless, these three pivotal British novels' endings are open, as cunning readers can notice, and present opportunities for future subversions of social norms despite the apparent recovery of order and conventions. After Victor's demise, the creature promises to commit suicide in the "most northern extremity of the globe," where he will "consume to ashes [his] miserable frame" in a pyre, and although he jumps into the ocean and readers are left to trust his word, there are no proofs that he has indeed died, which provides the creature with time to rethink his decisions: he might change his mind and stay alive, and he might decide to make the scientist's fears come true (pp. 229-230). Similarly, despite having annihilated the Count and his threatening power, the possibility that Dracula's blood flows through Mina and her son's veins exists, which also leaves room for their vampirism to (re)surface (Hindle, 2003, p. xxxvi): Mina hopes that "some of brave [Quincey's] spirit has passed into him," which is unlikely as the American's blood has not mixed with Mrs Harker, but hers and the vampire's have; the birth of little Quincey, hence, could be read as Dracula's reincarnation and attempt to rise like a phoenix from the ashes (pp. 402). Likewise, the potentiality for another rebellion is also embodied in the Cathy-Hareton marriage (Nestor, 2000, pp. xxvi-xxvii): it is true that, towards the end of the novel, Lockwood observes Cathy teaching Hareton how to read while Nelly "sew[s] and sing[s]," illustrating an idyllic representation of a family (pp. 309-310), but each of them has inherited their parent's extremely unruly nature; also worth mentioning is the fact that Heathcliff and Catherine are finally reunited and eternally inseparable when they both belong to the realm of the dead,

which reminds readers about the immortality of their rebellion. Consequently, in these three novels, order is not as restored as it may initially seem, so readers are guided to think that the potentiality for further boundaries being transgressed is not impossible—indeed, quite likely—, which highlights the possibility that these characters may again fight against the strict social conventions of gender, social class, race, sexuality, and morals, hence becoming the 'menacing' Others.

In conclusion, British authors contributing to the literature of the nineteenth century that wanted to focus on everything that deviated from the normativity of the period often employed the Gothic, as it allowed them to explore those social anxieties that not only transgressed the established boundaries but they were also embodied by the figure of the Other; this exploration of Otherness, however, took myriad shapes, as its depiction depended on what the authors wanted to focus on: as it has been thoroughly analyzed throughout this paper, instances of this creation of marginalized and suppressed identities are located in three pivotal nineteenth-century novels, *Frankenstein*, *Wuthering Heights*, and *Dracula*, for they dive into gender, racial, sexual, moral, and class-related anxieties.

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