Vampirism and Global Power Relations: A Study of the Fictive Histories in the Swedish Adaptation of *Dracula*

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Abstract: Stoker's *Dracula* frames the entire narrative in the context of the political dynamic between London and East Europe, and the anxieties surrounding the invasion of the London public and domestic spheres by the Romanian Count. At the beginning of the novel, however, Dracula gives a lengthy account of Romania's political rivalry with the Turks, referring specifically to the confrontation between the Voivode and the Turks across the Danube River. This political history in Stoker's *Dracula* is, however, not explored beyond the initial sections of the novel. The Swedish version of *Dracula*, titled *Powers of Darkness*, and published in 1899, explores the political history in a more detailed manner. The Swedish version is not a mere translation of Stoker's novel, as scholars had believed for long, but features additional scenes and characters, which alter the text in significant ways. This paper will argue that the change in the fictive history in this adaptation is a deliberate creative intervention meant to interpolate Stoker's narrative with new political tensions and social drama. This changes the nature of horror itself that defines the 'original' *Dracula*.

Keywords: Fictive history, adaptations, Dracula, horror

Introduction

Bram Stoker's *Dracula* has proven to be the definitive text of vampire literature across ages, surpassing texts like Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla*, Polidori's *The Vampyre*, or James Malcolm Rhymer's *Varney the Vampire*. Over the years, vampire literature has proliferated, each treating the theme of blood-drinking according to the anxieties and fears of one's age and geographical location. However, no matter how far the storylines of these vampire narratives may be from Stoker's novel, they are always pitted against *Dracula*, which the other texts are shown to align against, or deviate from. This has led to a debate around what constitutes the 'original' and what constitutes the 'apocryphal' in the oeuvre of vampire fiction. Scholarly studies on these 'adaptations' frequently try to trace the ways in which the 'authentic' *Dracula* is transformed, tampered with, and transferred into a different cultural and historical context, in order to cheat the mechanisms preventing the direct piracy of literary works. In the process, they also radically alter the structure of the fictive history, against which Stoker's novel is set. Such changes to the fictional historical narrative are mostly seen as necessary technical changes to bypass legal issues related to the publication of a 'bootleg' novel. However, I argue in this chapter that the change in the fictive history in such adaptations is a deliberate creative intervention meant to interpolate Stoker's narrative with new political tensions and social drama, that change the nature of horror itself that defines the 'original' *Dracula*. As Brundan, Jones and Mier—Cruz argue, just like Dracula appropriates and transforms the bodies he preys upon, the myriad 'inauthentic' and unauthorized translations and adaptations of *Dracula*, alter Stoker's novel and appropriate it, playing a crucial role in the transmission and reproduction of the text (294). In this paper I will study the 1899 Swedish version of *Dracula*, published by Rickard Berghorn as

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Powers of Darkness. Instead of trying to verify the actual historicity of Stoker's novel and its adaptations, I will compare the fictive histories of Stoker's novel and the Swedish text in order to prove that any change in Dracula's fictional history leads to a change in the kind of horror generated by the vampire figure in the text.

The change in the fictive history of *Dracula* in the numerous adaptations of the novel, including the Swedish one, depends on the popular reception of the novel through the ages. Critical studies on the novel proliferated during the second half of the twentieth century, with the first modern critical study of the novel being published in 1959 (Riquelme). Furthermore, in 1997, on the centennial of the publication of Stoker's novel, *Dracula* was re-issued in the *Norton Critical Edition*, with Nina Auerbach and David J. Skal as editors (R.L. 133). While the blood-thirsty Count was slowly creeping into the halls of academia, his presence in the popular media was also becoming more and more prominent. Ted Browning's 1931 screen adaptation of *Dracula*, featuring Bela Lugosi as the Count, and Terence Fisher's 1958 screen adaptation titled *Horror of Dracula*, featuring Christopher Lee, established the figure of the vampire in the minds of the people. While scholars have often tried to offer psychoanalytic, historical, or gendered readings of the text, the popular media has highlighted the sensationalized, visceral, and physical aspects of the horror, seeking to excite the audience/readers with a simple tale of horror. However, the Dracula of academia cannot be seen as different from the Dracula in the popular media. Just as in the novel where the Count is simultaneously a warm, polished host and a brutal predator, so also, he lives a double life in the academia and in the popular media.

The critical works on the novel, focusing on the psychological and sociological aspects of horror, deconstruct the way popular imagination perceives the vampire at a particular moment in history. While the audience/readers may not consciously think about the psychological and sociological construction of the text, it nonetheless influences the way it affects them. This in turn determines the way in which the next adaptation will be shaped by the popular imagination, thus paving the way for future popularity of the novel. Studies on Bram Stoker's novel only serve to analyze and critically breakdown the way the popular imagination shapes, and in turn is shaped by, these different adaptations of *Dracula.* The Swedish adaptation, titled *Powers of Darkness*, helps us trace this change in the popular perception of this novel. As we will observe in this paper, while the political anxieties towards the end of the nineteenth century determine the way Stoker's novel is re-imagined by the people, the story of Dracula, and his invasion of England, shapes the popular perception of political rivalries across the world.

Dracula and Orientalist Fantasies of Sexual Excess

Although Stoker locates the castle of the vampire in Transylvania, Count Dracula traces his heritage back to the Szekelys, who were primarily a Hungarian tribe. Dracula repeatedly mentions how his tribe had defended the land against the Turks over the course of history:

> ...the Szekelys were claimed as kindred by the victorious Magyars, and to us for centuries was trusted the guarding of the frontier of Turkey-land [...] when the flags of the Wallach and the Magyar went down beneath the Crescent, who was it but one of my own race who as Voivode crossed the Danube and beat the Turk on his own ground? (Stoker 34)

Matthew Gibson in his analysis of the Eastern Question in *Dracula* observes that Stoker created the fictional history of the Count by combining the history of the Wallachian Voivode Dracula, found in William Wilkinson's *An Account of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia* (1820), and the political history of the Szekelys, found in Major Johnson's *On the Track of the Crescent* (Gibson 75). Although the Wallachians and the Szekelys belong to different ethnic traditions, Stoker combines the two in the figure of the Count by representing their common enmity against the Turks. As Gibson says, Stoker combines the Turk-hating Dracula of Wilkinson with the Szekelys tribe in

order to establish Dracula as 'a guardian against the Turks…[who] pits the cross against the crescent, even though the former has by now forsaken him' (77). However, the Christian symbols in *Dracula* serve more as elements of horror iconography than as markers of a specific religious worldview. Therefore, Gibson's interpretation of Dracula's tirade against the Turks as a fanatic preference of the cross over the crescent appears too simplistic and faulty. This is because while Dracula proudly talks about how the Szekelys were trusted with the responsibility of defending the borders against the Turks by the Magyars, in the course of the same speech he also talks about how they 'threw off the Hungarian yoke' (Stoker 35) which is a clear reference to the time the Turks defeated the Hungarians in 1526, and Transylvania achieved a status of semi-autonomy (Auerbach and Skal, footnote in *Dracula*, 35). This anomaly in Dracula's political affiliations (which Gibson mentions briefly but ignores as Stoker's misappropriation of his source materials) is significant in two respects.[1] Firstly, it shows that Dracula's vain stories about his past military glory do not imply his allegiance either to the cross or to the crescent but highlight his sense of skilled oratory, which tries to elevate his image from that of a scheming, bloodthirsty monster to that of a brave warrior.[2] Secondly, it situates Dracula at the intersection of Turkish and Hungarian politics, highlighting the influence of both East European and Oriental cultures on the character of the Count. In Stoker's novel, the Oriental influence is only hinted at, and not explored fully. When the Count keeps Harker awake every night, talking about his past, Harker notes that his diary entries, recording the daily conversations he has with Dracula, bear a strong resemblance to the *Arabian Nights* (Stoker 35). Harker's analogy picturizes Dracula as an Oriental despot, who will kill Harker once he is done with him, just like the king plans to execute Scheherazade in *Arabian Nights*, once she has completed her story. Although there has been a reversal of role whereby it is Dracula who is telling the story and not the other way around, it is interesting to note that Harker compares his relationship with Dracula to Shahryâr and Scheherazade of *Arabian Nights*, who ultimately share a nuptial bond. Even before the Count has made an attempt to turn Harker, the latter imagines himself to be a 'bride' of Dracula, thus giving their relationship a deeply sexual character.[3]

While Stoker restricts the Orientalism in *Dracula* to this brief analogy, the Swedish version of *Dracula*, titled *Powers of Darkness* and published in 1899, explores this connection in a more detailed manner. The Swedish version is not a mere translation of Stoker's novel, as scholars had believed for long, but features additional scenes and characters, which alter the text in significant ways. In one such scene added to the novel, the Count, referred to as Draculitz here, offers to show Harker the gallery of family portraits. While going through the portraits, Harker sees the figure of the mysterious woman who appears to him several times in the castle, and towards whom he feels an irresistible sense of attraction (Stoker and A–e 94). The Count, sensing the hidden passion in Harker for the woman in the portrait, goes on to revel in the sensuous details of her physique, which Harker professes, deeply offends his sensibilities (Stoker and A–e 95). The idea of sexuality and vampirism in Stoker's *Dracula* has mostly been seen in terms of Victorian anxieties about the expression of sexual desire outside the boundaries of monogamous, heterosexual marriage. Christopher Craft for example, argues that the novel opens with a sexual threat of Dracula's interest in Harker, which may lead to the Count penetrating and draining him (109–110). Similarly, Phyllis A. Roth observes that Lucy is allowed to be voluptuous only after she is turned into a vampire, and that the human relationships in the novel are spiritualized to the extent that their sexual natures are made invisible (115). However, *Powers of Darkness* situates the sexual perversion of Draculitz within the larger Orientalist discourse of the nineteenth century, rather than just placing it in the context of the Victorian repression of sexuality. When Draculitz speaks about the portrait of the woman in overtly sexual terms, Harker says that he is reminded of a painting he once saw in an exhibition, and goes on to give a detailed description of the scene in the painting:

> …a slave trader who displayed his product to a lustfully reclining Turkish pasha (or something along those lines) — a beautiful naked woman whose charms he expatiated upon and pointed out with the

> full eloquence of the connoisseur and the businessman, hoping to make her even more desirable to the intended buyer… (Stoker and A-e 95–96)

The Oriental landscape has frequently been seen as a place of sexual excess in the Western imagination. As Nigel Leask observes, that the East in orientalist literature was increasingly seen as a place of licentiousness and perversion by the West in order to justify its moral and economic appropriation by the colonial forces of Europe (21). Harker assumes a moral high ground above Draculitz because he feels that the Count's excessively erotic descriptions of the woman in the portrait form a part of his Eastern identity. Even before Stoker, the association of Oriental sexual excess with vampirism is found in Byron's *The Giaour*, where the intense sexual rivalry between Hassan and Giaour over Leila leads to Hassan killing his beloved, and Giaour avenging her death by killing Hassan (123–155). The narrator says that because of Giaour's act of murder he will haunt his family and suck their blood as a vampire to sustain his undead body. Similarly, in William Beckford's *Vathek*, the eponymous Oriental ruler indulges in licentious sexual activities, and in excessive worldly pleasures in his five Palaces of Senses, eventually leading to his damnation (Beckford).

Harker's recollection of the painting with the lustful Turk, in response to Draculitz's sensual picturization of the portrait, thus falls in the tradition of Western writers labelling the Orient as a land of sexual perversion and ribaldry. However, it is not Draculitz whom he compares to the lustful Turk in the painting. If we study the analogy closely, Harker is comparing Draculitz to the slave trader who is displaying the naked woman, which makes him the lustful Turk, whom the Count is trying to titillate with his erotic picturization. In a way therefore, Harker willfully participates in this orientalist sexual fantasy, imagining himself to be the Turkish lord who is enjoying the way the slave trader presents the woman. As Said observes, that for the European writer the Orient was a place where one could experience sexuality in a more libertine and guilt-free manner which was not possible in the West (190). If Draculitz's purpose is to make the mysterious woman irresistible for Harker, like the slave trader's 'display' makes her more desirable to the Turkish lord, the Count is indeed successful. Harker himself confesses at one point that he has had several opportunities to escape from the castle through other hidden routes but the sensual memory of the mysterious woman, and the desire to see her again, has prevented him from doing so (Stoker and A-e 186). Unlike Stoker's Harker who is trapped by Dracula without any chance of escape, the Harker of *Powers of Darkness* is trapped by his own desire. Although he realizes the incipient dangers of staying in the castle, he says, 'I do not wish to talk about, nor think about going home — the thought itself is a horror' (Stoker and A-e 188). The white, Western man has thus immersed himself in the oriental fantasy that Draculitz has created, to the point that he is unable to escape from it. Moreover, the thought of going home makes Harker afraid because the pleasures of sensual imagination, to which he has subjected himself in Draculitz's castle, would haunt him with guilt once he enters the 'civilized' Western world. This is because, although Harker maintains his fidelity to Wilma (the Mina figure in the Swedish version) by not giving in completely to the seductions of the woman at the castle, he repeatedly calls out to her mentally, and enjoys thinking about her sexualized form. Just like the white, English writers of nineteenth century vicariously enjoying the pleasures of unbridled sexuality through their orientalist writing, Harker too participates in the fantasy of the mysterious woman to indirectly break free from his sexual rigidity in this alternative space. The horror in *Powers of Darkness*, unlike Stoker's novel, is not just the horror of the white, Western man on encountering the Other in an unfamiliar, culturally-distant setting. It is the horror of returning from the non-Western, orientalized space, and re-acclimatizing oneself to the society of England, after one has willingly participated in the sexualized fantasies of the East.

While Harker had referred to Draculitz as a 'Hungarian, or rather Transylvanian, magnate' (Stoker and A-e 56) on receiving his letter at Bistritz, following the scene at the gallery he calls him an 'immoral, barbaric, unreliable, and despotic Oriental — or rather half-Asian'(Stoker and A-e 96). Soon after, when Draculitz continues to talk about women in explicitly carnal terms, Harker com-

ments on his 'strange Asian eyes' and is disgusted with his 'Eastern eroticism' (Stoker and A-e 96). The change in Harker's portrayal of the Count's heritage from an East European one to an out-and-out Eastern one is a significant departure from Stoker's novel. Stoker's Dracula inhabits a world that despite being located at the far Eastern ends of Europe is nonetheless a part of it. The members of the Crew of Light therefore actually go to Transylvania and kill the Count, along with the female vampires, thereby returning 'normalcy' to the region, and re-instating it as a part (although a culturally distant one) of the rational West. In *Powers of Darkness* on the other hand, Draculitz's world is orientalized to the point that it is imagined as an alternative, fantastic space to which neither Harker returns, nor the members of the Crew of Light go, to end the terrors present in the castle. Draculitz is killed off in London itself; whatever horrors remained in the castle at Transylvania, including the woman who had repeatedly appeared to Harker, and the mysterious creatures participating in some weird blood cult, are left undisturbed in that alternative space.

The orientalizing of Draculitz thus leads to the creation of this zone of horror, which, despite the efforts of Helsing and the others, is not integrated within the European space. However, this alternative zone of horror does not remain restricted to Transylvania but is also found in the orientalized space of Carfax, where Dr Seward meets the Countess. While in Stoker's novel, the house at Carfax was used solely by Dracula as his lair, in *Powers of Darkness* it becomes the meeting place for strange cultists, which forms the second layer of horror in the text. When Dr Seward is invited to the house at Carfax to treat the Countess, he is directly led into her private room. Although the house is in London, Seward notes how the wallpaper depicts 'an Oriental landscape' and how the finely carved latticework with thin columns was 'probably a fantasy of some returned nabob, who…had wished to conjure a colourful, Oriental world in the vicinity of fog-shrouded London' (Stoker and A-e 418). The Oriental world which Harker had conjured up in his imagination in Transylvania has thus assumed a physical reality of its own, and permeated the house at Carfax in London. Within this world, Dr Seward participates in a kind of orientalist harem fantasy where he sees the Countess in her private domestic space, rising up from a divan to meet him.[4] The harem, as a cloistered space in the household reserved for the women and inaccessible to people from outside, formed an important part of the Western sexual imagination of the East, in the paintings and the writings of the nineteenth century. The women in such narratives — whether visual or textual — would often be shown as nude or semi-nude in 'a state of pleasing vulnerability' while the European onlooker is fully dressed and equipped with his rationality and language to describe this encounter (Kabbani 73). This orientalist harem fantasy becomes all the more explicit the second time Dr Seward visits the house at Carfax. This is because, this time Dr Seward is directly taken to the bedroom of the Countess, where she is lying down with a dressing gown wrapped around her (Stoker and A-e 426). As Seward opens the dressing gown to check her with the stethoscope, he notices that 'she was entirely undressed under the same, so that her naked, perfectly beautiful figure' was outlined against the lining of the robe (Stoker and A-e 426). This undressing of the Countess in her bedroom by Dr Seward marks the fulfillment of his sexual fantasy, which I argue had been triggered by the orientalist motifs on the wall, the first time he had entered Carfax. While the Countess lies there in her state of vulnerability — both in the sexual sense of being undressed, and in the physical sense because of her illness — Dr Seward arrives as a symbol of Western rationality with his knowledge of medicine and cure. However, the rationality of the white, Western man is soon subverted as he is called upon to cure her, not by using his knowledge of medicine but through the process of hypnosis. Just like Harker, this orientalized world that his own fantasies have played upon, consumes him completely to the point that he returns time and again to the house at Carfax, furthering his own destruction.

Powers of Darkness and Continental Politics in the Nineteenth Century

The Swedish version therefore, adds extensive Oriental details to Stoker's original text and significantly alters the nature of the text. Although such details may appear to be a mere reflection of

nineteenth century European attitudes towards the East, they bring about significant changes in the original political dynamic of Stoker's novel. Stoker's *Dracula* brings out the horrors of an East European Count who 'invades' England and spreads his empire by turning people into vampires. This East European monster is tracked down and killed, securing the borders of Britain against foreign elements once again. *Powers of Darkness* however, complicates the political framework of the text by highlighting Draculitz's position in the global politics of the time. When Harker browses through the letters of the Count he finds that there are names which 'are known throughout Europe, indicating secret connections and combinations … [that are] significant, politically as well as socially and culturally' (Stoker and A-e 164). When Barrington Jones, the detective, starts investigating Draculitz's political activities he finds that he is suspected of several political conspiracies and associated with several anarchist groups in the Continent (Stoker and A-e 265). Moreover, he also uncovers a conspiracy against England in the letters of the Count, which was meant to weaken its power and influence from within. The reference to the political upheavals in the Continent, along with the Oriental details in *Powers of Darkness*, highlights Britain's complex international relations with France, Sweden, and the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth century. From the end of the eighteenth century to the beginning of the nineteenth century, the political ambitions of Napoleon Bonaparte led to a series of global conflicts over the issue of territorial control, referred to as the Napoleonic wars. Although the parties involved in the Napoleonic wars changed with each Coalition that was formed, Britain's rivalry with France over the process of empire building led to the continuation of war between them for 20 years, with Britain spending over £65 million on subsidising wars against Napoleon (Mikaberidze xiii-xiv). Meanwhile, because of King Gustavus IV Adolf's dislike for the French Revolution, Sweden joined the Third Coalition in 1805 along with Britain and Russia, leading to the Franco-Swedish War (Mikaberidze 334). In *Powers of Darkness,* the house at Carfax becomes the meeting point for a group of cultists who are also tied with some form of political conspiracy. These meetings of conspirators are presided over by the Countess, whose appearance and language is revealed to be French. Given the common enmity between Britain and Sweden against France during the Napoleonic wars, it is no surprise that the leader of a group of political conspirators is given a French character in a Swedish adaptation of an English text. Although the novel is written and set during the end of the 19th century, the Napoleonic wars highlight the long-standing history of rivalry between Britain and France in the 19th century. That is why although there is no direct reference to the Napoleonic wars in *Powers of Darkness*, the historical background of this rivalry between the two countries helps us understand why the conspirators are shown to be French.

Powers of Darkness therefore significantly alters the London-Romania political dynamic of Stoker's *Dracula* by introducing this additional subplot that ties England to the global politics of the time. Unlike Dracula's invasion of London and his spread of vampirism, which is contained within England once he arrives at Whitby, Draculitz's invasion of England affects its position within the Continental politics on the whole. As Barrington Jones says, '…this is about a grand conspiracy of a political nature…England's power and influence have long been a thorn in the side of the nations of the Continent…our enemies…have had the sense to enlist allies…' (Stoker and A-e 510). The invasion of the vampire in Stoker's *Dracula* is a localised threat from Romania, which temporarily acts as a source of anxiety about the intrusion of the East European Other. In *Powers of Darkness*, on the other hand, Draculitz's coming to England is tied to the systematic destabilisation of Britain's political influence. The threat in the latter case, is not just a supernatural threat from East Europe which can be isolated and eliminated but a diplomatic and political threat posed by the countries across the Continent, which Draculitz is manipulating to his advantage. The fear of Britain's political downfall thus accompanies the fear of spiritual degeneration that Stoker's *Dracula* was based on. That is why Draculitz is defeated by the combined efforts of Van Helsing, who uses his knowledge about the occult to stop the spiritual and moral decay brought about by the vampire, and Barrington

Jones who uses his intelligence about secretive international conspiracies to reduce the political damage inflicted by the Count's criminal activities. Moreover, unlike Stoker's novel, *Powers of Darkness* does not receive a closure with the death of Draculitz alone. Many of the Count's accomplices who served as diplomatic corps in England are called back by their governments, while some disappear or commit suicide (Stoker and A-e 539). Despite the end of the supernatural villain, there is a hint that England's political troubles are far from over, given the complicated nature of its diplomatic relations with other countries. The successful translation of horror from a British text to a Swedish one is thus based on shared political aspirations and anxieties of the two countries in the Continental play of power. The supernatural horror in Stoker's *Dracula* only acts as a metaphor for the fin-de-siècle Victorian fears about sexuality, degeneration, and social change. In *Powers of Darkness* however, the political horror is not just metaphorical but an actual part of the plot that cannot be resolved using the conventional remedies for supernatural monsters. This actuality of the political horror — which is fused with the supernatural horror of the novel —extends it beyond the boundaries of the text, and beyond the death of the vampiric Count.

The presence of the Countess within London, from where these conspirators bring their plans to destroy England to fruition, is thus a political commentary on the rivalry between France and Britain over territorial expansion during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. However, the Continental politics in the Swedish version is not restricted to Franco-Britain or Franco-Swedish conflict alone. When Dr Seward goes to attend the concert of Signor Leonardi — a famous musician who is a part of the cultist group at Carfax — he overhears a conversation about a secret plan to destroy Britain, involving huge sums of money:

> Why, Russia has not yet said its last word…the mines are already worth billions and there is infinitely much more gold than they yet suspect…once the armaments are completed, I promise that the mood *here* will be such that it only takes one spark to light the fuse — and then — *finis Britannia!* (Stoker and A-e 467)

The reference to the gold mines, that they will probably use to generate wealth for making arms, seems to be a reference to the gold rush which took place in Siberia during the nineteenth century. The gold rush was a result of the discovery of a mine in Siberia in 1838 on the Ulderey River, and resulted in Russia acting as the main source of gold, accounting for as much as sixty percent of world production in the first half of the nineteenth century (Marsden and House 3). In the novel, it is probably the wealth that is being generated through these mines that is being used to fund the political destruction of Britain. Although Draculitz is not directly shown participating in these schemes of disrupting Britain's social stability, his presence at the meetings at Carfax, and the letters Harker discovers at his castle, hints at his involvement in this larger political scheme. For a large section of the novel, Draculitz is absent from the main scene of action, with the plot revolving around Dr Seward's gradual discovery of the dangerous nature of the conspiracies being hatched in the house opposite to his asylum. But it is important to remember that it is Draculitz who had purchased the house at Carfax, and who is now controlling this flow of wealth to manipulate the Continental rivalries to his advantage.

In Stoker's novel, Carfax was more of a lair for the undead where Dracula's coffins were stored. In the Swedish version however, the political activity at the house of Carfax supersedes the vampiric activity of Draculitz in England. Rather than acting as the undead who rises up from his grave to prey on the living, Draculitz's vampirism is seen more as a medium for establishing his position within the global politics as a powerful contender for power. Stoker's Dracula sees his past glory as a Szekelys warrior as part of a different world that is gone. After his initial conversations with Harker about his war with the Turks we never find a reference to his political identity when he comes to London to prey on the living as a vampire. Draculitz, by contrast, renews his political ambitions of ruling the world as a conqueror by carefully using international alliances and rivalries to strengthen his hold of power. In doing so, he places Eastern Europe at the center of world politics rather than

seeing it as a peripheral power living in the shadow of the West. The reference to the gold being used for making armaments also alters the nature of vampirism in the text. Stoker's Dracula, as critics have identified, is seen as an aristocratic hoarder of wealth, and is a symbol of old money belonging to a corrupt class (Halberstam 346–348). Citing the scene where Harker finds a heap of gold covered in dust at Dracula's castle, vampirism is seen as a hindrance to the natural flow of currency (Halberstam 346). Similarly, Franco Moretti observes that Dracula 'lacks the aristocrat's conspicuous consumption' as he keeps no servants, drives his own carriage, and prepares the bed and meals for Harker on his own (90). Although this wealth is later used by Dracula to infiltrate London and satisfy his bloodlust, on the whole, the Count has managed to keep his money out of circulation.

In *Powers of Darkness* however, not only does Draculitz have a deaf-mute woman at the castle to work for him, once in London, he is also seen in these lavish parties hosted at Carfax. Within this changed Gothic economy, the vampire has not only learned to circulate the wealth he has amassed but also to use it in his transactions of power across the world. He no longer acts as the monopolistic villain who hoards both blood and gold for himself, acting as the sole source of horror in the text. Rather, Draculitz operates in conjunction with a host of other characters, who despite their participation in cultist activities, may not be blood-sucking vampires themselves. Unlike Stoker's Dracula, the act of turning others into vampires is not the sole purpose with which the Count arrives in England. Through his wealth and influence, Draculitz creates a global alliance, working towards spreading his power on a wider scale.

The involvement of Russia in this plot against England becomes significant in the light of what Dr Seward reads in the telegram section of the newspaper. While commenting on the general state of war and lawlessness across the world, Seward notes that 'the free republicans in France are lauding with exultation the representative of slavery and despotism in the East — their highly honoured and beloved new ally, "Holy" Russia' (Stoker and A-e 469)! Britain's relationship with Russia had already been fraught with tensions because of the Crimean War fought between 1853–1856, over issues of territorial control in areas that were then under the Ottoman Empire. Although both Britain and France had supported the Ottoman empire in the conflict with Russia during the Crimean War, the alliance of Germany and Austria in 1879 severely disturbed the balance of power in Europe, which led to the creation of the Franco-Russian alliance in 1894 (Bovykin and Spring 21). Dr Seward's mention of France's newest ally is marked by a tone of condemnation towards Russia, which further highlights Russia as a force of evil that is working towards the destruction of Britain.[5] The horror in the Swedish version of *Dracula* therefore stems from a sense of political volatility that was gradually spreading across continents before the eventual eruption of the First World War. Within this scene of instability and mistrust among the global powers, the fear of national safety somehow overlaps with the personal fear of being turned into a vampire and being corrupted by Draculitz. But there is also a subtle hint that while Draculitz is using this atmosphere of political volatility to further his own nefarious purposes, he is not necessarily the cause of it. The intense struggle for territorial control, and the imperial rivalries among the different countries, were gradually pushing the world towards a point of total breakdown during the end of the nineteenth century. Draculitz's power-hungry vision of ruling the entire world mirrors the political ambitions of most of the global, imperial powers like Britain, Russia, France and others, all of whom were locked in a struggle for control. The horror in *Powers of Darkness* is thus less tangible because it is not concentrated in the monster alone but is diffused across the countries. Rickard Berghorn, in his introduction to the novel, commenting on Dr Seward's reference to the antisemitic persecution of the Jews, observes that the novel anticipates the rise of Nazism in a way. He compares Draculitz's ideas of building a world ruled by 'the Strong' to Hitler's fascist ideas about the superiority of his own race (Berghorn 12). While such references either to the rising anti-Jewish sentiment or to Franco-Russian politics are not explored beyond their initial mention, they point towards a global hunger for power that seriously impacts the course of history. Count Draculitz's vampirism, while a formidable threat to deal with, becomes secondary to this broken state of world order which cannot be restored easily.

Powers of Darkness thus has to be read in retrospect, in the light of the events of the First and the Second World Wars that would eventually rack the world after the novel was published. And it is this retrospective, historical reading which leads to a successful translation of the horror from Stoker's *Dracula. Powers of Darkness* thus continuously looks forward in horrific anticipation, rather than peeking at the monster behind the back. It looks at the vampire as a threat to modern, mercantile, and military England. While translating the elements of horror in *Powers of Darkness*, the same scene, character, or motif, begins to carry different historical and political meanings, changing the way the readers perceive the monster. In this Swedish version of *Dracula*, horror is not just the end result of the narrative, rather it is a medium through which the complex global relations between empires and nations are understood. Therefore, these translations are more than inauthentic, bootleg versions of Stoker's novel that they were earlier believed to be. Through the act of translation, they have acquired meanings that expand and enhance the global relevance of the myth of Dracula.

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Notes

[1] In the Norton edition of *Dracula*, the editor mentions in a footnote that the patriotic rhetoric of Dracula 'makes more sound than sense.' This hollow oratory of Dracula and his obsession with his political past seems to be more than a nostalgia for his military exploits. Since Stoker deliberately refrains from revealing the origins of Dracula as a vampire, it is possible that the Count's reminiscence of history is based on a longing for his past human self, before he was turned into an undead.

[2] Dracula's eloquent speeches also link him to another important literary portrayal of evil, namely, Milton's Satan. Declan Kiberd in his book *Irish Classics* goes so far as to say that 'In another kind of story, Dracula would indeed have been the hero (at least in the way that Satan was in *Paradise Lost*)'. Although as readers we may not see him as a hero, Dracula views himself not as a bloodsucking monster but as a descendent of a powerful race meant to conquer the world.

[3] The queerness of *Dracula* has been analyzed by Prof. Prodosh Bhattacharya and Dr. Abhirup Mascharak in their essay "'Wilde Desire' Across Cultures: *Dracula* and its Bengali Adaptations." However, Harker's portrayal of his relationship to Dracula in such nuptial terms brings into focus the question of Harker's queerness as well.

[4] Although Dr Seward initially indicates that the appearance of the Countess is that of a 'Paris chic', he later refers to her as a 'more or less dubious Polish, Wallachian, or Roumanian Countess.' The orientalizing of the private space of the Countess reminds us of Harker's orientalizing of the gallery scene with Draculitz, as both the scenes associate the Orient with some kind of sexual excess.

[5] It is important to note that Britain too joined the Franco-Russian alliance later, forming the Triple Entente in 1907. However, at the time when *Powers of Darkness* was published in 1899, Britain was diplomatically aloof from the affairs of the Continent, forming no permanent allies. This period, often referred to as Britain's 'splendid isolation,' finds a reflection in the novel wherein Britain receives no help from the Continent regarding the conspiracies being plotted against it, and must fight off Draculitz's transcontinental attack alone.

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