# CASTLE, COFFIN, STOMACH: *DRACULA* AND THE BANALITY OF THE OCCULT

## *By Philip Holden*

Fools, Fools! What devil or what witch was ever so great as Attila, whose blood is in these veins?
— Bram Stoker, *Dracula* (1897)

Art is completion; not merely a history of endeavour.
— Stoker, *Personal Reminiscences* (1906)

"HE CAN, WHEN ONCE HE FIND HIS WAY," says Van Helsing of Dracula, "come out from anything or into anything, no matter how close it be bound" (211; ch. 18). Recent criticism has claimed similar powers for Stoker's text, and its relationship to late-Victorian social formations. A wide territory has been staked out. Moving beyond earlier universalizing Freudian readings, Carol Senf sees the anxiety the novel expresses about gender roles as indicative of Stoker's difficulty in accepting the rise of the New Woman. Talia Schaffer and Christopher Craft read the homosocial relations in the novel in the light of sexological discourses of inversion and the emergence of the homosexual as a "type of life" (Foucault 43); Stephen Arata, noting Stoker's frequent use of racial metaphors, has seen the text as expressive of a "reverse colonization" in which "the spectacle of the primitive and the atavistic" ("Occidental Tourist" 624) is brought back to a town house near Piccadilly Circus, the hub of the empire.

For Jennifer Wicke, Stoker's novel looks forward — it is a "a liminal modernist artifact" (469) — while for Franco Moretti it looks back to the great depression. To Moretti, Dracula is a "monopolist," and "[l]ike monopoly capital, his ambition is to subjugate the last vestiges of the liberal era and destroy all forms of economic independence" (92). In contrast, David Glover sees "*Dracula* as reflecting the underside of the liberalism to which Stoker adhered, a nightmare vision of unruly subjects who are unamenable to its formal democratic calculus" (*Vampires* 41). It may be, as Judith Halberstam has argued, that the novel is overdetermined, the Count "a composite of otherness" (335).

Such criticism has, of course, played a valuable function in exploring the naturalization of Victorian ideologies of race, gender, and sexuality, ideologies which persist as a Gramscian common sense in our own *fin de siècle.* At times, however, it may serve our own needs a little too smoothly, and neglect the social environment in which *Dracula* was

produced and read. Many of the readings referred to above posit that Stoker's text is unstable, fissured, unable to close down an anarchic play of anxious meaning, a novel which "stages the very act of its own consumption, and problematizes it" (Wicke 491). Yet it is important to remember that it was almost unanimously well-reviewed as a novel of "considerable art and cunning," a work of "unmistakable literary power" (qtd. in Stoker, *Dracula* 364). What little negative criticism *Dracula* did receive was premised on artistic, not moral grounds.[1] It could, of course, be argued that Stoker's novel closes down its play of contradictions in its conclusion, tying up a series of potentially disruptive ends in a vision of the bourgeois family on holiday, Jonathan, Mina and their son revisiting sites of suffering and struggle which are now domesticated into the contents of a Baedeker. The late Victorians, however, were not so easily deceived by narrative strategy, as witnessed by the critical reception of *The Portrait of Dorian Gray, Jude the Obscure,* and *The Island of Dr. Moreau.* Each of these novels was clearly perceived as a scandalous challenge to socially normative constructions of the individual — in the areas of sexuality, gender, and atavism respectively — despite the fact that each has a conclusion which, on the surface at least, attempts to adumbrate that challenge.[2]

It is not possible for a late twentieth-century reader to achieve a Weberian *verstehen,* an empathic understanding of the motives of the Victorian reader, but it is, I think, possible to exercise some skepticism over implicit suggestions that all late Victorian texts are open, reflecting "sexual anarchy" (Showalter), "abjected masculinities" or "narrative chaos" (Hurley). Stephen Arata is right that many contemporary observers saw the last decade of the nineteenth century as a decade of crisis, but one might reasonably make the same observation of every decade in Britain's twentieth century. Crisis, Geradine Heng and Janadas Devan note, is in itself a discursive trope, and those "who successfully define and superintend a crisis, furnishing its lexicon and discursive parameters, successfully confirm themselves the owners of power" (343). The revival of the Gothic and Romance at the end of the nineteenth century might be seen through the lens of psychoanalysis — itself a very *fin-de-siècle* social science — as the manifestation of the repressed demons of a social unconscious, but it might equally well be seen as the imposition of a Foucauldian technology of the self, a new genre encouraging a reading practice which would create normative, masculine social subjects and encourage their self-improvement. "Life is monstrous, infinite, illogical abrupt and poignant," wrote Robert Louis Stevenson in defence of Romance and adventure fiction; "a work of art, in comparison, is neat, finite, self-contained, rational flowing and emasculate" ("Humble Remonstrance" 217). The reading of such works of art, Stevenson, Andrew Lang, Rider Haggard and others implied, might incite the development of a similarly self-contained human subject.[3]

With this disciplinary element of the Gothic and Romance revival in mind, I wish in this essay to investigate the most visible aspect of Stoker's *Dracula,* its depiction of magic, the supernatural, and the occult, as incitement to social conformity and individualization on the part of the reading subject. My reading of Stoker's novel will be informed by Theodor Adorno's essays on astrology and the occult, which demonstrate how the apparent irrationality of such practices and beliefs in fact contribute to the victory of instrumental rationality as a totalizing system of thought. In looking at the micropractices of discipline in Stoker's text, however, I wish to move away from Adorno's vision of power as hierarchical, a masochistic submission by each subject balanced by a sadistic demand for the submission of those further down the hierarchy (Adorno, *Stars* 43). Adorno wrote

in the shadow of fascism, convinced that Hitler's Germany represented the logical end of the Enlightenment, and that the North American culture industry's promotion of "mass deception" was leading the U.S.A. in the same direction. Michel Foucault's account of power, "exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of nonegalitarian and mobile relations" (94) gives more critical purchase on Stoker's text, enabling discussion of "a general line of force" subject to complex textual "redistributions, realignments, homogenizations, serial arrangements" (94).

Spiritualism and the occult were omnipresent features of middle-class Victorian life. While middle-brow fiction such as Edward Bulwer-Lytton's *A Strange Story* and, most famously, George du Maurier's *Trilby* deal centrally with occult powers, it is difficult to find a late Victorian novel that does not in some way touch upon hypnotism, possession, somnambulism, or the paranormal. Paradoxically, interest in the paranormal increased even as scientific methodology increasingly promised rational explanation of the physical world. At times, the occult operated as a strange reflection of advances in the field of science and technology. The tappings discovered by Kate and Maggie Fox which began the Spiritualist craze in 1848, Diana Basham notes, were seen as a "spiritual telegraph," a decade after Samuel Morse's invention of his Code (111).

Stoker's own life was as marked by occultism as that of any late Victorian. Barbara Belford notes persistent rumours that the author of *Dracula* was a member of the occult secret society the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn (213), and shared the interest in spiritualism shown by many of his acquaintances, notably Pamela Colman Smith and Constance Wilde. Belford suggests that it is possible to read Dracula as an occult *roman à clef,* each character corresponding to an important card in the tarot deck. To do so is possibly to take Stoker's theatricality at face value; his fictional texts, and indeed the theatrical performances at the Lyceum which he supervised, play with the possibility of both rational and supernatural explanation. In Stoker's first novel, *The Snake's Pass,* an Irish myth is found to have rational origin, just as Heinrich Schliemann's excavations in Turkey and Greece confirmed to the Victorians the veracity of Homer. In contrast, Stoker's later novel, *The Jewel of the Seven Stars,* presents a middle-class English home invaded by the occult: the events which surround the resuscitation of Queen Tera's mummy are rationally inexplicable in both of the author's alternative endings to the narrative. Much of the pleasure the audience took in the Lyceum production of *Faust* in 1885 was perhaps due to the ingenuity of special effects such as electric swords, which created the illusion of the supernatural, and yet which also encouraged efforts at rational explanation. In each of these texts the occult not so much important in that it provides a key for hermeneutic investigation, but rather in the fact that it is juxtaposed with rationality and science, a technique repeated in *Dracula.* This juxtaposition occurs not only in the story, in Seymour Chatman's terms, of Stoker's novel, but also in the discourse. The novel purports to be a series of texts — journals, letters, cuttings, phonograph transcripts — assembled into a causal order by a process analogous to that of scientific investigation: the reader is never in doubt as to the status of the text he or she reads. At the same time, recurrent numerology and imagery inexplicably link disparate textual fragments produced under widely different conditions. The three vampire women in Dracula's castle parallel the three proposals Lucy receives in one day, which in turn foreshadow the three old men at Whitby. Dracula's ability to cross water only at the turn of tide is paralleled by Jonathan's comparison of the dawn to the turn of tide, and Mina's remark in her diary

about the tides at Whitby (64). The taxonomy of the novel's contents page, with the status of each chapter pinned out for inspection, is thus juxtaposed to a series of inexplicable, occult, intertextual connections.

The capacity of the *fin-de-siècle* Gothic to marry a fascination with the occult and supernatural to contemporary scientific discourses has been noted by many observers. In a perceptive discussion of the role of the "abhuman" within a "dominant [Victorian] understanding of the subject" (3, 8), Kelly Hurley takes Seward's conversation with Van Helsing in *Dracula* as a paradigmatic example of Gothic operating as Todorovian fantasy, managing a confrontation between two different ways of perceiving reality. Hurley notes that while Seward is gradually forced to "modify his rationalist world-view by accepting the extra-rational possibilities exemplified by Dracula" in his conversation with Van Helsing in chapter 14, "the reader has happily acknowledged the existence of vampires as early as chapter 2" (19). She accounts for this by noting that Stoker's novel is not merely concerned to apply a totalizing, scientific rationality to its fictional world:

> What happens instead is that as Seward is educated out of purist rationalism, the reader is educated into a more "rationalist" accounting of phenomena like vampirism. Both Seward and the reader are trained into an understanding of the permeable boundaries between science and occultism, between natural phenomena and monstrous ones. Science is gothicized, and gothicity is rendered scientifically plausible. *Dracula* finally will not choose between the two competing models. (19–20)

There is some confusion here between reader and implied reader: it is unlikely that most of Stoker's readers would have been, through a vicarious return journey to Transylvania, convinced rationally of the existence of vampires. What is more fundamentally contentious in Hurley's analysis, however, is that occultism and scientism are two equivalent, "competing models" through which the world can be viewed: in this she accepts the "common sense" of late Victorian discourses of self. The truth is very different: occultism is a key component of late Victorian rationality, fitting inside it as one Russian doll inside another. To adopt Hurley's metaphor, science and occultism are not so much two territories, but two congruent shapes, laid on top of each other, sharing a common perimeter and with many points of contact.

The relationship of the occult to the rational at the Victorian *fin de siècle* can be illuminated by reference to the critical theory of Theodor Adorno. As we have seen, Adorno's writings on the occult are largely inspired by his observations on what he saw as incipiently fascist American popular culture in the 1950s: their use to examine late Victorian texts needs some justification. Adorno's remarks are framed within a larger critical project outlined by himself and his fellow member of the Frankfurt School, Max Horkheimer, in *Dialectic of Enlightenment.* Briefly, Adorno and Horkheimer believed that the Enlightenment project of liberation of the human subject from the forces of nature was doomed to failure, and eventually to a collapse into the authoritarianism of fascism. This was due to an inherent feature of the motor of Enlightenment itself, rationality. Rationality, Horkheimer and Adorno argued, was enabling in the early Enlightenment, since it enabled the control of nature and the liberation for humankind from myth. However, this control soon led to another form of domination, through subsumptive, or instrumental rationality. Just as use value was extinguished in favour of exchange value,

Adorno and Horkheimer argue, so instrumental rationality subsumed, or disregarded "the intrinsic properties of things, those properties that give each thing its sensuous, social and historical particularity" (Bernstein, "Introduction" 4) in favor of instrumental self-preservation. The Enlightenment ideal of the autonomous individual still existed, but now only serving to mask the triumph of subsumptive rationality:

> Not only are qualities dissolved in thought, but men are brought to actual conformity. The blessing that the market does not enquire after one's birth is paid for by the barterer, in that he models the potentialities that are his by birth on the production of the commodities that can be bought in the market. Men were given their individuality as unique in each case, different to all others, so that it might all the more surely be made the same as any other. (Horkheimer and Adorno 12–13)

In a strategic reversal of Marx, the logical outcome of the Enlightenment was thus not communism but fascism.

From the perspective of the late twentieth century, the final assessment of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* seems unduly pessimistic, but the early trajectory of the development of instrumental rationality is useful in examining the nineteenth century. Many of the decisive changes in the Victorian social construction of the individual in areas of considerable urgency to us today — gender, race, and sexuality — are explicable in terms of a growth in subsumptive rationality. Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall have noted that in the course of the nineteenth century an anarchic, at times revolutionary masculinity was replaced by bourgeois self-containment. Stamford Raffles' vision of a hierarchy of nations, each on different rung of a ladder leading from savagery to enlightenment, was replaced by a precise taxonomy of racial types in the mental vocabulary of late-Victorian imperialists such as Hugh Clifford and Frank Swettenham.[4] From sexuality as behaviour, Foucault suggests, the late Victorians moved to sexuality as identity, to a new "specification of individuals" with "strange baptismal names: . . . Krafft-Ebing's zoophiles and zooerasts, Rohleder's auto-monosexualists; and later mixoscopophiles, gynecomasts, presbyophiles, sexoesthetic inverts, and dyspareunist women" (42–43). Such changed "concepts *subsume* particulars under themselves"; paradoxically, in their elaborate taxonomies, "they insist that one (unique) thing is the *same* as another" (Bernstein 53). Instrumental rationality might find a way even when scientific discoveries would seem to work against it. The publication of Darwin's *Descent of Man* in 1871, Douglas Lorimer notes, resulted in the victory of monogenesis over polygenesis, yet Victorian scientists used Darwin as the basis for an ever-more elaborate racial types, still thinking "in terms of racial typology in spite of Darwin's transformation of the significance of species, in spite of abundant evidence of racial intermixture" (421).

In one sense, of course, this analysis is misleading. Instrumental rationality did not lead so much to increased domination, as Adorno and Horkheimer would claim, as to a multiplication of power. An ascribed identity in a larger taxonomy, Foucault notes, often "began to speak on its own behalf, to demand that its legitimacy or 'naturality' be acknowledged, often in the same vocabulary, using the same categories by which it was . . . disqualified" (101). This is true not only of homosexuality, Foucault's example, but also of resistance to colonialism through ethnic and nascent national identities, and of the deployment of femininity by the women's movement. Central to these legitimated identi-

ties was the notion of an embodied individual whose identity — gender, race, sexuality — was externally marked, and who was endowed with inalienable civil rights.[5] A claim for these rights was often couched in the ability of individuals to discipline the natural, to subject their "nature-marked" bodies to rationality.[6] Adorno's and Horkheimer's thesis, with this modification, thus gives a means of explaining transformations in conceptions of the human subject in the late nineteenth century, without accepting the common sense of contemporary accounts of anarchy, collapse, and loss.

Adorno's two essays on the occult see apparently irrational superstition and spiritualism not as the inverse of rationality, but very much part of it: "[i]rrationality is not necessarily a force operating outside the range of rationality: it may result from the processes of rational self preservation 'run amuck'" (Adorno, *The Stars* 34). Astrology, crucially, operates for most people as a "secondary superstition": people who read the astrology column of a newspaper are unlikely to have direct access to occult practices or, indeed, to be interested in "the justification of the system" (36). Adorno notes that, paradoxically, the surface of occult practices and astrology is surprisingly rational and even "cosy": he comments upon the "platitudinously natural content of the supernatural message" (131) at seances, or the commonplace advice given by the astrology column. As a "secondary superstition," however, it relies upon an irrational authority. The astrology column thus socializes people to accept the irrational elements of their own existence:

> [T]he discrepancy between the rational and irrational aspects of the column is expressive of a tension inherent in social reality itself. "To be rational" means not questioning irrational conditions, but to make the best of them from the viewpoint of one's private interests. (42–43)

Astrology, Adorno notes, offers the individual an apparent freedom of action, yet such "freedom consists of the individual's taking upon himself voluntarily what is inevitable anyway. The empty shell of liberty is solicitously kept intact" (44). "By its regression to magic under late capitalism, thought is assimilated to late capitalist forms" (129), the occult and astrology operating as "an *ideology for dependence,* as an attempt to strengthen and somehow justify painful conditions which seem more tolerable if an affirmative attitude is taken towards them." (114–15). Rather than being opposed to enlightenment reason, then, the occult represents an "extreme empiricism" which, "teaching absolute obedience of the mind to given data, 'facts,' has no principle such as the idea of reason, by which to distinguish the possible from the impossible, and thus the development of enlightenment overreaches itself and produces a mentality no longer even able to resist mythological temptations" (116–17). Its irrationality is thus, paradoxically, the end product of instrumental rationality.

We have come some way, of course, from Stoker's text, and it is now time to return. The act of reading any fictional text, one could argue, is closely analogous to belief in a "secondary superstition": entry into the world of the text requires a suspension of a certain critical judgement, a belief in the inner logic of the text itself. Realism attempts to reduce the amount of suspension necessary: modernism, famously, attempts a self-reflexivity, allowing readers to catch themselves in the process of suspension. Thus for Adorno at his most optimistic, modernism could work autonomously at "the level of fundamental attitudes" ("Commitment" 91), challenging the common sense of everyday life. Of all the dominant and emergent cultural movements at the *fin de siècle,* romance and the gothic

would have demanded the greatest suspension of critical judgment, an uncritical entry into a world which, unlike the world of realism, was apparently radically different from that of the reader. Most romance and gothic texts of the end of the nineteenth century are thus readerly rather than writerly, in Roland Barthes's terms, attempting to produce an exotic yet finally coherent fictional world rather than institute an unending play of signification. Once judgment is suspended, once the fiction has been accepted as "secondary superstition," then the text operates according to an inner logic which is clearly "assimilated to late capitalist forms," in which autonomous individuals succeed in an exotically-situated textual marketplace which encourages self-discipline and governance.

The content of the late nineteenth-century romance and gothic is thus, like the content of Adorno's occult messages and astrological advice, surprisingly mundane. The romance and the gothic consciously distance themselves from the excavations of social hypocrisy which marked naturalism, moving to a more private, individualized bourgeois "habitus" in Pierre Bourdieu's terminology. The setting of Stevenson's *Kidnapped* and *Catriona* is exotic, but the subject matter is not. Alan Breck's primitive code of Highland honour is transmuted into the self-discipline of the Lowland gentleman, and ultimately into the tortured self-regulation of David Balfour's courtship. The end of Haggard's *Allan Quatermain,* like that of *Dracula,* centers upon a bourgeois family, Henry Curtis hoping that his son will become "an English gentleman[,] . . . the highest rank that a man can reach upon this earth" (276; ch. 24), and the sealing off of Zu-Vendis might be seen as the final triumph of very Victorian technologies of masculinity, a confirmation of "the little hard ring of self fencing you about; the impassable barrier which encircles each soul" (Clifford 260). The terror of *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* is very much concerned with an internalized self-regulation: Hyde's crimes are hardly comparable to those of Jack the Ripper, and his final moments are enacted amid the domesticity of "things laid out for tea" in "the quietest room, you would have said, and . . . the most commonplace in London" (56).

## The Domesticated Castle

IN STOKER'S NOVEL THE OCCULT AND THE SUPERNATURAL are similarly domesticated. Polidori's Ruthven commits casual violence on a grand tour of Europe, while the protagonist of Sheridan Le Fanu's "Carmilla" wreaks the revenge of an established aristocracy on the nouveau riche. Stoker's Count, in contrast, is initially much more domesticated, clearing Harker's table, making his bed, and even folding his clothes and putting him to bed after a rather risky night out. The novel's first four chapters, of course, bear traces of a quest romance, and indeed of Romanticism in their depiction of the sublime landscape of "great jagged mountain fastnesses, rising peak on peak" (40; ch. 3) outside Dracula's castle. The focus of these chapters, however, is interiority, in which the castle itself comes to stand for the male subject, Harker's imprisonment in the castle for a necessary imprisonment in a regulated body, in Adorno's empty shell of individuality.

Dracula's castle, although initially strange to Harker, is very much like a late Victorian household. It has masculine spaces — the library, for instance — and feminine ones, most notably the room in which Harker falls asleep, in which "the furniture had more air of comfort than any I had seen" (40; ch. 3). The count is stern, and authoritative, very much the late Victorian *paterfamilias* who replaced the "relaxed and ap-

proachable fathers" of the 1850s and earlier (Tosh 63). John Tosh's account of Edward Benson's treatment of his children — "[a]ny moral laxity was corrected; innocent pleasures were killed by a word of disapproval; flippant remarks encountered stony silence" (63) — might indeed apply to the Count's behaviour towards Harker. Flinging away the shaving mirror which has given his guest an important clue to his incorporeal nature, the Count admonishes him against self-indulgence, commenting that "this is the wretched thing that has done the mischief. It is a foul bauble of man's vanity" (31; ch. 2). Despite the apparent irregularity of the Count's domestic arrangements, they preserve the gendered "ideological constructs" of public and private spheres common in Victorian England (Davidoff and Hall 33). The Count leaves the castle by night in a parody of the middle-class man's leaving of the house in the day: both perform necessary labour, the fruits of which they bring back to their female family members, who remain cloistered at home. Harker himself acknowledges the parallel, noting that the count's "acumen" would make him "a wonderful solicitor," a prime representative of Victorian bourgeois respectability (37; ch. 3).

The castle's identification with a late Victorian bourgeois habitus is enhanced by the practices of self-discipline in which Harker indulges. Dracula's guest worries about the management of time, about staying up too late and sleeping during the day. He imposes order upon a life marked by a conflict between a nocturnal and a diurnal rationality through the action of writing. Harker's diary is not intended for communication, although it will later serve that function, but as a means of "repose" against madness and the dissolution of the self (41; ch. 3). Writing his diary, Harker attempts a form of hermeneutics, a classification of cause and effect which enables him to achieve some mastery over the world. At times he fears that he is getting "too diffuse," yet at a later date is glad that "I went into detail from the first" (30; ch. 2), since every fact assumes a larger significance. Writing thus is linked to Harker's habit of reading the signs which surround him in the castle, and understanding their significance. In the library, for example, he discovers an atlas "which I found opened naturally at England, as if that map had been much used. On looking at it I found in certain places little rings marked" (29; ch. 2). The reader is thus brought into Harker's hermeneutics of reading and reinscription, especially when the scene changes to Whitby, one of the marked areas of the map, in chapter 5. Yet Harker's reading is not only a process of rationalization, but also one of domestication. The continual direct quotation of and reference to Shakespearean tragedy in the early part of the novel ally Harker's own conflicted masculine subjectivity with that of Hamlet and Macbeth, characters through whose example, Henry Irving suggested, "higher moral education" might be achieved (Stoker, *Personal Reminiscences* 23). For Harker, the writing of the diary becomes a means of subjectification: like the "Arabian Nights" (35; ch. 3) to which he compares it, it is a means of preserving and refurbishing a subjectivity under constant threat of dissipation.

The act of processing, of disciplining the self through writing, is present not only in Harker's diary but in the imagined activities of "some fair lady" who, he muses, must have "sat to open" "at a little oak table" in the room in the right wing of the castle in which he will fall asleep (40; ch. 3). In a scene immediately preceding Harker's medieval reverie, he has heard the Count tell of how his ancestors emerged from "the whirlpool of European races" due to their martial prowess (33; ch. 3). In his imagination, Harker now domesticates this primordial masculine activity within a regulated, late-nineteenth-century, bour-

geois self. Racial strife is transmuted into chivalry, carried out by gentlemen whose descendants are the burghers of *fin-de-siècle* Europe, and again the separation of spheres is introduced. Stoker's protagonist thus finds comfort in sleeping in a room "where of old ladies had sat and sung and lived sweet lives whilst their gentle breasts were sad for their menfolk away in the midst of remorseless wars" (41; ch. 3).

It is in this context that Harker's seduction by the three women vampires must be seen. The scene is obviously sexually charged and, like much contemporary purity literature, it figures sexuality as lassitude and a surrender to temptation, a threat even to the vigilant self. Christopher Craft is surely right to emphasize the homoerotic nature of the scene, Harker feeling the "hard dents of two sharp teeth" on the surface of his neck, closing his eyes "in languorous ecstasy" and waiting for their penetration "with beating heart" (43; ch. 3). The scene has, however, to be seen in its context. It is prefaced by Harker's own insistence that the self can be regulated, that "the habit of entering [diary material] accurately must help to soothe me" (41; ch. 3). This is followed by Harker's account of his "pleasure" in "disobeying" the Count's commands through a willful obstinacy: clearly, this is a foray outside the remit of the paternal law. The terror of the scene comes from the transformation of the passive ladies of Harker's fantasies into active female vampires, all "ladies by their dress and manner" (41; ch. 3). While Harker waits on the bed he becomes passive, unable to govern, a delighted spectator in his own body. The language of self-governance, however, persists, and is transformed into a technological metaphor. Harker experiences the laughter of the women as a "tingling," the word being repeated as his flesh begins "to tingle" (42; ch. 3) upon the approach of their teeth. The hidden metaphorical tenor here is static electricity: Harker's voluptuous passivity represents a damming up of a force that should be harnessed into a controlled, productive discharge. Stoker's metaphor here is again a common *fin-de-siècle* representation of masculine subjectivity; Herbert Sussman has noted that manliness in early Victorian England was "consistently identified" in terms of the regulation of distinctively male energy, much as industrial machinery would harness the flow of natural energy (11), and that this representation of masculinity persisted late into the century. Significantly, when the Count appears and restores the patriarchal order, Harker perceives his return as the electrical discharge of "lightning" (43; ch. 3).

Harker's episode with the female vampires, then, does not so much disrupt a process of bourgeois, specifically masculine, individualization, as provide a new exemplum of it. The count's "fierce sweep of his arm" restores his authority in his household just as it proclaims his mastery of the public world: "it was the same imperious gesture," Harker notes, "that I had seen used to the wolves" (43; ch. 3). Dracula's claim that "[t]his man belongs to me" (43; ch. 3) does suggest the homoeroticism which, as Eve Sedgwick notes, underpins much late nineteenth-century male writing, but it also emphasizes those public elements of homosociality which were often deployed to men's advantage: here it is used to directly refute any independent claims that women may have on household "property." Harker, for one, takes the lesson provided by the night's activities very much to heart. Waking in the morning, he again proceeds to read his room for signs. The most significant of these he can find is that his watch is still unwound: he is "rigorously accustomed to wind it the last thing before going to bed" (44; ch. 3). A crisis has been superintended by discipline, and the disciplinary process emerges from it strengthened, even if the subject is himself somewhat enfeebled.

Within the walls of the Count's castle, then, the occult and the rational work in harmony, in an elegant, interrelated dance. Harker, apparently a free subject attempting to escape imprisonment, actually undergoes a process of individualization in which he will "all the more surely be made the same as any other" bourgeois subject. The castle becomes a bourgeois habitus, Harker processing the powers of "old centuries . . . which mere 'modernity' cannot kill," regulating primordial energy under the tutelage of the Victorian *paterfamilias,* the Count (41; ch. 3). There is danger, of course, but it is danger which can and will be averted by self-governance, by the exercise of the will.

### Blood, Tea, and Money

WITH THE SHIFT OF SCENE TO ENGLAND IN CHAPTER FIVE, the Count comes to occupy a different space within the narrative. He no longer presides over the domestic space of the house: rather he is an outsider, whose every effort to penetrate to the bedroom, the heart of the Victorian bourgeois household, must be resisted. He now becomes more clearly an aristocratic, rather than bourgeois, figure. As Steven Arata notes, he has a close, almost feudal attachment to the soil, to his native earth, which is severed by the actions of his largely bourgeois antagonists: blood, which he consumes, is associated with breeding and with lineage. In buying one house in Piccadilly and another in Purfleet, the Count is attempting to restore an aristocratic order that was, by the 1890s, in decisive decline (Cannadine 88–138). Many aristocratic families had to choose between a town house and a country one, the maintenance of both now being economically impossible.

Dracula's thirst for bourgeois blood is, like middle-class constructions of a decadent aristocracy at the *fin de siècle,* essentially parasitic. He does not engage in productive labour, but obtains his nourishment from the healthy blood of the bourgeoisie — from Mina, Lucy, the solicitor Harker, and indirectly from the professionals Seward and Van Helsing, and the American Morris. The other aristocrat, Arthur Holmwood, seems to have acquired several middle-class virtues; he has, for instance, travelled widely in the empire, and he seems an altogether more modern aristocrat. The Count's manner in London, his "pointed beard" and "sensual" face, hint at aristocratic decadence and licence (155; ch. 13) compared to the resolute moral continence of the middle classes, instanced by Seward's tortured refusal to allow a nightcap of chloral to "grow into a habit" (97; ch. 8).

Dracula's thirst for blood, with its occult associations, has a mundane parallel in the thirst of Stoker's working-class characters. Seward bribes the carriers attacked by Renfield with both money and "a stiff glass of grog" (143; ch. 12). When Harker tracks the Count's movements he is met with a working-class thirst as voracious as the vampire's. In Whitby the men who have shifted the Count's boxes report a "thirst," and Harker expresses his "appreciation of their efforts in a liquid form" (201; ch. 17). In due course he also slakes the "abnormal thirst" of the officials at King's Cross, while the carriers who delivered the boxes to Carfax complain of "the dusty nature of the job, and of the consequent [and apparently persistent] thirst engendered" (201; ch. 17) by their exertions. Harker's later detective work in London leads him to Thomas Snelling, who is much excited by the "prospect of beer" (229; ch. 20) as a reward for information, and from him to Sam Bloxam,

"a rare one when he starts on the booze" (230; ch. 20), who confesses finding his job moving the Count's boxes into his Piccadilly residence "dry work" (232; ch. 20).

Stoker's working-class characters are, of course, stock comic representations of the undeserving poor, but they are no less ideologically situated for being so. The extremes of a decadent, parasitic aristocratic body, and a degenerate, equally parasitic proletarian one bracket a healthy bourgeois body, its integrity maintained by work and disciplined consumption. Many of the discussions about tactics to combat the vampire conclude in a restorative dinner (193; ch. 16, 198; ch. 17, 208; ch. 18). The solidity of food is seen as fortifying the body, and thus Van Helsing urges Mina to restore her husband's health by example: "for his sake you must eat and smile" (166; ch. 14). Harker has earlier found the food in Klausenburg "very good" (9; ch. 1) and in a moment that Levi-Strauss would no doubt have relished, makes a note to "get recipe for Mina." Consumption of cooked food becomes a cultural act inscribing the solidity of bourgeois identity against the rawness of blood and Renfield's creatures and, presumably, the rancidity of beer. When fluids are associated with middle-class identity, they have a restorative function. The brandy which Lucy and Mina take (138; ch. 12, 198; ch. 17) restores a startled or semi-conscious body to the control of the will. Renfield, significantly, receives brandy only after he has achieved a belated self-possession, and it has the effect of temporarily restoring him to consciousness. Even Harker's "cup of tea at the Aërated Bread Company" (234; ch. 20) has a restorative function, enabling him to carry on to Purfleet after a strenuous day's activity.

The intricate imbrication of modes of consumption, of occult, aristocratic blood-sucking with the more mundane bourgeois eating and proletariat "boozing," is related to the circulation of another fluid in Stoker's novel: money. The count in Britain is profligate with money. He tips extravagantly, apparently leaves a great heap of gold in his castle in Transylvania, and when Harker cuts his coat with a knife "a bundle of bank-notes and a stream of gold" fall out (266; ch. 23). The working classes' appetite for money seems to match, and indeed be a function of, their thirst for beer: the reporter at the zoo has to bribe the keeper with a flow of half-sovereigns to extract information, while Harker and Seward both need to dip regularly into their pockets in the course of their investigations. Only the middle classes seem to fully appreciate the exchange value of money: they count it out carefully, never spending more than what is strictly necessary, using it to extract information. After Dracula departs from the confrontation in the house in Piccadilly, Van Helsing, ever frugal, carefully puts "the money remaining into his pocket" (267; ch. 23).

The circulation of fluids in *Dracula,* then, seems to be related to the movement from use value to exchange value towards the end of the nineteenth century, and the replacement of what Lawrence Birken has called an ideology of production with an ideology of consumption. The individual became the consumer: by the twentieth century, Birken notes, "desire has begun to replace property as the symbolic badge of individualism" (12). The middle-class consumer, crucially, is aware of and can control and channel a desire to consume, can indulge in consumption in exchange for other commodities produced by honest work. Neither the aristocratic Dracula nor the working classes can achieve this channelling of desire. Again, the occult is revealed not as exterior to, but very much a cosy part of this process of self-definition, a process through which the "individual is reduced to the nodal points of the conventional responses and modes of operation expected of him" (Adorno and Horkheimer 28).

### The Homely Coffin

THE CONCLUSION OF STOKER'S NOVEL might be felt to escape enforcement of subsumptive rationality which characterizes the earlier part of the work, the "repression of inner nature [which] precipitates the formation of the individualized self or subject and a strengthening of the self as a subject, a strengthening which is, of course, also a defeat" (Bernstein 51). The last chapters of *Dracula* closely resemble the romances of Haggard and Stevenson, taking place in the open air, and stressing action, not self-governance. Helsing compares the band of adventurers who track the Count to his Transylvanian lair to "the old knights of the Cross" (278; ch. 24), while Nina Auerbach and David J. Skal note that the "ritual oaths and stately tableaux" of the last third of the novel reprise Arthurian romance.[7] The largely bourgeois pursuers of the Count now have the chance to act out the roles of medieval gentleman, the knights of whose battles Dracula himself has so fondly reminisced to Harker:[8] they inhabit an imagined primordial gentlemanliness, one against the background of which the Victorians drew up proper notions of masculine self-deportment. Gone are the confines of the castle, bedroom, or sickroom: the chase now encompasses sublime landscapes, and is carried out with fevered energy. At the same time, though, the novel is concerned not just with the gentleman as man of action, but with gentlemanliness as a technology of the self, a disciplinary practice which turns inwards, not outwards, away from the world.

Motifs that stress this interiority thus repeat struggles enacted earlier in the novel. Thus Mina's and Harker's sleepiness in the daytime returns to the nocturnal rationality of the castle against which the latter character struggles in the opening chapters. Sleep as a surrender of will has figured prominently in the novel: Renfield's guard is one of many characters who cannot resist the sleepiness induced by the Vampire, and many of the most dramatic scenes in the middle part of the book are based upon nightly vigils in which characters force themselves to stay awake. Van Helsing's promise to "be accurate in everything" in his Memorandum, lest his readers consider him "mad — that the many horrors and the so long strain on nerves has at the last turn my brain" (315; ch. 27) similarly recalls Jonathan's attempts to discipline himself through writing his diary in the novel's early chapters. Mina's refusal to take food refers the reader back to the expansive bourgeois appetites of the middle of Stoker's book, and indicates that something is truly amiss.

New motifs in the closing pages of the novel, however, suggest the connection between the interior and the exterior of bodies, at times attempting to force a consistency between interior and exterior, between surface and depth. The Count, Mina announces, is "a criminal and of criminal type. Nordau and Lombroso would so classify him" (296; ch. 25). His nature is readable from the surface of his body, and he thus may be placed within a criminal taxonomy. Mina's own body's pollution is clearly marked by the scar on her forehead. Van Helsing, entering the count's castle, forces a communication between interior and exterior, ensuring that "though the doors were all open I broke them off the rusty hinges, lest some ill-intent or ill-chance should close them" (319; ch. 27). Paralleling these images, however, are those which attempt to enforce, or control, a separation between inside and outside: the circles of communion wafers which Van Helsing makes around Mina at night, or Godalming's regulated opening and shutting of the furnace door

on the yacht (309–10; ch. 26). As in *Allan Quatermain*'s Zu-Vendis, the desire to penetrate through to the interior is there, but it is matched by an equal desire to regulate communication between exterior and interior, once the interior is known.

The split between interior and exterior, a desire to penetrate matched by a concomitant desire to reseal, to conceal, illustrates what Eve Sedgwick has termed an "epistemology of the closet" in which a "turn-of-the-century crisis of sexual definition" becomes central to "modern processes of . . . knowing" (74). In the last two decades of the nineteenth century the growing presence of a homosexual identity on the mental horizon of many middle-class men had two effects. Firstly, it resulted in a desperate reading of bodies for signs of perversion; sexologists such as Havelock Ellis gave elaborate taxonomies of inverts who, like Lombroso's criminal types, could be identified from marks upon their bodies. Secondly, it resulted in a guarded masculine subjectivity, subject to ever more discipline. This "regime of knowing" (67), Sedgwick emphasises, has importance "for all modern Western identity and social organization (and not merely for homosexual identity and culture)" (11): it is central to middle-class masculine self-fashioning. Certainly Stoker often defined his own masculinity and his relationship with other men within Sedgwick's regime. His first meeting with Henry Irving, for instance, is prefaced by an assertion of his own robust, embodied masculinity, erased of any signs of perversity:

> I had won numerous silver cups for races of various kinds — for rowing, weight-throwing, and gymnastics. I had played for years in the University football team, where I had received the honour of a "cap!" When, therefore, after his recitation I became hysterical, it was distinctly a surprise to my friends. (*Personal Reminiscences* 20)

In that meeting, Stoker added, "[s]oul had looked into soul! From that hour began a friendship as profound, as close, as lasting as can be between two men" (21). Yet the intimacy, once revealed, is then sealed off from the outside world. In his *Personal Reminiscences,* Stoker admires men who are readable, such as the explorer Henry Morton Stanley, upon whose "dark, still face" "toil and danger and horror had set their seals" (234–235). He admires control and especially a self-control metamorphosed, as Harker's is in *Dracula,* into writing. One visitor to the Lyceum, Stoker noted with approval, "seemed to speak fully formed thoughts. . . . One might have stenographed every word he said, and when reproduced it would require no alteration" (336).

The clearest metaphoric representation of a simultaneous desire for correspondence and split between exterior and interior in Stoker's novel is the Count's coffin. The coffin travels from London to Romania by water: one might call it a portable closet, into which Dracula can vanish at will. Mina's occult connection with the Count after he has made her ingest his blood enables her, under hypnosis, to reveal the contents of the coffin, contents which are, like much of the occult in the novel, banal. There is darkness, Mina repeats at times, "waves lapping against the ship, and the water rushing by" (289; ch. 25). The repetition becomes too much for Seward, who frequently ceases to report her words at all, instead remarking laconically that "she made the usual hypnotic report" (292; ch. 25). Yet there is also a sense of loneliness: the interior is "so still . . . like death" (272; ch. 23). Dracula's body in the coffin stands for the core of the male self in Sedgwick's epistemol-

ogy, a persistent atavism which must be exposed to the light of day, inspected, neutralized, and then sealed once again.

Against a divided self represented through the banality of the occult, a self whose rationality now turns ever inwards, towards an overcoming of the natural forces which still dwell, ungoverned, within the bourgeois body, Stoker opposes a fantasy of an integrated body, a social body. From their vantage point among the rocks, Mina and Van Helsing watch as "the various bodies" in the pursuit of the coffin "began to converge close upon us" (323; ch. 27). The convergence centers upon the "leader of the gypsies, a splendid looking fellow who sat on his horse like a centaur" (323; ch. 27), his own body providing a monstrous, chimerical merging of the rational and the natural. "Instinct," exemplified by the responses of the individual gypsies, yields to "Mr Morris's strong resolute tone of quiet command" (323; ch. 27), while in death Morris achieves the status of a "gallant gentleman," remarking somewhat melodramatically that he has been "only too happy to have been of any service" (326; ch. 27).

Fantasies of an integrated body, however, move out beyond the end of the narrative proper, into the final "Note" which describes the journey of the Harker family to Transylvania seven years later. Morris's name is the first in the "bundle of names" embodied in Mina and Jonathan's son, which "links all our little band of men together" (326; ch. 27). Godalming and Seward are married, while the events of the narrative are retrospectively narrativized as service to Mina. The occult is present here, too, again suitably domesticated. "His mother holds, I know," Harker writes, "the secret belief that some of our brave friend's spirit has passed into him" (326; ch. 27).

Rather than representing a "moment of rupture" (Arata 645), the ending of the novel represents the victory of a technology of the self successfully applied. All traces of the past have been erased, and an individual subjectivity now achieved through a redoubling of subsumptive rationality, a processing of the natural within a now opaque bourgeois body, a body which is not disturbed by the presence of the occult. F. W. Murnau was perhaps one of Stoker's most attentive readers in this respect: a quarter of a century after the novel's publication he would make the seminal film interpretation, *Nosferatu: Eine Symphonie des Grauens,* in which the ending is very different from that of the novel. In Murnau's film, Mina lures the Count into her bedroom and delays his departure until dawn, when he is promptly vaporized by the first rays of the sun. In the bedroom, in the heart of the Victorian household, the primitive and atavistic become suddenly invisible, and desires crumble to dust.

Murnau's reading of Stoker's novel is, in conclusion, perhaps more attentive than many of our own. The occult here is dissolved in the domestic in a process which manages the primitive, the irrational, within the governing rationality of the bourgeois self. The "secondary superstition" which a reading of *Dracula* plays upon thus leads, like Adorno's astrology column, to a solidification of bourgeois selfhood, a selfhood based, we have seen, upon a textual enactment of containment and carefully regulated consumption. Stoker's novel, in this reading, becomes a conduct book for the creation of late nineteenth-century subjects. The occult is "institutionalized, objectified and, to a large extent, socialized" (Adorno, *Stars* 36): at the end of the novel Harker and Mina finally take upon themselves "voluntarily what is inevitable anyway" (Adorno, *Stars* 44).

*National University of Singapore*

## NOTES

1. Moral and artistic judgements were, of course, intimately connected in the Victorian era. Nonetheless, the critical reception of *Dracula* was markedly different from that of the other books mentioned.

2. Note, for instance, Rider Haggard's argument against the claim that naturalist novels, such as Zola's *Nana,* were morally instructive in that their conclusions punished the protagonists. It was not the putative object of the fictions that mattered, Haggard claimed, but their erotic content. "Once start the average mind upon this subject, and it will go down the slope of itself. It is useless afterwards to turn round and say that, although you cut loose the cords of decent reticence which bound the fancy, you intended that it should run *uphill* to the white heights of virtue" ("About Fiction" Olmsted 3: 384).

3. Haggard, Lang, and Stevenson, of course, would not have expressed the purpose of Romance in these terms. It is, however, possible to read the Romance revival as not merely a return to the mythic and irrational, but the promotion of a discipline of reading, a Foucauldian technology of the self. Elaine Showalter rightly notices how the transition from Realism to Romance was heavily gendered, "King Romance" replacing realism's "Queen George" Eliot (59–104). This transition was paralleled in a putative change in readership. Rider Haggard noted how the writer of fiction was entrapped by the "Young Person, and a dreadful nuisance most of us find her" ("About Fiction" Olmsted 3: 384). All fiction, Haggard protested, should not be "judged by the test as to whether or no it is suitable reading for a girl of sixteen" (384). Romance, Haggard argued, should encourage a male readership, aiming for a middle way between the excesses of naturalism and the blandness of the society novel. The metaphor he uses for both the writing and reading of romance is one of controlled flight, the harnessing of natural forces central to Victorian notions of masculinity. Violet Paget was typically more perceptive than her male contemporaries. The reading of novels, she wrote had both the "power of directing human feeling into certain channels rather than into certain others" and the "power of reiteration of emotion in constituting our emotional selves, in digging by a constant drop, drop, such moral channels as have already been traced" (237).

4. Richard H. King makes a similar point, noting that "[t]hough Adorno didn't develop the thought, the emergence in the nineteenth century of what we call 'scientific racism' was a prime example of the way rationality . . . was integral to the domination, extrusion and, of course, extermination of whole categories of human beings" (286).

5. Various commentators have noted that Foucault is wrong to ascribe the emergence of an identity based upon same-sex attraction to sexology's typologies. Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, for instance, produced a discourse of civil rights based upon the opposition of "Uranian" and "Dionian" love well before the growth of sexology. Clearly, however, sexology informed both discourses of pathology and of homosexual rights after its systematization in the late nineteenth century. See Bristow 19–25.

6. Thus in colonial communities native elites would often, initially, claim civil rights by stressing their contributions to society as imperial subjects. Such a claim would often be articulated in terms of a commitment to communal "regeneration," in which young men would be encouraged to play sport, and to reject gambling and prostitution. The example I am most familiar with is that of the English-speaking Straits Chinese community in colonial Singapore.

7. See their editor's footnote in *Dracula* 287; ch. 25.

8. Sir Richard Burton, the explorer and romantic prototype for the protagonists of Haggard's quest romances of is, curiously, described by Stoker in similar terms to Dracula. Noting Burton's aristocratic and feudal qualities — "an expert and an authority on all connected with the sword" (*Personal Reminiscences* 225–26) — Stoker remarked that in conversation

"Burton's face seemed to lengthen when he laughed; the upper lip rising instinctively and showing the right canine tooth" (227). There is also an undercurrent of veiled homoeroticism in Stoker's description of Burton, and he concludes his description by noting that "there were passages in his life which many set against him" (229), referring in all probability to the section on pederasty appended to *The Book of a Thousand Nights and A Night,* which was rumoured to be derived from personal experience.

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