

## Colonizable Bodies and Geographies: Constructing Foreignness in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*

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### ABSTRACT

The essay juxtaposes Bram Stoker's discourse on foreignness in his gothic novel *Dracula* (1897) against two overlapping ideological frameworks: first, the racially loaded anti-immigrant rhetoric of the Victorian age as exemplified in Evans-Gordon's propaganda book, *The Alien Immigrant* (1903); second, colonial discourse and its attitude to foreign bodies and geographies. The authors contend that the novel *Dracula* reiterates contemporaneous sentiments and representations of foreign bodies and geographies as it justifies the need to gain control over Count Dracula and his habitat.

**Keywords:** Colonialism, racism, physiognomy, foreignness, empire, imagined geographies.

### 1. Introduction:

#### Foreignness and the Falling Empire

There proceeds a systematic incursion of criminal and vicious persons for purposes of criminality and vice...These people come to England as to a "happy hunting ground." They intend to prey on the community which hitherto has foolishly received them without inquiry and has suffered severely from the gross abuse of its hospitality.

(Sir William Evans-Gordon, *The Alien Immigrant*, p. 256)

It is hard to miss the resemblance between Bram Stoker's best known character, Count Dracula, and the rhetoric about foreigners in the epigraph, which is excerpted from the "Alien Other" chapter of Major Evans-Gordon's political propaganda book, *The Alien Immigrant* (1903). The binaries of victim-victimizer, hunter-huntee, and criminal-innocent in the epigraph are reminiscent of Bram Stoker's depiction of the English people vis-à-vis Eastern Europeans in his 1897 novel, *Dracula*. While Stoker held liberal political views, his novel mirrors Britain's *fin de siècle* anti-immigrant sentiment, and as such overlaps with the constructions of foreignness and otherness in the writings of politicians like Major Evans-Gordon. A conservative member of Parliament first elected in 1900, Major Evans-Gordon was an ardent propagandist and vocal promoter of a new set of laws that would curb the influx of "alien undesirables" into England (p. 257). Evans-Gordon dedicated a great deal of effort into putting his book together. He travelled to various places in Eastern Europe in order to closely observe and document the living conditions of people there. His journey in pursuit of the fountain from where the dreaded immigrants flow is akin to the trip which vampire hunters in Stoker's novel take to Transylvania; reports of both journeys are written using the distant, scientific-sounding language of travelogues. Having observed the geographic source from which immigrants flow to England, Evans-Gordon then draws on existing immigration regulations in other countries, particularly the United States, in order to support his anti-immigration cause with what he considers to be morally acceptable precedents. Justifying the undesirability of aliens relies essentially on differentiating their traits. Accentuating the cultural dissimilarity between Britishness and foreignness lies at the core of Evans-Gordon's propaganda book, and vampire hunters in *Dracula* employ a similar discourse to distinguish between British people and Transylvanians.

Nevertheless, in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, the national consciousness of the Western European vampire hunters does

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not merely stop at defining *us* (Western European communities) against *them* (foreign bodies and geographies), but rather justifies a discourse of literal inclusion and exclusion that seeks to keep the orderly inside of Britain safe and protected from the unsafe, wild, and dangerous outside, i.e. Eastern Europe. The novel therefore invents an imagined enemy that should be ultimately conquered. The British interior should remain intact and continue to prosper while the land of the enemy, the outside, is to be mapped, comprehended, then subdued. To this end, Stoker portrays this imagined enemy, Count Dracula, in a way reminiscent of the portrayal of natives in colonial fictions, i.e., as effeminate, savage, degenerate and, most importantly, as a reflection of the wildness of the land he occupies. Count Dracula's unfathomable nature has therefore to be a subject of discovery falling within Van Helsing's "range of . . . study and experience" (p. 222). Similarly, Eastern Europe, of which Count Dracula is a physical extension, has to be comprehended by the highly-efficient English explorers through their mastery of maps and train timetables (pp. 31–2, 379, 397). In spite of British efficiency and breadth of knowledge, much about Transylvania remains a mystery that has to be solved by the scientific-minded vampire hunters. The novel, accordingly, presents Count Dracula's diabolic and unfathomable physical traits as parallel to those of the land which he inhabits. Count Dracula is inseparable from the land where he comes from, and defeating him necessitates conquering his habitat. Van Helsing thinks that it is necessary to "sterilize the earth [of Dracula's lineage], so that no more he can seek safety in it" (p. 281). Consequently, both Count Dracula and the foreign land have to be discovered and violated by the threatened English hunters.

Accordingly, the article aims to highlight the intersections between the imagined other in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and racist representations of otherness in the late Victorian era. To achieve this end, the article investigates the manifestations of tropes about foreigners in the novel as by answering the following questions: to what extent does Stoker's novel reiterate and amplify the era's sentiments about otherness? What are the ideological and historical frameworks that drive the construction of otherness or anti-immigrant discourse? The article demonstrates that the novel's depiction of the foreigners' contaminated bodies and deranged morality reinforces contemporaneous racial and colonial prejudice in Victorian England.

## **2. between Imagined Communities and Imaginative Geographies**

Concepts of imagined communities and geographies help elucidate constructions of foreign bodies and lands in *Dracula*. Benedict Anderson's notion of imagined communities, first put forth in book, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983), and Edward Said's notion of imaginative geographies, laid out in his most famous work, *Orientalism* (1978), can shed light on the implications arising from the distinct subjectivities and locales portrayed in *Dracula*.

Deconstructing Western national consciousness constitutes a common denominator between Anderson and Said. However, the main difference between their theoretical frameworks lies in the fact that while Anderson focuses on deconstructing the West's narrative about itself, Said offers a deconstruction of the West's narrative about the other, specifically the orient—almost to the point of denying the existence of Occidentalism as a field "symmetrical" to Orientalism (p. 50). Anderson's approach to the West's relationship with otherness reinforces the idea that the nation is imagined as a limited entity with "finite boundaries" that keep the other at bay (p. 7). Both perspectives acknowledge that rhetorical attitudes about the self and the other are interdependent.

Said argues in *Orientalism* that at the scholarly and political levels, the orient, although to a great extent heterogeneous in its races, religions, and customs, has been collectively imagined, and as far as literature is concerned, lumped as a homogeneous space. For him, Orientalism as a specialization has essentially emerged as a "geographical 'field'" (p. 50). Similarly, Anderson dedicates a section of the tenth chapter of his book to discussing "Maps." For him, maps "logoize"—that is, cognitively define—the political space (xiii). Anderson further argues that maps reduce places often deemed sacred or strategic, both for the West and the East, into manageable and comprehensible dots between which the map user can establish relations and calculate distances (p. 171). Therefore, mapping as a classic colonial tool that constructs the political space not only injects a structured image of spatial boundaries into the national consciousness of the colonial state, but also yields a tangible representation of what constitutes *us* and what

defines *them*.

Although Anderson and Said do not focus on the power structures or the discourses of representation specifically defining the relationship between Western and Eastern Europe, their concepts of the “imagined”—whether it is communities or geographies—function as paradigms of racial and imperial representation. These paradigms can be extended to account for the anxious and racially preoccupied representation of the Eastern European subject as a conspiratorial villain hailing from the imagined outside to infest the unheeding inside. The construction of otherness manifests in national consciousness as inseparable from the imagination of the other’s spatial dimension. Distance and space, therefore, can possess underlying implications that go far beyond their strict tangibility. Accordingly, the boundaries of otherness strongly correlate with the boundaries of geographic existence. This correlation, since it associates racial difference with distance, and selfhood with locality, will continuously decide the direction of the exercise of power in *Dracula*. Before exploring the notion of spatial and bodily boundaries further with examples from the text, it is worthwhile to evaluate critical attitudes to the issue of racial representation the novel.

### 3. *Dracula*, Race, and Literary Critics

Critics typically approach *Dracula* as an allegory of the threat of disease and decadence or as a reflection of the Victorian anxiety about industrialization and scientific progress. For example, Marie Kolkenbrock points out the British anxiety about “becoming ‘infected with otherness.’” This fear stems from the perception that the “evil ‘other’” has mysterious abilities (p. 157). Similarly, viewing the other as source of sexual deviance, Western Europeans try to “expunge the impurity” Count Dracula brought upon Mina (Mulvey-Roberts, p. 111). Connecting the fictional dreads of the novel to the psychological repercussions of the declining rule of the British Empire, some critics also read *Dracula* as an allegory of the fear of reverse colonization. For instance, Gregory Castle points to the threat of “the return of the repressed” which Count Dracula poses. This return is presented as ultimately dangerous in *Dracula* because it seeks to “reverse the power dynamic of colonialism” (p. 520). Castle’s reading of the novel strongly implies that Count Dracula arrives in London as a vengeful monster who exerts a certain degree of subversive force in England partly due to the perceived lack of alertness within the British Empire.

In the same vein, Stephen Arata reads *Dracula* as a novel which brings the “terror of the Gothic home” (p. 621). Arguing that many critics overlook the historical context in which gothic novels were written, Arata tries to place the novel within its historical framework in order to account for the anxiety and fear which exist in almost every scene of the narrative. For him, *Dracula* echoes the late nineteenth-century fear that “the ‘civilized’ world is on the point of being colonized by ‘primitive’ forces” (p. 623). The strict civilized-primitive binarism detected by Arata refers therefore to a status quo accepted as the natural order of things by many Western European characters. As pointed out earlier in light of Said’s and Anderson’s theoretical frameworks, the two poles of this imagined binarism have to be spatially divided. Any disruption of this well-defined geographic structure is a source of threat and fear, and therefore invites action to restore things to their binary order.

Also highlighting racial concerns in the novel, Patricia McKee stresses the white-centric aspects of the text by exploring the ways in which Western European characters arrogate “political and capitalist hegemony.” She argues that the novel achieves this by employing a consistent and effective process of “racialization of power” exercised by white characters as they manage the conflicts and dangers emerging from the encounter with otherness (p. 43). Anchoring her analysis on the capitalistic ideology of the empire, McKee adds that the victory of “whiteness” requires more than just putting Count Dracula to rest. It also necessitates that the narratives about the horrors posed by Count Dracula be in constant circulation so that the “the market logic of Western culture” would continue uninterrupted (p. 44). Based on McKee’s analysis, one could further argue that the hunting enterprise in which Western characters participate is a manifestation of the empire’s economically and ideologically driven desire for further expansion and continuous masculine assertion of national superiority. Count Dracula, to this end, has to be depicted as a worthy opponent who is exceptionally strong and dangerous so that the victory of the Empire would become meaningful.

Although McKee’s focus on economic expediency helps elucidate an important ideological component of

imperialism in the novel, she does not take into account the perception of exotic geographic and physical characteristics of foreigners as equally important components of the imperialist ideology. Similarly, while Arata's focus on the historical fears of reverse colonization is indispensable for an accurate understanding of how the novel reveals the insecurities suffered by the declining British Empire, his and Castle's analyses seem to overlook an important aspect of the novel, specifically the delineation of the Eastern European foreign geography and people as potential targets of the colonial enterprise. Colonizability, within the context of sovereign countries perceived as inferior by Britain, should be understood as the discursive enabler, not the equivalent, of colonization. Colonizability is, therefore, both the ideological parallel and impetus of imperialism, but not necessarily its actual implementation.

#### **4. Aliens and the Colonizable Landscape**

Since colonizability mandates establishing the difference of the other, a distinct racial language has to be employed, and it often involves observations about the potential colonial subject's body. Theorists usually link this language to the colonial gaze, which Boehmer defines as an "an organizing or concept-metaphor in colonialist narrative" and a "commanding perspective assumed by the European in the text" (p. 68). It should be added that the cognitive directionality of the colonial gaze is a unique one. In other words, the gaze is not a mode of communication with a bidirectional rhetorical or visual exchange between two ends. It is rather a unidirectional, objectifying, and commodifying phenomenon that stems from a predefined perception of otherness. The gaze, therefore, does not impartially or momentarily capture difference, but rather paints that difference with pre-existing ideological and political meaning and sustains it. These are important notions for elucidating the justifications used by vampire hunters as they pursue Count Dracula. In the novel, the threat posed by the Count is therefore constructed not through uninvolved descriptions of his physique, but, rather, by using emphatic judgments about the amount of terror he poses to the observer. The novel engages in physiognomic characterization, and Count Dracula's bodily features therefore reflect voluptuousness and savagery (pp. 48, 68). Consequently, any mode of analysis of Count Dracula's vampirism as a threat to English sovereignty based solely on racial and biological difference would be lacking unless supplemented by an investigation of the cultural connotations and exemplifications of that physical difference.

Marry Louise Pratt provides a framework that is useful for this type of connection. Examining the discourse of othering in the travel writings of the nineteenth century European explorers of the African continent, she describes colonial modes of observing native traits, which correspond with the concept of the colonialist gaze discussed by Boehmer as well as the ideas of imagined communities and geographies discussed earlier. The encounter of the travelers with the natives, Pratt argues, "begins with the body as the seen/scene." The traits of the other, thereafter, undergo a process of "enumeration," especially with the travelers' use of the "timeless present tense" to narrate the events. However, what Pratt describes as "traveler's eye" does more than just define a hierarchical racial relationship. It constructs the native as a "face of the country." Natives, it follows, are not autonomous entities. Instead, they are one with the landscape and only a visual aspect of the whole scenery. By defining a racial hierarchy, the "traveler's eye" also justifies a due exercise of power. Therefore, from a colonial perspective, those timeless enumerations help perpetuate "the Other's amenability to domination" (p. 139). Eastern Europeans in *Dracula* bear strong resemblance to the natives Pratt refers to. All non-Western characters in Stoker's novel, with the exception of Count Dracula, have fixed characteristics and limited agency. Harker, for example, portrays them as superstitious and ineffectual (p. 402). The Count, on the other hand, is deemed threatening particularly because he assumes more agency than is characteristic of his race; and hence the need to conquer him.

Pratt argues that European travel writers are, however, constantly depersonalized. This is so, she observes, because their presence is taken for granted. Consequently, their agency is rarely narrated as they perform the role of the "collective moving eye" of the Empire (p. 142). The purpose of the "European's self-effacement," she also explains, is to maintain silence about the actual encounters with the observed natives (p. 146). By contrast, the Western European travelers in Stoker's *Dracula* are directly involved in an opposite type of encounter with the natives; one that is based on Western self-assertion. This entitles Europeans to observe, judge, and remain in control of foreign subjects and their

lands.

The overlap which Pratt points to between the traits of foreign subjects and those of their land is characteristic of the attitude to foreignness in Stoker's novel. Similar to its demonizing discourse about Eastern European subjects, *Dracula* represents their landscape, particularly that of Transylvania, as wild, predatory, and inhospitable (pp. 32, 44, 413). However, one could argue that it is Eastern European landscape which is being threatened by the reductive gaze of a judgmental English narrator. Of all characters, John Harker utters the most immediate and summative judgments about the foreign landscape which he constantly tries to make sense of. As Harker embarks upon his journey to meet Count Dracula, the novel presents his transition while "leaving west and entering the east" as a definitive moment that is precursory to all other events which will follow thereafter (p. 31). As he proceeds with his journey, Harker gradually articulates formulaic descriptions of the landscape that are concurrent with the geographic transition he undertakes. Harker's journal is chronologically the earliest in the text. The significance of this arrangement lies in the fact that the demeaning attributes Harker starts associating with the foreign landscape and people become ideologically precursory to the rest of the narrative.

Harker observes that Dracula lives in "the extreme east of the country...one of the wildest and least known portions of Europe," then starts to wonder about how different the landscape and people are "the further east you go" (p. 32). Consistent with Harker's description of the hostile landscape is his description of the people who live therein. Harker remains judgmental throughout the journey, even before he finds the truth about Count Dracula. The landscape for him is both dangerous and enticing. By the same token, not only do Eastern Europeans constitute exotic and mysterious scenery for Harker to wonder about, observe, and take notes on, but they also pose as absolutely extreme, be it in their wickedness or passivity. He, for example, describes Slovaks as very "picturesque...harmless and rather wanting in natural self-assertion" (p. 33). Therefore, the native in *Dracula* is either a noble savage, like the peasants who offer Harker food, or a true savage, like the bloodthirsty Count and his sisters, but never in between. The wild-land-has-wild-people axiom becomes necessary for Harker so as to mentally consolidate the constructed enemy situated in an imagined geography. The heterogeneity of Eastern Europeans, being limited to two extremes in the novel, is only skin-deep and helps justify the colonizability of these people, hence the vampire hunting campaign. In contrast, Western Europeans, whether victims, ordinary citizens, or vampire hunters (including Quincy Morris, the American), are represented as homogeneous in their good intentions. Renfield, who at first cooperates with Count Dracula, is the only realistic exception to those well-meaning noblemen, but he is deposited into a mental asylum to be studied until he is later redeemed by death.

In various other instances in the novel, the wilderness of nature is associated with the savagery of people. Harker firstly objects to Mina going with Van Helsing by telling her that there is with "every speck of dust [which] whirls in the wind a devouring monster in embryo" (p. 396). Similarly, Count Dracula has a very strong attachment to the holy earth of his native land, of which he brings loaded boxes to London. This unbreakable connection between the alien undesirable and his homeland resembles what Evans-Gordon argues for in his book. That is, aliens cling to their roots even while in London and are only loyal to their own homeland. For Count Dracula, earth boxes represent "holy memories" of his distant homeland (p. 338). These boxes of earth offer accommodation for the Count's savage nature. This conflation between the earthly matter and the human traits suggests the geographic rootedness of racial traits. Therefore, the use of racial difference as a marker of geographic wilderness predominates in the novel. On their journey, Van Helsing explains to Lord Godalming that "this land is very different from yours or mine" (pp. 379-80). While in Varna later, Harker is thankful to God that "this is the country where bribery can do anything" (pp. 375). Also, as Harker and the rest of the group proceed with their vampire hunting trip, he fearfully says: "we seem to be drifting into unknown places and unknown ways; into a whole world of dark and dreadful things" (p. 398). By directing his gaze at the foreigners, Harker simultaneously creates two opposite perceptions: one of his own national identity and another of Eastern Europeans. The colonial gaze, therefore, does not construct otherness as an isolated sphere. Instead, it has the effect of constructing an ideological relationship with otherness.

Since the observed other, being at the receiving end, does not actively participate in the creation of the image that feeds the gaze, the gaze operates as a penetrative bridge to the other. By conceptually building on the Hegelian deconstruction of the master-slave dialectic, one can argue that Harker's perception of his superiority as an English gentleman is incomplete without an inferior other to complete the picture. Obviously, the novel depicts an avalanche of binary forces in an endless state of conflict, including sanity vs. madness, science vs. superstition, new vs. old, and civilized vs. uncivilized, to mention a few. What is interesting is how these opposite extremes are used to justify not only securing England from outsiders, but also studying, chasing, and depleting the resources that produce them. The novel therefore takes the cultural representation into a whole new level by militarizing the moral incongruity between Europe and the orient. If England has to be kept safe from the danger coming from the East, then "strength [is] the best safety," as Mina puts it (p. 281). The perceived inferiority of Eastern Europeans, their moral decadence, and their conniving nature are all exploited in a manner that feeds the propagandistic agenda that helps Western Europeans in the novel, most notably Van Helsing, to justify the ideology of the empire and to recruit brave men who are ready to sacrifice themselves for the sake of protecting that ideology.

Van Helsing, therefore, gives various impassioned speeches about the dangers posed by Count Dracula and how it is necessary sometimes to suppress and overlook ethical considerations in order to achieve a moral agenda. The end justifies the means and unburdens the vampire hunters from any moral reproach as they break into houses, bribe policemen, and desecrate graves in order to achieve their goal. Even after Count Dracula leaves England and therefore ceases to pose any threat to its inhabitants, Van Helsing answers Mina when she wonders whether they should keep hunting for Count Dracula now that he has left England by saying: "Yes, it is necessary—necessary—necessary! For your sake in the first, and then for the sake of humanity" (p. 359). Van Helsing's enthusiastic response seems to call for a patronizing role of the empire in a way that suggests its moral responsibility towards all of humanity. His reason for pursuing Count Dracula beyond England resonates with the notion of "the white man's burden" and sounds like a classic justification of imperial interventionism. In other words, agents of the empire have always fostered apologetic narratives that help vindicate and reinforce military interventionism as well as the territorial expansion of the empire not merely on grounds of expediency, but rather on grounds of moral obligation and authority. Accordingly, not only does the novel engage in hallucinatory alarmism about reverse colonialism, but it also accepts and suggests the colonizability of foreign subjects and their landscape because of their perceived savage features and potential threat.

### **5. Mapping Difference and Making Sense of Other Geographies**

*Dracula* employs a hegemonic narrative which resuscitates the discourse of the empire and celebrates the use of technological superiority as a vehicle for expansion. Throughout the novel, modern technology asserts the superiority of the British. Literary critics recognize the implications of the confluence between imperialism and technological knowledge and abilities. In "Empire, Race, and the Victorian Novel," Deirdre David brings attention to how topics of empire and race have started to gain momentum as "British imperialism gathered steam," propelled by the technological advancements of the century (p. 86). Within David's perspective, fiction functions as the stabilizer of the discourse of empire. Similarly, in "Scientific Exploration and Empire," Robert A. Stafford defines the exploration made by the British Empire "as goal-directed research that creates knowledge in the laboratory of the wilderness." The explorer, he proceeds, "plays the same role in this regard as the scientist or inventor, increasing the capital of whatever group gains access to the new information" (p. 297). The reporting of the British explorer, hence, has the same perceived degree of validity as that of the scientist and the inventor. The explorer provides the knowledge which the empire needs in order to expand and prosper economically. Stafford properly asserts that this knowledge is subjective. The subjective nature of reporting sometimes becomes even more evident because "not all explorers found science stimulating. The more individualistic tired of the daily round of observations, preferring to engage directly with the landscape and people, and revert to subjective, circumstantial reportage" (Stafford, p. 309). One way to expand Stafford's argument is by realizing that although this knowledge wears the mask of scientific reliability, it is largely

prescriptive and politicized. Interestingly, the narrative style of *Dracula* is exclusively based on reportage as well. The novel is written in epistolary form, and every chapter/letter in the novel is also given an exact date. Technological devices, like the phonograph and the typewriter, repeatedly play a decisive role in ascertaining the victory of vampire hunters. For example, because of Mina's use of the typewriter and manifold to duplicate the diary, Van Helsing is able to disseminate and preserve the knowledge which vampire hunters rely on. When Dracula destroys evidence—in an act which seems to symbolize the native resistance to invasive aspects of civilization—technology had already preserved all the knowledge necessary to conquer him.

Furthermore, attitudes to cartography in *Dracula* bear some resemblance to how technology is treated in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899), which is published two years after Stoker's novel and is considered a canonical novel on the subject of the empire. In *Dracula*, Harker points out how he "was not able to light on any map or work giving the exact locality of the Castle Dracula, as there are no maps of this country as yet to compare with our own Ordnance Survey maps" (p. 32). Uncharted territories are dangerous, mysterious, or full of potential, and therefore attract the imperial mindset and are candidates for colonization. Like Harker, Marlow, the narrator in Conrad's novel, recognizes the importance of cartography for imperial control. He has "a passion for maps" from a very young age. Also, all of the "blank spaces" in the map seem very inviting to him (Conrad, p. 73). The map as a technological device for knowing the world is a crucial to the imperial enterprises of the nineteenth century, and their use emphasizes the discoverability and colonizability of other geographies.

Topics of race, empire, and technology are far from occupying a background status in *Dracula*. Contemporaneous to Conrad's and Evans-Gordon's, Stoker's text is similarly abundant with technological tools that equip vampire hunters not only with a civilizational superiority over the technologically deficient foreigner, but also with the ability to discover and tame the wilderness of his land. Van Helsing, for example, brags by saying: "we have on our side power of combination – a power denied to the vampire kind; we have resources of science; we are free to act and think; and the hours of the day and the night are ours equally" (p. 277). Likewise, just as Marlow's journey to the Congo fills the blank spaces in the map with ideological substance about the so-called savages who inhabit Africa, the vampire hunters' use of maps creates an association between foreign small dots and grand concepts, like the discourse of intervention and the moral responsibility towards geographies perceived as untamed. A place without maps "to compare with...the Ordnance Survey maps" of England is unknown and therefore dangerous (p. 32). Harker assumes the white man's burden and keeps trying to make sense of the place and the people. His curiosity is now aroused by the sight of the Slovaks, "who are more barbarian than the rest," and now desires, to see all he "could of the ways of the country" (p. 34). He subjects the natives to the same reductive and measuring gaze he uses to comprehend the land.

Such discourse about the body of the other is not limited to fiction in Victorian age. Debates about race and foreigners were already fueling parliamentary speeches and political campaigns. Technology, not in the strict sense of tangible industrial products, has also been a reinforcing tool for the racial discourse in *The Alien Immigrant* as well. After exploring the homeland of aliens to make a strong case based on numbers and facts about their living conditions, Evans-Gordon suggests, among many other things, that medical inspection should be used to determine if the landing alien is suffering from mental incapacity (p. 282). This resembles the measurement of Marlow's head and the repeated emphasis on Count Dracula's physiognomy.

Furthermore, technology and science give a stamp of authenticity to how the other is imagined. For example, as in *Heart of Darkness*, the wilderness of foreign geographies accessible to Harker is too much knowledge to disturb the domesticated and docile women of England with. Harker's fiancé, kept in the dark, develops her own fantasies about the exoticism of "strange countries" (p. 87). Later, however, knowledge takes precedence over fantasy with the use of tools and science, and Mina gives up her meekness and is assigned a more active role later, albeit only after she has been victimized by the outside threat. Afterwards, she starts playing a more active role and proves to be of great help to the vampire hunters. To that purpose, Mina dedicates all of her skills to the service of the new imperial enterprise. By virtue of being able to think like a man according to the credit Van Helsing gives her, she helps in building a concrete

case against Count Dracula with the power of written pieces of evidence using a typewriter. Now that she has the experience required of English women lest they fall victim for Count Dracula, she demonstrates her wisdom through her mastery of the train schedule. "I have made a discovery. I shall get the maps and look over them," writes Mina in her journal (pp. 391–2). Mastery of technology, therefore, signals imperial preparedness as well as the potential of dominion over foreign bodies and landscapes.

However, at the narrative level, the knowability of foreign landscapes is not achieved exclusively through technological probing. The narrative style of the novel is detective in ways similar to *The Alien Immigrant*. The pace of narration is slow in *Dracula*, and details of the plot start piling up as if they were forensic evidence. The novel, overall, is investigative in nature and, as such, demonstrates the mental acuity and technological know-how of the British. Unlike Count Dracula, who is animated by his voluptuousness and uncontrollable urges, Van Helsing and the English group are driven by their rational abilities, a trait that offers a clear juxtaposition between civilized empiricism and Count Dracula's savage instincts. The British keep studying and analyzing the documents prepared by Mina so they would come up with an action plan, and the more the British discover about landscape, the more reassured they become of their knowledge of racial traits.

Reinforcing the technological advantage of the empire over the foreign landscape, the characters invoke an ideology of superiority and moral entitlement. Mina believes that it is "God's providence" which has enabled her to be very helpful to the vampire hunters. Moreover, she considers that they are "the instruments of ultimate good" (p. 356). A stronger connection is even later made by Van Helsing between ideology and locality:

That the world, and men for whom His Son die, will not be given over to monsters, whose very existence would defame Him. He have allowed us to redeem one soul already, and we go out as the old knights of the Cross to redeem more. Like them we shall travel towards the sunrise. And like them, if we fall, we fall in good cause. (360; sic)

Van Helsing's bombastic speech reveals the zeal of a relentless crusader heading towards the "sunrise," or the East, in a noble mission sanctioned by a higher moral order. If the Vampire hunters are killed, then they become martyrs for a just cause. It is as if the East is characterized by a preordained, existential, and therefore unalterable state of animosity towards Western Europe and the world, and, as such, has to be conquered. The pledge Van Helsing asks his group to make, therefore, is "to set the world free" (p. 322). Freeing Eastern Europe from evil forces is not set to bring benefits to the British Empire alone, but to the whole world.

#### **6. Politics of Geo-racial Purity and Containment of Cultural Contamination**

The threat of foreign bodies and landscapes also helps construct a well-defined sense of self for Western European characters in *Dracula*. More specifically, the deviance of foreignness is not merely with regards to physical appearance. It is also moral, pathological, and sexual, and therefore poses a threat to the purity of the British sense of selfhood. Judith Halberstam, a sexuality theorist, connects the threat of "pathological sexuality" which Count Dracula embodies to the desire to keep perverse bodies at bay (p. 335). At the semiotic level, Halberstam also suggests, the novel controls all aspects of reading and writing by forcing the reader to learn about the Count's perversion exclusively through the accounts of vampire hunters. To Halberstam, this reading/writing allows the subjective discourse of purist British sexuality to reign over foreign perversion (p. 336). Halberstam's treatment of perversion as a threatening aspect of foreign sexuality can be related to the novel's conservative discourse and the assumption of British heterosexuality. Underlying this discourse is a severe case of anxiety about endangered homogeneous geo-racial identity. Most of the time, Count Dracula preys on the weak and the innocent in the novel, mostly on women like Lucy Westenra and Mina Harker. Like the alien undesirable in Evans-Gordon's book, Dracula's vampirism, resembling a disease, is contagious and therefore threatens to desecrate the hygienic England. However, Dracula's vampirism is more than a pathological state of being. It is rather repeatedly represented in racial terms, as when Van Helsing refers to the likes of Dracula being the "vampire kind" (p. 277). Halberstam's interpretation of writing as a sexual metaphor of heterogeneous triumphalism can be further employed to argue for writing as a metaphor of geo-racial essentialism. Count Dracula's sexuality, one could argue, defines his geo-racial otherness as the penetrative outsider that poses a threat to the



enclosed, racially-homogenous hunting ground of England. His sexuality, unsurprisingly, allows him to reproduce and pass on the hereditary traits of the vampire species, thus alarming the reader of a competing race at the verge of toppling the racial balance. The longer Count Dracula runs loose in London, the greater the risk of more English people turning into vampires. If the Count is capable of trespassing into places which should be forbidden to aliens, it is because, as Seward puts it in the novel, those in charge of keeping danger outside “doze” from time to time and “cannot be trusted unless they are watched” (p. 313). Those who do not fulfill their role of protecting England from Count Dracula are thus similar to reckless Victorian politicians who are often blamed for letting immigrants in and threatening the racial homogeneity of England.

However, heredity as the physical manifestation of well-defined geo-racial identities is not limited to Eastern Europeans. In one of his unconventional moods, deemed his sanest moments by Dr. Seward, the psychiatric patient Renfield outlines the relationship between race, nationality, origin, and moral agency:

You, gentlemen, who by nationality, by heredity, or by the possession of natural gifts, are fitted to hold your respective places in the moving world, I take to witness that I am as sane as at least the majority of men who are in full possession of their liberties. And I am sure that you, Dr. Seward, humanitarian and medico-jurist as well as scientist, will deem it a moral duty to deal with me as one to be considered as under exceptional circumstances. (pp. 283–4)

By assigning heredity and nationality to their preconceived respective places in the world, Renfield asserts his own sanity to Van Helsing. In other words, Van Helsing agrees with Renfield that failing to recognize the threat posed by those who are hereditarily deviant constitutes insanity. However, the only obstacle to Renfield’s release from the mental asylum is Dr. Seward’s knowledge through past experience that the patient’s sanity is only temporary. Part of the racial discourse, it seems, is that geographic spaces carry the residuals of racial qualities in them. Wherever Dracula goes, therefore, he stains the place with his stench. “Every breath exhaled by that monster,” complains Harker, “seemed to have clung to the place and intensified its loathsomeness” (p. 290). Foreignness in this sense is like a pathogen that could spread in the homeland unless rational measures are undertaken by those who possess adequate technology to contain it, or even better, subdue and decontaminate its source.

Most important to the concept of the colonizable body and geography, however, are the two narrative aspects of the novel which connect the racialized physique to geographic occupancy: the first aspect comes from the delineation of the prodigious and supernatural qualities that emphasize Count Dracula’s bodily rootedness in his native land and, the same time, enable him to infiltrate the English inside. The second narrative aspect, going in an opposite direction both rhetorically and spatially, relates to the way in which vampire hunters, being protective of the British inside, restore order and safety to London by redefining boundaries and manipulating and subduing aspects of the landscape.

Count Dracula possesses many animalistic traits, including his “protuberant teeth” and the “feelings of the hunter” (p. 49). Most importantly, he is well adapted to the environment where he lives and can use his “fingers and toes [to] grasp the corners of the stones, worn clear of the mortar by the stress of years, and by thus using every projection and inequality move downwards with considerable speed, just as a lizard moves along a wall” (p. 66). Like a Darwinian beast, the Count’s body is equipped with the biological traits it needs to survive where it lives. Furthermore, he is equipped with the ability to manifest himself in immaterial ways. Like the “mist,” he seems to “steal away under the door” (p. 321). In other words, Count Dracula’s racial features enable him to enjoy an advantageous relationship to the space he occupies. Therefore, he is characterized with maximum fluidity which allows him to transgress borders, break into houses, and violate the privacy of women’s bedrooms. The geo-racial aspects of Dracula, it should be added, have another function, which is to pose sufficient threat that would give vampire hunters the moral justification to put an end to his threat.

The way in which vampire hunters deal with the threat of Count Dracula further reinforces the connection between race and geographic occupancy. The Count is intent on achieving the maximum possible geographic distribution in order to allow his race to prevail. He therefore plans “to scatter these ghastly refuges of his over London” (p. 300). The struggle of vampire hunters against the Count turns into a warfare aimed at protecting certain geographies and violating

others. The danger of the vampires has to be contained, and the borders have therefore to be secured. Van Helsing constantly tries to “deck” the rooms with garlic flowers in order to protect Lucy and Mina from the monster which creeps through holes and cracks (p. 167). Similarly, portions of sacred wafer are repeatedly used to restrict Count Dracula’s access to his own landscape, namely the burial grounds and earth caskets, which are the only places where a vampire can traditionally rest during the day. The garlic, the cross, and the sacred wafer with which the vampire hunters are equipped become repeatedly weaponized in the novel. One of their functions is to control the space which vampires can occupy and to prevent them from intermixing with the Western European victims. Through the enforcement of physical boundaries, these weapons preserve the racial purity of the English landscape. The use of spiritual weaponry—so to speak—seems to signify the idea that traditional and spiritual values ascertain the moral superiority of the Empire and are the best means to counter England’s new enemy, the undesirable alien.

### 7. Conclusion

Based on Evans-Gordon’s investigation and findings regarding the conditions of foreigners, the Royal Commission recommends that “efforts should be made to rid this country of the presence of alien criminals and other objectionable characters.” The Commission also suggests preventive measures because “evil, unless checked by legislative or administrative measures, year by year intensify [sic] and increases” (p. 279). Similar to the approach taken to keep Count Dracula outside of a certain geographic space, the prevention of evil can be achieved only at the border checkpoint by police officers equipped with sufficient power to check the immigrants “upon their arrival as to their character and condition” (p. 280). Both Evans-Gordon’s immigrant and Stoker’s Dracula define the threatened interior against the threatening exterior. Similarly, both accounts of foreignness rely on exploration and knowledge about foreign subjects, their physical and moral traits, and the landscape they occupy. This knowledge, being politicized, is translated into action in both the real (Evans-Gordon’s immigrant) and the fictional (Stoker’s Count Dracula). Count Dracula, his race, and the landscape where he comes from have to be constructed in a manner that deviates from the normalized and imagined British community. The lack of well-defined spatial boundaries and an ideology that regulates geo-racial delimiters threatens the Empire. However, whereas Evans-Gordon’s campaign calls for preventive measures to be enforced only within the English space, Stoker’s novel takes the preemptive approach a step further and its protagonists justify the exercise of force against Count Dracula’s biological roots and geographic origins.

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## أجساد و أصقاع مستباحة للاستعمار: صناعة مفهوم الأجنبي في رواية دراكيولا لبرام ستوكر

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### ملخص

يعالج هذا المقال خطاب برام ستوكر من خلال المفهوم الأجنبي في روايته القوطية دراكيولا (1897) ضمن الأطر الأيديولوجية المتداخلة، أولاً: الخطاب المعادي عرقياً للمهاجرين في العصر الفيكتوري كما ذكر في كتاب إيفانز - غوردون، المهاجر الأجنبي (1903)، ثانياً: الخطاب الاستعماري وموقفه من الهيئات والمناطق الجغرافية الأجنبية، ويؤكد المؤلفون أن رواية دراكيولا تعيد التأكيد على المشاعر المعاصرة والتمثيلات للهيئات والجغرافيات الأجنبية؛ لأنها تبرر الحاجة إلى السيطرة على الكونت دراكيولا وموطنه.

**الكلمات الدالة:** الاستعمار، العنصرية، علم الفراسة، الأجنبي، الإمبراطورية، المناطق الجغرافية المتخيلة.

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