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Exactly the Same but Completely Different: The Evolution of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* from Page to Screen

By: *Simon Bacon, Independent Scholar*

A moment ago I stumbled upon a most amazing phenomena. Something so incredible... I mistrust my own judgement.¹
We all know *Dracula*, or think we do, but . . . there are many *Draculas*—and still more vampires who refuse to be *Dracula*.²

1. Introduction

Since its publication in 1897 Bram Stoker's *Dracula* has never been out of print, a reflection of the immortality of the undead Count himself. However, whilst remaining fixed on the page, he has evolved almost beyond recognition in its adaptations on stage and screen. This paper aims to look at the ways the immortal Count has changed not just across mediums but because of the inherent nature of those mediums themselves. Some of these changes have been so dramatic and so fundamental to his nature that the Vampire King we see today is virtually unrecognisable to the one created by Stoker over a hundred years ago.

From his initial transfer from the page and first appearance in the early stage productions of Hamilton Dean and his first tentative steps in front of the camera of F.W. Murnau and up to the present day not only the look but the inherent nature of *Dracula* has been transformed. So much so that it can be argued that it is not the vampire that feeds and evolves to suit the times³ but rather the times or the medium of translation that feed off and shape the vampire. Film, which has been variously identified as one of the dominant languages of the twentieth century, more than any other medium can be seen to have transposed its own nature upon the revenant making it dependent upon, not just the play of shadows and reflections, but upon the very nature of light itself. Further the demands of sound and ever increasing intricacies of CGI (Computer

Generated Images) make the contemporary vampire both super and supra-natural in being not just more than human but also an entirely separate evolutionary species. Interestingly within this wider development of the vampire, the Count himself retains a distinct and discrete persona, so that while his kith and kin have changed their kind from figures of abjection and abhorration to ones of aspiration and human becoming, the Dark Lord retains the sinister Otherness and liminality that made him so mesmerising to audiences in the late 19th Century.

Consequently I will concentrate upon Dracula rather than revenants in general and particularly on three of his characteristics that I have identified as specifically changing from the original novel and due to the nature of the medium through which he has been translated. These are ones which whilst being culturally specific have ramifications on the wider uses and abuses of the vampire.⁵ However I should stress that these points have not remain fixed and are themselves subject to change and re-interpretation though, I would argue, are never lost as an integral point of reference within its subsequent evolution. So for this paper I have chosen features that concentrate upon his 'look', his 'sound', and his 'annihilation'. The 'look' comes from Dracula's first steps on the theatrical stage which signals a first and significant shift from Stokers original. The 'sound' from his first words on film which continually act as a spatial, and even temporal, locator and the last, which can be seen to be split into two parts, examines the changing manner of his death and its subsequent digitalisation and disintegration by the modern technological wonders of CGI.⁶ Whilst the first two may seem to be historically rooted to their particular times leaving the third somewhat temporally unconnected this study aims to show that they are in fact integrally interconnected and not just in the ways they continue to effect our continuing viewing and consumption of the vampire. Ultimately the aim is to show that their, and indeed

Draculas, continued relevance today has been created not so much by folklore and superstition but by the innate qualities of the means of adaptation and reproduction itself or what Judith Halberstam would describe as the “monstrous technologies”⁷ through which they are translated and interpreted, and as long as these continue to evolve and change so to, inevitably, will the vampire.

2. The Look of Love

In beginning a discussion on the changing look of Dracula it is worth starting with an extended quote from Stokers novel just to see how much it differs from the picture that most of us will inevitably have in our heads from popular culture:

His face was a strong "a very strong" aquiline, with high bridge of the thin nose and peculiarly arched nostrils, with lofty domed forehead, and hair growing scantily round the temples but profusely elsewhere. His eyebrows were very massive, almost meeting over the nose, and with bushy hair that seemed to curl in its own profusion. The mouth, so far as I could see it under the heavy moustache, was fixed and rather cruel-looking, with peculiarly sharp white teeth. These protruded over the lips, whose remarkable ruddiness showed astonishing vitality in a man of his years. For the rest, his ears were pale, and at the tops extremely pointed. The chin was broad and strong, and the cheeks firm though thin. The general effect was one of extraordinary pallor.⁸

How markedly different this is to what Alan Silver and James Ursini identify as the “very genuine stereotypification of the Dracula figure” which is typified by “dark clothes and full-flowing red-lined cape, the hair brushed back straight and flat from the forehead, the lips

extraordinarily crimson and distended in an eerie smile which reveals abnormally long canines.”

9 Possibly even more striking than the change in appearance is the importance of what the vampire is wearing and how vital that has become in being one of the major elements in recognising the Count. Whilst the novel rarely mentions his attire in much detail subsequent representations are based upon this most obvious of visual markers. Although it may seem an obvious, and indeed inevitable, development in the look of Dracula due to his later transition to film it is actually born from his adaptation to the theatre and is not one of style over substance but is due to practical necessity.

After his death in 1911 Stoker’s widow, Florence, took charge of his estate and in particular the rights of *Dracula*. She was notoriously difficult to work with in part through a reverence for her late husband’s work but also a dependence upon it for any kind of income.¹⁰ The extent of the popular success of the novel over and beyond any critical acclaim, a trend that would occur time and time again both on stage and screen, meant a theatrical production was virtually inevitable.¹¹ This permission for this was secured by Hamilton Deane who was an actor, playwright and director and formed his own troupe in the 1920’s. Long envisioning a theatrical version of the novel and unable to secure a script writer he wrote one himself, supposedly in three weeks and whilst suffering from a severe cold.¹² Possibly due to connections to the families of both Bram Stoker and Florence Balcombe, his wife, or simply ire against the contemporaneous unauthorized “that Ghastly German” production by F.W. Murnau,¹³ Deane was given permission to produce the play, which was given license to be performed by the Lord Chamberlain on August 5th 1924. Amazingly it was the surprise hit of the season in 1927, whilst critics thought it “appallingly pompous”¹⁴ the public could not stay away.

Almost as surprising as the plays success was the fact that Stoker's widow accepted the new image of the master vampire as put forward by Deane. He envisioned Dracula in evening dress and opera cloak exemplifying an urbanity and sophistication entirely absent from the novel where, although longing “to go through the crowded streets of your mighty London, to be in the midst of the whirl and rush of humanity” (Stoker 25), the Count could never be seen as anything other than alien. Here, however, he could quite easily repair to a Knightsbridge living room rather than just hover outside of its bedroom window. This change in costume was in partially due to the demands of the theatrical production itself and particularly one predicated on the “drawing room drama.” Here the “star” of the show is required to stand centre stage and interact with the other characters, predominately in a interior setting. In the novel Dracula is a creature of edges, never being described in his own words, he only exists in the penumbra of the other characters lime-light. On stage he must appear and disappear from the full glare of an anticipatory audience and it is the manner of this vanishing which required a very particular adaptation and which brings me to the main point about the change from page to stage. If the introduction of evening dress meant the Count could finally blend in and become one with the crowd, to vanish in the “whirl an rush of humanity”(25) that he so desired, then the collar once again made him visible but not just as a stranger, this time it marked hum out specifically, or stereotypically, as Dracula.

The reason for the introduction of the collar is one purely of theatrical practicality and as such makes it totally inherent to the medium itself. Its sole intention was to allow the actor playing Dracula to miraculously vanish before the audiences eyes. At set points in the production the Count would turn his back to the house allowing the actors head to be hidden by the high, and stiffly wired, tumescent collar¹⁵ so that he could disappear through a convenient wall panel

or trapdoor. What started life as a wardrobe idiosyncrasy has now become a staple feature of the popular image of Dracula, even up to the present day. The ubiquity of the collared cape is seen in its appearance in the majority of cinematic adaptations and sequels featuring him that followed. Whilst Murnau's *Nosferatu* (1922) was too early to come under the influence of this particular vampiric signifier Tod Browning's 1931 *Dracula* most definitely was not¹⁶ and provided the template for all subsequent offerings From *House of Frankenstein* (1944), *House of Dracula* (1945), *Son of Dracula* (1946), *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein* (1949).¹⁷ *Horror of Dracula* (1958), *Dracula Prince of Darkness* (1966) *Dracula A.D. 1972* (1972) *Love at First Bite* (1979), *Dracula: Dead and Loving It* (1995), *Dracula 2000* (2000) and *Van Helsing* (2004). Even when the story is updated and set in an envisioned future there is no escape from the collar, space may be a place where no one can here you scream but in Darrell James Roodt's *Dracula 3000: Infinite Darkness* (2004) it's still a place where the Dark Lord wears a cape, albeit with an amazingly statuesque and pert collar. Which also highlights a further development within this adaptation for the collared cape itself is enough to signify not just the Vampire King but his vampiric off-spring as well. This is seen in such films such as *Dracula's Daughter* (1936) and *Nadja* (1994) and *Blackula* (1972) and *Scream Blackula Scream* (1973) example representations of gender and ethnic agency which take the original signifier beyond its Transylvanian proto-type.

Although there are representations of Dracula that specifically refuse to wear the cape it is an inherent trait and an inescapable condition of subsequent vampiric reproduction, whether biologically or representationally. The high, stiff collar is now fully embedded within the vampiric signifier that came from his initial transference from the written word on the page to the

theatrical stage and one that was so much part of the medium itself that the consequences of its inclusion were never thought of let alone intentional. The next adaptation was to film and whilst owing a large debt to its theatrical roots was brought about by a revolution in the nature of film itself and that is the introduction of sound.

3. The Sound of Love

Once again it is worth returning to the source and beginning this section with another quote from Stoker's novel to see how speech, and in particular that of the Count, transformed as it made its way onto film and contrasts to the author's original intent:

'But, Count, 'I said [Harker], 'you know and speak English thoroughly!' He bowed gravely.

"I thank you my friend, for your all too flattering estimate, but yet I fear that I am but a little way on the road I would travel. True, I know the grammar and the words, but yet I know not how to speak them. "

"Indeed," I said,"you speak excellently. "

"Well I know that, did I move and speak in your London, none there are who would not know me for a stranger." (Stoker 25)

The first instance of Dracula speaking, and in fact of sound in any horror film, is in Tod Browning's 1932 version for Universal and it is somewhat ironic that the now iconic voice of the Count, rather than realizing his sameness, as was his original intent actually emphasises his otherness. Browning's handling, or supposed mis-handling, of the new medium of sound has been variously commented upon but even so its use in the film establishes some of the stalwarts of the genre with creaking coffin lids and the howling "children of the night." However it is the voice that is used to create the sense of place and difference. This is emphasized by the strangely

ambiguous scenery that rather than creating any real sense of place only produces an undefined otherworldliness. Even the Count's spectacularly gothic castle is denied its roots in Transylvania by such oddities as Armadillo's and Possum's running around the hallways. It is only when Bela Lugosi opens his mouth and intones: "I am...Dracula. I bid you welcome." in his thick Hungarian drawl that we are transported "through the forest" to the Carpathian Mountains.

Interestingly, Lugosi, who plays Dracula, was not the first choice for the role. Although he had played the Count for many years in the highly successful theatrical productions that toured America he was Universals last choice. David Skal observes "the list of actors tested or talked about for the part included Chaney [Lon snr.], Ian Keith, Paul Muni, William Courtney, Chester Morris, and Arthur Edmund Carewe."¹⁹ Although director Tod Browning wanted to cast an unknown actor, "I favour getting a stranger from Europe" (ibid). Universal believed that Lugosi was "too foreign for the part."²⁰ Browning, however, understood the need to highlight the link between the Other and the foreign, or more specifically the European. Ina Rae Hark notes that "the accented voice is of course the key signifier of foreignness."²¹ This is important not only in terms of the film but in how the character of Dracula went on to achieve its significance. David Pirie explains that in Stokers novel "[he] goes to enormous trouble to stress the Count's anglophile charm in his characterisation: he speaks excellent English."²² Browning's Dracula does exactly the reverse and from the very beginning of the film he emphasizes this difference. Many critics point to the large amounts of silence²³ in what was the first horror "talky" and as observed by Hark, "It is surprising that the build-up to Dracula's meeting with Renfield²⁴ should make such heavy use of silence. The sense that there is too much silence in the Transylvania section has inspired the legend that Browning did not know what he was doing"

(Hark 53).

What this actually achieves though is a far greater emphasis on his voice when he does speak and lifts it, to what Pirie describes as “the most famous single line in horror movies” (Pirie 53). As the film continues Dracula delivers every line with a huge pause between each word and often a similar one between each syllable. Whilst this has been often attributed to Lugosi’s lack of English and his need to pronounce every word phonetically the fact that he had toured successfully for many years across America with the stage production of *Dracula* prior to filming tends to refute this. This does not stop reviewers such as David Pirie identifying this aspect as the downfall of Browning’s directing “making Count Dracula into a ludicrous and stagey caricature” through a “visual and aural emphasis he insists on attributing to Lugosi’s every word push[ing] the character to the most extravagant shores of theatrical melodrama” (Pirie: 53-4). In contrast, it actually has the effect of fixing the performance into the mind. By essentializing the otherness of the vampire and by dislocating it from the world of reality it becomes the stuff of dreams... even nightmares. As noted by Skal: “For all its artistic deficiencies, *Dracula* liberated the dormant impulse in America, re-establishing an essential connection between film and the unconscious, and quietly transformed our imaginative life forever” (Skal 127-28).

By emphasizing an inherent characteristic of the uncanny in the introduction of sound, which is through difference and otherness, the voice of Dracula became fixed within the signifier of ensuing vampiric representations. Even if only as a post-modern self reference its continued significance is seen in such representations as The Count from Sesame Street who intones to an audience of children increasing and decreasing numerical scales in a thick Hungarian drawl that

Lugosi himself would have been proud of. As well as in more recent cinematic productions such as Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (Coppola 1993) and *Van Helsing* (Sommers 2004) both featuring English actors, Gary Oldman and Richard Roxburgh respectively, imitating an accentuated eastern European drawl to mark them out as the Count from Transylvania..

Curiously whilst the voice was initially used to identify the Count, as foreign and other, through its difference to the novels original intention, it is now often used to signify alterity by conforming to the Vampire Kings ambitions, and that is through perfect English intonation. Though later films are obviously influenced by the hugely popular Hammer productions starring Christopher Lee,²⁵ who even growls with an anglicized intonation, earlier films too configured *Dracula* with a typically English accent. Countess Zaleska, played by Gloria Holden, from *Dracula's Daughter* (1936) and John Carradine as the Count in *House of Frankenstein* (1944) and *House of Dracula* (1945) both speak with perfect English accents. This is also seen in more recent productions such as *Dracula 2000* (2000), *Dracula II: Ascension* (2003), and *Dracula 3000: Infinite Darkness* (2004). Whilst all these utilise what Stoker's *Dracula* saw as the ultimate quality of assimilation, by mimicking perfectly the world into which he wants to insinuate himself, they are in fact used to posit difference and alterity. Surrounded by a broad variety of accents the perfect English intonation identifies him as markedly other almost as much as Lugosi's did when placed in the centre of a Victorian drawing room. Re-enacting a similar spatial and temporal shift of East into West and the Old World into the New, both signal the possible incursion of superstition and chaos from the past in to the well ordered present, the destructive impulses of the unconscious breaking the bonds of repression and entering into the reality of everyday life.

The medium of sound, as seen specifically in the vampiric voice, has become an innate quality of the ever evolving and ever reproducing Count. Although alternating between languages and accents which place him not just spatially, but also temporally, it is always as other and different. Strangely condemned to enact his own pronouncement no matter where, or when, he finds himself he will always be identified as different “none there are who would not know me for a stranger” (Stoker 25). This notion of staying the same through, and in the process of, reproduction informs my last category of adaptation. For whilst the final demise of Dracula in contemporary times can be seen to be exactly the same as the literary source it is also completely different, and it is this difference that changes the death of the Immortal Count into his future.

4. Love is Dead...Long Live Love

A quote from the end of the novel will show how close to the original but how significantly different the Dracula of the early twenty-first century differs from that of the late Nineteenth. From Mina’s journal:

The sun was almost down on the mountain tops, and the shadows of the whole group fell long upon the snow. I saw the Count lying within the box upon the earth, some of which the rude falling from the cart had scattered over him. He was deathly pale, just like a waxen image, and the red eyes glared with the horrible, vindictive look which I knew too well.

As I looked, the eyes saw the sinking sun, and the look of hate turned to triumph. But on the instant, came the sweep and slash of Jonathan’s great knife. I shrieked as I saw it shear through the throat, while at the same moment Mr Morris’s bowie knife plunged in the heart.

It was like a miracle, but before our very eyes, and almost in the drawing of a breath, the whole body crumbled into dust and passed from our sight.

I shall be glad as long as I live that even in that moment of final dissolution there was in the face a look of peace, such as I never could have imagined might have rested there. (Stoker 328)

The important points of this extract that configure the two part of this final example of adaptation are the means and the meaning of Dracula's death, that is what killed him and what the result of that is. The result would seem to be most clear aspect of this and would appear to echo Lugosi's fateful pronouncement in Browning's film: "To die, to be *really* dead, that must be glorious" would appear to signal a final release from immortality and some kind of eternal rest. However, a consideration of what killed him and how it was achieved might change this view. If we look closely at the passage, it is not the sunlight that has incapacitated the Count, as we might expect, but rather the "rude" fall from the carriage. Realizing that the sun is setting and that his powers will return to their full potential a look of triumph enters his eyes. This immediately refutes and confirms the modern expectations of a vampire and indicates how the medium of film has changed its very nature in relation to daylight. Previous to Stoker's novel revenants were largely unaffected by sunlight, although they often chose to come out after dark the rays of the morning sun meant very little to them. Even the early Nineteenth Century Romantic role-model for Dracula, John Polidori's Lord Ruthven, 26 operated effectively during the daylight hours. Dracula himself, whilst less powerful and trapped in physical form, was untouched by the searing power of the sun. It was only in the transition to film that light began to play such a vital or de-vitalizing role.

One of the first and most notable examples of this is in Murnau's *Nosferatu* where, at the end of the film, we see Count Orlok, caught in the first rays of dawn, slowly fading into nothingness with only a wisp of smoke to mark his final dissipation into the ether. Here the Count takes on the quality of film itself, created and lost in the play of shadows and light. A point continually made during the film where we are told via the inter-titles "take heed his shadow not enter [encumber] thee" which is reiterated as we see his shadow covering, or taking hold, of Hutter,²⁷ and most dramatically, the heart of his virginal wife Ellen as he literally enters and consumes them. This represents a major shift in Dracula's relation to light for here he has actual physical presence and is able to cast shadows and has a reflection. As the Dark Lord changes from magical chimera to a dark reflection of humanity the spiritual light of religion loses its power to be replaced by the cold glare of science and technology. This equivalence between the vampire and the medium of film is most poetically shown in E. Mirhige's *Shadow of the Vampire*.²⁸ Purporting to show the actual filming of Murnau's earlier film, it shows the mysterious actor Max Schreck, who plays Orlok, as if he actually was a vampire. Whilst being at turns comedic and strangely eerie it shows how the vampire only achieves life, or rather immortality, on film. This is expressed in the closing scenes when John Malkovich, playing Murnau himself, says 'if it's not in the frame it doesn't exist' and indeed the destruction of the film represents the final destruction of the Count. As the sun enters the film set Orlok melts into nothingness just as the film itself melts and burns. He is the stuff of dreams, of lights and mirrors that vanishes when the film ends and the lights go up.

The increasing power of sunlight over all the other more traditional means of killing the vampire continues up until the present day. From Terence Fishers 1958 *Horror of Dracula* where

Dracula is dispatched by Van Helsing's desperate lunge for the huge dining room curtains allowing the sun to burst in and excoriate the vampire to ashes and bones, up to *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, both the 1992 film and the 1997-2003 television series, where vampires are regularly 'dusted' by both stake and sunlight. Although vampire killer Edgar Frog, played by Corey Feldman, from *The Lost Boys* (1987) and *Lost Boys: The Tribe* knowingly intones in both that "no two bloodsuckers die the same way" the means of that death is becoming ever more predominately sunlight. Possibly the most dramatic use of sunlight or UV (ultra-violet) is in the *Blade* trilogy of films. Whilst the first two, *Blade* (1998) and *Blade II* (2000), have Dracula like leaders, Dragonetti and Damoskinos respectively, it is not until the third instalment *Blade Trinity* (2004) that we see Drake, or Dracula, the firstborn and original vampire. The films feature an amazing array of ultra-violet weapons, not least laser bows that can slice vampires in two, all of which cause them instantly to evaporate in a cloud of dust. It is only Drake, who like Blade, played by Wesley Snipes, is a "Daywalker,"²⁹ and like Stoker's Count is unaffected by light, unlike either though he is able to transform during the day. It is only through the development of a virus called, not unintentionally, "Day Star" that he is destroyed. Similarly *Underworld* (2003), *Underworld Evolution* (2006), *Underworld: Rise of the Lycans* (2009), and *Van Helsing* (2004) all example the destructive power of sunlight upon the vampiric body. Interestingly in the quote above from Stoker's novel it is not the sunlight but the knives of Harker and Quincey that dispatch him, one through the throat, effectively decapitating him, and the other through the heart. These enact a far more traditional method of despatch, though opening a possible door for resurrection that I shall discuss later. Here though it is the growing connection between sunlight and vampiric dusting that identifies a change not only in the method and meaning of dispatch,

but how the medium of film and specifically CGI has, and is, adapting the figure of Dracula.

Whereas in the novel the vampire's body "crumbled into dust and passed from our sight" (Stoker 328), the modern revenant "magically bursts into a sparkling cloud of dust."³⁰

Signalling not so much a gentle passing into that dark night but a violent dissolution of the body into a million pieces or pixels which speaks directly of the nature of the medium, or mode, of representation itself. Stacey Abbott describes it thus:

There is however, a major distinction between the spectral effects of *Nosferatu* and those created by computers. When Schreck puts his hand in front of the projector in *Shadow of the Vampire*, the shadow that is projected is derived from his own body. Similarly, the demise of Orlok in *Nosferatu* is presented by fading out the real image of Orlok. The demise of each vampire in *Buffy*, however, is not drawn from life but created in a computer. (Abbott 206)

As such this posits not only a change within the medium of film but in the nature of Dracula too. Whilst his dependence upon light reflected the innate qualities of the materiality of earlier modes of film making now that the representation of his demise has passed into the realm of digitalisation it "no longer represents the uncanny quality of the photographic qualities of film but rather of the computer" (Abbott 211). The computerisation or pixilation of the Count then re-enacts the earlier spectral or shape-shifting qualities, of folklore where he was able to transform, at will, into a cloud of mist and re-appear wherever he chooses. The vampiric "dusting" then acts as the first part of a phoenix-like transformation, an alchemical act of purification ridding the body of the stains of reality, ready to be reborn anew.

Adapted and reproduced through the medium of CGI, Dracula takes on the chimerical

qualities of a pixelated cloud which dissolves and re-forms at will, where and when it likes. This dramatically changes the nature of the end of Stoker's novel for no longer is the final 'look of peace' on the Counts face one of grateful acceptance of eternal rest, but the knowledge that he can and will rise again when and where he likes. The dust of his dissolute and crumbling body is not a sign that the Count is dead but just resting.

5. Conclusion.

Stoker's novel is replete with new technologies which ultimately become linked into its own means of creation and dissemination, as Judith Halberstam notes "the technology of the vampire's monstrosity, indeed, is intimately connected to the mode of the novel's production."³¹ These new modes of recording and reproduction range from the typewriter to stenograph and telegraph to cinematograph which proliferate and ultimately define the world of modernity that Dracula wants so desperately to infiltrate and be part of. As he says himself at the start of the narrative: "I long to go through the crowded streets of your mighty London, to be in the midst of the whirl and rush of humanity" (Stoker 24-5). Erik Butler sees the Counts attempts at this within the novel as doomed to failure "though Dracula wins a few initial skirmishes, he simply does not operate quickly enough in the epoch of typewriters and telegrams, nor can his "snail mail" compete with the data-processing network that Mina administrates and Van Helsing oversees" (121). Dracula is simply "stuck in the past" (121) and it is up to the "new" vampires to go forth and multiply. Butler and Franco Moretti see this in the figure of the American, Qunicey Morris who, Moretti argues, is another vampire as he "is another foreigner [like Dracula] who represents an economic system inimical to the English social order and his hosts' traditional way of life" (Butler 122). This point is picked up by Halberstam who, whilst still identifying The Count as a

primary source, posits the socially monstrous notion of hybridity as the true goal of vampirism, which also includes the transfused blood of the American as seen in Jonathan and Mina's offspring Quincey Harker "the boy reincarnates the dead American, Quincey Morris, and the dead vampire, Dracula, as if to ensure that, from now on, Englishness, rather than a purity of heritage and lineage, or a symbol for national power, will become nothing more than a lost moment in Gothic history" (350).

Hybridity here becomes equivalent with reproduction, and one that is beyond the control of the society that seeks to control it. The monstrosity of the technologies at work here is in their capacity for reproduction, the typewriter and the stenograph can reproduce an original ad infinitum, as too can the Count by other means and as such strike an equivalence. The true horror of Dracula in this sense is that he embodies a mode of self reproduction outside the parameters of the hegemonic society that aims to control and contain him. As further stated by Halberstam "Dracula the text, like Dracula the monster, is multi-valenced and generates a myriad of interpretive narratives: narratives which attempt to classify the threat of the vampire as sexual or psychological, as class-bound or gendered" (335). Ironically although we never hear the words of the Count himself the book or text, itself comes to embody him. Like the Harker's hybrid off-spring he lives in every subsequent reproduction and translation across mediums, changing and adapting himself through new technologies but never being wholly contained by them. This is seen in the adaptations noted above, as the Vampire King is shown to mutate and evolve certain core characteristics of his defining trope remain, joined to the past but informing the future. So whilst this can be interpreted as an entropic reification "[o]nce Dracula's image was fixed and permanently associated with a particular actor and "look," the ever-changing world of

cinematic images ensured that his style would fall behind the times” (Butler 178). It misses the point that it is actually a layering of signifiers. Showing that the continuing reproduction of Dracula is not a loss of aura but rather a complication or immanence of meaning within the vampiric trope so that meaning in the present is constantly being constructed, in part, from what it meant before. This is of course part of the very nature of the vampire, and Dracula himself, reiterating the point that he is fundamentally about the past disrupting the “now” and therefore showing that meaning is not just layered horizontally, separate and discrete, but is vertical and fluid.

When he moved from page to stage he gained a “look” that was taken directly from the medium, an unintentional theatrical device that changed his external features into ones that would allow access to the wider society he so desired. Though whilst it added to the external signifiers of his otherness it still reproduced and indicated his inherent monstrosity, as too did his subsequent transmutation to film. Again through adaptation he gained equivalence to the medium itself, not just to the play of light and shadow, but to the materiality of film in its capture or possession of the physical world around. This feeding off or vampirism even, that film enacted upon the world around it was also embodied in the uncanny nature of the images themselves. Though dead and gone the fixed moment on celluloid was resuscitated and reanimated; brought back to life; raised from the dead and made to move again and again. But as the very stuff of film ages and disintegrates under the harsh light of day, where the sun embodies not just the light of reason but the fire of purification, the vampire too will burn, melt and disappear just as Orlok dissolved away as the house lights slowly rose. Dracula’s reproduction here is dependant upon the reality that imprints itself upon the film, though raised he is never truly free. As noted before

by the character F. W. Murnau in Mirhige's film "if it's not in the frame it doesn't exist." So whilst cinematic sunlight³² freed Dracula from the bonds of superstition and religion it still defined the limits of his prison.

Even sound constrained him, though at last given a voice to speak, unlike Stoker's text which he is never allowed his own voice and only being described by the words of others, so too the technologies of the talkies meant that "none there are who would not know me for a stranger" (Stoker 25). When allowed to speak at last it is only allowable in the intonations of otherness. Whether Eastern European or perfect English it inevitably sets him up in opposition to the milieu in which he is placed. Though leaving his home in, and of, the past he is never allowed to arrive in the present manifesting to perfection the body of the continual traveller, a point to be returned to later. It is only with his, as yet, final transformation into computerisation that a way "beyond the forest" begins to open up. The million motes of dust into which the Count explodes configure not a final passing but a transmutation into a pixelated miasma that speak of transition rather than termination. As noted by Abbott "the computer frees the vampire from the torment of endless repetition and breathes new life into their undead existence" (Abbott 214). Once again it speaks of equivalence to the medium itself as before the sunlight of reason fixed the form of the vampire Dracula could transform at will. Halberstam observes "Dracula is likened to 'mist,' to a 'red cloud,' to a ghost or a shadow until he is invited into the home, at which point he becomes solid and fleshly. As flesh and blood, the vampire embodies a particular ethnicity and a peculiar sexuality" (Halberstam 337).

It is only when he takes on a solid form that he becomes limited and imprisoned, as fluid and malleable he has the potential to be what, when, and where he likes. In the form of a

pixelated cloud not only is Dracula infinitely reproducible but infinitely variable. Just as the text before gave him the potential for life beyond the page so to does the pixel give him the chance for life beyond the computer. Exactly what the nature of that might be and whether it finally allows the Count the freedom of assimilation and self ownership he craves is a different matter but it goes to explain why the final scene of his demise in the novel brings peace and not vitriol or resignation. His dissolution signals a return to his original state, a state of mutability and transition, he may have expended this medium, but a new one will come along in which he can realize more of himself. Abbott further observes that “these films suggest that the vampire in the twenty-first century continues to be a product of the changing modern world... the modern vampire has gone global” (Abbott 215). As technology continues to evolve so too will Dracula manifesting a becoming that owns itself beyond the society that creates it showing that the past is never lost in the present, nor the present in the future and that reproduction and hybridity are terms that can never be fully realised for like the Count one they never arrive but are always arriving.

Notes

1. Van Helsing in Tod Browning’s film *Dracula* 1932.
2. Nina Auerbach. “Introduction.” *Our Vampires, Ourselves*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1995, p. 1.
3. This forms the basis of Nina Auerbachs, where every age creates the vampires it needs, and now a seminal work: *Our Vampires Ourselves*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1995. Print.
4. See in particular the furore around the vampire character of Edward Cullen in Stephenie Meyers *Twilight Saga* which leads to media commentators such as Julie Plec observing. “The vampire is the new James Dean” in “From Film to Fashion, A Trend with Teeth” in *The New York Times*. July 2nd 2009. Web. 10th November 2010.
5. Although the interpretations and translations of the vampire into and onto, other cultures outside Anglo-western are beyond the remit of this study see *Dracula’s, Vampires, and Other Undead Forms: Essays on Race, Gender, and Culture* ed. by John Edgar Browning and Caroline Joan Picart. Plymouth: Scarecrow, 2009. As an accessible starting point for further

investigation.

6. CGI is chosen here as the foundation of the continued development of not only the cinematic medium, both public and domestic, but also gaming and interactive media which in turn inform further translation into the more socially based communities of commodities, collectors, and fandom.

7. Judith Halberstam. *Skin Shows: Gothic Horror and the Technology of Monsters*. Durham: Duke UP, 1995.

8. Bram Stoker. *Dracula*. EU: Media Circus Productions Ltd., 2006. 23.

9. Alan Silver and James Ursini. *The Vampire Film: From Nosferatu to Interview with the Vampire*. New York: Limelight Editions, 1997. 61.

10. For an absorbing and detailed account of this see David J. Skal *Hollywood Gothic: The Tangled Web of Dracula from Novel to Stage to Screen*. New York: W.W.Norton & Company, 1990.

11. Upon its completion Stoker gave a monologue performance of the novel at the Lyceum theatre, where he was stage manager, in front of his mentor Henry Irving who has been often cited as the inspiration for Dracula. Irving promptly left shortly after Stoker began consigning the projected stage version to the waste basket.

12. Raymond T. McNally and Radu Florescu. *In Search of Dracula*. Haughton: Mifflin Harcourt, 1994. 157.

13. Florence Stoker was involved in protracted negotiations with Prana Films who produced the unofficial version of *Dracula* filmed by Murnau as *Nosferatu* in 1921. A subsequent injunction was served demanding the destruction of all copies of the film.

14. Skal 2004 p. 111

15. Deane used a crimson lined Episcopalian priest's funeral cape for the purpose.

16. Browning's *Dracula* was based upon Deane's original production, though subsequently reinterpreted by Jon Balderston for the American stage.

17. Due to what the studios saw as the larger selling potential for the name Frankenstein many of the productions featuring more than one monster were grouped under the title of the Promethean creation.

18. See Pirie (1977) and Skal (1993) for notes of Browning's supposed excessive drinking during filming of *Dracula*.

19. Skal, 1993: 117.

20. Lennig, 2003: 95.

21. Hark, 2007: 53.

22. Pirie, 2008: 98.

23. It has since been indicated that a large amount of silence at the start of the film was in fact filled with eerie wind noises that were lost in successive reprints of the original film.

24. Though this was an official version of Stoker's novel Browning's film, like Murnau's earlier production, changes the plot of the novel so that it is Renfield that travels to Transylvania

rather than Jonathan Harker.

25. Lee has played Dracula on film more than any other actor particularly well know for Hammer productions as the Count in: *Dracula (aka Horror of Dracula)* (1958), *Dracula: Prince of Darkness* (1966), *Dracula Has Risen from the Grave* (1968), *Taste the Blood of Dracula* (1969), *Scars of Dracula* (1970), *Dracula AD 1972* (1972), and *The Satanic Rites of Dracula* (1973) as well as non-Hammer films such as *Count Dracula* (Franco: 1970), and *One More Time* (Lewis: 1970)

26. John Polidori's *The Vampyre* was conceived on the same fateful gathering in 1816 on the shores of Lake Geneva where Mary Shelley, then Godwin, wrote Frankenstein.

27. Because of copyright laws Murnau changed the names of all the characters with Harker becoming Hutter and Mina changing to Ellen, and of course Count Orlok is Dracula.

28. Filmed in 2000 it has the rare distinction of any vampire film of actually being nominated for an Oscar.

29. Blade can do this as he is a Dhamphir, born of a human mother bitten by a vampire. This is also seen as a female born of a similar human/vampire pairing in *BloodRayne* (Boll: 2005) and *BloodRayne II: Deliverence* (Boll: 2007)

30. As described by Stacey Abbott in *Celluloid Vampires: Life After Death in the Modern World*. Austin: U of Texas P, 2007. 206.

31. Judith Halberstam, "Technologies of Monstrosity: Bram Stoker's *Dracula*." *Victorian Studies* Vol. 36.3 *Victorian Sexualities* (1993): 333-52. Print.

32. There is an extremely poetic scene in *Shadow of the Vampire* where Orlok finally gets to see the light of day by playing a film of the sunrise directly into his own eyes.

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