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**SUBVERSIVE BLOOD TIES:
GOTHIC DECADENCE IN THREE CHARACTERS FROM
MURNAU'S AND COPPOLA'S RENDERINGS OF BRAM
STOKER'S *DRACULA***

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Orientador: Prof^ª. Dr^ª. Anelise Reich Corseuil

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ABSTRACT

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2013

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The present dissertation consists of an investigation of the construction of the Gothic theme of decadence in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and two film adaptations of the novel – Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau's *Nosferatu* and Francis Ford Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula* – having as the centre of analysis how three characters – Dracula, Jonathan Harker and Mina Harker – relate to that theme. The Gothic decadence is a literary motif from the *fin-de-siècle* context of the Victorian Era inspired by the social crisis that took place in England in the late nineteenth century (Punter and Byron 39-40). Authors like Bram Stoker wrote stories that reflected moral and social fears of the Victorian society, depicting images of monsters that represented the crossing of moral and sexual boundaries established by the Victorian traditions (Botting 88). Bearing that discussion in mind, this study aims at connecting the portrayal of such a theme from novel to the two adaptations, also making use of a filmic analysis to identify techniques that highlight the depiction of the theme related to the three characters, ultimately linking such a thematic depiction to crises and social commotions that were taking place in both films' social contexts.

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*RESUMO*SUBVERSIVE BLOOD TIES:
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2013

Professora Orientadora: Anelise Reich Corseuil

Esta dissertação consiste em investigar a construção do tema da decadência Gótica em *Drácula* de Bram Stoker e duas adaptações fílmicas do romance – *Nosferatu*, de Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau, e *Drácula de Bram Stoker*, de Francis Ford Coppola – tendo como centro da análise como três personagens – Drácula, Jonathan Harker e Mina Harker – se relacionam com tal tema. A decadência Gótica é um padrão literário do contexto *fin-de-siècle* da sociedade vitoriana inspirada pela crise social que acontecia na Inglaterra no fim do século XIX (Punter e Byron 39-40). Autores como Bram Stoker escreveram histórias que refletiam medos morais e sociais da sociedade vitoriana, retratando imagens de monstros que representavam a transgressão de fronteiras morais e sexuais estabelecidas pelas tradições vitorianas (Botting 88). Tendo tal discussão em mente, este estudo busca conectar a retratação de tal tema do romance às adaptações, também utilizando uma análise fílmica para identificar técnicas que destacam a representação do tema relacionado aos três personagens, finalmente ligando tal tema a crises e confusões sociais que aconteciam nos contextos de ambos os filmes.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The Irish author Bram Stoker has achieved a considerable status as a Gothic writer over the past century, and part of that accomplishment is due to the classical representation of the vampire figure that he developed in his novel *Dracula* (1897)¹. The novel resides among the most widely known Gothic stories², and that literary exploit resulted in a considerable amount of film adaptations that have attempted to reproduce the atmosphere, setting, characters and the figure of the Count throughout cinema history. Such adaptations have displayed different actors playing the vampire's role and showed the cinematographic public diverse facets of the character and many acting strategies: Bela Lugosi in Tod Browning's *Dracula* (1931), Christopher Lee in Terence Fisher's *Dracula* (1958), or Klaus Kinski in the German version of the story in Werner Herzog's remake of *Nosferatu* (1979). However, seventy years separate two particular filmic renditions that interest this research: Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau's *Nosferatu* (1922) and Francis Ford Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992). The present research aims at looking at both of them through the scope of film adaptation, having the novel as the starting point. This introductory chapter shall provide a definition of the corpus engaged by the present study, its main objectives and focus, the review of the literature and the theoretical basis used to support the arguments and analyses developed in the further chapters.

Dracula is a novel that presents the modern myth of the vampire with the creation of Count Dracula. The character is an immortal being

¹ “Novelist, biographer, critic, and manager of the actor Henry Irving, Stoker's reputation today rests primarily on *Dracula* (q.v.), the book that established the type of the vampire (q.v.) for future generations and produced one of the most enduring of all literary myths” (Punter and Byron 167).

² “[. . .] it has seemed to many critics more useful to think of it [the Gothic] in terms of a psychological argument, to do with the ways in which otherwise repressed fears are represented in textual form. A more radical claim would be that there are very few actual literary texts which are ‘Gothic’; that the Gothic is more to do with particular moments, tropes, repeated motifs that can be found scattered, or disseminated, through the modern western literary tradition” (Punter and Byron xviii). That assertion serves as a basis to establish to what extent the contextual and psychological nuances that influenced *Dracula* place it among Gothic novels. Not only does *Dracula* reflect anxieties of its time and place, but it also exteriorises the repressed fears of the society into which it came to life, i.e. the women's repressed desires, the fear of the invader, or the fear of an economic downfall.

that has lived long enough to see the glories and ruins of his lineage, and decides to live a different life and spread his power and influence across English territory. As a creature of the night, Dracula avoids daylight, sleeps in a coffin in the depths of his macabre castle, and knows the secrets of the sinister and dark Transylvanian forest³. As a vampire, his actions in requesting the services of solicitor and estate agent Jonathan Harker derives from a more obscure desire: to feed from his blood and from the blood of young women in England, including Mina Murray, who is Harker's fiancée. One of the remarkable characteristics of the novel is the particular way through which its narrative develops: with the use of letters, ship logs, telegrams, newspaper cuttings and, for the most part, journals and diaries. The vampire eventually arrives in England, and after terrorising and contaminating the young Lucy Westenra with his bite, he goes after Mina, who is also hypnotised by his powers, not being able to resist sexual attraction from the Count's figure. Later on, an alliance of four men – Jonathan, Arthur Godalming, Quincey Morris and Professor Abraham van Helsing – hunts the vampire down while he is on his way to his castle. Jonathan and Quincey Morris kill him, and Morris dies from a wound resulted from the conflict with the group that was transporting Dracula.

Nosferatu, directed by the celebrated German filmmaker Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau, a film whose name lies on lists of German Expressionist Cinema motion pictures, is a product of the Silent Era from the nineteen-twenties. With the use of footage shot on-location in Slovakia⁴, its depiction of the Eastern European countryside and a medieval castle takes a different course from its Expressionist predecessor *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920), by Robert Wiene, which was shot in a studio with the use of bizarrely shaped buildings.

³ Such mysteries are evidenced through passages from the novel such as when Jonathan describes that “I asked him of some of the strange things of the preceding night, as, for instance, why the coachman went to the places where he had seen the blue flames. He then explained to me that it was commonly believed that on a certain night of the year—last night, in fact, when all evil spirits are supposed to have unchecked sway—a blue flame is seen over any place where treasure has been concealed” (22). This mystery unveils the old bond between the forest and Dracula's countrymen, since he goes on to describe that the treasures were once left there as a result of many battles fought on those lands in the past(22-3).

⁴ For more information on *Nosferatu*'s use of the Slovak landscape, see: Votruba, Martin. “Nosferatu (1922), Slovak locations”. *Slovak Studies Program*. University of Pittsburgh. Web. 28 Jan 2013.

That different course in film setting furnishes *Nosferatu* with a more realistic appearance, and speaks to real-life anxieties of the German people at those times of war and misery. However, that setting realism does not overshadow other Expressionist features of Murnau's motion picture: the exaggeration of Count Orlok's (Count Dracula's persona in the film) physiognomy and the dramatic lighting in a number of scenes account for some of the Expressionist properties of *Nosferatu*. Here, the Count is given monstrous traits and the viewer looks mostly through the eyes of the vampire's victims, with diaries and letters being resorted to as the deliverers of news on his inauspicious arrival.

Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula* is a more colourful rendition of the horror classic, and it relies more on special effects and soundtrack than its German counterpart. Its constant references to blood and sex give it a more aggressive tone, and the distribution by Columbia Pictures granted it a more popular status. Coppola begins his narrative around four hundred years in the past, exposing Dracula's early days as a noble and as a general of his people, while also focusing on the romance between him and an ancient incarnation of Mina Harker to ensure that the viewer reconciles the strong bond between the two later on. A young Gary Oldman stars in the main role, suggesting a more sensual approach to Count Dracula's behaviour as he reaches England to find his significant other with an elegant and jovial appearance, as opposed to the novel, where he is given a more mature semblance. Dracula is a more central character in the film narrative, with the camera following his steps most of the time. In addition to these particularities, the film also favours action scenes, a special appeal to larger audiences, with quick camera movements and the use of intense soundtrack to set off suspense and anxiety, thus following a Hollywood-style edition. The result is an acclaimed film that won three Academy Awards – all three in the artistic categories, for Best Costume Design, Best Sound Effects Editing and Best Makeup⁵ –, and that was a box office success⁶.

In spite of the seventy years that keep the two adaptations apart, they express a similitude concerning social contexts. During the time in which *Nosferatu* was produced (released in 1922), Germany was

⁵ For more information on the awards, see: *The 65th Academy Awards (1993) Nominees and Winners*. The Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences. Web. 20 Jan 2013.

⁶ For more information on the box office numbers for *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, see: Fox, David J. "'Dracula' Takes a Big Bite Out of Box Office". *Latimes.com*. Los Angeles Times. 16 Nov 1992. Web. 20 Jan 2013.

undergoing a process of recuperation from the damages of the First World War, also suffering from the loss of several territories through the Treaty of Versailles. The fear of misery and an economic downfall had already knocked on German doors, and the perspective of future was not pleasant⁷. Likewise, a social commotion was taking place in the early 90s American context, when *Bram Stoker's Dracula* was produced (1992). However, the general fear had a more biological touch: AIDS had been discovered in the 80s and genital herpes was already a public health concern. Fred Botting, in his book *Gothic*, states that “in the film’s magnified shots of blood cells seen through a microscope, the novels link to diseases of the blood is prominently displayed: the 1990s, like the 1890s, is terrorised by the lethal link between blood and sex, syphilis becoming AIDS” (115), indicating that anxieties from the contexts of both the novel and the film (1890s and 1990s, respectively) were linked. Consequently, there was a fragmented notion of social organisation in both contexts, which gave way to new artistic reproductions of a novel that had mirrored its own predicaments in the late 1890s.

The hypothesis here is that there is a theme which connects the three pieces that comprise my corpus: the novel and the two film adaptations. Such a theme is the image of decadence represented by the Victorian *fin-de-siècle* cultural context of England – into which *Dracula* is inserted –, more specifically as applied to the Gothic fiction repertoire. Maria Beville examines it by stating that

The ‘decadent Gothic’ of the *fin de siecle* (sic) is quite a remarkable literary progression and in it we see all the characteristics of artistic decadence: the enactment of vice and immorality and a distinctive turgidity of style as a response to conceived artistic, aesthetic and moral degeneration⁸. While *regeneration* is the aim,

⁷ “In the domain of public life nothing was settled as yet. People suffered from hunger, disorder, unemployment and the first signs of inflation. Street fighting became an everyday event. Revolutionary solutions seemed now remote, now just around the corner. The eversmoldering class struggle kept fears and hopes aflame”, notes Siegfried Kracauer on the German post-war crisis (43).

⁸ In Beville’s words it can be seen the connection between *decadence* and *degeneration*. And, as concluded by her arguments, decadence and degeneration are used in the quotation to imply the same idea: that of downfall, decay and/or deterioration. Therefore, from this point on, the use of those two words should apply to the common thematic representations in this research.

degeneration is the key concern of these Gothic works [. . .] (64, author's emphasis)⁹.

Beville's argument shows how the social dilemmas were already affecting the artistic layer of the British culture. Moreover, David Punter and Glennis Byron add that "The Gothic horror of the Decadence is the horror of dissolution, of the nation, of society [. . .]" (43). The intensity of the social effects from this so-called decadence of the Victorian era – frequently related to artistic and moral degeneration, as accepted by Beville – are examined by Jerome H. Buckley, when he states that "familiar though it may have been to earlier eras, the idea of decadence grew steadily more urgent and immediate throughout the Victorian age [...] it was a morbid condition of the social psyche, a disease sapping the vitality of civilization" (71). That social psyche was being frightened by the overly rapid progress of the latest centuries that had resulted in social disturbance, illustrated by religious upheavals (reflected by prophecies that foresaw the end of the world¹⁰), negative environmental effects caused by the industrial overgrowth, agricultural crisis, and urban inflation. Although still representing an important part in the Western political and cultural world, the decadence of old values and visions of a once all-powerful British Empire was coming to life, since the image of a nation that had achieved unity with Scotland¹¹ and boosted its industrial and naval advancement one century earlier¹² was fading away due to the aforementioned crisis.

⁹ Other Gothic works that fit the Victorian *fin-de-siècle* decadence thematic category would include Oscar Wilde's *Picture of Dorian Gray*, Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, and H. G. Wells *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (Beville 61).

¹⁰ Buckley, in *Victorian Temper*, states that "As the nineteenth century drew at last to its close, many a late Victorian pulpit rang with apocalyptic warnings. To the ardent Evangelical the end of all things was at hand; the old order, it seemed, could hardly long survive the faith that had made possible its dominance" (226). That, however, did not cause any strong social commotion, since "most of the chosen, apparently, preferred to linger on earth for at least another year, that they might join the festivities of Victoria's Diamond Jubilee [. . .]" (226-7). That evidences the disruption of conservative religious values that used to be part of the English social imaginary, so iconic for its founding of Anglicanism some centuries earlier.

¹¹ "Eighteenth-century Britain arguably came into existence with the acceptance by the parliaments of Scotland and England of a Treaty of Union creating the kingdom of Great Britain with its parliament in London at Westminster" (Murdoch 381).

¹² "When Castlereagh signed the Treaty of Vienna in 1815, the by then United Kingdom of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland had emerged as the hegemonic naval power, possessed the largest occidental empire since Rome, enjoyed extraordinary shares of the

Bearing the above-given discussions in mind, the focus of this investigation revolves around the Gothic notion of decadence as depicted in the two film adaptations from Bram Stoker's novel. In addition, this research aims at looking into the films – having the novel as a starting point – to identify that Gothic notion as experienced by three characters: Jonathan Harker, Mina Murray, and Count Dracula. Studying the two adaptations through narrative and cinematographic scopes can yield several possibilities of a comparative investigation of adaptation elements, particularly in relation to their respective representations of a Gothic theme such as the decadence, given that it is present in the Gothic fiction related to the Victorian *fin-de-siècle*. And as one goes through the narrative of *Bram Stoker's Dracula* and *Nosferatu*, the problems of characters' perspectives when in contact with the Count and monstrous demeanour come to life. He is the one from whom that decadence stems. Happenings coming from the encounter between Dracula and the three others include the ill state of Harker and his escalating state of delirium, and Mina Murray being overwhelmed by the Count's seduction and her subsequent loss of control over her sexual morality. All those examples of a change in the lives of the three described characters are not necessarily related to Dracula solely, but especially to his obscure, invasive and decadent facet as relating to horror and fear; and such examples evidence the importance of each character for this investigation. In this manner, the image of the Count evinces the sense of decay, invasion and corruption of the dominant social order in the *fin-de-siècle*, through illustrations such as steal of riches (the vampire sucking blood and acquiring English property), sexual perversion (he violates Mina and Lucy, thus practising bigamy, a strange practise to the conservative eyes), and disorder (he is a night creature, as opposed to a regular worker's life, whose work is done during daylight, and whose night is intended for resting). Consequently, the notion of Gothic decadence as referring to the image of the vampire disrupting the dominant social order is applied to each film's reality, evincing different anxieties that are reflected by a common theme derived from a common source material, the novel itself.

In addition, the present study aims at investigating what impact the historical aesthetic styles of both films had in the conception of the

profits from international trade in goods and services, and its economy was approximately half-way through the first industrial revolution.”, asserts H. Patrick Karl O'Brien (31).

characters and the theme, consequently going through film techniques such as editing, mise-en-scène, cinematography, and sound. The divergences between the arty context of the Expressionist style in *Nosferatu*¹³ and the Hollywood culture that came from Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula*'s appeal to larger audiences are what can enrich this comparative study in which I try to find in both films the Gothic idea of decadence as a common theme, bearing in mind how culturally different they are. Whereas *Nosferatu*'s aesthetic style approaches a more dramatic acting and a strong use of lights and shadows, *Bram Stoker's Dracula*'s depicts a more violent, fast-action and romantic interpretation of Stoker's piece. The particularities of each style can elucidate many points regarding the way both directors approached the Gothic decadence in each of the three characters.

Several studies have been developed on both Bram Stoker's novel and the two aforementioned films, bearing sociological, political and psychological approaches to their analysis. Franco Moretti, in his *The Dialectic of Fear*, presents a Marxist view of the image of the monster, and presents Dracula as a "true monopolist", a character who wants to possess the capital and the properties, and whose "ambition is to subjugate the last vestiges of the liberal era and destroy all forms of economic independence" to make them his own (74). Sergio Bellei, in his book *Monstros, Índios e Canibais*, offers a psychoanalytical look on the Count in part of his investigation. Using concepts from Sigmund Freud's *Totem and Taboo*, he proposes that Dracula acts like a paternal figure, and that there is an incestuous relationship between him and the female characters whom he seduces; he intensifies this argument by stating that "*Drácula é o patriarca da horda primordial que deseja para si todas as mulheres e tenta submeter à sua vontade os homens menos poderosos no grupo social*" (36-7)¹⁴. Ana Cristina da Silva also refers to psychoanalysis in her MA dissertation *The Fog Era: a Jungian and post-Jungian interpretation of Dracula and its filmic version Bram Stoker's Dracula*, in which she tries to bring Jungian images to the fore when analysing Coppola's film. Other approaches include William

¹³ Peter Hutchings, in his *The Horror Film*, implies that *Nosferatu*, as well as other motion pictures from the early German cinema, were seen primarily "as 'art movies'" (3). Their connections to that classification are partly due to the experimentalism endured by directors like Murnau and Robert Wiene with lighting, costumes, and setting.

¹⁴ "Dracula is the patriarch of the primal horde, who desires all the women and tries to subdue the less powerful men of the group under his will" (henceforth all the translations are mine, unless otherwise indicated).

Hughes' *Beyond Dracula: Bram Stoker's Fiction and Its Cultural Context*, in which he draws upon the social context in which Stoker was raised and in which his fiction came to life, attempting a biographical approach to the conception of the novel. Although both this research and these authors may share some common ground of investigation, the objectives are different: the present study focuses on the cinematographic representations of the theme here presented.

Since the corpus, focus and the objectives have already been unveiled, the next pages of this introduction shall present the theoretical basis for the present study, exposing the context within which the argumentation will develop in the chapters to follow. There are four issues to be explored, namely (i) the issue of film adaptation, (ii) the Gothic conception of the *fin-de-siècle* decadence, (iii) the issue of filmic styles and how they enhance the theme exposure, and (iv) the study of characters and how their perspectives engage the theme in discussion.

i. Film Adaptation

When speaking of film adaptation, it is important to have in mind the many nuances that contribute to distinguish the notion that one has of both literature and cinema. Desmond and Hawkes state that "Adaptation, then, is an *interpretation*, involving at least one person's reading of a text, [adapters'] choices about what elements to transfer, and decisions about how to actualize these elements in a medium of image and sound" (2, author's emphasis). Therefore, it must be understood that the level of perception when observing a piece of literature into film changes, and so do the reactions to delicate and often disturbing matters such as the Gothic decadence, which is my interest here. In the adaptation, like in language translation, the concern is directed at the medium that a specific audience is familiar with, bearing the aim of transferring the themes from one medium to another through broader structural aspects. Included in those aspects are narrative form, characters and plot, for instance.

Linda Hutcheon's *A Theory of Adaptation* provides a considerable backbone for the adaptation field of this investigation. In the book, Hutcheon works on classifications of the adapting phenomenon, as well as on the minutiae of the process and interactions between the written and the audiovisual media, also mentioning other media as participants in the adaptation phenomena. She considers the various aspects of the adaptive context - which she calls the "what" (forms), "who" (adapters), "why" (cultural, personal and economic

reasons for the making of an adaptation), “how” (audiences), “where” and “when” (the context). The book is important for this thesis because all those factors should be considered when looking at two contextually and conceptually distinct adaptations from the same source text as the two films here studied. Hutcheon’s specific looking at those aspects becomes a closer support for the present study. For instance, an important element pointed out about “what” (forms) to adapt evinces the idea of sensorial judgment as an identifier of the theme present in a given piece:

When theorists talk of adaptation from print to performance media, the emphasis is usually on the visual, on the move from imagination to actual ocular perception. But the aural is just as important as the visual to this move. [. . .] Soundtracks in movies therefore enhance and direct audience response to characters and action, as they do in videogames, in which music also merges with sound effects both to underscore and to create emotional reactions (Hutcheon 41).

On that note, film directors and producers make constant use of visual and aural effects to make a certain portion of the story more notable to viewers than others. And that factor highlights emotional responses and possibly provides a different perspective on the source text. In the case of *Nosferatu* and *Bram Stoker’s Dracula*, the creation of the atmosphere – or its adaptation from the novel – establishes fear as the main aspect the audience would respond to, and technical elements – such as sound and editing – have that aspect as a starting point. Factors from the adaptive context would include a need for a new gaze on Stoker’s novel for a contemporary American audience (in the case of *Bram Stoker’s Dracula*’s “why”), or a German scenario devastated by war and poverty living an artistic turn with Expressionism (in the case of *Nosferatu*’s “where” and “when”). All these points are important when looking at a certain specific theme’s depiction by a certain film adaptation.

Another common discussion in the film adaptation studies concerns the fidelity issue. James Naremore, in an introduction to the compilation *Film Adaptation*, raises the point that “Even when academic writing on the topic is not directly concerned with a given film’s artistic adequacy or fidelity to a beloved source, it tends to be

narrow in range, inherently respectful of the ‘precursor text’” (2). In the article “Teoria e Prática da Adaptação: da Fidelidade à Intertextualidade”, Robert Stam addresses the issue as he asserts that “*a retórica padrão comumente lança mão de um discurso elegíaco de perda, lamentando o que foi ‘perdido’ na transição do romance ao filme, ao mesmo tempo em que ignora o que foi ‘ganhado’*” (20)¹⁵. Neither *loss* nor *gain* in film adaptation are intended to be within the scope of this study, but instead the updating of old themes that, for artistic reasons, come back to life through media transmutations, mirroring cultural anxieties that refer back to that theme throughout history. In his *Literatura através do Cinema: Realismo, magia e a arte da adaptação*, Stam emphasises “[. . .] *a natureza multicultural da intertextualidade artística*” (19)¹⁶, justifying the cultural reflections of old themes represented in the two films, dictated by temporal and geographical – thus cultural – particularities. The themes used in artistic pieces transcend medium evaluation, and the media serve as particular artistic choices that house the former. Therefore, the approach to the corpus in this thesis will ensure that the three pieces are placed side by side, not bearing any sign of artistic hierarchy, and having the theme of Gothic decadence as a connection to unfold their nuances of depiction.

Intertextuality broadens its range as new media are born, but storytelling is a human characteristic not restrict to the artistic sphere. In his above-cited essay, Robert Stam addresses the matter as he states that “*as palavras, incluindo as palavras literárias, sempre vêm ‘da boca de outrem’, a criação artística nunca é ex nihilo, mas sim baseada em textos antecedentes*” (23, author’s emphasis)¹⁷. The theme of decadence is also not *ex nihilo*: the two adaptations here studied refer to the theme from the novel, which in turn reflects the anxieties of its time and place. Concerning this idea, Linda Hutcheon suggests that

[. . .] adapters relate stories in their different ways. They use the same tools that storytellers have always used: they actualize or concretize ideas; they make simplifying selections, but also amplify and extrapolate; they make analogies; they critique or show their respect, and so on. But

¹⁵ “The standard rhetoric uses an elegiac discourse of loss, saddened by what was ‘lost’ in the novel-film transition, and ignoring what was ‘gained’” .

¹⁶ “[. . .] the multicultural nature of the artistic intertextuality”.

¹⁷ “Words, including literary ones, always come from ‘someone else’s mouth’, and the artistic creation is never *ex nihilo*, but instead based on previous texts”.

the stories they relate are taken from elsewhere, not invented anew (3).

The novel and two films materialise their respective contexts using a fictional style to refer to a shared theme (the fictional style being the Gothic fiction category, and the theme being the *fin-de-siècle* decadence, whose contextual inspiration may not necessarily be from the nineteenth century, but with narrative portrayals of that time). In other words, while the novel and the adaptations establish an artistic intertextuality among themselves, their fictional styles also establish a thematic intertextuality through the shared Victorian *fin-de-siècle* decadence theme, updating the theme through their own narrative and character conception.

Moreover, the important role played by the order of the plot and the narrative representations of characters and places determines which aspects are retained, eliminated or changed in the adapting process. Roland Barthes details two groups of narrative functions: one group is that of *distributional functions* (also called *functions*), and the other is that of *integrational functions* (also called *indices*). Barthes explains that *functions* refer to narrative units that create the association that “the purchase of a revolver has for correlate the moment when it will be used”, thus functioning as determining the linearity of a plot; whereas *indices* concern “psychological information relating to characters, data regarding their identity, notations of ‘atmosphere’, and so on” (92). Taking into consideration that the study of the characters’ configurations in the narrative, as well as the atmosphere as constructed through the written descriptions – in the case of the novel – and audiovisual narrative – in the case of the films –, shall be two of the main points of interpretation for the analysis, Barthes’ principle of *indices* will be relevant for the present study. That is so because it opens possibilities for drawing argumentations on the demeanour of the characters, setting and atmosphere; that is, how the novel constructs its mood and presents its participants for setting the story, and how the films adapt those elements, thus developing their own take on the theme conceived by the novel¹⁸. In the written work, the conception of the

¹⁸ Possibilities for *indicial* distinct configurations are linked to the adapting process itself, for the signifying systems of the two media generate unique narrative elements. Brian McFarlane states that “The novel draws on a wholly verbal sign system, the film variously, and sometimes simultaneously, on *visual*, *aural*, and *verbal* signifiers” (26, author’s emphasis).

characters through their psychological reactions to the happenings set the *indicial* configuration – e.g. how Dracula is the conductor of moral subversion, how his castle suffocates Jonathan’s individuality, or how Mina is affected by Lucy’s change of spirit –, as well as the conceptions of place – the bourgeois English life against the superstitious and wild Transylvanian otherness. In the films, the two directors work through cinematic techniques – such as the *mise-en-scène*, editing or sound – to create their own narrative *indices*, establishing their own psychological traits for the characters, as well as their own configurations of setting.

ii. The *fin-de-siècle* Gothic Decadence

It is crucial for this study to reinforce how closely related Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* and the Gothic tradition are, and the reasons why *Dracula* is considered Gothic; David Punter and Glennis Byron offer arguments for a confirmation in their book *The Gothic*. It is important to bear in mind that the vampire is a figure awakened in literature by pieces considered to be Gothic (most notably, John Polidori’s *The Vampyre* and Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*), and that their presence in the literary world increased in the nineteenth century, during the time when the Gothic tradition underwent a literary revival. The vampire had already been present in folk-lore contexts, in poetry with pieces such as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s “The Bride of Corinth” (1797), and in romantic literature – with Lord Byron’s *The Giaour* (1813). But with John Polidori’s *The Vampyre*, the infamous undead creature returns as the iconic figure that we know today. The English writer “while only a minor player in the literary world [...], nevertheless had a significant impact on the Gothic through his writing of *The Vampyre* (1819)” (Punter and Byron 157). However, it was Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* that reinforced its power in the literary world¹⁹. The aristocratic figure idealised by Polidori had then gained the status of a foreigner of ancient and obscure origins. Its Gothic connections had been strengthened by the presence of the aggressive sexual illustrations, the social fragmentations and anxieties – arising from the *fin-de-siècle* context –, the breaking of cultural barriers, and the notable clash between past and present, from Count Dracula’s medieval castle in the dark woods of Transylvania to the industrialist England.

¹⁹ Punter and Byron state that “In *Dracula*, Bram Stoker established the prototype of our modern vampire”, and that “Few Gothic figures have been so repeatedly revived and reworked as Stoker’s vampire, and even after more than one hundred years interest still shows no signs of abating” (230).

In order to shed light onto the thematic background of the present study, it is more important to focus on *Dracula* as a Victorian Gothic novel rather than a Gothic novel per se. This is so because of several motifs common to novels from that time that can be found in Bram Stoker's piece as well. One of them is that "Victorian Gothic is marked primarily by the domestication of Gothic figures, spaces and themes: horrors become explicitly located within the world of the contemporary reader" (Punter and Byron 26). The dangers were not in the colonies anymore, but in their own lands, and Stoker's novel expressed that domestication of Gothic figures with a traditionally British male figure – Jonathan Harker, the bourgeois solicitor – being dragged into the shadows of the Transylvanian woods, and representing the bridge that Dracula uses to reach the Englishman's home and possess the local women. The decadence was waging war against the English conservative and sexist morality. On that note, Punter and Byron assert that

England was an imperial power in decline, threatened by the rise of such new players as Germany and the United States, experiencing doubts about the morality of the imperial mission, and faced with growing unrest in the colonies. At home, the social and psychological effects of the Industrial Revolution were becoming all too clear as crime and disease were rife in the overcrowded city slums. The traditional values and family structures upon which the middle class had based its moral superiority were disintegrating, challenged by the emergence of such figures as the 'New Woman' and the homosexual. Gothic texts of the late 1880s and 1890s consequently come to be linked primarily by a focus on the idea of degeneration (39).

The imperial minds of the English were failing to acknowledge the severe turn that the world was taking, and fears began to arise, having the city organisational fragmentation – as showed by Punter and Byron – increasing beyond control. The drastic changes in their social and individual order are what the decadence answers for, since "A related [. . .] fear is that England itself will be invaded and contaminated

by the alien world. Such imperial Gothic narratives articulate anxieties about the integrity of the nation, about the possibility of the ‘primitive’ infecting the civilized world” (Punter and Byron 40). Dracula is the primitive figure, the barbarian aristocrat, the dangerous alien; inept to accept the local disorder, the Victorians needed to blame or fear the alien. The main fear was that the alien would convert their lands and their values, to which *Dracula* responds with the Count’s desire to become English, and to abandon his nobility in his own country in order to live a British life. The domestication of Gothic then happens, as the threat of the vampire knocks on English doors, and the Count himself wants to be part of Britain, to make his figure local, for he is a “foreigner trying to pass as English” (Botting 97). With the coming of the alien, the Victorians feared the social disruption and the moral transgression, ultimately expressed in fiction by the motif of decadence, which reflected the internal fear of their social and moral degeneration. Dracula brings his exotic façade to the heart of the Empire, and the films illustrate that idea through his peculiar appearance in *Nosferatu*, and his oddly colourful fineries in *Bram Stoker’s Dracula*.

For Fred Botting, the *fin-de-siècle* scenario also evinced the disruption of human knowledge and cultural perception. He states that “In disclosing threatening natural forces scientific theories gave shape to the anxieties about cultural degeneration and provided ways of disciplining and containing deviance” (89). Van Helsing, for instance, is an illustration of the punisher who wishes to re-establish the social order of imperial norms heavily affected by menacing customs from the outside. He is the force of science and metaphysics that attempts to re-establish that order by researching on the devious creature of the night, whose origin is unknown and whose existence is ancient, thus threatening the mortals by the fear of the unfamiliar and the distant. But that social order present in the dominant Western world is the main target of the Gothic vampire figure, and the subject onto which the *fin-de-siècle* decadence operates is the individual’s moral stability, since

Individual moral degeneration was also considered as a problem of class and social structure in that capitalist modes of organisation produced a society in which individuals were parasitic upon each other [. . .] Primitive cultures were stronger and healthier because their members were not separated along class lines or restricted to single occupations and thus, more

self-reliant, did not need to prey upon each other. In the city and the factory, where divisions of class and labour were more extreme, alienation and cultural corruption were most acute. It is no wonder that Dracula selects London as his new hunting ground (Botting 89).

An illustration of that argument is that Dracula makes use of storytelling about his ancient, war-like traditions to impress and frighten Jonathan Harker during the latter's stay at the castle (Stoker 31). He knows that Harker's capitalist mind is dependent on the notion of social roles, having aroused him to the pompous estate negotiation that a capitalist individual would be looking for, then leaving him alone in a strange environment that progressively tortures the Englishman. He also knows that Harker's sanity is threatened by the oddity, vastness and ancientness of the castle. Later in the story, Dracula corroborates Botting's argument that the collective parasitism was awakened by capitalist production systems, moving his horrifying actions to larger human numbers: his arrival is related by the English press to a devastating storm, which resulted in the fact that "the whole aspect of nature at once became convulsed", and the dead or missing members of the crew in the ill-fated *Demeter* (Stoker 82-8). In addition, Dracula challenges the sexual conventions: Lucy Westerna is the first notable female character to be assaulted by him, as Mina takes note that

When coming home—it was then bright moonlight, so bright that, though the front of our part of the Crescent was in shadow, everything could be well seen—I threw a glance up at our window, and saw Lucy's head leaning out. I thought that perhaps she was looking out for me, so I opened my handkerchief and waved it. She did not notice or make any movement whatever. Just then, the moonlight crept round an angle of the building, and the light fell on the window. There distinctly was Lucy with her head lying up against the side of the window-sill and her eyes shut. She was fast asleep, and by her, seated on the windowsill, was something that looked like a good-sized bird (Stoker 103-4).

Mina cannot acknowledge the big bird as being Dracula's metamorphosis, so she is not able to see that Lucy is being assaulted by a vampire. That passage being considered, he takes possession of Lucy's sexual desires, thus invading the sexual reservation of the English feminine figure, and mirroring the decadence of the *fin-de-siècle* perspective, brought by the immigrant, the stranger, the *vampire*²⁰, and expanded to the capitalist collective context. Moreover, he always causes Lucy to not be able to distinguish between dreaming about and actually living the nocturnal assaults (and subsequent contamination by the vampire's bite), since she writes in her diary that "Last night I seemed to be dreaming again just as I was at Whitby. Perhaps it is the change of air, or getting home again. It is all dark and horrid to me, for I can remember nothing; but I am full of vague fear, and I feel so weak and worn-out" (Stoker 119).

However, to better understand the fear towards the image of the vampire (especially when associated with the figure of the outsider), it is important to envisage their condition of being monsters. As Bellei discusses, "*interessa [. . .] surpreender essa monstruosidade enquanto historicamente associada ao conceito de fronteira, já que monstros e fronteiras aparecem, via de regra, em íntima associação: o monstro é aquela criatura que se encontra na ou além da fronteira, mas que está sempre e paradoxalmente próximo e distante do humano*" (11)²¹. In *Dracula*, the Count is at the frontier between being an aristocratic, authoritarian figure and being a hideous creature of the night, which crawls on walls and sleeps in coffins. Ken Gelder adds to that notion by stating that "the vampire's function is to cross back and forth over boundaries that should otherwise be secure – the boundaries between humans and animals, humans and God, and, as an expression of its 'polymorphous' sexuality, man and woman" (70). Therefore, the image of the vampire was constructed as the ultimate nemesis of the dominant Western civilisation: it seeks to defy moral, sexual or religious conventions, so that the image of the other is integrated into that civilisation. Dracula brings that condition of never-ending

²⁰ Being the vampire a figure that sucks blood, thus absorbing life, Dracula can be seen as the representation of that who absorbs the riches and values of the Imperial, first-world nation.

²¹ "It is pertinent [. . .] to innovate that monstrosity as historically associated with the concept of frontier, since monsters and frontiers appear in intimate association: the monster is the creature which is always at or beyond the frontier, but which is always and paradoxically near and far from the human".

transformation and constant location at the frontier to England, as he attempts to make his subjects of horror into monsters as well (Lucy eventually becomes a vampire and Renfield is under his control, announcing his arrival and relating to him as a servant). He is not dead or alive, civilised or barbarian (since he is a knowledgeable man that speaks English fluently, but also a warlike figure that refers to blood and war when talking about glory), man or animal: he is the doubt concerning degeneration of moral values that engulfed the Victorian imaginary, given that “*Associado constantemente ao conceito de fronteira, o monstro atende a necessidades históricas diversas em diferentes momentos e pode ser utilizado para uma melhor compreensão de tais necessidades*” (14)²².

iii. Aesthetic Film Style

As for the broader understanding about German Expressionism, as well as its historical account, I shall use Lotte Eisner’s *A Tela Demoníaca: As influências de Max Reinhardt e do Expressionismo* as a basis. Eisner presents the German Expressionist principles that help understand the artistic movement in question in cinema and in other artistic expressions. Eisner also contextualises such principles, providing the reader with information about the German mentality during the silent era of cinema. However, it is important to grasp the basis of the Expressionist conception, notably the exaggeration of forms and feelings expressed in films, paintings, music and so on. And although a direct definition of such a complex artistic movement is unlikely to suffice its range in arts, Eisner demonstrates some of the characteristics involved in the Expressionist creative mentality when she states that

O expressionismo, declara Edschmid, reage contra o “estilhaçamento atômico” do impressionismo, que reflete as cintilações equívocas da natureza, sua diversidade inquietante, suas nuances efêmeras; luta, ao mesmo tempo, contra a decalcomania burguesa do naturalismo e contra o objetivo mesquinho que este persegue: fotografar a natureza ou a vida

²² “Being constantly associated to the concept of frontier, the monster relates to the various historical needs in different moments and can be used for a better understanding on those needs”.

cotidiana. O mundo aí está, seria absurdo reproduzi-lo tal qual, pura e simplesmente (18)²³.

That argument discloses the dramatic and vertiginous shapes that Expressionist forms evince. It seeks to encapsulate what the inner feelings of the artist have to say, and Eisner reveals that the end of Naturalism and Impressionism left the artistic notion that psychological impressions should in fact be expressed in intricate, distorted and contrasting images. She writes that “*Devemos – dizem os expressionistas – nos desligar da natureza e tentar resgatar ‘a expressão mais expressiva’ de um objeto*” (19)²⁴. That detachment from reality and pursuit of dream-like expressions in art led several pieces from early German silent cinema to receive an important artistic status which has lasted to date, and that had already been experimented on in painting, for instance.

Eisner also explores the Expressionist aspects of *Nosferatu* itself, which could be of considerable importance for the present study. One of the relevant things to observe in *Nosferatu* is the aforementioned vertiginous forms in the film, noticing how simple cinematic images can gain a substantial expressive charge with the presence of contrasting lighting and rural settings. This idea is presented by Eisner through the illustration that “*A natureza participa do drama: por uma montagem sensível, o ímpeto das ondas faz prever a aproximação do vampiro, a iminência da desgraça que fulminará a cidade*” (74)²⁵. Images of the woods, the aggressive and ancient architecture of the castle, the strangely slender, rat-like aspect of the Count’s appearance, among other elements captured by the camera, can help visualise the in-film development of the theme explored in this study. In addition, the awakening of a Gothic-derived atmosphere through the gloomy, the macabre, the weird and the profane are portrayed in the film through the

²³ “Expressionism, as Edschmid asserts, reacts against the ‘atomic shattering’ from Impressionism, which reflects the equivocal twinkling of nature, its disquieting diversity, its transitory nuances; it fights, at the same time, against the bourgeois decalomania from naturalism and against the self-absorbed objective that it seeks: photographing nature or the day-to-day life. The world is there, and it would be absurd to reproduce it purely and simply as it is”.

²⁴ “We must – say the Expressionists – detach ourselves from nature and try to revive the ‘most expressive expression’ of an object”.

²⁵ “Nature takes part in the drama: for a sensitive montage, the rhythm of the waves makes one foresee the vampire coming, the imminent disgrace that will devastate the city”.

use of strong lighting, the strange demeanour of the vampire and constant use of emphasised shadows. Therefore, in order to comprehend images as showed in *Nosferatu*, and use them as illustrations of Gothic motifs present in the film as related to the theme of decadence, it is pertinent to consider Eisner's account on the Expressionist movement in German cinema.

Roger Cardinal, in his book *O Expressionismo*, introduces several characteristics of the Expressionist movement in Europe and illustrative masterpieces of cinema and plastic arts; characteristics which I intend to define. Some factors from the Expressionistic art enlighten the forms of *Nosferatu* and the possibilities that the decadence guides the course of the three characters that will be analysed in this study. In *Nosferatu*, the vampire is more distant from the civilisation – he acts as though trying to hide his face under his collar to avoid the human gaze –, and has a more unwelcoming appearance, which unleashes the link with the decadence and the invasive aspect of the distant immigrant in a more aggressive, uncanny way. Cardinal states that

*O aspecto ameaçador da figura humana, quando vista sob o aspecto de uma sombra sem traços, como uma silhueta negra sobre um solo branco, foi explorado em diversos filmes expressionistas [. . .] Em Nosferatu (1922), projeta-se a sombra de um vampiro com suas longas garras subindo as escadas, ameaçadoramente – o horrível é feito mais horrível ao ser mostrado de forma plana, desencarnada (92)*²⁶.

Nosferatu's images strike through the overly monstrous aspect of the vampire's figure and its horrifying undead form lying in a coffin, while on his way to Thomas Hutter's quiet home. Another important insight comes from Cardinal's argument that there is a common structure used by writers of weird stories involving Gothic *fin-de-siècle* patterns such as the *doppelgänger*, mysterious crimes, the vampire, transformations; and that "*este assunto parece feito de encomenda para*

²⁶ The threatening aspect of the human figure, when seen from the aspect of an amorphous shadow, like a dark silhouette on a white soil, was explored in many Expressionist films [. . .] In *Nosferatu* (1922), the shadow of a vampire with long claws walking upstairs is portentously projected – the horrible becomes more horrible as it is depicted in a plain, disembodied manner".

esse novo veículo, o cinema, [. . .] onde o negativo de um filme pode transformar um bosque numa paisagem branca e monstruosa, como em Nosferatu de Murnau” (94)²⁷, referring to the carriage trip through the Transylvanian woods during the first sequences of the film, in which a film negative is used and the dark trees become white, evincing a ghostly ambiance in those lands. Cardinal’s assertion can show how capable the German Expressionism is of conveying frightful images in cinema, and how important those images are to investigate the Expressionist features in cinema in order to find such a notable Gothic theme as the *fin-de-siècle* decadence in the three characters – Orlok (Dracula), Thomas Hutter (Jonathan), Ellen Hutter (Mina) – of Murnau’s adaptation of *Dracula*.

Likewise, there are pertinent points concerning adaptation in Coppola’s *Bram Stoker’s Dracula* that can elucidate the perspectives of the three characters as depicted in the film. In the book *The literature/film reader: issues of adaptation*, Welsh draws upon Coppola’s rendering of Dracula and the cultural aspects involved in the depiction of a historical character such as the Romanian prince Vlad Tepes. He highlights the transformation of the Romanian landscape and traditions into a place of evil, and the historical image of the Vlad being converted into that of a Gothic creature (167), so as to use the image of a medieval warrior as barbaric and monstrous, condemned by his heretic past to be outcast from humanity in his lonesome castle.

Such a character and such a transformation have close relation to the exotic nature of the Transylvanian region for the Western European community. Dracula’s origin relates to the Carpathian Mountains, largely located into Romanian territory. Although part of the novel’s narrative is set in that mountain range, Jonathan quickly identifies Transylvania as the major area where Castle Dracula is located, since he notes that “having some time at my disposal when in London, I had visited the British Museum, and made search among the books and maps of the library regarding Transylvania; it had struck me that some foreknowledge of the country could hardly fail to have some importance in dealing with a noble of that country” (Stoker 1-2). Despite acknowledging later that Dracula’s lands are “on the borders of three states, Transylvania, Moldavia, and Bukovina, in the midst of the Carpathian mountains”, the place is referred to as Transylvania

²⁷ “Such a subject seems to perfectly fit this new medium, the cinema [. . .] where the negative of a film can transform a forest into a white and monstrous landscape, as in Murnau’s *Nosferatu*”.

generally throughout the story (including in Coppola's film). In the novel, Harker notices that "the impression I had was that we were leaving the West and entering the East [. . .]", later adding that "I read that every know superstition in the world is gathered into the horseshoe of the Carpathians, as if it were the centre of some sort of imaginative whirlpool" (Stoker 1-2). The impression of leaving the West is the impression of leaving the safety of home; however, not only home, but also the other powerful Western nations that shared political relations with England (such as France, Germany and Italy). To leave means to enter the exotic, that which is foreign, strange. Adding that notion of West-East travelling to the second passage referring to the Carpathians as an "imaginative whirlpool" establishes the ground for awakening fear of the other. Coppola's film responds to this notion with the depiction of strong and hot colours (red, orange and yellow) as Harker is on the train arriving at the Eastern European territories – symbolizing the foreign, the East (from where the sun rises), the wild –, and cold, sombre colours (blue and purple) as he approaches Castle Dracula to indicate the darkness that he is coming closer to; such use of colours by Coppola also transfer to film the expressive embellishment of the Gothic tradition.²⁸

That outside perspective on Transylvania intensifies as one takes into consideration the fact that the production, direction and audience of the film were primarily inserted in a modern American cinematographic context. Therefore, to apply the film's mentality to national artistic conventions, a link to the Hollywood Classical Narrative – a film feature described by David Bordwell – is traced by the director through the portrayal of a common feature from that narrative style: the heterosexual romance. On that matter, Bordwell states that "heterosexual romance is one value in American society, but that value takes on an aesthetic function in the classical cinema (as, say, the typical motivation for the principal line of action)" (4). Coppola uses it in a way that makes him bring to life both the romance between the Victorian couple – Jonathan and Mina Harker –, but also the challenging romance between the Victorian woman and the monster – Mina and Dracula. In the film, Dracula loses his monstrosity when in Mina's presence, and the romance is set under those circumstances. By the end of the film, Mina even defends her monstrous partner, trying to avoid that the coalition of the Western men – Jonathan, Van Helsing,

²⁸ "Gothic signifies a writing of excess" (Botting 1).

Arthur Godalming and Quincey Morris – eliminate the vampire. Therefore, that main heterosexual romance between Mina and Dracula is used by Coppola to soften the monstrous image of the vampire, at the same time installing her motivation in the principal line of action – which is to reconcile her love with Dracula and seek to restore and protect it –, and also applying to a mainstream audience.

iv. Study of Characters

As the last conceptual background, I shall use Baruch Hochman's views on characters and their images in literary texts to help comprehend the complexities of the chosen characters towards the theme here studied, as presented in his book *Character in literature*. Hochman points to the significance that characters have had in literature throughout modern history, from a result of the self-consciousness of the author to socially repressed representations of moral figures (24-5). And such idea can add argumentative corroboration to the nuances involved in the relationship between the Count – the moral source that brings the decadence²⁹ in itself – Jonathan, and Mina throughout the story. Moreover, Hochman states that

The schematic organization of our knowledge of characters in literature differs from that of our knowledge of people in life in that the existence of characters in literature (and our perception of their existence) rests on the more or less coherent, more or less self-declaring structure of the work that generates them and that we perceive as a single thing. (64)

That notion substantiates the unity of the theme when shared by the three chosen characters. The structure and the thematic nuances bind them around the story, with the theme referring back to the outside representations of the cultural fears. These ideas shall help find that

²⁹ It is important to point out that I have no judgmental control on the principles involved in the word decadence used in this study. That word receives its roots from the Western – most importantly, Victorian *fin-de-siècle* – moral perspective of the time, and such a word receives a different social connotation in the present times. Naturally, it is important to refer to it as from the dominant perspective of those works so as to highlight its importance for the conception of the monster and the latter's impact on that dominant society (Victorian in the case of the setting of *Dracula* and *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, and a German bourgeois one in *Nosferatu*).

structural coherence between the said characters that revolve around the same Gothic thematic decadence in the two films, and notions from Hochman's *Character in Literature* such as the ones previously presented can provide the theoretical support for that endeavour.

Also, the narrative configuration of each work can enhance certain characters' traits and their relation to the reader/viewer. Murray Smith notes that

[. . .] our experience of characters is shaped in terms of *allegiance*, that is, in moral and emotional terms, by the manner in which the narrative represents them as (for example) generous or mean, brave or cowardly, diligent or irresponsible (and so on). A film prompts us to feel *for* characters in response to these factors – that is, to feel emotions distinct from but appropriate to the actions and attitudes of the characters (234, author's emphasis).

Thus, the progression of Barthes' narrative *indices* in *Dracula*, as well as in *Nosferatu* and *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, is important for setting the psychological traits of each character, how and to what extent they are going to function as conductors of the theme, and how they will or will not reproduce a social paradigm of the context in which they are inserted. Narrative characterisations serve to set those traits, and to put some characters closer to stereotypical configurations, while distancing others from them. In the case of the works here studied, the *allegiance* described by Smith crosses paths with the notion of social pattern reproduction, in the sense that the Victorian characters – Jonathan and Mina – and the vampire exhibit their own mirrors of social values that may or may not arouse the audience's affection, depending on each author's conception of such characters.

Subsequently, in order to demonstrate that the two adaptations in question – in close analysis with Bram Stoker's *Dracula* itself - have specific techniques that express the *fin-de-siècle* Gothic decadence, I shall continue the construction of my argumentation with a close analysis of the novel and the films in the following chapters. In the second chapter, entitled "Images of Decadence in the Origin: Looking at Gothic Decadence in *Dracula*", I shall focus on the concept of decadence in the Gothic tradition of the late nineteenth century as applied to a close analysis of the relation between that concept and the

three characters in question throughout the novel itself. The textual evidences shall be brought to light to demonstrate the relations between the characters and how those relations evince the thematic configuration. The investigation will follow the order of the plot developed in the novel, and will set the background for the filmic analysis.

The third chapter, entitled “Images Beyond the Epistolary Mode: Applying Gothic Decadence to *Nosferatu* and *Bram Stoker’s Dracula*”, will work on film analysis concerning characters’ depictions in the two film adaptations, focusing on the way they live with – in the case of *Dracula* – and respond to – in the case of the Jonathan and Mina – the Gothic concept of decadence (related to the social disruption of conservative and dominant moral values and urban organisation in general) present in the Count. The chapter will also focus on how the aesthetic styles of each of the two films favour that theme, keeping in mind the depiction divergences and convergences in comparison to the novel in order to help guide the style distinction. Scenes that favour the depiction of the theme of decadence throughout the films shall be chosen and drawn upon, while also making use of stills of the most relevant shots to offer graphic evidence of the presented arguments. All the terms concerning filmic techniques that shall be used in the analysis shall be defined in a glossary located in the final section of this dissertation, having as basis the classifications found in David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson’s *Film Art: an Introduction*. Finally, in the fourth chapter, I shall finish the research, showing the conclusions and final remarks, and presenting possible implications of the study for future investigations on the subject.

CHAPTER 2
IMAGES OF DECADENCE IN THE ORIGIN: LOOKING
AT GOTHIC DECADENCE IN *DRACULA*

*Unreal City,
 Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,
 A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,
 I had not thought death had undone so many [...]*

“The Waste Land” – T. S. Eliot

Having introduced the main concepts and objectives of the present study, the investigation on the Gothic theme of decadence in the novel begins in the following pages. Punter and Byron state that “the Gothic is frequently considered to be a genre that re-emerges with particular force during times of cultural crisis and which serves to negotiate the anxieties of the age by working through them in a displaced form” (39). This research has acknowledged that those anxieties are connected to the Gothic literature of the late nineteenth century, but the displaced forms retrospect to the monster, the creature that haunts the normality and the conventions, hence being the source of the anxieties in the Gothic imaginary. The fictional nature of Gothic texts is used to create imaginary settings, events or characters that act as allegories for those displaced forms, and it is no different with Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*. It manipulates the English social reality to add fictional imagery to represent the real-world crisis (in this case, that image being Dracula, the vampire). Dracula influences Jonathan Harker and Mina Harker in his favour, using them as subjects to exploit the English way of life – the former to cross the borders into Britain, and the latter to suck the blood out of the English female. The purpose of the present chapter is to unfold the relations between Jonathan, Mina and Dracula, as referring back to the Gothic motif of decadence in the *fin-de-siècle* context. The nuances of such a motif, and how deeply they are affected by that decadence, can be revealed by a close reading of the characters’ relationship. The points that shall be clarified in the next pages will serve to elucidate the novel’s take on the theme, thus allowing this research to delve into the film adaptations in the following chapter, consequently investigating how such films refer back to those thematic features through their respective cinematographic techniques.

In the late Victorian Era, the artistic layer of the English society reflected upon the consternations of that era. Buckley acknowledges the

fact when he writes that, in Victorian London, “polite society [. . .] was so far forgetting its reticences [discretion] that it would admit the impolite reality of physical passion; while art, in its turn, seemed more and more prepared to ignore the conventional respectabilities that it might cater to the depraved appetites of wanton youth” (*The Victorian Temper* 161). Therefore, Buckley highlights the solid response from the artists of the time to the ongoing wave of social and moral twists. *Dracula* mirrors several changes in the English life, from the introduction of the typewriter and the phonographs – signs of modernity –, to the overgrowth of the country’s cities – symbolised by the coming of the foreign, attracted by the English powerful cultural influence; and also by the strong naval commerce depicted in the novel as coming from all corners of Europe, as with the Russian schooner *Demeter*, on which Dracula travels to British lands.

However, to be considered fitting in a Gothic story, the Victorian *fin-de-siècle* decadence would require the horror element, so that it would not stand alone as a social premise. And in *Dracula*, the horror does not necessarily resides only in the murky images of the wild forests of Transylvania, the gruesome howling of wolves, and the daunting corridors of Castle Dracula, but also in the impalpable and subtle images of fear brought to life by Dracula’s journey to England (e.g. the strange feelings of anxiety that the characters have without knowing their origins, as well as the unknown horror in the face of the *Demeter*’s captain). These are the fears of the late Victorian Era. Botting explains that connection between social, cultural and/or political crisis and the Gothic when he states that “in the nineteenth century, Gothic fiction seemed to go underground [to reach the city’s margins]: its depths were less romantic chasms or labyrinthine dungeons, than the murky recesses of human subjectivity. The city, a gloomy forest or dark labyrinth itself, became a site of nocturnal corruption and violence, a locus of real horror” (8). In this context, the social and organisational predicament that troubled the big cities – among those is London – no longer represented mere urban problems, but a true source of fear and threat. The connection between the social commotion and the fear generated from it are the arguments that will make the analysis in the following pages pertaining to an investigation of late nineteenth century

Gothic images, bearing in mind Botting's point on the century's urban site of horror for Gothic importance³⁰.

The importance that characters in literature have in externalising ideas and/or moral patterns, as well as mirroring real-life behaviours, must be considered here. Baruch Hochman states that "literature [. . .] involves the generation in our minds of images of people who figure in it" (31); later he adds to that reasoning by asserting that "in the end, we tend to think of character – of people, to begin with – in terms of conflict, which may be moral, social, or psychological in nature" (51), which is why the conflict generated by the relationship of the two English characters here studied with *Dracula* refer to that argument, in the sense that the images of the three characters clash and echo the dramas of their times through fictional structures. Barthes' concept of narrative *indices* expresses the capacity that the narrative has to bring to life psychological nuances that characters emanate which enhance the reproduction of moral conflicts; their descriptions and discourses create their narrative traits, which can be used as comparative parameters. These narrative aspects reinforce points that will be brought to attention while analysing the characters selected; how the English ones react to *Dracula's* demeanour, how they see his presence as threatening to their ways of life, and by which principles they judge his coming as hostile to the Western world as a whole. All of these points work with fictional representations of moral values established at the time, and they can expose the traces of national pride – in the case of the English characters of the novel and their sense of protection towards their British bourgeoisie – or rejection – in the case of the same English characters' despising of the Count's strangeness.

That said, the structure that this chapter will follow shall bring the three characters to a close analysis. Passages from the book will be brought to light as textual evidences of the arguments presented.

Count Dracula

³⁰ The contrast between Gothic texts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries lies – in this case – in the setting: images of "anything medieval" or "preceding about the middle of the seventeenth century" were considered Gothic (Punter and Byron 7). In previous contexts, images such as the castle – as though a "general topography of the Gothic" – used to bear paranormal features, as "a site of spectres and miracles" (Punter and Byron 259). Therefore, the domestication of fears in the late Victorian Age of Gothic served to establish a new setting of horror and human fragmentation.

Dracula is an agent of monstrosity and disruption of boundaries. He is the character through which the Western, dominant world is weakened in the novel. Dwelling in the remote and wild lands of Eastern Europe, he is sinister even for the people of his nation, since Jonathan Harker mentions that “When I asked him [Harker’s landlord in the Carpathians] if he knew Count Dracula, and could tell me anything of his castle, both he and his wife crossed themselves, and, saying that they knew nothing at all, simply refused to speak further” (Stoker 4). The vampire is described as “a tall old man, clean shaven save for a long white moustache, and clad in black from head to foot, without a single speck of colour about him anywhere” (16). Dracula has three connections that can be his strongest ones, and which can represent his most notable characteristics as a weird individual to Victorian – and Western, in general – eyes: his relation to the night, to the ancient, and to the beasts. The three connections play an important role in the *indicial* construction of his persona, and can be first noticed in the early chapters of the novel.

Dracula’s close relation to the night becomes an apparent trait of his nature as Jonathan begins to get acquainted with the way of life of the Carpathians and to discover the Castle and Dracula’s routine. Before travelling to the Castle, Jonathan is warned by the landlord’s wife: “Do you know that tonight, when the clock strikes midnight, all the evil things in the world will have full sway?” (Stoker 5). Besides representing part of the attempt that Stoker was making to generate the atmospheric *indices* of Transylvania as a land of superstitions and bad omens – thus helping set the air of mystery for the horror to come –, that passage also indicates that the closer Harker is to Dracula – that is, the vampire, the monster, the crosser of frontiers –, the more dangerous and damned the night becomes. Being it the time when one sleeps, the night is the appropriate time for the “evil things in the world” to prey upon the incautious. Harker makes constant references to the darkness that embeds the Transylvanian lands during the night, indicating that although it is no more than a normal time of the day, the nocturnal can engender a fearsome and decadent atmosphere given mysterious circumstances and also the influences that a strange character such as Dracula can enforce upon it. Later, when presenting the first description of Castle Dracula, Stoker complements by writing – through Harker’s narration – that “suddenly, I became conscious of the fact that the driver was in the act of pulling up the horses in the courtyard of a vast ruined castle, from whose tall black windows came no ray of light, and whose

broken battlements showed a jagged line against the moonlit sky” (14). This passage shows that, as dark as night can be, the roughly edged silhouette of the castle was able to outline the sky with even more darkness; not even the nocturnal sky – which had moonlight – could be as dark as the Count’s lair – which had no light, not even the ones expected by the Western man to come out of the windows. Furthermore, Harker notices the strangeness of the Count’s nocturnal routine when he says that “I have not yet seen the Count in the day-light. Can it be that he sleeps when others wake, that he may be awake whilst they sleep?” (50). That passage places Dracula at the margin of normality by only demonstrating his supposedly unusual routine.

As for his connections to the ancient, his castle and his family roots can attest that. The castle is often referred to as of old appearance, and its age and large size are *indicial* elements from the novel to evince the overwhelming power of the structure, connecting it to Dracula’s persona through that ancientness. Harker underlines that power when he documents that

I stood close to a great door, old and studded with large iron nails, and set in a projecting doorway of massive stone. I could see even in the dim light that the stone was massively carved, but that the carving had been much worn by time and weather [. . .] I stood in silence where I was, for I did not know what to do. Of bell or knocker there was no sign; through these frowning walls and dark window openings it was not likely that my voice could penetrate. The time I waited seemed endless, and I felt doubts and fears crowding upon me (Stoker 17-8).

Being alone with Castle Dracula is overwhelming for a Western man from the big Victorian cities. The castle is old and everything in it is suffocating for they are overly large: the nails, the door, and the stone which walls it. Dracula himself has lived in it for centuries, and his presence has blended with the castle structure, for he knows every one of its corridors, and often seems to be watching Jonathan in the latter’s routine in the Carpathians. Dracula does not appreciate modern ambiances and says that “I am glad that it [the castle] is old and big. I myself am of an old family, and to live in a new house would kill me. A house cannot be made habitable in a day; and, after all, how few days

go to make up a century” (Stoker 25). For the Count, time passes quickly, and centuries constitute short spans of time given his vampiric immortality and, consequently, his ancientness, of which he speaks pompously as he tells that “We Szekelys have a right to be proud, for in our veins flows the blood of many races who fought as the lions fight, for lordship” (Stoker 31). This assertion reminds the reader that by Dracula’s time and values, nobility was acquired through battles, and that warlike spirit would suffer displacement in the Victorian society, where nobility and lordship were measured through riches and lands. Dracula’s kind of nobility could be considered barbarism in Britain, thus pertaining to the old times, the Middle Ages, also known as the Dark Age.

As for his link to beasts, Dracula has total control of wild animals since the beginning of the novel, and that encapsulates his monstrous condition. When disguised as the coachman, he scares off the wolves that threaten the calèche with an unknown power, as Jonathan describes saying that “I heard his voice raised in a tone of imperious command, and looking towards the sound, saw him stand in the roadway. As he swept his long arms, as though brushing aside some impalpable obstacle, the wolves fell back and back further still” (Stoker 14). That impalpable obstacle is the mystery that makes his figure so fearsome; it is the unknown boundary between man and beast that contributes to making him a monstrous being. That symbiosis is consolidated by the famous line: “Listen to them – the children of the night. What music they make”, to which Jonathan reacts with a facial expression that the Count felt to be weird, and the latter complemented that “Ah, sir, you dwellers of the city cannot enter into the feeling of the hunter”, as a reference to the role of the wolf in nature as a predator, as is his own role in the metropolitan society of England (Stoker 18). Later, Dracula intensifies his relation to animals when he is seen by Harker crawling the outside walls of the castle in a lizard-like manner. Jonathan describes the man-animal demeanour of the Count at that point with loathing and wonder when he says that “my very feelings changed to repulsion and terror when I saw the whole man slowly emerge from the window and begin to crawl down the castle wall over that dreadful abyss, *face down* [. . .]” (Stoker 36, author’s emphasis). Dracula’s appearance reminds one of a reptile, a snake, a creature that is often seen with disgust by the Western civilisation, and that is often used as comparison when referring to a low or dishonest person. Harker makes remarks on Dracula’s monstrous state of being when he adds that “what

manner of man is this, or what manner of creature is it in the semblance of man?" (Stoker 37); Jonathan's sense of identification with another human being is increasingly vanished by Dracula's distance from what the Englishman considers to be man-like bearings. And that distance just intensifies more and more as the novel goes on, since the mere resemblance of a beast turns into total metamorphosis. Dracula often makes use of his power to become a beast in order to invade England and the English lairs.

The three aforementioned connections can relate to the Gothic atmosphere and concepts. The night is the unknown realm, and it brings the darkness that folds everything under a mysterious aura, as is mysterious the ancient nature of Dracula and his castle. Botting writes about the power that both the nocturnal and old ruins have to threaten the human reasoning:

Darkness, metaphorically, threatened the light of reason with what it did not know. Gloom cast perceptions of formal order and unified design into obscurity; its uncertainty generated both a sense of mystery and passions and emotions alien to reason. Night gave free reign to imagination's unnatural and marvellous creatures, while ruins testified to a temporality that exceeded rational understanding and human finitude (21).

It is no wonder that Harker loses much of his reasoning as time passes in the Carpathians, for the obscurity of the night and the mystic temporality of the castle are similes pertaining to the vampire. Harker feels blinded by the night, and bewildered by the old castle, since both the former and the latter are part of an unfamiliar atmosphere to him, and the maddening process that falls unto the Englishman from those two aspects is the decadence emanating from Dracula's persona. As for his beastly/monstrous side, he operates as the weird, frightening being that is not completely recognised as human, thus evincing the idea that he challenges the political and social domains through the tension that he brings to the established notions of normality in the Western world. Punter and Byron draw on that idea when they state that

What is primarily important for the Gothic is the cultural work done by monsters. Through difference, whether in appearance or behaviour,

monsters function to define and construct the politics of the 'normal'. Located at the margins of culture, they police the boundaries of the human, pointing to those lines that must not be crossed (263).

Dracula defies the sanity of the Victorian individual, and he uses the beasts as a fearful – in the case of the wolves in the Carpathians – and disguisable – in the case of his metamorphoses – factor to control the line that separates the conservative, urban, colonialist normality established by England from the nocturnal, ancient, wild customs that disturb that normality. All in all, the monster operates outside the rules of the allegedly civilised and outside their zeitgeist, attempting to be a part of that context, but only being able to do so by challenging the contemporary order and conventions of dominant societies. Punter and Byron assert that “monsters, as the displaced embodiment of tendencies that are repressed [. . .] not only establish the boundaries of the human, but may also challenge them”, concluding that “monsters problematize binary thinking and demand a rethinking of the boundaries and concepts of normality” (264). Arguments like those define the capacity that the creature that represents the connection man-beast has to act as a fictional agent of chaos and restructuring of values in a society going through tense time transformations – those transformations being represented here by the end of the Victorian Age and of the nineteenth century. As seen, the three Dracula’s connections have close relation to the Gothic and to how strongly he is perceived as decadent, and they shall be revisited as this chapter goes.

Since before being visited by Harker, Dracula had solid plans and wishes to travel to England. There is a desire in him to become English, to imitate the English people and, consequently, to blend in and spread his influence through his vampirism. While in his conversations with Harker in the castle, he tells the solicitor about his will to impersonate the English culture, and his will to be part of that society, especially when he mentions that “through them [the books on the history and life in England that he possesses] I have come to know your great England; and to know her is to love her³¹. I long to go through the crowded streets of your mighty London, to be in the midst of the whirl

³¹ In this case, the use of the feminine object to refer to England can also be read as a way to refer to the very image of the English womanhood. “To know her is to love her” can also mean *to love Mina*, or *to love the English femininity*.

and rush of humanity, to share its life, its change, its death, and all that makes it what it is” (Stoker 21). Wanting to be amongst the crowd is his first desire, and his motives are to absorb some of the life of its people, some of the “humanity” that the monster needs to blend in as he wants to spread his decadence; and the predicaments and death of those people are among the cyclical factors of life that he needs in order to live their mortality, given his state of immortality. To Victorian eyes, Dracula was a problem – the origin of crises –, and the challenger of their morality. Besides, while in his preparations for his journey to England, the Count acts as a spy, a stalker, for he spies on Jonathan’s letters and decides what the latter is going to write³².

His journey to England is also full of significant traces of his power, especially when one looks at the way through which he makes his trip. It all begins with the significant events concerning the earth boxes. Seeing that his servants, the Szgany, begin to carry the boxes full of earth to be transported – inside one of which the Count himself would lie –, one can say that the earth is the portion of his land that he wants to take to England; the earth that represents his soil. Since the soil is where mankind plants and harvests, Dracula intends to plant his seed of Gothic decadence into the English metropolis as he transports the boxes onto the schooner, *Demeter*, to his new estate in London. The ship itself derives its name from the Greek goddess Demeter, the goddess of fertility and agriculture, which relates to that act of planting the seed of decadence. In Greek mythology, when setting out to rescue her kidnapped daughter Persephone from Hades, Demeter also serves “to reestablish the relationship between life on earth and the underworld”, says Claude Calame in *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Mythology* (264). Thereby, in a moment of strong crisis, Demeter represents the link between earth and the underworld, as does the schooner in *Dracula* between Transylvania and England, the latter being the earth and the former, the underworld. Being the symbolism of the harvest and the planting of decadence into the English soil part of Dracula’s quest, it is through the *Demeter* that that quest is fulfilled.

As the *Demeter* approaches Whitby, in England, other characters begin to notice changes in their routines and lives. Mr. Swales, the old man from Whitby tells Mina Murray that “there is something in that wind, and in the hoast beyont (sic) that sounds, and

³² “I pray you, my good young friend, that you will not discourse of things other than business in your letters. It will doubtless (sic) please your friends to know that you are well, and that you look forward to getting home to them. Is it not so?” (34).

looks, and tastes, and smells like death. It's in the air; I feel it comin' ” (Stoker 81). Then the storm that drags the ill-fated schooner begins to brew in the horizon, announcing the air of death that Swales mentioned falling upon the British soil for the first time, and eventually appearing in the shape of an innocuous dog, the first *de facto* Dracula's metamorphosis (the lizard-like crawling was but a prelude of his beastly side). Swales is later found dead with a broken neck, and had “fallen back in his seat in some sort of fright, for there was a look of fear and horror on his face that the men said made them shudder” (Stoker 95). The coming of Dracula is the ultimate fear and bringer of doom over the English lives, and Swales, who had predicted it, was the first one affected by that doom. Lucy Westenra begins to feel his coming too. She is the sweet English woman, and throughout the story, she serves well to illustrate how Dracula can bring decadence to the English traditions, as she turns into a vampire after being bitten by him. Lucy's name carries a considerable meaning in this discussion³³, as Westenra stands for the “light of the West”³⁴, the dawn and hope of the Western civilisation. She emanates the English sense of righteousness and conservativeness, especially in the way through which she sees marriage. Three different men propose to her, and she sorrowfully writes to Mina Murray that “I never had a proposal till to-day, not a real proposal, and to-day I have had three [. . .] Isn't it awful! I feel sorry, really and truly sorry, for two of the poor fellows” (Stoker 61). At this point, Lucy consolidates the desire for the monogamy idealised in the Victorian society, establishing the English ideals soon to be consumed by Dracula's monstrosity.

Lucy's perishing period is Dracula's first apparent entrance to contaminate a female in the novel. As Dracula arrives, Lucy takes up on an old habit of hers: sleepwalking, a way for the Count to manipulate her mind to come and meet him outside the Westenra manor. This is the beginning of her crisis in the story. Mina assists her all she can, but Lucy eventually falls to vampirism, being constantly bitten by the

³³ Baruch Hochman, about the importance of names in literary texts, states that “even names, which might seem to be the most artificial aspect of characters in literature, correlate with social practice, since nicknaming and satiric naming are an integral part of our relation to people” (37).

³⁴ “Mas como Lucy Westenra (‘a luz do oeste’) e Mina Harker representam [. . .] os valores ideais de uma sociedade civilizada, o que está implícito no romance é a necessidade da destruição do *Vampiro*”; “But since Lucy Westenra (‘the light of the West’), and Mina Harker represent [. . .] the ideal values of a civilised society, what is implicit in the novel is the need to destroy the Vampire” (Bellei 45)

Count, who performs his assaults during the night and in different forms (first an unrecognisable dark figure, then a big bat, and ultimately as a wolf that had supposedly escaped the local zoo). In addition, she begins having queer dreams, and one specific dream suggested a sexual temptation taking over her will, since, as she described the dream, “I had a vague memory of something long and dark with red eyes, [. . .] and something very sweet and very bitter all around me at once” (Stoker 107). At that point, Lucy had already been haunted and violated by the long, dark figure that bent over her near the local church and first bit her. The bitterness and subsequent decadence of her feeling during the dream does not suppress her desire and the sweetness of the same feeling, suggesting her attraction to the dark figure that Dracula had impersonated, and to his challenging of the sexual traditions of the Victorian society. In addition, Lucy begins to realise that, regardless of her health state and weird symptoms taking over her body, her utmost horror comes from the night, when apparently her safety is most jeopardised³⁵. As her health worsens day by day, the alliance formed by Arthur Holmwood, Dr. Van Helsing, Quincey Morris and Dr. Seward start their quest to save her. In an attempt to replenish her blood cells lost to Dracula’s sucking, all the four men give blood to the young woman through transfusion, a sign of polygamy, since her desire for monogamy is suppressed by the sacrifice of four men, a deviation of the family morals that the Victorian society had established as decent for them³⁶. Therefore, Dracula triggers two disruptions of monogamy in different sexes, and through three participants: three brides seduce Jonathan Harker, and three men offer their blood to Lucy; the integral matrimonial infidelity is broken in both sexes in the conservative England, by then already being contaminated by the vampirism of Dracula.

When the hunting after the Count begins and he starts hiding, the reader is presented with the Western men’s weapons against him, the main ones related to Christianity: the crucifix and the sacred wafer. As

³⁵ “Oh, the terrible struggle that I have had against sleep so often of late; the pain of the sleeplessness, or the pain of the fear of sleep, with such unknown horror as it has for me” (Stoker 144).

³⁶ Dr. Seward and Van Helsing have a conversation on the matter, as the latter mentions that “says he (Holmwood, Lucy’s husband) not that the transfusion of his blood to her veins had made her truly his bride?”, and later completes his reasoning by adding that “if so that, then what about the others (who had given her their blood as well)? [. . .] Then this so sweet maid is a polyandrist, and me, with my poor wife dead to me, [. . .] am bigamist” (Stoker 191).

the nemesis of the Victorian moral norms, Dracula rejects Christianity, and that is clear since the beginning of the novel, when the fearful villagers in Transylvania cross themselves when hearing his name, and also given that the crucifix and the wafer had already been used to repel Lucy's vampiric fury. Therefore, the Victorian world resorts to Christianity and the divine providence to fight the decadence of the vampire. When being defeated by Dracula's forces, Van Helsing, in a moment of desperation for not knowing what to do to save Lucy's life, asks God: "Is there fate amongst us still, sent down from the pagan world of old, that such things must be, and in such way?" (Stoker 146). That passage demonstrates the strong fear of the Western, Christian and traditionalist world towards the recesses of the unknown, ancient presence of the monster, the outsider. By referring to Dracula's attacks as a fate sent down from a pagan world, Van Helsing symbolically acknowledges the threat that Dracula poses to the whole Christian morals in the Victorian society, not only as an erratic creature that is attacking a young lady. The alliance itself, when officially sworn by its members, has a crucifix as its ritual icon as "The Professor stood up and, after laying his golden crucifix on the table, held out his hand on either side [. . .] So as we all took hands our solemn compact was made" (Stoker 259-60). When hunting down the Count around London, he then puts the sacred wafers inside the earth boxes brought on the ship, in an attempt to keep the heretic and decadent influence of the Transylvanian soil off English lands. In addition, besides representing the profane, pagan influence over the English capital, the fact that the Count spreads his earth boxes about the city in different estates symbolises a plague, a general disease that is affecting the Victorian society, and that Van Helsing and his comrades believe must be eliminated by the Christian faith.

As a result, the alliance is then joined by two of the characters that are most affected by Dracula – Jonathan and Mina –, and the six of them set a crusade against the vampire. Their preparations and their enterprise against the presence of the invader are seen by Mina as "a solemn duty; and if it come we must not shrink from it" (Stoker 195). Sérgio Bellei identifies the group as "*membros representantes do que se poderia chamar a elite dirigente da Inglaterra vitoriana, dedicados à preservação tanto dos valores civilizados da ciência, da tecnologia e da cultura, como da mulher angelical representada por Mina Harker e*

pela Lucy Westenra anterior ao ataque do vampiro” (44)³⁷. In fact, the alliance reproduces the colonisation process by crossing borders to send the invader back to his obscure and decadent lands, thus affirming again the cultural and political power of the Victorian society. They fear the degenerating cloud that has been set over their heads in their own home, and they feel the delicate changes that have taken place since that cloud has reached London³⁸. Upon reaching Dracula’s acquired estate at Carfax with the party, Jonathan notices the decaying atmosphere of the vampire’s influence as he refers to the odour contained in the building. He says “how shall I describe it? It was not alone that it was composed of all the ills of mortality and with the pungent, acrid smell of blood, but it seemed as though corruption had become itself corrupt” (Stoker 273). Even in the darkest recesses of the English metropolis, the corruption brought by the vampiric invader had overwhelmed the local decay; signs of urgent times needed to be attended to by the redeeming powers of the colonisers, the party members.

Consequently, as an illustration of the Count’s decadent impact on the Victorian society, Van Helsing expresses his relief in saying that “if it had not been that we have crossed his path he would be yet – he may be yet if we fail – the father or furtherer of a new order of beings, whose road must lead through Death, not Life” (Stoker 329). Through that passage, Van Helsing acknowledges the contamination that Dracula has sketched over the English morality, and also the fear of a change of values, the creation of a new order, a less Victorian and less bourgeois society, and more attached to the sexual liberations and transgressions that Dracula had awakened. R. M. Renfield’s interest in the consumption of lives and his slave-like posture towards the Count had alarmed the party members, who had also been terrified by Lucy’s turn from the sweet bourgeois humility to the voluptuous blood thirst after having been bitten by the invader. The creation of a new breed of social figures – that did not please the Victorian values – was at hand.

³⁷ “members that represent what could be called the presiding elite of the Victorian England, dedicated to the preservation of the civilised values of science, technology and culture, as well as that of the angelic woman represented by Mina Harker and Lucy Westenra, before the latter’s attack by the vampire”.

³⁸ Seward notices the traces of decadence change the smallest things in the environment (evinced by the Count’s relations) as they enter the churchyard once more, and mentions that “never did the tombs look so ghastly white; never did the cypress, or yew, or juniper so seem the embodiment of funereal gloom [. . .] and never did the far-away howling of dogs send such a woeful presage through the night” (229).

What follows those events is a final myriad of frantic attempts from the alliance to drive out the Count, and ultimately destroy him. Dracula gets aboard the *Czarina Catherine* back to Varna, to then reach his castle on a calèche. The name of the ship is a reference to the Russian empress in the eighteenth century that, who as a child dared explore her sexuality and sense of female role³⁹, thus representing the feminine sexual liberty that the vampire tried to establish in the English lands. Upon getting to Transylvania, Van Helsing remarks that “the very place [. . .], Un-Dead for all these centuries, is full of strangeness of the geologic and chemical world” (Stoker 348). The Dutch professor therefore suggests an abyssal nature to the region, rendering it a darker atmosphere to justify their hunting of a profane creature. The men have to reach the calèche that carries the vampire before sunset, as the night will again protect him. He meets his end by the hands of Jonathan and Quincey Morris. However, just a little after him being stabbed in the heart and having his throat slit, his death takes a significant turn, as “the whole body crumbled into dust and passed from our sight” (Stoker 411). The fact that his existence vanished into dust is a reminder that he is not welcome in the civilised world of the West, and as such does not deserve a Christian burial or respectable mourning, being forgotten and disappearing into the wind, similar to pagan funerals in which they burnt their dead bodies. That is how Stoker gives an end to Dracula’s quest against the Victorian world, re-establishing the order of the Victorian convictions after the monster has been dealt with.

Jonathan Harker

Dracula’s peculiar epistolary narrative structure is initially performed by an Englishman travelling to Eastern Europe to fulfil work obligations. That Englishman is Jonathan Harker, a solicitor who is sent to the Carpathians to consolidate a deal with a local nobleman, the strange Count Dracula. Harker is the first contact Dracula has with an Englishman in the plot structure, and for a long period, he is the main narrator. The narrative constantly conducted by his diary establishes his *indices* as the reader shares his impressions, his fears, his affliction and

³⁹ “Riding horses like a man later became one of Catherine’s ‘dominant passions’ in Russia. The psychosexual implications of such passion are apparent: the desire for mastery, personal autonomy, sensual gratification, and power [. . .] These multiple challenges to social conventions could only give the youngster strange ideas about marriage, love, and happiness”, described John T. Alexander in his book *Catherine the Great: Life and Legend* (22).

his imprisonment; in addition, *Dracula's* *indicial* conception of setting and atmosphere in Transylvania is provided by Harker's narrative accounts. Throughout that period in the novel, Jonathan is the voice of normality and its impressions against the weirdness of the Transylvanian vampire. And as a narrative standard for the literary Gothic in the nineteenth century, "the vampire functions to police the boundaries between 'normal' and 'deviant' sexuality, with the narrative voice firmly positioned on the side of the 'normal'" (Punter and Byron 270). In fact, throughout the novel, the narrative voice always stands on the side of the Victorian normality and maintenance of its ideals, but it is through Harker that the reader first meets Dracula, and it is with Harker that the reader first feels the Gothic decadence preying upon the Victorian world. The following pages will take notes and insights on Jonathan's impressions of Dracula and his demeanour, and consequently the former's relationship with the latter's monstrosity and decadence.

It all begins with Harker crossing Europe up to the Carpathians, and his thoughts on the local landscapes, people and customs. A considerable charge of ideological judgment can be verified in the course of his trip. He describes Dracula's land as a remote and weird area, conveniently located "in the midst of the Carpathian mountains; one of the wildest and least known portions of Europe" (Stoker 2). He strengthens that thought when he exaggeratedly mentions that "I read that every known superstition in the world is gathered into the horseshoe of the Carpathians, as if it were some centre of an imaginative whirlpool" (Stoker 2). His use of an exacerbation in his comment marks the distorted vision that the Victorian society has of unfamiliar cultures in the novel – the monstrosity and obscurity of the place is a result of that. Furthermore, he begins having "all sorts of queer dreams" (Stoker 2), and dogs howl nearby in a way that affects him; a sign that Dracula's influences are beginning to lurk upon his mind as he draws near to the castle.

Jonathan also feels overwhelmed by the Count's connection to the night, since, while crossing the Carpathians, he notes that "as they sank into the darkness I felt a strange chill, and a lonely feeling came over me" (Stoker 11). The night in the Carpathians is not the same night as the one in the comfort of his English home. In England, he is surrounded by the invisible safety of the masses, of the Victorian values, of his sense of nationality – related to the sense of interdependence and parasitism of individuals amongst themselves in

the capitalist world⁴⁰. In Transylvania, previously described by him as “some centre of an imaginative whirlpool”, all unknown dangers may threaten his integrity, and his feeling of national pride and morality is progressively overpowered by the uncertainty of his wellbeing there, and the lack of social comfort of the metropolis.

Moreover, it is pertinent to clarify how his stay in the castle itself affects his sanity and his sense of liberty. Upon arriving at the ancient building, Harker asks himself “What sort of place have I come to? And among what kind of people? What sort of grim adventure was it on which I had embarked?” (16). Thereby, due to the dark impact of the whole place that has fallen upon him, he questions aspects that go beyond the nature of his job there and that concern a danger to his subjectivity. The structure of the castle, closely associated with Gothic literature, as Botting points out, holds an “architecture, particularly medieval in form [. . .], signalled the spatial and temporal separation of the past and its values from those of the present. The pleasures of horror and terror came from the reappearance of figures long gone” (2). Harker feels his displacement in the building coming from its ancient frame and its labyrinthine corridors, as well as the darkness of its surroundings and the threat of the wild domain over urban presence – again, indicating his dependence on the Victorian masses. Soon the castle becomes “a veritable prison” for him (Stoker 28).

While in the castle, Harker also participates in the daily life of the vampire, and that only encloses his sanity increasingly. His sense of a normal day is disturbed, especially when realising that his host is only about during the night, and that during the day, there is apparently no one else in the castle. He only feels better while living a trace of the Victorian normality again when having supper, as “the light and warmth and the Count’s courteous welcome seemed to have dissipated all my doubts and fears. Having then reached my *normal* state, I discovered that I was half famished with hunger; so making a hasty toilet, I went into the other room” (Stoker 18, my emphasis). Even simple things in his habits are distorted, such as shaving while looking at the mirror, and there is no more privacy in his activities, for the mirror itself is broken by the Count, who deems it “a foul bauble of man’s vanity” (Stoker 27). At that point, Harker’s own right to see his reflection is taken from him, symbolising that even himself could not recognise his self again, and

⁴⁰ That sense refers to Botting’s argument that there is a parasitism and inter-dependence in societies driven by the capitalist modes of production (89).

could no longer see safety in his subjectivity. An individual fragmentation was at stake, particularly expressed by Harker's quote that "the conviction of my helplessness overpowered all my other feelings" (Stoker 29).

Jonathan then undergoes the crossing of sexual boundaries that is part of the Count's function, as previously defined by Punter and Byron. The three brides – Dracula's consorts in the castle – seduce him and put his Victorian monogamy and supposed loyalty to his soon-to-be wife Mina at stake. They prey upon him after his moments of exploring the castle, and when feeling a sudden sleepiness, the Englishman wakes up under the women's control. On the moment in which he was touched by them, he notes that "there was a deliberate voluptuousness which was both thrilling and repulsive", demonstrating the ambiguous feeling of attraction and repugnance, the former being a part of him that is crossing the boundaries of the Victorian norms, and the latter an indicative of his still conservative repression of his sexual desires, resulted from those norms (Stoker 40-1). He also notes that paradox of feelings on the event when he says that "I felt in my heart a wicked, burning desire that they would kiss me with those red lips. It is not good to note this down; lest some day it should meet Mina's eyes and cause her pain; but it is the truth" (Stoker 40). That passage illustrates both his repressed desire to give in to the temptation, and his fear of showing his beloved one that disintegration of his morals. Ultimately, being trapped by the brides and submitted to their sexual abuse was in itself a result from his own curiosity in discovering the mysteries of the castle; his own will to explore the decadence that he previously despised.

That was the beginning of Jonathan's decadence in the story. From then on, his situation in the castle only gets more problematic, since the sexual assaults on him intensify. He feels his subjectivity crumbling under the attacks to the point of feeling hypnotised by the bride's sexual curse⁴¹. He falls under the power of the castle, and even his memory begins to fade away overtime⁴². Harker falls progressively to the decadence, and is later said to be in a Romanian monastery, under the protection of the Christian faith. What follows is a process of his

⁴¹ "I found myself struggling to awake to some call of my instincts; nay, my very soul was struggling, and my half-remembered sensibilities were striving to answer the call. I was becoming hypnotised!" (Stoker 48).

⁴² "Every scrap of paper was gone, and with it all my notes, my memoranda, relating to railways and travel, my letter of credit, in fact all that might be useful to me were I once outside the castle [. . .] This looked like some new scheme of villainy..." (Stoker 46).

return to the Victorian world, his wedding with Mina (taken place in the same monastery where he regained his traditional moral values), even though Harker still has strong traces of the decadence in his demeanour, since Mina describes him being “so thin and pale and weak-looking. All the resolution has gone out of his dear eyes, and that quiet dignity that I told you was in his face has vanished” (Stoker 113). He then develops a will for revenge on Dracula and his deviant influence, joining the alliance against the vampire, and eventually killing him by shearing his throat during the final struggle to repel the danger against the Victorian world. However, the importance that Jonathan Harker represents to the present study resides in his process of degeneration in Dracula’s castle. He undergoes a crescent fragmentation of his sanity and values, and the Count’s decadence transforms his perception of morality and self-preservation throughout his stay there; therefore, that is how the Gothic decadence affects Harker’s Victorian principles.

Mina Harker

Mina Harker (née Murray) is the symbol of female frailty and innocence in the novel, always in need of the hero’s help, as she is protected by the moral walls of the Victorian bourgeoisie. Jonathan draws an early description of her image as a Victorian woman that is important to the present study when he writes that “I am alone in the castle with those awful women. Faugh! Mina is a woman, and there is nought in common. They are the devils of the Pit!” (Stoker 47). In fact, Jonathan expresses through that passage the contrast that generated the fear of the denigration of sexual values and the woman’s submissiveness in the Victorian society. Botting draws on that when he states that, in the late nineteenth century, “one of the main objects of anxiety was the ‘New Woman’ who, in her demand for economic, sexual, and political independence, was seen as a threat to conventionally sexualised divisions between domestic and social roles” (90). Therefore, Mina is the second feminine subject – the first being Lucy – that Dracula uses to spread his disruption on the woman’s domestic humility.

When feeling anxious about the wellbeing of her fiancé, she often expresses the desire for marriage, especially by writing to her best friend, Lucy. Mina, as a young, beautiful and sweet bourgeois woman, is the symbol of that domestic humility. As of the beginning of the story, she dedicates herself to her hard work as a schoolmistress with

the intent of being useful to her soon-to-be husband⁴³, consolidating her submissive role in the Victorian domestic set of relations. Mina even mocks the New Women by writing that “We [her and Lucy] had a capital ‘severe tea’ at Robin Hood’s Bay in a sweet little old-fashioned inn [. . .] I believe we should have shocked the ‘New Woman’ with our appetites. Men are more tolerant, bless them!” (Stoker 97). Such an apparently joyful and innocent passage carries a meaning that represents Mina’s will to stay away from the new feminist wave that sought women’s autonomy and rights to equal social and domestic rights; especially for the fact that she declares her appreciation for men’s supposed tolerance towards Lucy’s and her strong appetite for tea at that moment. Nevertheless, she expresses her admiration for the New Women right afterwards, saying that

some of the “New Women” writers will some day start an idea that men and women should be allowed to see each other asleep before proposing or accepting. But I suppose the New Woman won’t condescend in future to accept; she will do the proposing herself. And a nice job she will make of it, too! There’s some consolation in that (Stoker 90).

In a way, Mina wishes that the domestic relations will change someday, and that women will have their autonomy; she simply does not think that it is appropriate for an engaged woman such as her to side with that idea at that time. The pressure from the Victorian morality constantly falls upon Mina’s notions of social roles.

However, as Dracula’s curse on Lucy draws near, Mina begins to feel the changes. While in Whitby, she gets progressively attracted to the churchyard where the tombstones of the city are located. She writes that “there is another church, the parish one, round which is a big graveyard, all full of tombstones. This is to my mind the nicest spot in Whitby, for it lies right over the town, and has a full view of the harbour and all up the bay” (Stoker 68-9). Her sudden attraction to a place where dead people are buried – thus embedded in a gruesome atmosphere – is a sign that she feels the coming of the vampire;

⁴³ “I have been working very hard lately, because I want to keep up with Jonathan’s studies [. . .] When we are married, I shall be able to be useful to Jonathan, and if I can stenograph well enough I can take down what he wants to say in this way and write it out for him on the typewriter, at which also I am practicing very hard” (Stoker 58).

consequently, the coming of death. The graveyard is also where she meets Mr. Swales, the old man who constantly talks about death and the lies that society create to romanticise the death of somebody. As aforementioned, Swales died at the graveyard site, with an expression of horror on his face, announcing the coming of death to the little city, and he also predicted that event as he felt the air of doom reach the shore. Consequently, the graveyard represents the beginning of Mina's inner feelings for the decadence, either the repulsive or the tempting ones.

After Lucy dies and the alliance is formed, Dracula truly begins his quest after Mina's blood and vitality. Mina feels the temptation drawing close to her mind, and there is a moment when she and Jonathan see the Count while walking down Piccadilly St. in London, to which Mina notes that "his face was not a good face; it was hard, and cruel, and sensual, and his big white teeth that looked all the whiter because his lips were so red, were pointed like an animal's" (Stoker 187). Just like the temptation that Jonathan felt with the brides, Mina feels the repulsiveness and the attraction that the Count and his sensuality awaken in her. But the horror soon overwhelms her, when she reads about what happened to Lucy and imagines Jonathan's grief in the castle, and she says that "my brain was all in a whirl, and only that there came through all the multitude of horrors [. . .] It is all so wild, and mysterious, and strange that if I had not known Jonathan's experience in Transylvania I could not have believed" (Stoker 244). The horrors defy reality to Mina, since the monstrosity of the Count and how much pain and death that monstrosity had brought to the ones around her struck her emotions, leaving her stuck between the feelings of attraction and horror. She concludes, despite pondering about the horrors at hand, and after being helped by Seward – also a member of the Victorian world –, that "the world seems full of good men – even if there *are* monsters in it" (Stoker 244, author's emphasis), highlighting the supposed decency of the Victorian "heroes" in contrast to the monstrosity of the vampire. After a while, Harker and the other members of the alliance notice a certain pallor in Mina – initial traces of her contamination –, who also sleeps more soundly than usual during the night, intensifying her relations to the nocturnal. That condition only worsens overtime⁴⁴.

⁴⁴ "She looked heavy and sleepy and pale, and far from well" (Stoker 286).

When the other party members first witness the Count attacking Mina, it brings the issue of contamination to the fore once more. The experience of sucking blood is described in details at this point, when

Kneeling on the near edge of the bed facing outwards was the white-clad figure of his [Jonathan Harker] wife. By her side stood a tall, thin man, clad in black [. . .] With his left hand he held both Mrs. Harker's hands, keeping them away with her arms at full tension; his right hand gripped her by the back of the neck, forcing her face down on his bosom. Her white nightdress was smeared with blood, and a thin stream trickled down the man's bare breast which was shown by his torn-open dress (Stoker 307-8).

Dracula and Mina are found in a very voluptuous position, with the latter kneeling down and sucking the former's blood, as in an illustration of the oral sex. Dracula makes her drink his blood, consolidating a symbiosis between the two, added to the fact that blood is a fluid that transports diseases, as well as it saves lives. Just as the blood of the four brave Western men initially served well in an attempt to save Lucy's life, the blood that Dracula drinks and gives is his way of both absorbing the life of the Victorian society and awakening the female sexual autonomy in Mina, as well as transporting the aforementioned plague that he brings to England and to the Victorians. And that refers to a fear of the late nineteenth century related to venereal diseases, since, as Botting points out:

A more pervasive, biological manifestation of the sexual threat was perceived in the form of venereal disease: syphilis was estimated to have reached epidemic proportions in the 1890s [. . .] the threat of venereal disease was particularly intense as a result of its capacity to cross the boundaries that separated the healthy and respectable domestic life of the Victorian middle classes from the nocturnal worlds of moral corruption and sexual depravity (90).

From the bond that Dracula established between him and Mina through the blood, he contaminated the ideal Victorian woman and

transferred to her his nocturnal link. Mina enters a state of delirium right before sunset and after dawn, when she tells Van Helsing what Dracula is doing through a hypnotic procedure to help the alliance track the vampire down. During the night, however, Mina cannot help her husband and friends in the hunt, as though there is an involuntary bond to Dracula that blocks her from giving him away⁴⁵. As Van Helsing uses the sacred wafer on her forehead in an attempt to “purify” and Christianise her again, the wafer actually burns her it, indicating that her bond to the vampire is still well alive, and that she has become a religious reject. But even though that bond is alive, Mina shows her intense will to destroy the Count, as her nemesis too, and joins the alliance in their journey east.

Therefore, Mina’s role in destroying the Count is crucial, as she is the one who feels for the vampire, and can see where he is going and how. Though her connection to him – sealed by blood – is present, and oftentimes generates pity from her towards him, she knows that it is the Victorian duty to eliminate the decadence⁴⁶. She avoids knowing about the plans the men have against Dracula, lest she tries to defend him somehow, but at the same time she trusts the righteousness of their endeavour when she affirms that the alliance and its men are “the instruments of ultimate good” (Stoker 344). That assertion indicates that she shares both the will for liberation from the moral pressures and anxieties, and the will to stay in the comfort zone of the Victorian principles. Ultimately, she is saved from the vampiric threats by her male heroes when Dracula is destroyed before sunset. What follows is Mina’s and Jonathan’s return to a normal Victorian life, far from the degeneration of the Count, and raising a family together – in a way, an ultimate repression of the sexual autonomy of the Victorian woman is consolidated. The vampire’s quest did not succeed, and found a tragic ending in a death taken place in his own home.

This chapter has presented textual evidences from the novel to verify Dracula’s rampant quest against the Victorian moral norms and organisation, and the latter’s representatives’ counteract in the form of a hunt after the invader. He represents the plague that haunted the big cities’ streets, and which the English eyes saw as the decadent end of an

⁴⁵ Dracula tells her: “And you, their best beloved one, are now to me, flesh of my flesh; blood of my blood; kin of my kin; my bountiful wine-press for a while; and shall be later on my companion and my helper” (Stoker 314).

⁴⁶ Mina tells Harker that “you must be pitiful for him, too, though it may not hold your hands from his destruction” (Stoker 336).

era, not acknowledging the problems as coming from within, and displacing them as horrors from without. Stoker sought to explain the crisis of the Victorian Era as a result from the coming of the outsider, which Punter and Byron describe as being part of the image of the monster, as they write that “Gothic texts repeatedly draw attention to the monster’s constructed nature, to the mechanisms of monster production, and reveal precisely how the other is constructed and positioned as both alien and inferior” (264). That who is from without is quickly perceived as a threat, thus generating a distressing condition in which the normality is in constant danger of being violated by the other. Edward W. Said contributes to that idea as he suggests that the Orient – not that Transylvania is the Western notion of Orient, usually associated with the Middle East (Said xiii); but in this context, the word Orient applies to the novel’s representation of Transylvania as the other world, based on Jonathan’s initial statement of “leaving the West and entering the East” (Stoker 1) – converges with the Western notion of colonies and “most recurring images of the Other” (1). In Gothic fiction, that condition creates the sense of fear, blinding the society towards the inner predicaments and making them turn against the outsider, who is turned into the fearsome monster. In this sense, *Dracula* is, according to Peter Hutchings, a “masterpiece of the unconscious, the symptomatic, the unintended, a work which seems to operate independently of the conscious intent of its author, and the significance of which was barely recognised on the book’s first appearance in the late-Victorian period” (*Dracula: A British Film Guide* 9). Stoker wrote the book in the dominant context of the Victorian England, and by attempting to reiterate the Victorian righteousness – especially through the happy ending with the restoration of the Victorian matrimonial order –, he inserted the novel into that context. However, the story also reverberated Gothic images of monstrosity and otherness, of the threat to moral conventions and Western power, especially through the fact that such a restoration of order does not eliminate the fact that the vampire had once violated that order.

Having presented the way through which each of the three characters act in relation to the Gothic decadence, the following chapter will engage in the filmic discussion. How do the same characters relate to the Gothic decadence in both renditions? How does that decadence affect the order of the two English characters’ society, and the moral values contained in it, in the two film adaptations? And how do the cinematographic techniques influence the depiction of the theme in

relation to them? Those are questions that shall be considered and investigated in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3
IMAGES BEYOND THE EPISTOLARY MODE:
APPLYING GOTHIC DECADENCE TO *NOSFERATU* AND
BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA

As the monster of the body is slain, humanity steps out of its labyrinthine cage. Birth was simply entrapment; the monster — be it Phedre, Frankenstein's creature, or the Job rendered horrible by his affliction - cries out that it would have been better never to have been born. As we, the onlookers, ascribe these words to the monster - as if they were merely the consequence of, or even retribution for, its deformity - we repress our sense of just how normal it is to feel that way.

Paul Coates

Considering the analysis on *Dracula* that brought textual evidences concerning the Gothic *fin-de-siècle* decadence in the characters of Dracula, Jonathan, and Mina, the present study now delves into the investigation of Friedrich W. Murnau's *Nosferatu* and Francis F. Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula*. Both films establish different configurations of the Gothic decadence from those present in the novel, which were investigated by this research in its second chapter. Robert Stam, in "Teoria e Prática da Adaptação: da Fidelidade à Intertextualidade", states that "*tanto o romance quanto o filme são expressões comunicativas, situadas socialmente e moldadas historicamente*" (24-5)⁴⁷. By using a traditional motif proposed by *Dracula*, both films communicate with the novel through a contemporaneously moulded notion of decadence, applicable to their respective realities, in accordance to their respective styles and audiences. Stam also writes that "*A adaptação [. . .] pode ser vista como uma orquestração de discursos, talentos e trajetos, uma construção 'híbrida', mesclando mídias e discursos*" (23)⁴⁸. That "hybrid" form is also present in *Nosferatu* and *Bram Stoker's Dracula*: they share discourses relating to the Gothic image of decadence, and through their

⁴⁷ "Both the novel and the film are communicative expressions, socially situated and historically moulded".

⁴⁸ "The adaptation [. . .] can be seen as the handling of discourses, talents and paths, a 'hybrid' construction, which mixes media and discourses".

own contextual and stylistic paths they convey that image, since “films [. . .] are also objects that are moulded by the context of their production”, as stated by Hutchings (*DBFG* 4). This chapter focuses on both films’ representations of the Gothic theme of social decadence brought by the image of the vampire through their filmic techniques and depictions of the three characters here studied: Dracula, Jonathan Harker and Mina Harker.

One important factor when looking at film adaptations concerns the narrative features of the films. The present study shall take into consideration some narrative nuances in the films here analysed. Brian McFarlane, in his *Novel to Film*, writes that “what novels and films most strikingly have in common is the potential and propensity for narrative,” later highlighting that some aspects of written narrative can be transferred into the silver screen, while others have to be conveyed through different audiovisual strategies (12-3). As seen in Chapter 1, the narrative plays a relevant role in establishing the tone of the setting, as well as the emotional traits of the characters through the use of what Barthes calls *indices*, narrative descriptions concerning atmosphere and psychological conception of characters. Since both media use different signifying systems – from a verbal language to a verbal, visual and aural one – (McFarlane 26), it is important to keep in mind the use of cinema’s techniques to provide narrative configurations in each motion picture.

Together with the aforementioned notions of narrative, concepts of editing, cinematography, and the *mise-en-scène* shall aid the argumentation. The *mise-en-scène* is an important group of “aspects of film that overlap with the art of the theater: setting, lighting, costume, and the behavior of the figures” (Bordwell and Thompson 112). It is important to keep track of what is shown on screen, so that the study can analyse how the depiction of the theme draws upon and converges with the images, shapes, costumes, objects and acting that may enhance an idea of horror or darkness. The analysis of editing, which “may be thought of as the coordination of one shot with the next” (Bordwell and Thompson 218), shall also play an important role here. In fact, the study of shot and framing, also known as cinematography – which involves “(1) the photographic aspects of the shot, (2) the framing of the shot, and (3) the duration of the shot” (Bordwell and Thompson 162) –, together with editing and the *mise-en-scène*, make up for a considerable aid for the analysis on how the narrative order in the films will unfold, as well as they generate the films’ *indices*, relating to their unique

narrative features concerning character formation and atmosphere conception.

Nosferatu

Murnau's *Nosferatu* bears particularities that shall be looked at by the present study. As with all films from the silent era, it is not coloured, therefore relying strongly on lighting. And as a film bearing German Expressionist features, the lighting in *Nosferatu* is used to give birth to dramatic, exaggerated forms, and to highlight Orlok's monstrous silhouette. That monstrous shape serves once again the stylistic purposes of the German Expressionist cinema that aim at high-contrasting figures. As Paul Coates states, "Dracula is an uncanny figure, but *Nosferatu* is poised between the uncanny and the monstrous; he cannot quite pass for a normal human" (94). Orlok's appearance crosses the boundary of physical normality in the Western world, with an extremely thin, lightly hunchbacked, long-nosed and darkened-eyed look that is bound to arouse suspicion and, ultimately, bewilderment. While Dracula intends to disguise and to blend in⁴⁹, Orlok does not care much for disguises; his methods are more aggressive. Moreover, the verbal narrative in *Nosferatu* occurs through aesthetically varied intertitles that try to recreate the epistolary narrative of the novel: some intertitles bear a newspaper format, while others carry an ancient book style, yet others bring an unknown character from outside the universe of the camera scope, who speaks in a first-person voice and claims to have known some of the characters. Intertitles were a regular feature of the Silent Era, but the aesthetic variation that suggested *Dracula*'s epistolary narrative was not common.

As the film begins, a warning is given to the spectator as to the horrific nature of the vampire. Following a simulated chronicle-like narrative, the intertitle describes "A Chronicle of the Great Death in Wisborg", establishing a major setting – the city of Wisborg –, and the gruesome event – the Great Death – as central parts of the plot, thus anticipating the horror that the film will unfold (*Nosferatu*, 00:01:17-00:01:31). Afterwards, another intertitle states "Nosferatu – Does not this word sound like the call of the death bird at midnight? You dare not

⁴⁹ Dracula demonstrates that wish to seem more humanised to English eyes when he evidences his eagerness to learn the English language, read books on the life and geography of England, in order "to be in the midst of the whirl and rush of humanity", as looked at in Chapter 2 (Stoker 21). In *Nosferatu*, the vampire follows his instincts to simply acquire the estate and spread his plague across Wisborg.

say it since the pictures of life will fade into dark shadows; ghostly dreams will rise from your heart and feed on your blood” (*Nosferatu*, 00:01:31-00:02:02). Both intertitles serve to set the story and create a feeling of tension on the viewer, letting them know that the major element of suspense and awe is the threat that *Nosferatu* – the one who brings the Great Death – poses to the peaceful Wisborg. Also, a superstitious notion is presented in this very section, as the narrative suggests that the name *Nosferatu* itself is macabre and that the viewer should not utter that name; the narrative somewhat guides the feelings of the spectator towards the horror that is to come. The term Great Death itself, as referring to masses fatalities, exposes one of the main motifs in *Nosferatu*, and one that connects Count Orlok – Dracula’s alter-ego in Murnau’s version – to the other two characters here studied – Jonathan Harker, in the film called Thomas Hutter, and Mina Harker, in the film called Ellen Hutter –: the plague. The plague signals contamination, infection, thus the spread of decadence in a given society, just as a disease spreads to epidemic proportions, bringing a society to extreme dismay. The plague indicates the “pictures of life” that “fade into dark shadows”, setting the contrast between the peaceful life in Wisborg and the darkness that devours the light of that normality as the film goes. The city itself is the first element to be shown in the film, in an extreme long shot that exposes its grandeur and its civilised streets, with a church bell-tower as foreground and taller building, pointing out to the fact that the Christian values guided that society, and that they were higher than any other value.



Image 3.1: Establishing shot showing the fictional city of Wisborg, with the bell-tower of the city’s church in the foreground.

The protagonist soon appears, as we are introduced to Thomas Hutter, the solicitor from Wisborg, who is first showed as an overly flamboyant individual, a dramatised representation of his satisfaction with his life, which points towards the depiction of the pleasures and joys of the Western life (in this case adapted to the German culture).

The character grins and hugs his wife Ellen, as she is found sewing in the living room, an iconic female activity in a patriarchal nineteenth-century Western society. They are both established as the bourgeois couple, in whose nucleus lies the male worker and the female housewife, a symbol of the female submissiveness to be explored throughout the film. A cut in fade-in/fade-out sets the transition between his family life and his professional life, as he is then seen walking on the streets of Wisborg in an extreme long shot frame, an image that imposes the style and peace of the German town, inserting Thomas in that context and making sure that the viewer is aware of the symbiosis between the character and his environment, and more specifically, of the fragile condition of an individual against a larger, collective universe of the city, full of moral conventions.



Images 3.2 and 3.3: Medium shot that shows Hutter's relationship with his wife, and the long shot showing Hutter's relation with the city.

Thomas is then assigned by Knock – the film equivalent of Renfield, who is here a real estate agent and Hutter's employer –, a man of maddened demeanour, to visit Count Orlok, who wishes to acquire a house in the city. The source of horror in the depiction of the characters begins at this point, in which Knock looks at a sheet of paper with mystical symbols on it, suggesting a relationship between the agent and the forces of the vampire. He warns Hutter about the job, claiming that it pays well, but that “it will take a bit of effort... a bit of sweat and perhaps... a bit of blood” (*Nosferatu*, 00:05:45-00:05:59). Knock shows a frequent knowledge of Orlok's plan to invade Wisborg, as he proposes which house should be offered to the Count, “that house... right next to yours” (*Nosferatu*, 00:06:51-00:07:04). Knock knows about Hutter's fate in Transylvania, and he knows about Orlok's desire to possess Ellen. Thomas is then told to travel as soon as possible to Transylvania, described as “the country of ghosts” (*Nosferatu*, 00:07:06-00:07:17). Shortly afterwards, Hutter tells his wife – still with his typical flamboyant mannerism – that he is “going to travel far away to the

country of thieves and ghosts” (*Nosferatu*, 00:07:33-00:07:40). Therefore, it can be noted then that the film creates a mythical image of Transylvania as a fearsome land, a land of horrific creatures of a strange lore; a damned land. It creates its own *indices* of the Eastern European parts and sets them as representations of a macabre part of the world, one that should not be ventured into by “sane” individuals. *Nosferatu* aims at that image so that the atmosphere of horror is created.

However, Hutter is unaware of the real danger that lurks in the place. The *mise-en-scène* of this scene demonstrates his naïveté towards the horror, for while he is happy with the recently given opportunity, Ellen is shown in the foreground with an anguished expression – as if her feelings were already connected with the horror –; whereas in the background, through the windows, a shadowed image of the soon-to-be Orlok’s house is shown to remind the viewer that the danger is coming to the Hutter home. The whole frame indicates the conflict already being generated in Wisborg, having the couple as the primary victims of the vampire’s threat. The very image of the houses through the window suggests the German Expressionistic attempt to recreate the style of painting on the silver screen⁵⁰, since the houses do not really resemble true buildings, but instead funnily angled drawings or scale models conveniently positioned through the open curtains so that the viewer would recognise their proximity to Hutter’s house.



Image 3.4: Hutter’s naïveté towards his fate, whereas Ellen demonstrates a consternated semblance. The houses can be seen through the window.

⁵⁰ Dietrich Scheunemann, when listing important features of Expressionist films, proposed that they were “indebted to expressionist painting” (2). That intimacy with the plastic arts is expressed in *Nosferatu*, in the scene in question and in another instance to be detailed in the following pages.

What follows is the depiction of Thomas' trip to Nosferatu's castle, also serving as a sequence to establish the rural and gloomy visual characteristics of Transylvania, important to set the mood in which Hutter will meet his host. The former rides a horse to get to the Carpathians, and the first shot of the fictional Transylvanian landscape. It is a sea of thin trees that mesh into a dark mass in the horizon, expressing the idea of vastness and desolation. The camera has then set the contrast between the security of the urban, capitalist life and the sense of confusion brought by the deserted forest of Orlok's country. That sequence also illustrates Murnau's audacity to leave constructed sets and shoot *Nosferatu* on location in Slovakia, thus showing the audience the wilderness as explicitly as described in the novel. Hutter stays with the locals, who tell him of the local myths of the werewolf, and who get horrified when knowing that the young man will stay at Orlok's castle; at this point, the film's narrative linearity follows that of the novel to emphasise the atmosphere of superstition of the natives and their fear towards the figure of the Count.



Image 3.5: Extreme long shot depicting the first landscape of *Nosferatu*'s Transylvania.

The very use of extreme long shots to depict the locales Hutter travels through serves to change the *indices* that concern the atmosphere of those locales, setting the thematic conception of different scenes. When Hutter wakes up on his second day in the local village, still unaware of his fate there, an establishing shot shows him being bathed by a strong burst of sunlight as he seems jubilant. The following shot comes from a POV cut from Hutter's perspective, and shows a blissful and bucolic landscape about which he is running with some horses, in a dream-like image that converges with the German Expressionist artistic imagery of abstract figures and fragmentation of the sense of reality, since Eisner states that “*o desejo de ampliar o significado ‘metafísico’*”

das palavras domina a fraseologia expressionista. Joga-se com expressões vagas, forjam-se cadeias de palavras combinadas ao acaso, inventam-se alegorias místicas, desprovidas de lógica e cheias de insinuações [. . .]” (18)⁵¹. Here, if replacing the notion of word for its cinematic equivalent of images, Hutter’s POV shot applies to Eisner’s argument, in the sense that the sense of reality is broken by a man looking at himself running in the fields, whereas the allegory that is forged relates to his sense of joy as he wakes up and beholds the landscape. If the initial shot of Transylvania in the film shows a desolate and apparently dead forest, this time the landscape seems very much alive, though resulted from the film’s attempt to establish that scenery as Hutter’s perspective of the place; a naïve perspective, incredulous towards the existence of a Nosferatu, and even sarcastic towards the possibility of its existence, given his mocking reaction to the folklore book.



Image 3.6: Hutter’s POV of himself running around peaceful hills with horses.

Nevertheless, as he is taken by a local carriage through the path that leads to Orlok’s castle, the landscape changes, and so does the formation of atmosphere. The shot that establishes the new kind of landscape is one that reminds the viewer of a painting; one that highlights pointy – and even sinister – treetops rising in the horizon, exposing a wilder, less civilised and more intimidating face of nature. The clash of tones created between the pale, foggy sky and the dark silhouettes of the pine trees reinforce the coldness and darkness of the place. Furthermore, the foreground shows a fallen tree, illustrating that

⁵¹ “The desire to amplify the ‘metaphysic’ meaning of words prevails in the Expressionist phraseology. Vague expressions are played with, word combinations are forged by chance, and mystic allegories are invented, detached from logic and full of implications [. . .]”.

the decaying forest had a denser, darker aura about it. Later, when Hutter is forced to resume the path on foot by the carriage drivers, and having to cross a bridge to enter the part of the forest that is closer to the castle, an important communication through the omniscient intertitle narrator happens, as the viewers are informed that “as soon as Hutter had crossed the bridge, the eerie faces he had often told me about, took hold of him” (*Nosferatu*, 00:17:55-00:18:04). The eerie faces represent the strange power of decadence that starts to take possession of Hutter; in addition, they stand for the supernatural facet of that land, as a form of generation of horror in the German Expressionist horror film, since Lotte Eisner justifies that “*sobre todas as paisagens – colinas sombrias, florestas espessas, céus de nuvens recortadas anunciando tempestade – paira [. . .] a grande sombra do sobrenatural*” (74)⁵². Just after that intertitle, the camera focuses on a high peak on top of which stands the main tower of Orlok’s castle, consolidating the new kind of environment, reinforcing his soil as damned, dark and supernatural, and his castle as tall and intimidating – referring back to the issue of the labyrinthine and overwhelming castle discussed in Chapter 2. The landscapes caught by the camera lenses of Fritz Arno Wagner in *Nosferatu* convey eerie images through different techniques; the low-angle shot on the castle tower, which gives the building an imposing power that cannot be stopped or repelled; or the aforementioned tone clash in the line of treetops scene. The “shadow of the supernatural” – as described by Eisner – reaches its peak when Hutter is picked up by another carriage – this time driven by a mysterious figure that may well be interpreted as a disguised Orlok – and is led into a curtain of fog, as though entering the vampire’s domain definitely. He is then led through the dense woods shot in negative, granting the location a spectral atmosphere, as though evil spirits emanating from the nearby castle were crawling onto the ancient trees. The negative in this scene demonstrates Murnau’s will to experiment and take the most horror out of a shot, while conveying the dream-like, fantastic images of the German Expressionist cinema.

⁵² “Over all landscapes lurks the great shadow of the supernatural – over shadowy hills, massive forests, or skies of highlighted clouds announcing a storm”.



Images 3.7 to 3.9: Much darker and sinister landscapes, ranging from the line of pointy treetops, the low angle shot on the imposing main tower of the castle, and the spectral image of the forest edited in negative.

At the time of Hutter's arrival in the castle, the viewer has a first look at Count Orlok. It is relevant to remember that, when still in the village, Thomas reads through a book that describes the myth of Nosferatu. An intertitle stylised as an ancient book page states that "Out of Belial's seed appeared the vampire Nosferatu who lives and feeds of Human Blood. He lives in terrifying caves, tombs and coffins. These are filled with goddamned soil from the fields of the Black Death" (*Nosferatu*, 00:13:50-00:13:59). Those statements present the figure of Nosferatu with even more sense of repulsiveness, as his condition of monstrosity is frequently allied with an exaggerated condition of profanity. He is openly described as being daemonic, offensive to God-fearing people and associated with damnation and plague. And even before the very first appearance of the vampire in the film, the narrative – through the descriptive intertitles – tries to expose that image of the vampire, as opposed to the construction of the *indices* of the Count's figure in the novel, in which, although the villagers show fear and superstition towards his image, that fear is not clearly explained until Dracula imprisons Harker and begins to spread his decadence in England. All in all, in *Nosferatu*, the image of the vampire is associated with damnation and decadence earlier, so that the sense of horror in the spectator is constructed from the beginning of the narrative.

The relationship between Hutter and Orlok is triggered in the courtyard scene. The vampire seems annoyed by the late arrival of his guest, and invites him inside. The *mise-en-scène* of the following shot is compelling, as Thomas is led into a dark arch, thus suggesting that the true decadence lies within the castle, and that now the solicitor is truly to be engulfed by it. The subsequent scene begins with an establishing shot that captures the vastness of the castle interior, while also setting the close distance between the young man and the Count, indicating

their intimacy in that deserted space. That creates a sense of urgency and suspense in the spectator, as they are aware of the danger that the vampire represents and that that space is his domain, very much like a predator that hunts its prey in an auspicious environment. The shot/reverse-shot shows both ends of the relationship, with a subsequent close shot on Hutter, then an opposing shot on Orlok, with the difference that the latter has an aura of darkness around him; the lighting is much weaker on Orlok's figure, thus highlighting his decadence. After Hutter cuts himself, the cut announcing that the vampire's invasion will begin – as he is thirsty for Hutter's blood; that is, his bourgeois life –, the camera depicts a slow and tense proximity between the two closing more and more, as Thomas finally realises the menace he is involved with. As he approaches, Orlok seems almost cadaveric, a diabolical figure that expresses his strangeness even more when aroused by the opportunity of sucking blood. The following scene is introduced by an intertitle that states that “with the sun rising, all of Hutter's dark thoughts of the night were vanishing”, expressing that the night is a definitive and explicit motif to determine Orlok's power (*Nosferatu*, 00:23:27-00:23:36).



Images 3.10 to 3.12: Orlok leads Hutter into the dark arch; the vast hall where Hutter is having dinner; and Orlok approaching the solicitor with his cadaveric semblance.

The coming of another night brings again the shadows on Thomas⁵³, as one shot shows the dark clouds growing to block the sunlight, and the sinister forest appearing as shadowy tree silhouettes in the foreground; this is when Orlok's threat intensifies. Hutter and the Count are discussing business, but the latter seems more interested in the small picture of Ellen that Thomas keeps with him. Orlok compliments Ellen's neck – in the progression of the plot, Hutter is still

⁵³ “The ghostly evening light, again seemed to revive the shadows of the castle” (*Nosferatu*, 00:27:06-00:27:17).

unaware of his host's vampiric habits, but the viewer has been led to know those traits in advance by being shown by the verbal narrative the threat that Orlok poses –, and his demeanour becomes weirder, as his bloodthirst and the lust awakened by the beautiful bourgeois woman grow stronger. Max Schreck's intense acting is an essential part of the *mise-en-scène* to display that demeanour in the film.

Shortly afterwards, Hutter is shown in his room in a medium shot, with the only light coming from the lone candle in front of him, which he uses to read again through the folklore book that he acquired previously in the village. The darkness around him and behind him provides the shot with an air of solitude and loss, as if the confused individual were already fighting the demons of the castle. And it is at this point that the vampire's link to the nocturnal is reinforced as threatening the solicitor's self, since when reading a part of the book that says "beware, so that his [Nosferatu's] shadow cannot burden your sleep with horrible nightmares" (*Nosferatu*, 00:28:59-00:29:17), he is led to a moment of full realisation of his situation: Hutter now knows that he is imprisoned in the gloomy castle, and he knows that the vampire's shadow can burden his sleep, and terrorise his individual integrity. When looking out of his room, he sees the Count again in his cadaveric posture, in a long and dark shot, as a dissolve brings the camera closer to the vampire's figure, with a dramatic ray of light projecting the fearsome shape of the Count on the wall behind him. That image strikes fear in Hutter, as the latter unsuccessfully tries to find a way out. Orlok now comes closer, again in a deeply slow-paced walk, increasing the tension of the scene, the ultimate strain of horror in Hutter's heart. This is the point in which the action is spatially related to Ellen, who – through a crosscutting between shots in Transylvania and Hutter's home – gets up alarmed as her husband's integrity is at stake, thus establishing that Orlok's horror is spreading to Wisborg through Thomas Hutter. The scene reaches its dramatic peak when Orlok's shadow spreads over Hutter's frightened body, symbolising the spread of darkness and decadence that has finally invaded the German solicitor's mind.



Images 3.13 to 3.15: Hutter is surrounded by darkness, as he kisses his beloved one's picture; Orlok invades his room; and the vampire's shadow engulfs the German solicitor

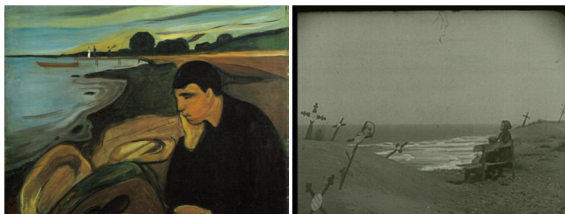
At this point, the viewer is presented with the Ellen that participates in the drama and that is involved with Orlok. Throughout some crosscutting shots, Ellen and Thomas maintain a sort of psychic dialogue, as if their love were crossing borders and trying to save Hutter from the imminent jeopardy at the castle. And then Ellen sleepwalks to the outside, demonstrating Murnau's strategy of condensing the characters of Lucy and Mina into one single woman. It is important to remember that, while Lucy was in danger sleepwalking outside and exposing herself to the whims of the vampire, Mina was her safe haven, the one who often watched after her. The change in the plot leaves Nosferatu in his homeland while Ellen is sleepwalking, as opposed to the novel, in which the same sections have their climax when Dracula is already in Whitby, and the condition itself is caused by his presence. Although the sleepwalking scene takes place when Orlok is still in Transylvania, Ellen does not have another woman to protect her integrity; the character of the partner who looks after her is gone, and the female victim is seen alone, the only female target that Orlok has in mind. While the doctors had no explanation for Ellen's sudden breakdown, the narrative explains that "her soul had heard the call of the death bird", then associating the vampire with the death bird by stating that "already Nosferatu was spreading his wings" (*Nosferatu*, 00:33:21-00:33:40). This part explores once again the motif of the plague, so revisited in the film. Already the intertitles had indicated the proximity of the "Great Death" of Wisborg, relating the soil in Nosferatu's coffins and tombs to the "fields of the Black Death", and then associating him with the death bird, as aforementioned. The very appearance of the Count, with his pointy ears, thin composition, and protruding front teeth – as opposed to the traditional canine teeth of Dracula –, relates the vampire with an animal often associated with plague: the rat. Later, when boarding the ship, the crew members open

up one of the earth boxes to reveal a large number of rats inside, intensifying the status of damned objects already indicated in the novel by Van Helsing, as he “Christianises” them with the sacred wafer. While in *Dracula* Van Helsing serves as the redeemer of the English Christian values by sterilising the foreign earth, in *Nosferatu* there is a feeling of despair for the people of Wisborg in the sense that there is no redeemer to avoid the entrance of the otherness symbolised by the coming of the boxes full of earth and rats, the latter intensifying the idea of contamination.

The following scenes portray Orlok’s journey to Wisborg and his assault on the Russian schooner, a crucial point for the understanding of Ellen’s reaction to the vampire’s approaching. As that event is taking place, the viewer is taken to Wisborg, where Ellen Hutter looks at the ocean with longing of her husband. The image is strong: she is sitting on a bench at the beach, surrounded by Christian crosses stuck in the sand, establishing a religious reference, at the same time as it symbolises a place of dead people, bringing the motif of death to the fore. Ellen is curiously calm in such a gruesome location, and the melancholic expressiveness of the *mise-en-scène* – its gray tone generated by the absence of strong lighting or shadows, the crosses all about, Ellen’s apathetic calmness, and the soft waves on the shore – resembles a piece by an Expressionist icon of another art, the painter Edvard Munch⁵⁴, with his painting *Melancholy* (1894). The intermedia communication between Murnau’s film and Munch’s painting demonstrates Murnau’s perception in utilising the *mise-en-scène* to give life to a panorama similar to that previously depicted by an Expressionist artist, granting it an air of doom and dramatic photography. The waves in the horizon get more violent, announcing the storm that brings decadence and death to the peaceful Wisborg in the form of the ill-fated schooner. The sense of despair begins to fill Ellen’s heart, as her demeanour becomes more and more concerned after she receives a vague letter from her consort; she ultimately runs off back home. Meanwhile, the schooner approaches, whereas Thomas

⁵⁴ This study has observed such intertextual reading since Munch himself dealt considerably with themes such as disease and death. The similarity between the two images strengthens: the painting *Melancholy* was also named, among other titles, *Jealousy* (Bischoff 50), thus also touching the grim landscape through a feeling that is also generated by anguish or longing of a beloved one.

Hutter rushes back to Wisborg with his horse, going through fallen trees – again referring back to the images of the decaying forest, the decadent nature around Orlok’s land – and a difficult terrain to try and save his wife. The constant crosscutting of shots depicting the three universes – that of Ellen, of Orlok and of Thomas – about to clash has a considerable charge of drama and creates an air of suspense as the danger of the vampire’s coming grows deeper.



Images 3.16 and 3.17: The similarity between Munch’s *Melancholy* and the atmosphere of anguish generated by Ellen contemplating the sea.

Orlok progressively spreads his darkness around the ill-fated ship that is carrying his boxes full of earth and rats. A notorious shot shows a darkened silhouette of the schooner crossing the sea waves, indicating the evil events that are about to take place inside. Meanwhile, an intertitle in the form of a news report shows the urgency of the decadence that the vampire is bringing as it describes the coming of a plague that began in Transylvania, and has curiously affected younger people⁵⁵. The specification of young victims suggests the horror that affects the sons of an age – that age being the post-WWI era, when Germany was in a deep economic and social crisis –, indicating the response that the film had to a contemporaneous anxiety of its country. The plague has reached locations in the “foreign” and “strange” Eastern Europe, and represents a solid threat to the German people; the fictional fear represents a real national fear, since the Treaty of Versailles had already taken much of the German richness and territorial influence,

⁵⁵ “A plague epidemic has broken out in Transylvania and in the ports of Varna and Galaz on the black sea. Young people are dying in masses. All victims appear to have the same strange scars on the neck. The doctors are unable to tell their origin. The Darnadelles were closed to all ships suspected of being plague infested” (*Nosferatu*, 00:46:39-00:46:49).

leaving the hopes of the German people in dismay. Back in the schooner, the crew members get sick one by one, following the chain of gruesome events depicted in *Dracula* with the *Demeter*'s crew. The vampire then gives the viewer a demonstration of his demeanour and his supernatural powers as fear-striking in his victims in the scene in which Murnau uses the superimposition technique to project the vampire's shape on the scenario, granting the shot a ghostly aspect. That ghostly image is significantly strong for early film audiences, and especially interesting – stylistically speaking –, as it carries a peculiar use of a film technique to convey the sense of dreadfulness, of apprehension about the predicament brought up by the hideous vampire. The subsequent sequence depicts the damage caused by Orlok on the ship, as the captain and the last mate throw the latest victim's body at the sea, with desolate looks on their faces. The vampire has finally shown his destructive power explicitly as the viewer has the first visual contact with a dead individual in the film. The mystery grows when only the captain is alive: Orlok makes his way onto the deck, slowly advancing towards the frightened man. The camera shows only the latter's reaction, creating a sense of mystery for Orlok's figure is kept off-screen, out of the narrative range of the camera, thus awakening the suspense on the viewer⁵⁶. An intertitle describes that “the death ship had a new captain”, indicating Nosferatu's ultimate freedom to advance into Wisborg and consolidate the spreading of his plague (*Nosferatu*, 00:52:07-00:52:12).

⁵⁶ Anelise Corseuil notes that “*No cinema, o fato de as palavras serem substituídas por imagens, como se a plateia estivesse vendo a ação sem a interferência de um narrador ou de sua voz, produz a impressão de que não há narração, mas apenas o processo de mostrar*”; “In cinema, the fact that the words are replaced by images, as if the audience were seeing the action without the interference of a narrator or their voice, produces the sense that there is no narration, only the process of showing” (374). That narrative feature of *showing* is performed by the camera, which comprises the universe of the film in the frame for the eyes of the viewer. By being outside of such a narrative range, the vampire awakens the sense of horror through confusion and mystery; his cryptic position without the frame generates the anxiety towards his next move against the ship captain. Acting almost like a ghost on the schooner, Orlok can also defy the framing of the film, thus hiding his actions from the eyes of the spectator.



Images 3.18 to 3.20: The dark silhouette of the schooner advancing; whereas inside, Orlok appears in his ghostly form with the use of superimposition; and the captain looks frightened at the approaching vampire, who is not shown in the frame.

The vampire then advances into town, spreading his plague – the symbol of his decadence in Murnau’s narrative – even more. The ship – now mastered by Orlok himself – is shown closing into the docks, as its figure covers more and more the shapes of the houses in the frame, representing the engulfment of the city by the imminent crisis. Another intense crosscutting sequence starts here, for the film is reaching its climax: while Orlok is seen carrying his coffin down the streets – his sinister silhouette contrasting with the apparently peaceful aspect of the town –, Hutter rushes into Wisborg to try and save Ellen, who is herself in deep concern in her bedroom, somewhat feeling that the menace is closer than ever. The shots are fast-paced and varied: the cutting indicates the simultaneous actions taking place, and awakens the ultimate suspense of the story. An intertitle shows a public announcement that states that “ill or plague-stricken people should not be seen on the streets and cannot be taken to the hospital. They must remain in their homes” (*Nosferatu*, 01:04:40-01:04:52). The plague-stricken ones are left to die, since the city does not offer the aid or want to see them exposed; the decadence has reached that city and the ones infected should stay isolated, as a sinful and despicable layer of their society. Houses that are affected by the plague have their doors marked with a cross, exposing whose homes to fear. Meanwhile, Ellen reads through the book on *Nosferatu*, and her concerned state intensifies. People are seen carrying coffins with dead ones down the streets, expressing an atmosphere of mourning and dark anxiety. The frame is centred on the street, and the perspective shows the mourners walking towards the camera; since it is a POV shot from Ellen’s eye-line, the approaching of the mourners can symbolise the coming of the decadence to her.



Images 3.21 and 3.22: The ship covers the city's horizon, and Ellen's POV shot as the mourners walk down the streets of Wisborg.

Exactly at that moment, she reads through the book again, and finds a passage that describes that “nobody can save you unless a sinless maiden makes the Vampire forget the first crow of the cock – if she was to give him her blood willingly” (*Nosferatu*, 01:10:06-01:10:18). That establishes the ultimate image of Ellen as the pure woman, the sinless maiden that can be everyone's saviour; a feat not present in the novel, which intensifies the moral image of Ellen compared to Mina towards the end of the drama, something that puts the former in the position of vampire killer. It is significant that the moral focus on the woman of *Dracula* ends up being centred on only in the end of *Nosferatu*, because Ellen becomes the one to eliminate the decadence, rather than Quincey and Jonathan slaying the vampire in the novel with their virile bravery. The distinction in the plot of the film consolidates the importance of the morally obedient woman acting for the sake of her people, at the same time as she mutilates the possibility of having free will – through the image of her own death. Ellen has to be the sinless woman, used as a bait to distract Orlok – who had approached the room in a tense and slow-paced shot that shows his shadow leaning towards the door –, and while the sun rises in the horizon, bathing the Count's houses – still shown in the background –, as well as his own figure in sunlight. The perishing of the vampire brings the equilibrium back: the light has overcome the shadows, as the order has been re-established in Wisborg after the threat of the monster is gone. In the process of saving the people, the sinless maiden has to sacrifice herself, as Ellen is seen lying inert in Thomas' arms. *Nosferatu* ends with the melancholy of the protagonist's consort's death, but also the ruins of Orlok's castle being depicted in the last shot, exposing even more that the vampire has been a repugnant figure throughout the entire film.



Images 3.23 and 3.25 – Orlok’s shadow approaches Ellen’s room; the vampire perishes under the sunlight; and his castle is shown in ruins in the closing scene, announcing the destruction of the decadence.

Bram Stoker’s Dracula

Francis Ford Coppola’s *Bram Stoker’s Dracula* follows different aesthetics and plot orientation. Released in 1992, *Bram Stoker’s Dracula* marks the modern revisiting of a novel that had been adapted in several ways previously. Coppola states: “I think what fascinated me was the idea that I could make the classic *Dracula* based on the book [. . .] and then also give it a little aspect of the historical background of Vlad Tepes” (“Introduction to *Dracula* by Francis Coppola”, 00:02:48-00:03:06). That statement implies that the 1992 rendition to be analysed in the following pages proposed a connection between Dracula’s past and present; a way to justify his actions and to give a reason to his existence in the story. The film experiments with colours, lighting, and has a strong depiction of costumes brought by the artist Eiko Ishioka – who was in charge of the film’s costumes –, ranging from visual influences such as an armadillo for Dracula’s initial sequence armour, and a lizard for Lucy’s wedding dress (“The Costumes are the Sets”, 00:03:30-00:04:01). Such influences provide a set of costumes that grant the film a weird atmosphere through its mise-en-scène, not to mention the change of appearance of the Count throughout the story, and the excessive use of blood in several scenes.

Although a somewhat experimental and violent film, *Bram Stoker’s Dracula* also brings a new way of adapting the horror classic: Coppola gives the vampire a romantic facet that dates back to his past life as a general, not explored in the novel. Botting explains that “The new frame turns Gothic horror into a sentimental romance. ‘Love never dies’ was the epigraph to posters advertising the film” (116); that epigraph dictated the air of sentimentalism to be generated in the audience back then, as well as the humanisation of a secular nemesis from the Gothic literature. The initial sequence of the film is a flashback

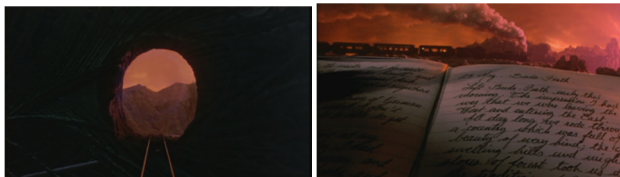
that shows a warlike Dracula who is fighting against the spread of the Turks, and who, while at war, lost his only love, Elisabeta. Upon returning home, he could not cope with the tragic death of his consort – who herself had committed suicide for receiving a false letter stating that her love had died in battle –, and broke his ties to religion, cursing God and sticking his sword in the stone cross that stood in the local monastery. A dramatic musical crescendo follows a plentiful of blood that spills out of the stone cross, as though the monument were alive and hurt with the sinful transgression of Prince Vlad Tepes. He drinks from the blood, as a way to seal the promise to never praise the Christian God again, and “his anger and anguish and the curse he casts on all holy forms cause him to become undead” (Botting 116), linking him to the contemporaries of the nineteenth century England through his immortality. That whole sequence serves to justify his acts thereafter, and that justification is the first attempt to bring the vampire closer to humanity: a religious offence committed out of anger for having lost his love makes the vampire seem ill-fated, not merely a monster that spreads his decadence without past reasons. He has motives to seek his reincarnated beloved one.

The film then seals its prologue and flashes forward to meet the novel’s narrative sequence with the presentation of the main setting, the Victorian London of 1897, which is the year in which the novel had been published. The extreme long shot shows grim London, full of shadows and a dense, dark sky. In the frame are the Thames and the Parliament, surrounded by labyrinths of houses and streets, thus exposing the overpopulation of the city. It is apparent that, as opposed to the novel, the film is concerned with the internal crises that were already taking place in the Victorian London, also indicating that the Victorian decadence was not necessarily linked to the coming of a vampire as the impersonation of the outsider. The strong image of the decadent London converges with Alexandra Warwick’s argument that “by the end of the century the city has become its Other, dominantly figured as labyrinth, jungle, swamp and ruin, and described as blackened, rotten, shadowed and diseased” (34). In *Dracula*, Stoker chose not to bring the decadence from within, but instead from the outsider, not emphasising the social and organisational decay taking place in the English metropolis before the coming of the vampire. On the other hand, Coppola chooses to depict the confusing web of streets

and the endless sea of rooftops that form the huge urban jungle, an image that causes discomfort and thrill, for the gloomy air of the country's capital is already present.

Subsequently, Harker is shown in a conversation with his employer as he is given his task of travelling to Transylvania to visit the new client. He explains such task to Mina, and she expresses a concern that is related to her anxiety in marrying as soon as possible. As they kiss, in a medium shot that emphasises their level of intimacy as a couple, the feathers of a peacock appear in the foreground, and a dissolve – that works as a continuity ellipsis to accelerate the temporal relation between the shots – makes the eye-spot of a feather graphically match the end of a tunnel through which passes the train on which Harker is already travelling to the distant lands of Dracula. The temporal continuity is used by Coppola to fill a span of time that does not need to be detailed, thus granting the sequence the opportunity to contrast the moment of love that Jonathan has with Mina against the tense moments of strangeness of the cultural clash in Transylvania. The eye-spot of the peacock feather can symbolise a strange force that is watching the couple from afar, as the transformation of the eye-spot into the end of a tunnel represents the coming of Harker into Eastern Europe, Dracula's homeland. A sequence of various narrative strategies follows, with the frame detailing the train running down the Eastern European railway, with an enlarged image of Harker's diary at the bottom of the frame, being accompanied by a voice-over narration by Jonathan himself describing his trip into the East, as portrayed in the novel. The colours of the scenes turn reddish, resembling blood and fire, and the soundtrack gets more sombre, creating an atmosphere of imminent tension. Here, the viewer enters the Englishman's world and shares his anxiety, since the subsequent scenes will take part in his perspective of the facts, from his coming to Dracula's castle to his victimisation by the three brides.





Images 3.26 to 3.29: The graphic match in the dissolve shows the transition from Harker and Mina kissing to the end of the tunnel through the image of the feather eye-spot; and the shot showing the elements of mise-en-scène in Harker's narration.

Jonathan looks at the letter sent to him by Dracula – the latter's voice reads the letter in a voice-over narration –, and this is the first contact that the spectator has with the character of the Count as a vampire. As opposed to the novel, Dracula does not have a nearly flawless English here. He bears a heavy accent, intensifying his image as a foreign and other. In fact, he does not even attempt to sound English, whereas it was in his deep interest to seem English and respectable to English eyes in the novel. That distinction creates a peculiar image of the Count as to his strangeness and austerity as an antagonist: he speaks in a deep tone, almost menacing, raising the sense of sombreness of Harker's arrival in Transylvania. The sense of strangeness and darkness strengthens as Jonathan is led through the ancient forests of Transylvania. Coppola used the lighting contrast to highlight the leafless branches of the trees and the loneliness of the carriage in that place. A bolt of lightning crosses the sky, resembling a hand as if it were trying to capture the Englishman. All these elements of the mise-en-scène suggest that the Transylvanian forest is alive through the forces of the vampire and his dark past, much like a land damned and forgotten by the Christian religious forces and left to be consumed by evil supernatural forces – a feat similarly attained by Murnau in his shot in negative that granted the forest a spectral aura. Subsequently, Harker is taken by the strange coachman to the castle. The castle is depicted in an extreme long shot, bearing the shape of a man sitting on a throne; in this case a decrepit throne, since it does not have the classical medieval appearance in Coppola's rendition, but instead that of a constantly attacked castle, refurbished with iron beams and timber. The decrepit state of the castle indicates the ancient property of a man who has lived centuries in decadence as result from his religious offence, and who is willing to move to a more prosperous

and populous place to find life and love again. Thus, the fact that the building – here also depicted in a low angle shot so that it imposes its power over Jonathan’s subjectivity – bears a more confusing form enhances its labyrinthine aspect from early in the film.



Images 3.30 to 3.32: Coachmen journeying through a stormy path, and the lightning bolt in the shape of a hand; the castle as seen from an extreme long shot; and the castle from a low angle shot.

Dracula’s first contact with Harker comes in the following scene, in which the spectator also has a first glance of the vampire’s appearance. The scene bears two notable shots: that of Dracula’s shadow crossing the room as he greets his guest, and that of Harker entering the castle. The former because the frame accompanies a shadow that is physically disaccording with the vampire’s shape, which evidences the supernatural aspect of the castle and of his shadow that moves differently, representing the inner desires of the vampire whose real shape is just being courteous out of interest; those inner desires are disclosed shortly thereafter. The latter scene is important because of the suspense revolving Jonathan’s entrance into the castle: the camera closes on his feet, showing a clear line that separates the inside of the ghostly castle and the outside. A tense – and also ghostly – nondiegetic sound of whispers accompanies his reluctant step into the main hall, which marks the point of no return for the Englishman; he has now delved into the decadent world of the vampire, the transgressor, and is subject to that vampire’s deeds. The castle is again a symbol of ancientness and, as described by Benjamin Herve, “castles embody the

past's oppressive weight" (234). Therefore, the building does not allow him to hold to his identity; there is no comfort for the self, for there is a strong temporal displacement – the “oppressive weight” of ancient times –, which he can neither leave nor be part of.

The dinner scene has several props that help set the atmosphere of place. Dracula, in his dramatic and long red robe – again red resembling blood and fire –, with inscriptions of a dragon on it, walks through the halls. The dark and colourless tone of the walls contrasts with his red robe, expressing that, if Dracula is lifeless and ancient, those walls are even more. There are relics scattered about, from a golden throne to swords and a picture of the young Dracula, again communicating with his glorious past and speaking for the novel's long description of his ancestry through one single image. The image of the old Count next to the portrait of his younger appearance tells the viewer that what is left of that man is a ruined body that wants that same vividness again. Everything in the castle is ancient, from the lighting of candles to a stone table, and these numerous props are communicating with the viewer to unfold the strangeness that such a new reality – and such a host – are representing to the confused Englishman. During dinner, the somewhat mocking way through which Harker agrees with Dracula's remark about his ancestors and the Church infuriates the Count, who, in a berserk reaction while brandishing a sword towards the solicitor, gives away a bit of his animalistic facet by roaring like a hound (*Bram Stoker's Dracula*, 00:16:11-00:17:10). Later, when sealing the purchase of the Carfax estate in London, a *plan américain* portrays Dracula and Harker in a fair proximity, with the map of London serving as background in the frame. The *mise-en-scène* suggests the shadow of the vampire covering the city, spreading his influence – much like Nosferatu's shadow consuming Hutter in Murnau's rendition –, at the same time as it advances upon Harker, evidencing again that the shadow expresses the Count's inner desires, which at that moment are to drink Jonathan's blood and have some of the latter's life. Upon finding Mina's portrait, Dracula becomes consternated and nostalgic, and his shadow then gestures as though trying to choke the Englishman, in an act of envy for the love that the latter had found and that the former had lost. Not only is Mina the female target that Dracula has in mind when going to England, but also the reincarnation of his past love. She is the sentimental justification for

his journey. Ultimately, when requiring that Harker stays in the castle for a whole month, to which the solicitor responds with concern, Dracula leaves the room as his shadow again darkens all the frame around Jonathan and the camera closes in his fearful appearance, more and more afraid that he is going to be involved in the castle's darkness and end up imprisoned there.



Images 3.33 and 3.34: The Count's shadow covering the map of London and gesturing as to choke Harker; and the shadow ultimately surrounding Harker in the end of the scene.

The next sequence shows the relationship between Mina and Lucy. As opposed to *Nosferatu*, they are now two different characters, presenting two different personas. Coppola presented very unique *indices* concerning Lucy's traits: in the film, she is young but not scrupulous; sexually hungry, and treats the three men who propose to her not as poor souls that have to be chosen from, but as objects for her desire. Coppola's Lucy is morally freer, and not afraid to express her sexual liberations, whereas Mina is afraid to step into Lucy's domain and voices her mild and contradictory discontent concerning the latter's indiscretion to the viewer ("Lucy is a pure and virtuous girl, but I admit that her free way of speaking shocks me sometimes [. . .] But truth is that I admire Lucy and I am not surprised that men flock around her", *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, 00:26:41-00:26:59). Lucy's sexual deviation from the moral standards of the Victorian society also attracts Dracula, for the ultimate image of the scene shows the vampire's shadow engulfing her figure as well.

Meanwhile, the imprisonment of Jonathan Harker in the castle only intensifies, unfolding progressively his conflict against Dracula's decadence, since he fears the otherness of that environment and of his host. The scene that depicts Harker shaving in his room has several props that suggest the ghostly aspect of the castle and the Count once more. Angle distortions make the walls seem to be moving back and forth, shadows crawl these same walls, and the nondiegetic sounds of

whispers are heard again. There is an air of extreme suspense in his conversation with the Count, for there is no soundtrack, only the sound of the whispers and the characters' voices. The constant close-ups also generate that tension, as the fear grows even more inside Harker's heart. He expresses his discontent with the strange things that take place in Transylvania, whereas Dracula had told him that Transylvania could be a strange place to his Christian habits and perspective. All those elements of sound and the *mise-en-scène* help create an atmosphere of the place overwhelming Harker, suffocating his sanity more and more, similar to the narrative *indices* of setting created by Stoker in the novel, which were aimed at generating the sensation that the place was a labyrinthine prison for the self.

At this point, it is important to focus on the nucleus of the film that revolves around the relationship between Dracula and Mina⁵⁷. Mina bears similar characteristics to her novel's counterpart, but only when considering the span of time before her contact with the Count begins. Her relation with the decadence begins after the coming of the vampire to England. However, since Lucy has different traits from the novel, and since she and Mina are close friends, Lucy also functions as an anticipator of the vampire's invasion, as she already challenges the Victorian sexual boundaries and acts as the ultimate voluptuous woman of the story, even before being contaminated by the vampirism of Dracula. At one point, the two young women are seen running about the garden in Lucy's mansion. During their moment of fun, they hug each other and ultimately kiss each other in the mouth. A montage sequence shows Dracula's face laughing with them, as though he were feeling their vitality and feminine sexuality already, before touching English soil. His eyes stare at them through the stormy clouds, announcing the rain during which the two play together. Dracula is the instigator, since his figure triggers sexual deviations and a mild homosexual desire

⁵⁷ The fact that *Bram Stoker's Dracula* revolves around the romance between Mina and Dracula (the very cover of the film's main poster depicts the vampire holding Mina in his arms, and also contains the aforementioned epigraph "Love never dies") puts them as the main conductors of the film's themes, thus compelling the present study to focus more on that relationship of characters, which exposes the very role of the vampire as sexual deviator in a conservative society, and Mina's role as the woman from that society who breaks its sexual conventions by crossing the otherness boundary and falling in love with the vampire.

between the two. It is important to point out that this scene has crosscutting shots with the coming of the *Demeter*. The camera moves swiftly back and forth, left and right, and the images conceal the perspective of a mysterious beast that invades the local zoo and frees a white wolf. Also in this crosscutting sequence, the body of the vampire is shown inside the ship, breathing heavily and moving inside a membrane, which resembles a placental gestation, suggesting that Dracula is having an opportunity to be born again, to gain his life back by sucking life from the English society and finding his long gone love again. When the vampire is in his werewolf form, he searches for Lucy, who is in a lascivious red dress (the red becoming a constant colour in scenes in which Dracula is in contact with his victims). Lucy walks out to the garden, with Mina also looking for her. The former's sleepwalking condition is not exposed in the film, thus diminishing the tension created around the fact that she was feeling Dracula's arrival. Nevertheless, the sexual desire that is awakened in Dracula by her is stronger, since she is – as previously mentioned – already a woman with challenging sexual desires. The spectator is led by Mina's POV shots, when she finally finds Lucy in an intercourse with the bestial form of Dracula. The weak lighting of the shot is interrupted by lightning bolts that illuminate the frame, exposing the shocking sexual image of a werewolf assaulting a young woman.



Images 3.35 and 3.36: The former shows the kiss between Mina and Lucy, while the latter shows the monstrous Dracula in an intercourse with Lucy.

Mina and Dracula finally meet and establish the first glance that the viewer will have at their symbiosis that goes from the English lady and the foreign count to their ultimate relationship as re-enactors of a distant love that has to fight the moral conventions. The vampire is now disguised as a young gentleman in Western garments, thus metamorphosing into a figure that is far from the otherness, since he wants to live the English vitality, at the same time hiding from Victorian

eyes in order to find Mina. The shot/reverse-shot reveals their first look at each other and, with the help of a mellow soundtrack, sets the romantic strength of their first contact. The Count introduces himself as Prince Vlad, referring back to the time when he still had his Elisabeta, seeing in Mina the reincarnated image of his lost love. Their proximity increases as the 180° line is shortened and Mina seems more seduced by Dracula's charm. In a cinematograph theatre, the background shows a wolf passing by and a nude woman on the film screen, indicating Dracula's bestiality and the female sensuality he is trying to awaken in Mina. He pronounces incomprehensible words in Romanian, and Mina reconciles their past bond, being affected by his sensuality (*Bram Stoker's Dracula*, 00:58:07-00:58:52). The action develops as the wolf is spotted by the scared crowd, a classical statue of a woman dressed in black dissolves into a skeleton, and the silhouette of soldiers are shown fighting on a battlefield under a red sky. All these shots are important for Mina's moment of realisation of a distant past, a different life: the woman dressed in black turning into a skeleton resembles her own dying body in the past, as well as the figures fighting on a battlefield resemble the war which Vlad was waging. The historical relationship between the two is reassembled, giving way for Dracula to make her cross the boundary of sexual patterns.



Images 3.37 and 3.38: The statue of the woman in black turning into a skeleton and the silhouettes of the soldier dolls serve as memories for Mina.

The symbiosis between the images of the Transylvanian monster and the Victorian lady intensify as the film portrays their meetings with more frequency. While in the novel Dracula only fed on Mina's blood when she was asleep or hypnotised, here Mina is aware of all her actions and is willing to seal a pact with the vampire⁵⁸. They meet in a

⁵⁸ In fact, she is aware of the changes that are taking place in her subjectivity ("What is happening to Lucy and to me? When I was younger, my feelings were never troubled. I wish I were myself again... the sensible Mina I always depended on", *Bram Stoker's*

romantic dinner, where they sit and drink absinthe, a beverage known for being highly alcoholic and allegedly causing hallucinogenic effects. Dracula himself states that “absinthe is the aphrodisiac of the self. The green fairy who lives in the absinthe wants your soul. But you are safe with me” (*Bram Stoker’s Dracula*, 01:09:58-01:10:15). The absinthe here is given the role of sexual liberation offered by the sexually subversive figure of the vampire. A graphic match shows the green liquid turn into blood cells, a technique already used previously when Lucy’s blood turned into blood cells, expressing the contextual idea previously manifested in this study concerning the spread of venereal diseases in the 80s and 90s, especially AIDS. Despite his love for Mina, Dracula is still the vampire figure who brings the disease to Victorian lands, and having already contaminated the young Lucy, he now wants to possess Mina, but through a different way: the sensual and charming absinthe serving as his means to fully acquire her sexual desire.



Images 3.39 to 3.41: The absinthe turns into blood cells, like the previous image of the contaminated Lucy’s face dissolving into the same blood cells; the last image shows Mina’s moment of realisation of her past life with Dracula.

The last sequence of the film is the one that leads Dracula’s death, and the one that seals the distinction between the way through which the Victorian woman ultimately relates to the decadence brought by the vampire in *Dracula* and in Coppola’s film. Jonathan’s swift

Dracula, 01:09:42-01:09:51). Mina knows that she is somewhat hypnotised by some supernatural force, for she does not recognise her acts. That stream of consciousness that questions her recent actions speaks for her moral barriers, which she feels resentment for crossing.

aging – indicated by his greyed hair – suggests that he recovered from the vampire’s attacks to become the same man as before, with the same traditional Victorian values that are becoming old and being left behind by the progress in the English society; Mina agrees to those same values by marrying him. That traditional Victorian bond is disturbed by another coming of the vampire, who, in a hidden meeting in Mina’s room, opens a wound in his chest and asks her to drink from his blood, so that their forbidden bond would be consolidated. The chase after the vampire then begins, as the Western coalition of the four men crosses the European borders to Transylvania. Dracula’s assassination follows the novel’s plot, but the change in the plot happens when Mina tries to interfere and protect Dracula, now mortally wounded. While she does not act or object the Western men’s attacks on the vampire in the novel, here she feels her bond with him and protects him, picking up the rifle and pointing at her own husband. She then takes the wounded Dracula inside the castle, to which Jonathan simply says “Let them go! Our work is finished here. Theirs has just begun”, implying that, while they are part of a past set of values and traditions, Mina and Dracula are part of something bigger: the vampire’s search for moral deviations representing the change and threat to the values of a morally conservative society (*Bram Stoker’s Dracula*, 01:57:30-01:57:36). The final scene portrays Dracula’s sacrifice by the hands of Mina. Candles are lit to symbolise that, in his final moments, Dracula could find his true love, and that his soul is redeemed. On the other hand, the film has no happy ending for the Harker couple, as it closes with the image of a mural painting depicting Dracula and Elisabeta embracing each other as a POV shot of Mina looking at the ceiling of the hall.



Images 3.42 and 3.43: Mina sacrifices her beloved one, and the mural painting depicting their past incarnations.

Past this filmic investigation, many symbolisms have been found, and one can notice the difference in the depiction of Mina, Jonathan,

and *Dracula* in the two films concerning their connections to the Gothic decadence. Especially the vampire, who, as the centre of the story, lives through many facets. In *Nosferatu*, Orlok's monstrosity reveals a film that focused on generating horror through artistic techniques, such as costume design, make-up, lighting and superimposition. His persona is utterly consumed by a weirdness that does not fit civilisation: his life is embedded by deformity. But that deformity is a result of the contextual references to the plague, which spreads quickly as a shadow and cannot be easily stopped. The issue of the Jew being seen as an evil outsider that infests the country during the years that precede the Second World War – and Hitler's political rise having been based on that premise – can be looked at through the figure of Orlok in a film that was released during one of the most critical times in Germany's twentieth century history⁵⁹. Ellen is caught between the image of the docile wife and that of the "sinless maiden" who is the only hope for redemption of a whole society stricken by decadence – in this case, a plague brought by the vampire. She has to die to make a decadent city flourish again against the disease. The sacrifice of the female figure underlines the moral burden that falls onto women's shoulders; every eye in Wisborg would expect her to do what was necessary – for it is considered the common good –, hence the loss of a life is justified, for the social order has to prevail and the decadence has to be swept away; in this case, the decadence having been interpreted by Murnau as the epidemic streak that affects the youth, the sons of an age and the ones who would establish social and sexual conventions thereafter. Thomas, with his changing behaviour, is the naïve traveller who is rather enthusiastic about knowing new countries. He does not know about his dark fate,

⁵⁹ Ken Gelder states that "given the appearance of *Nosferatu* [. . .] it is difficult *not* to see this German film as anti-Semitic", and goes on to imply that "Perhaps Ellen *does* come to represent the 'German soul' here, at the mercy of the property-acquiring Jew-vampire [. . .]" (96). The vampire's appearance and his immigration also converge with the equivalent context of the English anti-Semitism in the 1890s discussed. On that note, the otherness of the vampire as a Jewish figure is explained as "representations in the context of Jewish immigration to England in the 1890s and anti-Semitism in Europe [. . .] Popularised stereotypes of the 'Jew' certainly prevailed in Victorian England" (Gelder 14), thus establishing the contextual connection between *Dracula* and *Nosferatu*, reinforced by the preconceived image of the Count not only as a monster and an outsider, but also particularly that of the Jewish immigrant that comes to acquire the national properties and destabilise the local traditions.

and he is directly involved in the scenes construction of decadence, being constantly embedded by shadows and ultimately travelling through the tortuous paths of fallen trees on his way home, only to witness the death of his beloved one.

Coppola brings a more humane image of Dracula: he is the monster, but he is caught between the holy and the daemonic through the course of his long life. He is cursed, and is struggling to free himself from that curse. At the same time, he is not free from being the bringer of decadence, for his acts against the life of Lucy are not entirely justified by his love for Mina. Moreover, he fights against his many masks (considering the werewolf-like, the old, and the bat-like appearances of his) to find the young and vivid Dracula of the past, when he still had his love. Above all, in *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, the vampire bears the significance of the instigator, the sexual subverter, the one who wants to promote true and free love, independent from any moral conventions. It is only natural that the alienated eyes of the conservative Victorians see that as monstrosity and decadence, and Coppola conceived that very moral conflict in his rendition. The triangle Jonathan-Mina-Dracula generates the drama of the film, as Jonathan loses his importance little by little, being left alone for not leaving the Victorian comfort of the traditional marriage⁶⁰; he functions as the personification of the Victorian traditionalism. Mina and Dracula, however, seek the forbidden love, considered monstrous by the conventions of her society, as would be Mina and Lucy's kiss in the garden, also a symbol of sexual liberation. *Bram Stoker's Dracula* brings a more sentimental approach to their two main characters, participants of that weird romance; but a romance that seeks to humanise the monster, and to show that such a monster can be interpreted as the liberator as well. A monster that does not need to simply die and turn into dust, but one that can be sacrificed in the name of compassion. The insertion of the theme of venereal diseases also

⁶⁰ "The film is governed by a different context than the novel and a whole different logic determines the behavior of the main characters, Dracula and Mina, who are locked into a beauty and the beast relationship that tends to leave Jonathan out of the loop" (Welsh 171). The "beauty and the beast" romance is what makes their love forbidden and unholy, and that exclusion of Jonathan is a result of Mina's true desire for Dracula and the resentment for her husband's obedience to a set of values that restricts the female's freedom over their sex.

speaks for the social habit of seeing STD individuals as monsters and consequently ostracising them; Dracula carries that fate that is seen as decadence, and that ambiguity is a result of his tormented soul that has been excommunicated by Christianity for ages. Therefore, Coppola transfers the decadence to the English metropolis, showing the viewer that the problem can come from within, only consequently falling onto the outsider as a historical crime or infestation according to the judgment of a morally crystallised society.

CHAPTER 4 FINAL REMARKS

The present study has concluded that the Gothic theme of the *fin-de-siècle* decadence as found in *Dracula* transcends media and can be updated by both films in different historical moments to express the crises of their respective societies. Based upon a close analysis of the novel and the films, in which the investigation has confirmed the relation of the three characters – Dracula, Jonathan, and Mina – with the theme of Gothic decadence, applying such a theme to the films' respective realities, this study has connected the characters' roles and positioned them in relation to the horror generated by the social degeneration. The analysis has also presented some of *Dracula's* characters as participants of the social crises, thus reflecting a certain morality of the English Victorian society. And

The revival of Gothic, the point at which it could be said to be 'Victorian', is the moment at which it is being used explicitly to articulate the questions of the present, and setting them in that same recognisable present. The anxiety of the legacies of the past remains, intensified by the self-consciousness of modernity (Warwick 33).

Therefore, the Gothic notion of decadence, first conceived at that time, speaks through the contemporary crises in fragmented societies that direct their horrors to the image of the other, the alien, who is consequently seen as the monster. Bram Stoker reflected that mentality with his conception of Count Dracula, and if the Victorian Gothic is inherent to contemporaneity and conceived to highlight issues of the present – as proposed by Warwick –, then its theme of decadence can be seen as intertextual and applicable to different contemporaneous anxieties.

Directors in modern times have transferred those social images to film, presenting those conflicts with their own stylistic features, and responding to their own contemporary social conflicts. The choice for *Nosferatu* and *Bram Stoker's Dracula* is given to the fact that a considerable span of time separates the two adaptations, thus reflecting

two styles and two distinct moments in history. *Nosferatu* was conceived in a delicate time in German history, where the doubts of the people were gaining momentum, as illustrated by Eisner when she writes that

Os anos que seguem a Primeira Guerra Mundial são uma época singular na Alemanha: o espírito germânico se recompõe com dificuldade do desmoronamento do sonho imperialista [. . .] A atmosfera conturbada atinge o paroxismo com a inflação, que provoca a destruição de todos os valores; e a inquietação inata dos alemães adquire proporções gigantescas (17)⁶¹.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the post-war Germany did not find the social balance necessary to prevent that national disruption. It was a pertinent timing for Murnau to work on his horror/thriller films and disclose some of Germany's horrors. *Nosferatu* exposes the anxieties and the fear of a new plague, of the urban decay and of the social despair. The Treaty of Versailles was the outcome of the defeat in the First World War, which raised even more the distrust of the population. With the coming of the German Expressionist Cinema – and the Weimar Cinema in general –, the directors attempted to create an artistic layer that fought that crisis somehow; Murnau was inserted in that context. “Because of Germany’s catastrophic social and political history for almost half a century”, states Thomas Elsaesser, “it was tempting to look to the cinema to uncover hidden truths of the nation and its soul” (9). Therefore, in *Nosferatu*, Murnau uncovered a social fear of degeneration that was spreading in Germany through the allegory of the pestilent vampire. Seventy years later, Francis F. Coppola gave the Transylvanian vampire a colourful and romantic face that he had not received thus far. The film is also inserted in a *fin-de-siècle* context, only this time in the twentieth century: here the venerable

⁶¹ “The years that follow the First World War are a singular moment in Germany: the German spirit recomposes itself with difficulty from the destruction of the Imperialist dream [. . .] The commotional atmosphere reaches its peak with the inflation, which causes the destruction of all the values; and the German innate unrest acquired gigantic proportions”.

diseases were gaining worrying proportions, globalisation was reaching its peak, and wars – such as the then contemporary Gulf War – were still creating enemies of the West, images of the other. The film suggests the notion that the other can love and that the preconceived monster can have feelings, providing the myth of Stoker's vampire with a more humanising mentality towards the once monstrous figure of Gothic decadence. Coppola experiments with dark settings, montage sequences, weird costumes and iconic techniques (the graphic match and the use of an early cinema camera to portray a historical moment when cinema was a novelty) to create an uncanny film for mainstream audiences.

As pointed out by Beville, the vampiric image of Dracula is “an enigmatic character that has the ability to transcend subjectivity” (140). Dracula defies the normality, forcing the characters to face the edge of madness and disease, in order to be “purified” from the imprisoning moral values of their conventionalised societies. Harker, the traditional Victorian young man who is rising in the capitalist world, suffers the most from the overpowering reality of a strange culture and a strange individual who wants to carry him to that subjective limit. Unable to cope with that alien reality, Harker is lost and once he is back in his reality, he does not show traces of change – curiously enough, in neither of the three pieces, in which he represents the very unchangeable bourgeois individual – apart from his will to regain his bond with his consort and eliminate the monster. Mina is the centre of the change, and in the three texts she has three different fates: in *Dracula*, she reconciles her oppressive reality after having been offered the chance to be changed; in *Nosferatu*, she is sacrificed on behalf of her society; and in *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, she frees herself from those moral values that used to constrain her by siding with the vampire and abandoning her Victorian background. It is possible to see the impact of the dominant perspective on the decadence through the female figure: the woman is put in a critical condition of social obedience and carries the burden of monstrosity when trying to face up to that obedience. In this entire context, Dracula serves as the one who brings chaos, who suffocates the male's notion of self and order, and shows the female the ways of sexual liberation and self-realisation concerning the range of their social roles. The Gothic decadence is, therefore, the subversive power of transgression that challenges the bourgeois notion of self and morality.

This work has also analysed three relations of Dracula that connect him to the horror of decadence and which set his most notable *indicial* configuration: the nocturnal, the ancient and the bestial. A clash of approaches to those relations has come up with the analysis of three different versions of the same story. In *Dracula*, Bram Stoker sets the climate of those relations (as shown in Chapter 2), creating the symbiosis between the vampire and the night, his connections to the past and how that past was seen as barbaric by Victorian eyes, and the vampire's metamorphic powers that link him to the beasts. In *Nosferatu*, Murnau works with lighting and shadows that consume the German characters to create the nocturnal relations, the medieval style and imposing castle to suggest the ancient, and the tale of the bird of death and the plague-carrying rats to deal with the bestial. Finally, in *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, Coppola also uses strong lighting effects (and hand-shaped lightning bolts in the horrific natural images) to deal with the nocturnal, the many animal metamorphoses of the Count to suggest his bestial/monstrous faces, and his past life with Elisabeta to conceal the ancient connections. All those relations somewhat shape the horror and suspense creation in the three pieces. Furthermore, the intertextual links of the story require from each of the two directors to work out some of the relations in a particular way (through lighting, sound effects, POV shots from the eyes of a werewolf-transformed Dracula, among other techniques) to generate their own narrative *indices* relating to the Count. Additionally, *Nosferatu* and *Bram Stoker's Dracula* work with the image of the supernatural, so revisited in horror cinema (among other film genres): in the former, the superimposition technique depicts Orlok appearing to one of the ship crew members as a spectral figure, whereas in the latter, ghostlike whispers haunt the young solicitor from England when he is in the ill-fated castle.

The choice for the three characters took into account the level of connection they held with one another throughout the story, what depth of character constructions the novel and the two filmic renditions offered, and how closely and dynamically they were related to the Gothic decadence. *Dracula* depicts stereotypical and round characters alike. As Baruch Hochman states:

one possible way of reading certain kinds of extremely stereotyped and mechanic characters is

to see them as examples of extremely neurotic character formation or of arrested development; another is to see them as schematic reductions of social, moral, or historical types (48).

Characters such as Arthur Holmwood (later Lord Godalming) or Quincey Morris represent the second case of reading possibilities presented in Hochman's argument. Holmwood is the Victorian nobleman, surrounded by riches, estates and prestige, and who, in a male "dispute" between three men for the heart of a woman – that is, Lucy –, wins her heart conveniently for carrying the air of nobility and elegance. He participates little in the conflicts created, and mourns the death of his beloved one more than actually fighting against the coming of the vampire or ultimately slaying that vampire. Morris, on the other hand, represents the cowboy spirit of delving into unknown lands, exotic and fearful domains, and is the stereotypically appropriate character to strike the mortal wound on the monster. Both characters serve to support the construction of the sense of Victorian power, the same sense that refers to the alleged indestructibility of the Victorian moral walls. Jonathan Harker is supported by those two characters: Holmwood with his nobility and political importance, and Morris with his brawn and courage. The choice for Mina and Jonathan as relating to the vampire had to be distinguished from that nucleus of stereotyped characters that, in a certain way, provide the contextual support for their struggle. The couple sometimes stray away from their niche, which exposes their weaknesses and inner conflicts, Dracula, as being the horror generator and moral disruptor, served to close the fictional trio as the centre.

This study has demonstrated how the images of the two films investigated can depict the Gothic theme of decadence through cinematographic techniques, especially through aspects of mise-en-scène, editing and cinematography. Dealing with the audiovisual medium and its technical peculiarities can prove to be a complex undertaking, and the help from David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson's *Film Art: An Introduction* was of crucial importance. Understanding how a sequence works and how the content of a frame can help visualise thematic nuances helped considerably in the detection of the theme here studied in *Nosferatu* and *Bram Stoker's Dracula*. The film

adaptation background provided by texts written by authors like Robert Stam, Brian McFarlane, Linda Hutcheon, among others were also important readings for the development of the analysis, in that they broadened my notions of intertextuality and intermedia communication. Written works and films may differ in several aspects of narrative, and some of them can be transferred from the former to the latter, while others can only be adapted⁶², but it is important to reconcile that the relation is closer than the common sense usually anticipates⁶³, for both are artistic expressions that deal with discourses to create images and meaning and that touch a certain message or theme, oftentimes resulted from real-life anxieties or conflicts. It has been so with the present study, in which the generation of the theme by the three works has been more of a focus than the mere argument concerning their status as part of two different media, or even the issue of fidelity. In fact, the investigation here carried out has led me to the realisation of the insignificance of that issue, since distinctions in certain renditions in relation to the so-called source material – either through narrative *indices* or *functions*, or still related to aesthetics – can enrich an analysis of such renditions, creating possibilities and renewed themes to look at.

But the choice of the thematic basis for the analysis concerning the Gothic *fin-de-siècle* decadence comprised the core of the study, from which the other arguments stemmed. Alexandra Warwick highlights that “rather more recently in literary studies the *fin-de-siècle* has been somewhat separated from the rest of the century, evolving into

⁶² McFarlane describes the difference between *transfer* and *adaptation*, as he states that the former comprises “the process whereby certain narrative elements of novels are revealed as amenable to display in film”, whereas the latter is described as “the processes by which other novelistic elements must find quite different equivalences in the film medium, when such equivalences are sought or are available at all” (13). In other words, while *transfer* deals with narrative equivalences – mostly verbal –, *adaptation* goes into the core of intertextuality, where the director must find audiovisual counterparts that are more distant from the written/verbal approach to narrative.

⁶³ Narrative proximity between written works and films has been illustrated by Kamilla Elliott in the chapter “Novels, Films and the Word/Image Wars” of *A Companion to Literature and Film*, in which she states that “films abound in words – in sound dialogue, intertitles, subtitles, voice-over narration, credits, and words on sets and props – and written texts form the basis of most films. In the same way, novels have at times been copiously illustrated with pictorial initials, vignettes, full-page plates, frontispieces, and end-pieces and unillustrated novels create visual and spatial effects through ekphrasis” (2).

a distinct field of study in itself and characterised by attention to the articulation of social and political ‘crises’” (29). Being itself a unique portion of the nineteenth century, it was instigating to investigate how that theme applied to a different medium in two different moments in history and in two different cultures of the world. *Nosferatu* fits in the silent film era, and bearing German Expressionist characteristics, it gave the vampire a new monstrous aspect that was farther from the human appearances than other renditions of *Dracula* could suggest. Coppola’s version, on the other hand, relives the anxieties of the Victorian *fin-de-siècle*, but with the updating of themes, which can be corroborated by Warwick’s argument of the questioning of present issues in the Victorian Gothic, as well as by Hutcheon’s argument (presented in Chapter 1) about the concretisation and renewal of discourses by the process of adaptation. In *Bram Stoker’s Dracula*, the anxieties of the late Victorian era remain, and the modernity proposes new milieux and a new *modus operandi* for cinema, in that the monster is now likeable, even lovable, and closer to humanity than *Dracula* had been conceived in other versions. All in all, the image of the vampire achieved two poles of the monster-human world with *Nosferatu* and *Bram Stoker’s Dracula*. Moreover, the situation proposed by Bram Stoker may not depict the English as decadent, or the decadence as coming from within, but from the outsider (as seen in Chapter 2). Nevertheless, the opening for interpretations and investigations can detect that idea of the decadence through historical background – as with the arguments from J. H. Buckley –, connecting it to the very fear of decadence and the social commotion generated by that fear, giving the author the opportunity to create a fictional monster that acts as the responsible, the main agent of horror and degeneration, but that is also the agent of social transformation. Murnau intensifies the fearful aspect of monstrosity by likening it to the plague, whereas Coppola gives it a redeemable dimension. Both deal with the Gothic vampire and its decadence in a particular way.

In conclusion, the present study has aimed at a joint investigation between the Gothic tradition, film adaptation, and film techniques. It has also found out that the use of the *mise-en-scène*, framing, editing, and sound can unfold unique themes and styles, and that those themes and styles can give way to particular interpretations and analyses. But, most of all, the endeavour I have had to endure with this investigation

has shown that the possibilities of investigations are numerous, and that there are several fields of study that can be worked out through research on the corpus here used. Hopefully, various studies shall come into fruition through the investigation on the fields of Gothic studies, adaptation issues, gender issues, psychoanalysis, sexuality, history and fiction, among others; all of them possible through the use of any of the three works that I have used to integrate my corpus.

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GLOSSARY

The entries of this Glossary were taken from Bordwell and Thompson (477-82).

Angle of framing - The position of the frame in relation to the subject it shows: above it, looking down (a high angle); horizontal, on the same level (a straight-on angle); looking up (a low angle). Also called *camera angle*.

Close-up - A framing in which the scale of the object shown is relatively large; most commonly a person's head seen from the neck up, or an object of a comparable size that fills most of the screen.

Crosscutting - Editing that alternates shots of two or more lines of action occurring in different places, usually simultaneously.

Cut - [. . .] In the finished film, an instantaneous change from one framing to another.

Dissolve - A transition between two *shots* during which the first image gradually disappears while the second image gradually appears: for a moment the two images blend in *superimposition*.

Ellipsis - In a narrative film, the shortening of *plot* duration achieved by omitting some *story* duration.

Establishing shot - A shot, usually involving a distant framing, that shows the spatial relations among the important figures, objects. And setting in a scene.

Extreme close-up - A framing in which the scale of the object shown is very large; most commonly, a small object or a part of the body.

Extreme long shot A framing in which the scale of the object shown is very small; a building, landscape, or crowd of people will fill the screen.

Flashback - An alteration of story order in which the plot moves back to show events that have taken place earlier than ones already shown.

Flash-forward - An alteration of story order in which the plot presentation moves forward to future events and then returns to the present.

Frame - A single image on the strip of film. When a series of frames is projected onto a screen in quick succession, an illusion of movement is created.

Framing - The use of the edges of the film frame to select and to compose what will be visible onscreen.

Graphic match - Two successive shots joined so as to create a strong similarity of compositional elements (e.g., color, shape).

Long shot - A framing in which the scale of the object shown is small, a standing human figure would appear nearly the height of the screen.

Medium shot - A framing in which the scale of the object shown is of moderate size; a human figure seen from the waist up would fill most of the screen.

Nondiegetic sound - Sound, such as mood music or a narrator's commentary, represented as coming from a source outside the space of the narrative.

180° system - The continuity approach to editing dictates that the camera should stay on one side of the action to ensure consistent left-right spatial relations between elements from shot to shot. The 180° line is the same as the *axis of action*.

Plan américain - A framing in which the scale of the object shown is moderately small; the human figure seen from the shins to the

head would fill most of the screen. This is sometimes referred to as a medium long shot, especially when human figures are not shown.

Point-of-view shot (POV shot) - A shot taken with the camera placed approximately where the character's eyes would be, showing what the character would see; usually cut in before or after a shot of the character looking.

Sequence - Term commonly used for a moderately large segment of film, involving one complete stretch of action. In a narrative film, often equivalent to a *scene*.

Shot [. . .] one uninterrupted image, whether or not there is mobile framing.

Shot/reverse shot - Two or more shots edited together that alternate characters, typically in a conversation situation [. . .]

Superimposition - The exposure of more than one image on the same film strip or in the same shot.