



READING BETWEEN THE IMAGES IN BROWNING'S AND COPPOLA'S DRACULA ADAPTATIONS

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Abstract

This study compares two adaptations of Bram Stoker's novel, Tod Browning's *Dracula* (1931) and Francis Ford Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992), using Linda Hutcheon's theory of literary adaptation. Although listed as box-office oriented films, *Dracula* and *Bram Stoker's Dracula* are important examples of adaptation, because each production adapts the novel in a different cultural and historical milieu; thus they each paraphrase the same text according to the anxieties of their times. The study explores the author's and directors' takes on the conflicts about class, gender, and "the other," with close reference to the historical background of the novel and of each adaptation: the Victorian Age, the Great Depression, and the decade of the 1990s. Moving from Hutcheon's theory, the study claims that each adaptation with its own loyalties to the text not only reveals the problems of its period while offering its unique interpretation of the novel, but also comes up with new texts that enable the audience to find new meaning in every choice made by its director. This is what "adaptation" means.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Adaptation theory, Linda Hutcheon, *Dracula*, Bram Stoker, Tod Browning, Francis Ford Coppola.

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BROWNING'IN VE COPPOLA'NIN DRACULA UYARLAMALARINDA İMGE ARALARINI OKUMAK

Öz

Bu makale, Linda Hutcheon'ın uyarlama kuramını kullanarak, Bram Stoker'ın *Dracula* (1897) romanının iki uyarlamasının, Tod Browning'in *Dracula* (1931) ve Francis Ford Coppola'nın *Bram Stoker'ın Dracula'sı* (1992) filmlerinin karşılaştırmalı bir incelemesini sunar. Gişe odaklı filmler olarak görülmelerine rağmen *Dracula* ve *Bram Stoker'ın Dracula'sı* uyarlama için iki önemli örnek teşkil eder çünkü her biri romanı farklı bir kültürel ve tarihi arka planda uyarlar, bu nedenle metni kendi zamanlarının endişelerine göre yorumlarlar. Bu çalışma yazarın ve yönetmenlerin sınıf, cinsiyet ve "öteki" konuları hakkındaki çatışmaları ele alışlarını romanın ve uyarlamaların tarihi arka planlarıyla yani Victoria Dönemi, Büyük Buhran ve 1990lar ile yakın ilişki kurarak inceler. Hutcheon'ın kuramından yola çıkarak bu çalışma her bir uyarlamanın sadakat(sizlikler)i ile sadece döneminin sorunlarını farklı Drakula imgesi yorumlarını kullanarak yansıtmaya çalışmakla kalmayıp ayrıca seyirciye yönetmen(ler)in her bir seçimi ile yeni anlamlar üretme fırsatı tanıyan yeni metinler olarak ortaya çıkan, uyarlama tanımına uyan eserler olduklarını da kanıtlamaya çalışır.

Keywords: Uyarlama kuramı, Linda Hutcheon, *Dracula*, Bram Stoker, Tod Browning, Francis Ford Coppola.

Introduction¹

Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) is one of the Victorian novels that has been adapted to screen many times. Although it was considered to be a trashy Gothic-horror-fiction when it was published, with its underlying themes and representation of the concerns and technology of its time, it is also one of the novels that attracted academic study. When its adaptations are taken into consideration, from stage play to cinema, PC games to comics; it has been adapted to many different media since the nineteenth century. What is interesting about *Dracula*'s film adaptations is the distinction of high-brow and low-brow productions labelled by critics and academics. Tod Browning's 1931 adaptation *Dracula* and Francis Ford Coppola's 1992 adaptation *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, although listed as box-office oriented productions, they are important examples of adaptation, because each production adapts the novel in a different cultural and historical background and thus they paraphrase the text according to the anxieties of their times. Each dis/loyalty to the original text makes these productions applicable for close reading; this act of close reading explores the adaptations' differences from or similarities with the original text, how they convey the author's/director's message to the audience and the un/conscious motivation behind the directors' choices.

Bram Stoker's *Dracula* is a complex text in itself, both on the level of structure and textual/symbolic richness. Stoker's novel employs different narrative techniques; it consists of journal entries, letters, and telegraphs. Stoker chooses to reflect the technological achievements of his time through his narrators: Mina Murray (Harker) uses typewriter whereas Dr. John Seward's diary is "kept in phonograph" (Stoker, 2000, p. 52). Arthur Holmwood sends telegrams to Quincey P. Morris, furthermore, Mina cuts articles from the newspaper and pastes them to her diary, and Jonathan keeps his journal in shorthand on the train while traveling to the East, Van Helsing makes blood transfusions and John Seward examines blood cells with his microscope. Through the characters' narrations, Stoker reveals the technologically improved England at the end

¹ This article is an extended version of a short, published conference paper on Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula* ("Dracula'nın Öpücüğü: Coppola'nın Byronic Kahramanı Vlad Dracula"), presented in Turkish at '1. Korku Anlatıları Konferansı' (2009). A short article in Turkish that compares both films was also published online for a while on otekisinema.com.

of the century and this technologically improved, civilized and seemingly sterile picture of England also reveals the anxieties of the modern man of late nineteenth-century England. The civilized lifestyle brings the fear of losing it, while the scientific achievements in medicine hint the anxieties about illnesses. Jonathan Bignell in "A taste of the Gothic: Film and Television Versions of *Dracula*," suggests that,

[w]e should recall that the England of the late nineteenth century was regarded as the highest point of human civilisation, when industrial technology and the power of science appeared to offer a thoroughgoing conquest of nature. But such assurance brought with it a fear of relapse into a savage past, and an anxiety about other forces (especially those within the psyche) which had yet to be explained. Victorians were afraid of degeneration back to a pre-civilised state, known as atavism. Dracula's origins in the 'backward' east of Europe, his unrestrained 'primitive' appetite and sexuality are among the characteristics which made him alien and fearful to Britons (2000, p. 115).

One of the novel's complexities is the polyphonic narration, another complexity is the surface story of the novel's being the tip of the iceberg because a more condensed and complex story lies under the English man's fight against the mysterious, blood-sucking monster of the night. As many critics argue, Stoker's novel reveals the anxieties of nineteenth-century England; class struggle, the fear of the other and the unnatural, the fear of exposed (female or same-sex) sexuality and sexual diseases. The fear of "the other" in the form of sexually or nationally the other brings into mind the polarities between the West and the East, civilization and nature, rational and irrational, scientific and unscientific (superstitious). Furthermore, Dracula, who buys houses in London, and is able to travel to London reveals the fear of the clash with "the other" who meddles with their daily lives and constitutes a serious danger and problem for their civilised lives. Thus both the narrative technique and the story leave room for different interpretations which makes the novel much more ungraspable. In his book *Reading the Vampire* Ken Gelder comments upon the same idea:

Stoker's novel [...] then is not one *Dracula*, but many *Draculas*, which compete with each other for attention [...] It is, after all, a textually dense narrative, written from a number of perspectives or 'points of view', which brings together a multiplicity of discursive fields – ethnography, imperialist ideologies, medicine, criminality, discourses

of degeneration (and, conversely, evolution), physiognomy [...] At any rate, it seems that there is always more to be said about *Dracula*, always room for further interpretation and elaboration [...] (1994, p. 65).

This "multiplicity" of narration and "discursive fields" very much coincide with Bakhtin's concept of "heteroglossia" which derives from "polyglossia" and "intertextuality." The "multiplicity" of narration gives the story from different points of view and enables the reader to interpret the novel reading from various voices. Which points out, when applied to *Dracula*, the openness of the narrators' entries and the story's underlying subjects to different interpretations at any given time. Ken Gelder also refers to Bakhtin and the polyphonic nature of the novel:

There is no single authorial voice in the novel; rather, a number of characters [...] give their versions of what is happening using their own voices. [...] One must account not only for what is being said, but *who* is saying it – and to whom. Moreover, a single event may be reported by different characters in different ways (71).

[T]o account for the novel instead in Bakhtinian terms as a patchwork of voices and textualities which play off against one another. In short, the novel is 'polyphonic': there is, [...] not one dominant voice running through it, but many voices (1994, p. 80).

The seemingly "horror" story is what makes the novel mysterious and appealing for Hollywood producers, but its "polyphonic" nature makes it difficult to transfer the novel as a whole. Yet, when Browning's and Coppola's adaptations are taken into consideration, although they are classified as "low-brow, box office successes," (Davison, 1997, p. 33) Browning's (with its reduced and altered story) and Coppola's (with its added pieces and use of symbols which reveal nineteenth-century anxieties along with the modern ones) films present invaluable material for the study of the nature of adaptation.

The act of adapting does not mean to employ oneself with the mission of translating every detail in a written text to the visual medium. Hence, such an effort inevitably centres itself on the surface value of the text having no chance of interpreting and recreating it in the new medium. Yet also, novel's being a different medium from cinema makes the one to one transfer impossible, thus, adaptation requires a different construction of the written text in the visual form. In her book, *A Theory of Adaptation*, Linda Hutcheon, gives the dictionary meaning of "adapting" and lists three processes that adaptation includes:

According to its dictionary meaning, "to adapt" is to adjust, to alter, to make suitable.

[...]

An acknowledged transposition of a recognizable other work or works

A creative and an interpretive act of appropriation/salvaging

An extended intertextual engagement with the adapted work (2006, pp. 7-8).

Moving from Hutcheon's explanations, it is clear to see that there are no strict definitions for loyal or disloyal adaptations because adapting itself means "alter(ing)." According to Hutcheon, the adapter's part is either to "translate" (2006, p. 16) or to "paraphrase" (2006, p. 17) the original text; both of which include a recreating process.

Dracula, being a long and complex novel, welcomes these changes mentioned above in its adaptations. Some critics even go further to draw a link between the cinema and *Dracula* (the vampire); *Dracula*'s hypnotizing power, his physical and emotional impact on others, his ability to disappear at night at will and his ability of shape-shifting are all duplicated by cinema:

Cinema may be suitably nomadic home for the vampire: it, too, eventually goes everywhere – it has become an internationalised medium. Moreover, the 'dream industry' is drawn to the fantastic – it has a magical aura about it that ideological analyses of film often have difficulty accounting for. After all, film is an animating medium, bringing images to life in an otherwise darkened room, in a simulation of the night [...] (Gelder, 1994, p. 87).

Thus the adaptations of *Dracula*, in a way, attempt to enchant the audience by combining the "magical aura" of both Count *Dracula* and cinema. Two of these many adaptations which portray *Dracula* as an attractive character are the ones being discussed in this article. Tod Browning's *Dracula* is produced after Murnau's *Nosferatu* (*Terror of Dracula*, 1922) which portrayed *Dracula* as an appalling character as the subtitle of the film also suggests. In fact, all the adaptations of *Dracula* are based upon the fight against Count *Dracula* leaving no room for *Dracula*'s own point of view which is not included in the book either. Yet, Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula* focuses on *Dracula*'s own story, giving the fight against him a secondary position while Browning's *Dracula* is the first adaptation that portrays *Dracula* as a sexually attractive man. The novel itself places

Dracula as a rotten aristocrat who feeds upon the lives of his native folk and threatens the civilised life of the English middle class. The focal point of Stoker's *Dracula* is the English man's fight against the nationally, culturally, somewhat sexually and even religiously "the other" who puts the English gentlewoman's life and virtue in danger.² The aim is to re-establish the threatened order of the civilised England, putting every stone in its right place; aristocracy still falling in power, the middle-class family secured, religion and virtue saved. Browning's and Coppola's adaptations read the novel from very different perspectives standing at very different historic and cultural points. Coppola and Hart are under the effect of the late twentieth century "intertextuality" in their attempt to give voice to Count Dracula. However, Browning's *Dracula*, although it portrays Count Dracula as an attractive aristocratic man, as said before, uses this image to support the message given by the novel to the audience of the 1930s.

From Page to Stage, From Stage to Screen: Tod Browning's *Dracula*

The script for Tod Browning's *Dracula* was written by Deane and Hamilton, who actually adapted Garrett Fort's stage adaptation of the same name for the screen. This information makes Browning's film an adaptation of an adaptation. J. Hillis Miller in "Parody as Revisionary Critique in Charles Palliser's *The Quincunx*" draws attention to the Platonic idea of art's being an imitation:

A Victorian novel was already an imitation or mimesis of real life, a box top masquerading as currency, so to speak. A 20th-century imitation of a Victorian novel is an imitation of an imitation, a counterfeit of a counterfeit [...] (2004, p. 134).

Thus, each reproduction comes into being as another imitation, yet as the medium and the point of view changes (which takes us back to Bakhtinian "heteroglossia"), along with an imitation of the original, the latter product creates its own authentic existence as well.

For Browning's *Dracula* and therefore for the stage version, both of which change the structure and the plot of the novel, the criticism could

² Count Dracula's being religiously the other does not only stem from his renouncing the Christian God and becoming a creature of the dark but also and actually because he belongs not to the Roman Catholic Church or the Anglican Church, he used to belong to the Eastern Orthodox Christian Church as a character of Romanian origin.

be on their disloyalty to the original text. Hutcheon connotes that "[u]sually adaptations, especially from long novels, mean that the adapter's job is one of subtraction or contraction; this is called 'a surgical art' (Abbott, 2002, p. 108) for a good reason" (2006, p. 19). Browning's adaptation can also be seen as "a surgical art," yet as a result, the altered text in this new medium inevitably opens itself for new interpretations when compared to the original. What makes the 1931 adaptation an important one among the others is not only Bela Lugosi's immortal image as Count Dracula but also the underlying historical background to it. What affects the screenwriters or the director is not only their reading of the novel but the times they are reading and adapting it. In "Jung in the Twilight Zone: The Psychological Functions of the Horror Film," Angela Connolly indicates that:

[t]he rise of the Hollywood horror coincided with the darkest hours of Depression, and once again the role of the vampire plays in the cultural unconscious can be seen in terms of a crisis of male subjectivity and of the dominant ideology. The 1930s Universal horror films are often seen as 'responses to and even expressions of, fears and anxieties associated with the Great Depression' (Hutchings 2004: 25). They represented at one and the same time, a way of escaping from the real horrors of the economic situation, a search for a suitable scapegoat onto which to project collective guilt about the excesses of the Jazz Age and a way of expressing the profound feelings of impotent anger and passivity linked to the loss of social identity. If the Jazz Age was marked by transgression of traditional gender roles by figures such as the New Woman, the Vamp and the Homosexual, the Depression began a puritanical backlash and a return to repression of transgressive sexuality (2008, p. 133-4).

The above quotation can be a starting point for the interpretation of the changes made in the 1931 adaptation of *Dracula*.

In the 1931 adaptation Bela Lugosi, who appears in the role of Count Dracula, fits into the role of not only "the other" but also to the screenwriters' new interpretation of the character, which turns Dracula into an attractive figure with his cultural background as an outsider and his aristocratic appearance. Yet this choice on the screenwriters' or the director's side does not come from a desire to strip Count Dracula from its antagonistic position in the novel, instead, it aims to support the same antagonism:

The decision to turn *Dracula* into a mystery melodrama was thus the reason why Dracula was costumed in evening dress and opera cloak, making him look like the sinister hypnotists, seducers and evil aristocrats of Victorian popular theatre (Bignell, 2000, p. 124).

Thus, it is easy to see that both the screenwriters' and Browning's aim is to show Count Dracula as a familiar, attractive yet as the underlying message of the novel suggests still an evil aristocrat from the East who can easily seduce anyone but force one to his/her death. Yet, the attractiveness, sexuality and the frightening nature of the figure, his standing as a more charismatic character among the English gentlemen are what occupy the audience most, because he also represents the unconscious desires of the audience. Connolly suggests that:

[i]n Jung, the experience of the uncanny is linked to the encounter with the Shadow – the dark, unknown part of the personality that lies in the unconscious, 'the sinister and frightful brother, our own flesh-and-blood counterpart' (Jung 1953: para. 51) (2008, p. 129).

Therefore, although the aim is to make him into a figure that should be disliked, unconsciously they turn him into a cult image that the audience can sympathize with. Thus, Count Dracula in Browning's adaptation carries double characteristics, consists of binary oppositions within him, which is seen from the very first image in the film.

The film's opening titles flow to a background picture of a bat and a spider's web (Figure 3) which directly associate Count Dracula being a creature of the night that feeds upon other living beings. Yet the same image, as the poster of the film also supports (Figure 2), is also a symbol of the dangerous attractiveness of Count Dracula who catches and usurps English men and women in his web, and at the same time it symbolizes how the West sees "the other" and the aristocracy: as rotten, old and deathly. When looked at the symbolic meanings of "the spider" and "the bat," one can see that "the bat" also carries these dualistic meanings:

Under Mosaic Law, the bat was an unclean beast and became the symbol of idolatry and fear. [...] In alchemical tradition the ambivalence [...] the bat portrays the hermaphrodite, the winged dragon, devils. Its wings are those of the denizens of Hell. [...] Again, in some works of art under Germanic influence, the bat symbolizes envy [...]

[Yet at the same time]

In the Far East, the bat is a symbol of good luck [...] The bat is especially

the symbol of longevity [...] In Renaissance iconography as applied to Classical legend, the bat, being the only flying creature to suckle its young, came to symbolize prolific motherhood (Chevalier and Gheerbrant, 1996, pp. 70-2).

As for the spider:

The spider is regarded in the first place as a lunar manifestation, devoted to spinning and weaving [...] what is woven is of extreme fragility [...] The fragility evokes the fragility of a reality which is no more than illusory and deceptive appearance. [...] the spider makes its easy appearance in the role of cosmic creator [...] Since the spider wove the fabric of reality, it rules fate, and this explains its worldwide role as seer. [...] Lastly, spiders are sometimes symbols of the soul or are among those creatures which conduct souls (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996, pp. 904-5).

Although the use of the bat and the spider aim to show Count Dracula as a disgusting monster, it also unconsciously puts him to the place of a divine creature, with the power to resurrect and nurture, and the positive interpretations of this symbolism is the focal point of the 1992 adaptation which is in a way a deconstruction of the original text.

The film's opening music is also interesting, although Philip Glass composed a piece of new music for the film, what is played at the opening is a piece from Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*. This choice is also remarkable to the film because in the ballet *Swan Lake*, too, there is a powerful sorceress Rothbart who does not appear in the human form, and has turned Odette into a swan. There is a parallel drawn between Rothbart's character and Count Dracula's ability to hypnotise people under his charm and his ability of shape-shifting. Thus again, the adaptation emerges as an intertextual work, and the same subject also refers to the nature of cinema as a collage of different arts.

The film opens to an artificial Transylvanian scenery with steep hills and uncultivated environment which will later be contrasted with England's civilised streets. The journey can easily be mistaken by Jonathan Harker's journey to Count Dracula's castle yet the film takes the story back to Renfield's visit to Transylvania and puts him into the place of Jonathan. The multiple forms of narration and writing journals which, in a way, were giving authoritative power to the characters as well as the chance to narrate their own ways of seeing the events, and which also

was enabling the reader to identify with them is removed from the plot in this adaptation, instead, the film is shot from the point view of the third person narrator through whom the audience feels like a voyeur, as the eye of the camera.

At the same time, this omission of the diaries leaves the female characters weaker than they are in the original text. Both Lucy and Mina, in this version of the film, portrayed as fragile, spoiled and easily manipulated characters whereas in the novel both Lucy and Mina's characters give the signs of being powerful and dangerous at the same time. Yet as the quotation taken from Connolly underlines, this film which was shot at the time of Great Depression, tries to push females to their traditional meek, fragile, daughter/wife/mother roles, and tries to give the same message as Stoker's novel, that the sexually voluptuous women who go out of their domestic roles are eventually punished.

Together with the diary entries, Jonathan Harker's dominancy in the text is also taken away, as mentioned before; the film begins with Renfield, and the two European women added up by the adapters who are on a touristic journey which is again a reference to the historical background of the 1930s when women were able to travel alone in strange lands without any fear. In this very scene, the younger woman reads from a book on Transylvania, which shows that the West institutionalizes and turns the East into a consumable object. At the same time, the Transylvanian couple mentions superstitious beliefs about the night to come which makes the older woman smile at their "ignorance." While the European women symbolize the cultivated, scientific Western civilisation, the couple is portrayed as the symbol of the so-called uncultivated, superstitious Eastern civilisation, this can be considered as a depiction of what America thinks and makes of the East. Browning takes this image to its extremes by showing a Transylvanian interior (Figure 4) where the signs of superstitious beliefs show themselves everywhere around the house. Yet the unexpected lurch of the carriage which makes the younger woman fall into Renfield's lap (Figure 5) shows the cultivated West's helplessness against the more ancient and complicated culture of the East.

As will be seen in Coppola's adaptation, too, the castle is far from the daily life of the town and is set high upon a hill which is a reference to Count Dracula's aristocratic ties, but the old and desolate castle with spider webs and dust symbolizes the death of aristocracy. Yet at the same time, this Gothic building, with its pointed arches, shows how small a hu-

man being is (Figure 6) even against his own creation, the pointed arches which are the reclamation of the desire to reach God and the Heavens is also a symbol of how far the desired object falls although too much effort is put to achieve it.

The scene of Renfield and Dracula's meeting also gives an idea not only about a human being's but also Renfield's smallness as a middle-class man in respect to Count Dracula who looks down on him standing at the top of the stairs and making Renfield look up to himself (Figure 7). Even their choices of clothing give them away; Count Dracula is always dressed sharply as an aristocrat while Renfield's and Mr. Seward's or Jonathan's suits reveal their middle-class background. In fact, John Seward who is a middle-class doctor that administrates the Carfax Lunatic Asylum in the novel, turns into an established doctor with his own asylum which is a part of his house (Figure 8), yet also, although no father figure is apparent in the book, in the adaptation Mr. Seward is the father of Mina, while the aspiring solicitor of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, Jonathan Harker, is turned into a doctor in the adaptation. Thus, contrary to the book, Browning presents us a largely changed character relations and also a comfortably established middle-class life with proper patriarchs, which is again a desire to establish a sense of order in the audience. Yet this perfect life is threatened by Dracula's intrusion, he comes to England on a ship named "Vesta" (Figure 9) which was "Demeter" in the novel. While Demeter is "the Greek goddess of vegetation and fruitfulness [...] (who) possessed mysterious powers of growth and even resurrection" (Cotterell & Storm, 1999, p. 38) (which is, of course, a direct reference to Dracula's immortality and ability to give eternal life in the book), Vesta is "the Roman equivalent of the Greek goddess Hestia, who was the goddess of the hearth." (Cotterell & Storm, 1999, p. 90) This shift from earth to fire is again a twist in the perception of Dracula; while fire is life-giving for human beings it also moves Dracula closer to the fires of Hell, because fire also symbolizes "sexuality" and the "demonic" (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996, p. 381).

Another interesting point is both Count Dracula's and Renfield's (who is now a patient in Seward Sanatorium) free interaction with the daily and public life of the bourgeoisie (Figure 10-11). These intrusions signify both the threat of the dangerous other and the insanity which can threaten the perfect lives of the middle class unexpectedly. Therefore, these scenes where Dracula is seen in public places, sucking the blood of

a florist girl, hypnotizing a maid in the opera house, or the scenes where Renfield escapes into the drawing room of Mr. Seward with his sinister laugh, which are absent in the novel, are the scenes the anxieties of the 1930s' America reveal themselves. Another anxiety is the sexual aspect of the "blood-sucking" Count Dracula and his ambiguous sexuality which is not openly suggested in the novel yet slightly touched by the 1931 adaptation. The biting scenes of the fainted Renfield (Figure 12) and sleeping Lucy (Figure 13) can be read as sexual intercourse, and as Connolly suggested in an above quotation, these scenes with their references to "the Vamp and the Homosexual" (2008, p. 134) and the punishment of these characters with death, as it was in the novel, are an attempt to show that any role which does not concord with the traditional idea, therefore which will disturb the peace in this time of Depression, is not accepted or welcomed by the society. These scenes also represent how the aristocracy feeds upon the middle-classes, yet, later on; Renfield sinisterly approaches to the fainted servant (Figure 14) which is reminiscent of the same usurper-usurped relationship between the middle class and the working-class people.

The stairs, from the scene Dracula is first presented to the audience, play an important role as the signifier of class conflict. If one is higher in the stairs the higher his/her status is, yet going down is not only a symbol of descent in class but it is also the descent to the Underworld as well. The end of the film, where Dracula takes Mina down the high and long stairs is a symbol of her moral fall, while Renfield's literal fall from the stairs symbolizes his inability to win the class struggle. Yet, at the end, Mina is saved from Count Dracula by Jonathan's and Van Helsing's help and the film ends when Jonathan and Mina leave the Carfax Abbey, climbing the stairs with the accompaniment of the church bells (Figure 15) which gives the audience the message that the order is restored, the threats of intrusion, sexuality, and class struggle are resolved and the middle-class family protects its perfect frame with the submission of the woman. While Tod Browning chooses to restore the order as the book does, Coppola approaches the text from a different point of view.

A Tribute to Count Dracula: Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula*

The script for Coppola's *Dracula* adaptation is written by James V. Hart, and as James M. Welsh points out "[h]e started working on what he called 'the real Dracula' project [...] His first-draft screenplay, entitled 'Dracula:

The Untold Story” (2007, p. 168). From the very title of the screenplay it is easy to grasp the idea that this adaptation, rather than attempting to shoot an objective and sterilized version of *Dracula*, it will be an interpretation, a display of the thoughts between the lines that are only open to the interpretation of the reader. Thus inevitably, the film becomes the artwork of its scriptwriter and director, as Hutcheon indicates “[l]ike classical imitation, adaptation also is not slavish copying; it is a process of making the adapted material one’s own” (2006, p. 20). Thus, by presenting the audience his own reading of *Dracula*, which can be one reading among many other possible readings, and weaving it with the elements from his cultural and historical memory and nostalgia, Coppola both recreates the original novel and creates his very own text in a different medium. Additionally, although Coppola’s adaptation is criticised harshly, it is also an observable reality that he is the one who is able to get closer to the real themes and the techniques of the novel. Jacqueline LeBlanc in “It is not good to note this down’: *Dracula* and the Erotic Technologies of Censorship” writes that:

Coppola attempts an accurate rendering of Stoker’s narrative’s production process: we see Jonathan writing his diary in Romania [...] and Mina typing her own on the typewriter. As in the novel, the film draws parallels between these media, sexuality and vampirism (1997, p. 26).

He uses collage techniques to feed this diary narrative into his medium, he demonstrates Jonathan writing on the train, Mina typing and Dr Seward talking to the phonograph (Figure 16-19).

Coppola does not only adapt *Dracula* but also pays his tribute to the other genres and achievements, he adds up a scene in “the pictures,” he touches up the fairy tale *Beauty and the Beast* (Montalbano, 2008, p. 391), he explicitly displays the Victorian anxieties that lie under the sentences of *Dracula* which also correspond to his time’s anxieties, and he creates a collage, an intertextual work as a reader in the present time:

These ways of engaging with stories do not, of course, ever take place in a vacuum. We engage in time and space, within particular society and a general culture. The contexts of creation and reception are material, public, and economic as much as they are cultural, personal, and aesthetic. This explains why, even in today’s globalized world, major shifts in a story’s context – that is, for example, in a national setting or time period – can change radically how the transposed story is interpreted, ideologically and literally (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 28).

As Hutcheon suggests, it is impossible to leave everything out and be able to read and interpret a text disregarding the world outside. At the same time, as literature and art are concerned, the original that the adapter digs into is not without its connections with the outside elements.

Bram Stoker's *Dracula* is intertextual in the sense that he is writing a historical character, Vlad Dracula by twisting his story and he also weaves his story around the folkloric stories of the Eastern culture; he makes allusions to *The Arabian Nights* and to scientific subjects which make his novel a refracted work. Refraction means, as Celestino Deleyto Alcalá quotes, "the deflection from a straight path undergone by a light ray or a wave of energy in passing obliquely from one medium to another" (2004, p. 94). Therefore, this transfer to another medium which results in deflection creates a new kind of work as Stoker's readings emerged as a Gothic horror novel. As Gutleben and Onega indicate,

reading a refracting text leads automatically to a new reading, that of the canonical, refracted text. In that sense, refraction appears as a notable aspect of postmodernism for it inevitably signifies a present creation inscribed in the past, a text unfolding itself on the basis and in the light of a previous text, a work which contributes to a better understanding of both the present and the past, the text and its hypotext, modernity and tradition (2004, p. 10).

Hart's and Coppola's readings of *Dracula*, therefore, create a new text in a new medium; this new text is both connected to and disconnecting from the "previous text" which consequently leads to a new reading. According to Bignell,

[t]he film is loaded both with the subtexts of Stoker's novel and also with an excess of contemporary subtexts (for example AIDS and drug addiction.) Because *Dracula* is so familiar, its story can be written-over and filled with new allusions and themes (2000, p. 117).

It can be suggested that the themes with which Coppola re-writes the novel are the mainstream ideas of the last decades of the 1900s. The writing process for the script dates back to 1970s and it inevitably carries its period's dominant arguments: second-wave feminism and maybe the footsteps of the third wave feminism (as the first wave feminism is dominant in the original text with the suffragette movement in the background), dangers of sexuality, mental and physical diseases (Syphilis/

AIDS, morphine/drug addiction, and so on). Coppola recreates this story by the narrative of performance, music, colour symbolism and costumes, places the adaptation back into a nineteenth-century setting in 1897. As Hutcheon quotes from Stam, film is

[a] composite language by virtue of its diverse matters of expression – sequential photography, music, phonetic sound and noise – the cinema ‘inherits’ all the art forms associated with these matters of expression... - the visuals of photography and painting, the movement of dance, the décor of architecture, and the performance of theater (quoted in Hutcheon, 2006, p. 35).

Thus, adaptation is a form which inherits all the art forms, as well as literature, as its source. With the use of different art forms, the source text turns into a different narration. One may suggest that the themes Coppola chooses as the foundation of his adaptation and his use of technique are ways to draw public attention, yet even this is his intention the outcome of this work gives one the chance to comment upon these choices.

Coppola “adopts Stoker’s narrative structure to introduce the point of view and discourse of the only major character who is not permitted a narrative voice in *Dracula*, the title character” (Montalbano, 2008, p. 386). Thus, by giving voice to Count Dracula, Coppola shifts the centre of the novel from the middle-class narrator Jonathan Harker and his “league of extraordinary gentlemen” to the polarized and frightening Count Dracula. The love story and the hero-king character of the Count both humanize Dracula and seem like an attempt to explain his cursed existence. In his book *Uncanny Bodies: The Coming of Sound Film and the Origins of the Horror Genre*, Robert Spadoni writes for Browning’s adaptation as follows:

Lusk’s criticism of Dracula’s lack of “humanness” points to the film’s uneasy fit not just within the *mystery and love story* classifications but within the master classification of *Hollywood* cinema. What kind of Hollywood film offers viewers no characters with whom they may satisfyingly identify? Not a very successful kind, one might imagine (2007, p. 52).

Thereupon, depicting a more humane Dracula leads the audience to identify with him and internalise his character as a hero. Connolly in her article talks about sympathy and empathy while watching horror

movies. In the case of Browning's *Dracula*, one is driven to sympathize with Dracula, while in *Bram Stoker's Dracula* it is empathy; to "feel with the other": "Empathy is an imaginative activity in which the spectator is able to represent to him or herself the thoughts, beliefs, and desires of the other as though they were one's own" (Connolly, 2008, p. 131) and Coppola's adaptation enables empathy for the audience because it gives the story from Count Dracula's perspective by placing him in his historical and cultural context, and giving reasons for his present situation which is ignored both by the novel and the other adaptations.

By inserting "the Untold Story" at the very beginning of the film's title, Coppola ravages Jonathan's authorial dominance in the text and places Dracula as the main character. Ken Gelder, in his interpretation of the book, suggests that "[...] the vampire is to be redeemed – the problem lies, instead, with the upstanding heroes" (1994, p. 66). What Coppola tries to present is the problems with these "upstanding heroes" by contrasting their attempt to kill "the other" with Count Dracula's heroic past.

The opening, where Dracula rejects his religion for the love of his wife and the suicide of Elizabeta, who throws herself from the tower believing that her husband is dead, constitute a very romantic structure for the film yet this rejection scene also shows the rejection of the system which is patriarchal, heterosexual, unequal and unjust. Thus, from the very beginning Count Dracula's image is set as the one who opposes the system but for a cause, he is stripped from being the evil monster of *Dracula* and turns into a Romantic hero in *Bram Stoker's Dracula*. LeBlanc sees this version of Dracula's character as the unison of "Prince Charming and monster [...] a hero-villain tragically doomed by his own rebellious righteousness. A sort of Byronic hero" (1997, p. 264).

The third-person narrator, who narrates the story of Count Dracula and Elizabeta is an attempt to recreate the sense of storytelling and the opening title of the film (Figure 20) which comes after the warm-coloured and high-tensioned scene of Dracula's rejection of God, as Montalbano suggests, "function(s) primarily to underscore the differences between the source novel and the film" (2008, p. 389). Yet, the part added up by the scriptwriter and the director is made in the form of storytelling to awaken the feelings of the novel reading. Hutcheon points out that,

[t]he performance mode teaches us that language is not the only way

to express meaning or relate stories. Visual and gestural representations are rich in complex associations; music offers aural "equivalents" for characters' emotions and, in turn, provokes affective responses in the audience; sound, in general, can enhance, reinforce, or even contradict the visual and verbal aspects (2006, p. 23).

Coppola uses the music composed Wojciech Kilar for the film, which is another way of narrating the story as every piece is composed for separate scenes like "Lucy's Party," "The Brides," and "Mina's Photo." Montalbano suggests that,

[d]ifferent families of musical instruments [...] underscore climactic moments in the narrative (strings for the massacres of war; brass for Dracula's victory [...], drums for Elizabeta's plunge to her death; and a combination of full instrumentation, a mixed vocal chorus, chants, and Diamanda Galas's vocal effects as Dracula discovers Elizabeta's body) (2008, pp. 388-9).

So, each instrument, each object in the film becomes a way of narrating the story. Thus rather than being only conversational and a visual retelling, Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula* emerges as a narration created by symbols, costumes, décor, colour choices and the music which enables the adaptation move closer to the polyphony of the novel.

The warm colour of the first scene in Transylvania is followed by the dark, cold colour of London four centuries later which draws attention to the rationality and calmness of the English men (Figure 21). However, the next picture follows this calmness is the image of the "Carfax District Lunatic Asylum" plate (Figure 22) which contradicts and blasts the whole idea of the rationality of the West; the asylum represents the anxieties and fragility of the Western reason. Yet, remembering that Renfield gets his mental disorder when he was in Transylvania, it shows how the cultural and national otherness affects the English man. As the novel and the adaptation show, Jonathan is also on the verge of a nervous breakdown and it begins when he finds himself all alone in the midst of nature waiting for the Count's coach. The lonely Jonathan in the middle of the dark road scene is a choice on the director's side, in the novel Jonathan's and the Count's carriages meet, yet to give the sense of horror and terror on Jonathan's side, Coppola chooses to leave him all alone, far from his home, waiting for the unexpected, accompanied by the wolves. As a civilised man, who comes from one of the world's most developed countries, he is not able to cope with the uncultivated and unexpected

nature, which is stressed both in the book and in the adaptation with their return to ancient and pagan weapons to fight Dracula and the other or the East in his image.

Although referred once in the novel, there are two mirror scenes in the adaptation which creates a chance to comment upon the director's choice, both for the audience and for the Western man in Jonathan's shape. The mirror reflects one's own image, Jonathan's not being able to see Dracula or the Brides in the mirror is in a way a sign of his being the blood-sucking (colonising) one rather than Count Dracula. In the "harem" scene where he is seduced by the Brides, having only his own reflection in the mirror again (Figure 23) brings forth a question concerning the extent of his imagination. This scene brings into mind that all these can be his own imaginings, the free play of his own unconscious desires, for his image on the harem cushions, with the expression of sexual pleasure on his face, is not only a common Orientalist depiction but it also turns him into a concubine, an idea supported by his journal entry in the novel as well:

I determined not to return tonight to the gloom-haunted rooms, but to sleep here, where of old ladies had sat and sung and lived sweet lives whilst their gentle breasts were sad for their menfolk away in the midst of remorseless wars. I drew a great couch out of its place near the corner, so that, as I lay, I could look at the lovely view to east and south, and unthinking of and uncaring for the dust, composed myself for sleep (Stoker, 2000, p. 32).

Thus, Coppola does not forget to add this bisexual/homosexual connotation as an apparent image in his adaptation. Together with Jonathan, when the audience fails to see his/her own reflection, that inevitably identifies the audience with Count Dracula or with emptiness, with the unconscious or, as it is mentioned for Browning's adaptation, it places the audience in the role of the voyeur, thus a silent witness to what Jonathan goes through in the castle. At the same time, when one sees Jonathan's reflection on the mirror, it directly turns him/her into Jonathan, therefore into the role of the colonizer and the displaced and the imprisoned man whose reality cannot be separated from his dream images.

Victorian anxieties concerning sex and sexual diseases, together with the anxieties of AIDS in the late twentieth century (Montalbano, 2008, p. 388) are openly demonstrated in this adaptation, on the scene

where the Brides seduce Jonathan; the first encounter of Lucy and Dracula, and the scene where Mina is bitten by Dracula are all displayed with the connotation of sexual intercourses.

The blood transfusions, the sucking of blood all reveal the anxieties of venereal diseases. Coppola turns Dracula into a beastly sexual character; his hunger for blood is matched by concupiscence. Therefore, Lucy who is contaminated by Dracula's blood is portrayed more voluptuous than she was in the novel. Her fits which result from anaemia are presented as fully sexual scenes with her red nightgown and nearly naked body. The choices on the costumes and make-up of Lucy which turn her into a red-haired, white-skinned, attractive young woman, wearing passionate colours are at first juxtaposed by Mina's light-coloured dresses and tamed hair, which will change drastically only after she meets Dracula. In the novel, this juxtaposition turns Lucy into a fallen woman and she is punished while Mina is rewarded for her chastity. Yet although the character patterns are the same in the film, Mina, too, is divorced from her sexual passivity in the film even to the extent of being a temptress. Mina, who is disgusted by Count Dracula in the novel, as the resurrected ex-wife of Dracula, both spiritually and carnally falls in love with him in this adaptation, and turns into a sexually active character in the scene where she asks Dracula to "take (her) away from all this ... death" (Coppola & Hart, 1992). Montalbano suggests that "[i]n this reading of Dracula, the "danger" unleashed by the vampire's bite is more than that of sexual aggressiveness: it is the confusion of traditionally fixed boundaries that prescribe socially acceptable gender-based behavior" (2008, p. 393). Mina and Lucy become active figures with sexual desires and do not feel any guilt that is expected from them. Coppola does not forget to create similarities between the nuptial night and the encounter with Dracula, as the blood on Mina's nightdress signifies her deflowering as she calls herself "unclean," the bloodstain on Lucy's pillow (Figure 25) also draws a connection between sexual intercourse and being bitten by the vampire. Thus, again, both Dracula and the dangerous sexual desires of the females emasculate the "upstanding heroes," before they had the chance to reclaim their authority and masculine power over women.

The glass coffin (Figure 26) Lucy's un/dead body laid in recalls the glass coffin of Snow White, dressed in a white costume with a very white face, Lucy's before-burial scene makes a reference to the untouchable and chaste female ideal who is like Virgin Mary, she is only to be

gazed upon. Yet, on Lucy's case the interpretation can be a twisted one, although it can be suggested that the males want to remember her as chaste as the Virgin, they are also afraid of her voluptuous beauty and sexual existence, thus in order to protect themselves yet protecting their ability to gaze upon her beauty, they choose to imprison her in a glass coffin. Therefore, Count Dracula, who wakes her up from her sleep with the "Dracula Kiss", becomes the (twisted) Prince Charming of the adaptation, and he turns Lucy into a more dangerous character for these cultivated, scientific, Western men.

Another interesting point about the theme of dangerous women is the absence of mother figures. Although Mrs Westenra is alive in the novel and plays a very important role in Lucy's death, there is no reference to mother characters in both adaptations. Gelder quotes Veeder's comments on the subject of "bad mothers":

Vedeer draws attention to Mrs Canon and Mrs Westenra, two more 'bad mothers' in the novel, wondering why it is, for example, that Mrs Westenra (whose health declines, with Lucy's, at the arrival of Dracula) removes the garlic from Lucy's room (Stoker 1988, 133) – and why, when she sees the head of a wolf at Lucy's window, does she accidentally-on-purpose strip the wreath of flowers away from her daughter's neck (143)? Lucy is quite literally oppressed by her mother in this latter scene; so much so, that Veeder is led to consider whether Mrs Westenra is 'unconsciously in league with Dracula' (Veeder, 1988, xiv) (1994, p. 79).

The novel gives the impression that the mother, the dangerous female, is the one who leads Lucy to her death, yet Coppola twists the story and leaves out the mother figure completely. Instead, the "league of extraordinary gentlemen" barricades the house, yet Morris falls down with the attack of the wolf and Arthur falls asleep in his chair with a drink in his hand, therefore, cannot protect Lucy from the deadly intercourse with the wolf shaped Dracula. What Coppola's version changes, is a way of looking at the text, which is read as the punishment of dangerous, voluptuous and sexually awakened women who get in contact with the uncanny. This adaptation in a way shows how emasculated and how guilty the civilized Western men are, as they are, in contrast to the Byronic hero Dracula, not able to protect Lucy which was their sole aim.

The class struggle is another theme employed in this adaptation. Mina when she first meets Dracula, directly (and on the director's part

deliberately) says "Shall I call the police?" and refers to the establishment of the police force in the nineteenth century which was founded as a result of middle-class anxieties. Yet when she learns that he is a prince, the middle-class enchantment with the aristocracy's old power reveals itself. Dracula with his bright red, ancient, traditional costume welcomes the English middle-class gentleman Jonathan, who ignorantly jokes about Count's ancestors and as a result threatened by a sword, then apologizes like a small child on his feet, which again shows the ripeness of the middle class.

However, the decay and the fall of the aristocracy is again a dominant theme, supported with Dracula's appearance as an old man and Lucy's death. Although Jonathan, the aspiring solicitor is promoted and Dr. Seward learns the new scientific developments, in this adaptation the league of extraordinary gentlemen; Jonathan, Quincey (an American), Arthur (an aristocrat), John Seward and Professor Van Helsing (from Amsterdam) are doomed to fail though they symbolize the power of each class.

Although what kills Dracula is the unison of these gentlemen in the novel, which restores the patriarchal, middle-class order, in Coppola's adaptation, Mina challenges these men and does not let them kill Dracula. Instead, she takes him into the temple of the castle where the story begins (Figure 27). When Mina kisses Dracula and calls him "my love" in his deformed situation, the curse removes and Count Dracula physically turns back to his youth. Montalbano draws a connection between the fairy tale *Beauty and the Beast* and this scene by referring to Cocteau: "As if to acknowledge the cinematic sources that influenced his presentation of the romance between Mina and the vampire, Coppola pays homage to *Beauty and the Beast* (Cocteau, 1946)". (2008, p. 391) And after Mina's true love heals Dracula, Mina gives peace to his soul by drawing the sword deep into his heart and cutting his head which eventually turns Mina into a more powerful character divorcing her from her passive role in the novel.

"Love conquers all" is a message that lies under the plot of Coppola's adaptation. The rejection of the system both in Dracula and Mina results from love's power. This is why, contrary to the book and Browning's adaptation, Coppola chooses to end his adaptation open-ended. The order is not restored in *Bram Stoker's Dracula* which can be seen as the director's own rejection of the system. The film ends in the temple scene,

where *Dracula's* body vanishes into thin air and Mina looks up at the ceiling to the depiction of Elizabetha and *Dracula*. Rather than re-creating the middle-class patriarchal order, which undermines the stories/cultures/histories/needs of "the other" and ignores more natural feelings like love and sexual desires blinded by the anxieties and the scientific improvements, Coppola chooses to leave Mina in *Dracula's* castle, and threatens the continuity of the reproduction of the system.

Conclusion

Many films, like a number of eighteenth and nineteenth-century novels, aim to serve the dominant order and give pleasure and relaxation to the audience, especially at times of trauma, anxiety and national depression. It is the same with *Dracula* the novel and its adaptations; a foreign intruder threatens the seemingly "perfect" order of the civilised Western city, a band of gentlemen fight against this evil, and as a result, they restore their old order. Yet, as adaptation is a refraction of the text, a paraphrase, a translation, and an intertextual work, each adapter's way of transforming the novel creates a new story. While Browning chooses to restore the order, maybe to relieve his audience from the tension of the Great Depression, Coppola chooses to read the novel from a different point of view, keeping the heart of the novel but twisting the structure, which does not restore the order at the end and therefore is disloyal to the novel, yet also it does not leave the audience unsatisfied at all. What is most interesting in Coppola's adaptation is its also being a reclamation of the present-day anxieties in a nineteenth-century setting, and what is more horrifying than *Dracula* or the league of civilised men, is the same anxieties' never-changing process through the time. What Stoker's anxieties were in the novel are redoubled in Coppola's re-writing, this is what makes Stoker's novel a resourceful text for new readings and adaptations.

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FIGURES³

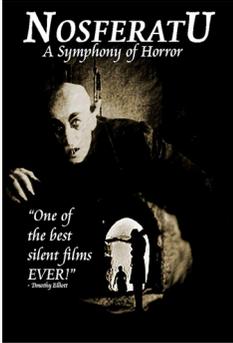


Figure 2

Figure 1



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7

³ All the figures are used for descriptive and interpretive reasons. Figure 1, the poster for Nosferatu is taken from "Nosferatu," <http://www.imdb.com/media/rm3635648768/tt0013442>, Figures 2-15 are taken from Tod Browning's Dracula, Universal Pictures 1931. Figures 16-27 are taken from Francis Ford Coppola's Bram Stoker's Dracula, American Zoetrope, Columbia Pictures, Osiris Films, 1992.



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10



Figure 11



Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14



Figure 15



Figure 24



Figure 25



Figure 26



Figure 27