

DUBLIN BUSINESS SCHOOL

CELINE DOMINGUEZ

**CRITICAL TOPOGRAPHY OF FEMALE VAMPIRIC CINEMATIC
NARRATIVES**

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SUPERVISOR: MATTHEW NOLAN

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this examination stems from a curiosity as to where the vampiric blood cult originated from and how it morphed into an iconic genre that is still prevalent in modern day cinematic narrative. It is an assessment of what type of ideology governs the vampiric discourse and whether those principles reinforce cultural belief systems. The inquiry will consider the vampire as a paradoxical metaphor for a variety of dominating principles as well as taboos within society.

Furthermore, it is a specific analysis of how female characters are represented throughout the vampire cinematic genre. An exploration to determine whether there is a correlation between the varied portrayals of female representation within vampiric film narratives and any linear developments within cultural attitudes and perceptions. By tracing various personas attributed and imposed on the female gender from the advent of the vampire cinematic genre, it is anticipated that a pattern will emerge, initially of depictions that constrain and subjugate women, according to dominating patriarchal governing authority.

However, what should also materialise, during evolutionary periods within cinema and culture, is a reconstruction of identities and representation regarding the female and male gender. The necessary application of theories developed within disciplines such as feminism, psychoanalysis and gender studies, will aid in interpreting these new symbolic cinematic representations. What should emerge is, like the vampire, a pattern of constant shift from disintegration and renewal amongst feminine representation within contemporary cinema narratives aligned with cultural alterations.

INTRODUCTION

The historical legend of the vampire is deeply rooted within written and oral recorded culture. Although there have been slight disparities amongst the supplementary characteristics, the vampire phenomena can be traced as far back as the Lemures of ancient Rome, Dearg-duls of Druid culture in Ireland, the mythological figure of Vetala from India and the most familiar figure of Baital from Eastern European-Balkans. Curiously, all of these prevalent legendary figures had similar prevailing hypothesis such as they were all deemed “as archetype, as superstition, and as possible reality.”¹ As Anthony Masters observes the fixation within „folklore and art“ stems from cultural ideological exploration of blood and death. This form of connection can be traced pre-historically within widespread cultural rituals and taboos. Furthermore, within these traditions, there has been an emphasis on blood being the source of life and a sacred and powerful liquid. For example, in certain African tribal laws, the spilling of a drop of blood was emblematic „of the life principle“ and it was mandatory for action to be taken instantly. Also, within the “...Old testament, many pre-Christians societies shunned and/or secluded women in menstruation in fear of the contagious power of free-flowing blood.”² Therefore, undoubtedly the influence of the vampire tradition has been universally embedded in the cultural psyche but how did this come into fruition within mainstream consciousness and what is the significance?

Bram Stoker’s gothic epistolary narrative *Dracula* (1897) is famed for introducing vampires to mainstream culture. Historically, vampire literature became popular in early 19th century by primarily English authors who were critiquing English class systems and familial structures. These early versions of vampires symbolised the “...sanctioned distance of class

¹ Silver, A. and Ursini, J. (eds.) (1993) *The Vampire Film from Nosferatu to True Blood* Hal Leonard Corporation Milwaukee WI. (p.12)

² *Ibid.* (p14)

relationships and the hallowed authority of husbands and fathers.”³ This was evident in relation to characters such as Lord Ruthwen in *The Vampyre* (1819). The action of this type of vampire character has been deemed by Valdine Clemens as a “...perceived weakening of the [English] social fabric that was occurring during the period.”⁴ Therefore, the fear that was generated by these narratives and characters stemmed from the fact that they provided a mirrored glimpse of the realistic cultural volatility that existed at the time.

Since the advent of film, the vampire has become one of the most globally recognisable and progressive archetypal characters present on screen. Hundreds of interpretations from various universal cinematic traditions starting from the silent era⁵ with movies such as *Le Manoir du Diable* (1896), *Vampire of the Coast* (1909), *A Fool There Was* (1915), *Les Vampires* (1915), *Nachte des Grauens* (1916), *Lilith und Ly* (1919), *Nosferatu* (1922), *Prem Ane Vaasna* (1925) and *Alraune* (1928). This signifies that vampires have become a well established figure within all cultures and this archetype has transformed throughout its cinematic interpretations, in line with the modification of cultural values within society. However, why does the vampire always return to our screens? As Jeffrey Jerome Cohen observes, “...each time Dracula is unleashed upon the world, he embodies a new structure of feeling, a different awareness of the world, an altered set of fears and desires.”⁶ Therefore, vampires are creatures that are “...culturally specific creations that police cultural borders even as they reveal tabooed or repressed desires.”⁷ Subsequently, these metaphorical “Others” are a form of political and cultural representation within the form of a fantasy filmic

³Auerbach, Nina (1995) *Our Vampires, Ourselves* University of Chicago Press: Chicago. (p.6)

⁴Clemens, Valdine (1999) *The Return of the Repressed* State University Press: Albany NY. (p.5)

⁵ See Appendix 1 for Extensive Filmography of Silent Era Vampire Films.

⁶Weinstock, Jeffrey (2012) *The Vampire Film Undead Cinema* Columbia University Press: New York (p.10)

⁷ *Ibid.* (p.7)

narrative. The vampire represents, as Rosemary Jackson states; "...all that is not said, all that is unsayable, through realistic forms."⁸ Furthermore,

"...[i]n periods of cultural insecurity, when there are fears of regression and degeneration, the longing for strict border controls around the definition of gender...becomes especially intense."⁹

A clear pattern is emerging whereby evidently the trajectory of the female gender acts as a conduit for male interaction. Notably, they do not maintain any voice amongst this fantastical genre of movies. Women are portrayed as victims and, when considering the cultural metaphors entwined within these narratives, thus suppressed by within patriarchal rule.

⁸ Jackson, Rosemary (1981) *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion* Methuen: New York. (p.26)

⁹ Showalter Elaine (1990) *Sexual anarchy: Gender and culture at the fin de siècle* Viking: New York (p.4.)

CHAPTER 1: DRACULA'S WOMEN

It is within the medium of cinema that the concept of the vamp is introduced, born out of the ideology surrounding the vampire. In the first decade of feature films, Andrea Weiss noted „...at least forty films about this mortal female vampire, whom men could find sexually enticing while women could fantasize female empowerment.”¹⁰ The notion of the „vamp“ derived from the cinematic offering of *A Fool There Was* (1915). The movie was inspired by a poem by Rudyard Kipling called *The Vampire* (1897). However, the film itself did not portray an actual vampire, rather a woman who possessed seductive powers over men and used those powers callously without conscious or remorse, to the detriment of men and one married man in particular. Although there is no literal vampire in the movie, the female lead clearly inherits the essence of the female vampire which constitutes “...a primal force of unleashed sexuality that holds her lovers in thrall...a creature that lives off the life force of others.”¹¹ David Pirie noted that these types of depictions of women as vampires were made “...simply as an innocuous alternative for femme fatale or vamp...”¹² Whilst, Andrea Weiss also determined that these early movies always appeared to portray a “...beautiful woman whose sexual desire, if fulfilled, would drain the life blood of a man.”¹³ The ubiquity of this „vamp“ persona or predatory female character has been portrayed since the advent of film. It is a deterrent that cautioned females who disregarded certain societal laws. A narrative that depicts female autonomy, as women who

¹⁰ Weiss, Andrea (1993) *Vampires & Violets: Lesbians in Film* Penguin: New York (p.97)

¹¹ Weinstock, Jeffrey (2012) *The Vampire Film Undead Cinema* Columbia University Press: New York (p.7)

¹² Pirie, David (1977) *The Vampire Cinema*. Cresent Books: New York (p.134)

¹³ Weiss, Andrea (1993) *Vampires & Violets: Lesbian in Film*. Penguin: New York

“...actively controlling and debilitating men...women who appropriated the masculine agency utilised in seduction, who refused to restrict their sexuality to procreative heterosexual monogamy sanctioned by marriage.”¹⁴

This hypothesis is supported by movies such as *Les Vampires* (1915), a French film released in episodes and considered one of the longest movies ever made. However, it was the infamous character Irma Vep (Musidora) who is the *belle dame sans merci* in the movie playing the scheming vampire strategist who carries out most of the vampire group’s plans. Also, in the movie *Lilith und Ly* (1919) the statute of Lilith (Elga Beck) is brought back to life by the obsessed protagonist. However, later it is revealed, through continuous appearances on a special screen invented by the protagonist, that she is a vampire that is gradually imbibing the life from his body. The protagonist begins to fade away only to realise that his girlfriend Ly has been possessed by Lilith and the same effect is being imposed on her.

In the 1930s, there was an introduction of female vampires in cinematic texts, such as Countess Marya Zleska (Gloria Holden) in *Dracula’s Daughter* (1936). This seminal performance of a female vampire reached iconic status drawing on the legacy by virtue of which:

“...the “Vamp” is a projection of both male fantasy and fear; a response to modern redefinitions of “the feminine” and to the social and sexual freedoms which were increasingly being demanded by women...”¹⁵

¹⁴ Weinstock, Jeffrey (2012) *The Vampire Film Undead Cinema* Columbia University Press: New York (p.24)

¹⁵ Svehla, Gary J. And Susan (1996) *Bitches, Bimbos and Virgins Women in the Horror Film* Midnight Marquee Press Inc.: Maryland (p.25)

In *Dracula's Daughter* (1936), which was a sequel to *Dracula* (1931), Countess Zalesak attempts to break the blood hungry familial legacy she has inherited. However, it becomes clear that although she has gone to great lengths of both stealing and burning her father Dracula's body and seeking help from a psychiatrist, Dr. Jeffrey Garth (Otto Kruger), for a cure, she still remains entrenched in a blood thirsty pursuit for survival. She recommences her hunt for victims by mesmerizing her victims with a striking ring. The climax of the film is after the countess has attacked Lili (Nan Grey) and kidnapped the doctor's love Janet (Marguerite Churchill). She is eventually killed by her manservant Sandor (Irving Pichel). Countess Zalesak epitomised the Vamp as a "...transgressive figure who violated standard patters of feminine behaviour and explicitly challenged the values of a male-dominated social order."¹⁶

Therefore, although Pirie and Weiss have some merit in their observations, their arguments however do not consider the Vamp as an alternative form of female representation. An alternative female representation which presents as a caution to the male gender of the consequences of temptation, which if indulged, will ultimately render a male powerless. Furthermore, this symbolic depiction has a binary feminine significance from the standpoint that it can also act as an agent that pronounces itself as an instructive narrative for women to remain within the boundaries ruled by patriarchal structures. Otherwise, the only alternative remains to inherit the role of victim and position them as „Other“. Plus, it can be noted that within all the vampire and Dracula movies from cinematic inception, there remains one common character, that of the female victim. The Vamp, it can be argued, can be seen as either nemesis to Dracula or Van Helsing. Yet there are always victims in these movies and

¹⁶ Ibid (p.28)

the majority of them are female. What this visionary dictum articulates about the female initially is that they are victims to a dominant social order.

One prominent component, as discussed previously, within Dracula narratives is the presence of the characteristics of the ideal Victorian women, as J. H. Buckley noted; "...pure...selfless center of a tight closed domestic universe."¹⁷ However, when under the malevolent enchantment of Dracula, they succumb to his sexual magnetism but periodically this is exercised as a mode of sacrifice to save their loved ones. This principled action reinforces their moral virtues and negates their forbidden carnal appetite. In *Nosferatu* (1922), which is a close adaptation of the Victorian novel, the character of Ellen Hutter (Greta Schroder) learns from the *Book of Vampires* the only way to destroy Count Orlock (Max Schreck). The Count is Dracula incarnate and Ellen must yield to his blood thirsty ways until dawn when the cock crows, a task she executes in order to save her husband and village. This is an act of heroism although she does give herself willingly. However, throughout the film, Ellen carries herself as the dutiful wife on the departure of her husband Thomas Hutter (Gustav von Wangenheim). She weeps and mourns for his return and is the consummate personification of female sensibility.

Furthermore, in Todd Browning's adaption *Dracula* (1931), the two female leads fall prey to their own sexual desires yet this craving is constrained and contained by pertinent guardians of the patriarchal hierarchy in the form of Van Helsing (Edward Van Sloan). The character of Lucy surrenders to Dracula's charms quickly and suffers the consequences with her life. Conversely, Mina (Helen Chandler) who attempts to resist the hypnotic gaze to no avail loses the battle against Dracula's (Bela Lugosi) powers of persuasion. Subsequently, it is

¹⁷ Buckley J.H. (1964) *The Victorian Temper: A Study of Literature Culture* Vintage: New York. (p.177)

Van Helsing whose action of destroying Dracula liberates Mina, which in turn restores the patriarchal structures. Thus, Mina is appropriately returned to her societal role of wedded life after her victimising experience.

Interestingly, it was the *Son of Dracula* (1943) that produced a different type of feminine representation. In this celluloid version, Count Alucard (Lon Chaney Jr.) is "...reduced to a subordinate role; but vampirism as a moral and existential question becomes thematically central."¹⁸ The main female lead character Kay Caldwell (Louise Allbritton) is Dracula's enthusiastic victim and her agenda is distinct from all other female experiences and identities portrayed in any aforementioned Dracula movies. Kay's willingness to engage with Count Alucard pivots on the premise of acquiring everlasting life for her and her fiancé. Kay schematically deceives both Count Alucard and her fiancé Frank Stanley (Robert Paige), unbeknownst to all characters in the movies, which renders her on the same malevolent scale as the Count. However, Kay's disingenuous and fabricated ambitions remain outside of societal acceptable structures and her impending death is brought about by her fiancé Frank, who burns her vampire body to restore equilibrium within the natural patriarchal code of society.

With the release from Hammer Films of their rendition of *Dracula* (1958), a landmark count was exhibited. The cause for the alteration in this diachronic narrative was due to the modification of visual and symbolic language within the movie. Primarily, the introduction of colour and sultry tones created a disconcerting mood within the frames. Also, the addition of colour further augments which is a "...sensual dreamlike quality of the film."¹⁹ When the character of Jonathan Harker (John Van Eyssen) arrives at Dracula's castle, he is met by a

¹⁸ Silver, A. and Ursini, J. (eds.) (1993) *The Vampire Film from Nosferatu to True Blood* Hal Leonard Corporation Milwaukee WI. (p.78)

¹⁹ *Ibid* (p210)

young woman who claims she is a prisoner and seeks his help. She is dressed in a revealing dress where her chest is clearly exposed. When she reappears again, she pleads for safety until Dracula (Christopher Lee) intervenes. This is the first depiction of the female vampire seeking help and attempting to escape the clutches of her enforcer. Later in the movie, it is disclosed that Harker's fiancée Mina is ailing, later ascertained to be from a vampire bite. Lucy opens her windows at night waiting to be seduced by the "...tall and virile demon with none of the posturing or artifice which tainted some of his predecessors."²⁰ The persona of Mina (Melissa Stribling) is the embodiment of the dutiful wife who gets caught within a battle between Dracula and Van Helsing. Once more she is a victim that is conveniently saved by the symbol of patriarchy and returned to her female trajectory of submissive wife, and notably subjugated woman within the strands of society. However, clearly there appears to be a transition emerging from the general stereotypical female representation of Victorian victim. There is an added depth to these women, who have the ability to indulge their sexual desires or have the ability to verbalise feelings of trepidation in relation to their entrapment. Notably, the only survivors of these cinematic tales are the females that are suppressed back into their traditional role within the patriarchal heterosexual matrix.

The Hammer Film group went onto produce additional vampire and Dracula features such as *Brides of Dracula* (1960) and *Dracula Prince of Darkness* (1965) which maintained the same female gender structure. However, what made these interpretations diverse to previous instalments of this genre is the added element of „desire“ and „obsession“. Although the narrative of these movies can be compared to the allegories in a morality play, the dramatic interplay between „victim“ and „oppressor“ can be perceived to be driven by an, as Kate

²⁰ *Ibid* (p209)

Friedlander comments, "...active impulse to die...based on a libidinal impulse."²¹ All these renditions employ violence and sexual rudiments to the narrative. Even the quintessential epitome of Victorian womanhood, Mina, has her repressive state dissolved as she is caressed by Dracula before he gratifies his vampiric thirst. What is being explored here, as well as in movies such as *Kiss of the Vampire* (1963), *Dracula has Risen from the Grave* (1968), *Taste the Blood of Dracula* (1969) and *Satanic Rites of Dracula* (1973), are the various meta-narratives intertwined within the original literary and cultural foundations. Ever present are dichotomies that remained unexplored such as:

"...psychological oppositions...struggle between the ego and the unconscious...between the "reasonableness" of repression-the Victorian temper itself-and libidinous irrationality."²²

Furthermore, the premise of the celluloid myth appears to be enshrouded in sexual ambiguity coupled with the emergence of blurred gender boundaries. Dracula feeds on male and female blood to quench his thirst in all of these movies. The female vampire also retains a primal predatory instinct, asserting male characteristics and she too feeds off both sexes. As Ernest Jones states in relation to the vampire culture:

"...when in a state of repression, regression to an earlier form of sexuality, particularly to the sadistic-masochistic phase of development...vampirism evidently signifies a reversion to the most primitive aspects of sadism."²³

²¹ Ruitenbeek, Hedrink M. (ed) (1983) *The Interpretation of Death* Dell: New York (p41)

²² Silver, A. and Ursini, J. (eds.) (1993) *The Vampire Film from Nosferatu to True Blood* Hal Leonard Corporation: Milwaukee WI. (p.213)

²³ Jones, Ernest (1951) *On the Nightmare* Liveright: New York. (p374)

In other words, what the vampire genre has the ability to reveal or visually debate is representations of sexual taboos. However, this is done in order to reinforce cultural boundaries that exist within dominant white heterosexual society. The entire existence of the vampire revolves within a parallel sexual domain. They are polymorphous perverse philanderers whose ritualistic kiss involves a process of kissing and sucking the neck, mostly in the confines of a dark bedroom. This can be seen as a form of sexual seduction but also a form of rape, when the action is taken against the will of the vampire's victim. Ultimately, vampires symbolise obstreperous figures of desire, driven by "pure Id, libidinal energy incarnate."²⁴ However, females were seldom allowed to express or engage in these sexual taboos and if they did, their fate was always met by death.

Predominantly, in early *Dracula* and vampire movies, females are presented as victims and protectors of moral codes within their own societies. They are placed outside such carefree sexual expressive existences and are only present to be ensnared or abused in anyway the sexually liberated vampire sees fit. He has the ability to incarcerate, sexually mistreat and manipulate all the women within his cinematic milieu. Women are present as voiceless and obedient and must at all time keep within the boundaries set out and governed by patriarchy, which is evident in movies such as *Nosferatu* (1922) and *Dracula* (1931). This was reflective of how Victorian women and women within any societal structure were expected to behave historically within culture. Notably, a shift within the representation began in films such as *Son of Dracula* (1943) and *Dracula* (1958). Although, they were bound within a repressive system, female characters had the opportunities to be expressive and even manipulative. There was advancement from town virgin or dutiful wife to vampire harlot and calculating strategist. However, women were never afforded the same sexual indulgences and privileges

²⁴ Weinstock, Jeffrey (2012) *The Vampire Film Undead Cinema* Columbia University Press: New York (p.8)

as males. They would have to wait for another cinematic era to be allowed sexual express and sexually indulge in their own fantasies and taboos.

CHAPTER 2: TRANSIENT IDENTITIES

Frances Gateward asserted that the role of the vampire character within film and literature has “...the ability to directly challenge the dominant ideologies of sexism, white supremacy, homophobia, and capitalism upon which high brow aesthetics rest.”²⁵ In other words, the vampire genre has the ability to challenge dominant ideology, a counter narrative that has the aptitude to destabilise traditional roles within culture on screen. Thus, creating a hybrid figure not just within the traditional definition but within the manner that Hommi Bhabha refers to in *The Location of Culture*²⁶, a hybrid figure that possess the ability to reveal a space of cultural uncertainty and instability. What Bhabha is referring to in relation to this alternative impalpable space is ultimately a location that has the capability to interrupt the flow of the unity and homogeneity of cultural identity. This creates a location where new identities can negotiate and subvert conventional and customary authority. Thus, the cinematic vampire can project many fluid hybrid forms such as man/woman, black/white, vampire/human, bisexual/lesbian and so forth. The very presence of their embodiment, their binary hybrid identities, produces an adaptable state, as opposed to the established mainstream fixity due to their own paradoxical structure. Therefore when viewing the celluloid vampire as a metaphor a connection can be exposed between “...the investments of contemporary fantasy...”²⁷ This notion is explored by Fredric Jameson in *The Political Unconscious* as what he describes as:

²⁵ Gateward, Frances “Daywalkin’ Night Stalkin’ Bloodsuckas: Black Vampires in Contemporary Film.” *Genders* 40 (2004): 38 paras. 1 July 2013 http://www.genders.org/g40/g40_gateward.html

²⁶ Bhabha, Homi K (1994) *The Location of Culture* Routledge: London. (p.36-p39)

²⁷ Gordon, J. and Hollinger, V. (eds.) (1997) *Blood Read The Vampire as Metaphor in Contemporary Culture* University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. (p.2)

“...the production of aesthetics or narrative form is to be seen as an ideological act in its own right, with the function of inventing imaginary or formal „solutions“ to unresolvable social contradictions.”²⁸

A sub-genre group of vampire films that can be deemed as exploratory within „contemporary fantasy“ is the lesbian vampire movies. As Carol Jenks noted the omnipresence of lesbian vampire movies elevates the status of these strand of films to “...an entire sub-genre of the horror film in itself.”²⁹ These movies can potentially reveal and articulate a reinvention of female femininity, sexuality and empowerment within the governing social conditions imposed by patriarchy and its heterosexual structure. However, these representations were not achieved from inception within this particular type of meta-genre. Through analysing the origins of these hybrid lesbian characters reflected on screen, the quandary of whether these types of women were established to facilitate a male fantasy will be investigated.

The lesbian folklore stems from two sources, the legend surrounding Countess Elizabeth Bathory, who is believed to have persecuted approximately 650 virgin women. The motive for this 16th century Hungarian noblewoman’s actions was to preserve her youth by bathing in their blood. The other source hails from LeFanu’s novella *Carmilla* (1871), which was considered to contain extremely erotic female content at the time. However, it was the movie *Dracula’s Daughter* (1936) which produced the first inferred screen female homosexual depiction between the blood thirsty Countess and a servant girl, Lili. The scene begins with the camera concentrating on the Countess as she progresses towards Lili. When Lili screams, all the audience glimpse is a cut away shot to a hanging African mask. Notably, the vampire

²⁸ Jameson, Fredric (1981) *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* Cornell University Press: Ithaca New York. (p.79)

²⁹ Jenks, Carol (1996) *Daughters of Darkness: A Lesbian Vampire Art Film* ed. A Black Necronomicon: Book One Creation Books: London. (p.22)

in this film is Countess Zalesak, a woman of class distinction which "...suggested an important class dynamic to the lesbian vampire myth."³⁰ This type of dominant social system is also mirrored in movies such as *Blood of Dracula* (1957) where the principal structures are displayed within the „schoolgirl-teacher lesbian relationship“. Conversely, in *Blood of Dracula* (1957), it is the prevailing teacher that conducts an experiment on her student rendering her powerless as a blood thirsty monster. Consequently, this type of dynamic presupposes that "...when the seducer is another woman, she must derive her power from her class position rather than her sex."³¹ Therefore, *Dracula's Daughter* (1936) and *Blood Dracula* (1957) are both examples of types of symbolisms which Reynold Humphries describes as "...the exotic, the erotic and the despotic..."³² However, lesbianism is only emulated on screen through the power of suggestion and within the audience's imagination and not literal depictions on celluloid. This advocates and promotes the axiom that, "...social construction of homosexuals as unnatural, predatory, plague-carrying killers."³³ However, Rhona Berenstein has an alternative suggestion in relation to the presence of „queer monsters“, by noting that characters like Countess Zaleska are the epitome of a:

“...paradigm of sexuality in which eros and danger, sensuality and destruction, human and inhuman, and male and female blur, overlap, and coalesce...the genre embellishes...perversions that defy and exceed traditional categories of human desire.”³⁴

³⁰ Grant, Barry Keith (ed.) (1996) *The Dread of Difference Gender and the Horror Film* University of Texas Press: Austin TX. (p.380)

³¹ *Ibid.* (p.380)

³² Humphries, Reynold (2000) „*The Semiotics of Horror: The Case of Dracula's Daughter*“; *Interdisciplinary Journal for Germanic Linguistics and Semiotic Analysis*, 5, 2, 273-89 (p.278)

³³ Benschhoff, Harry (1997) *Monsters in the Closet: Homosexuality and the Horror Film* Manchester University Press: Manchester. (p.14)

³⁴ Berenstein, Rhona (1996) *Attack of the Leading Ladies: Gender, Sexuality, and Spectatorship in Classic Horror Cinema* Columbia University Press: New York. (p.27)

Interestingly, the predominant view of most critics in relation to early 1970s celluloid lesbian vampires is that this type of female representation is constructed to satisfy the "...male imaginary and ultimately tend to reinforce negative attitudes toward lesbianism"³⁵ from a "...recreational use of the lesbian."³⁶ This is evident in the Hammer Studios lesbian themed renditions of *Carmilla*, movies such as *The Vampire Lovers* (1970), *Lust for a Vampire* (1970), *Twins of Evil* (1971) and *The Velvet Vampire* (1971). All these movies contain female vampires who predominantly possess desires towards women which can be a source of conflict. Additionally, these vampires nourish themselves on both male and female and at times even have strange sexual attachments to men. Predictably, they are all massacred by men, an intrinsic trope that seems to prevail within most vampire movies up to this cinematic period. Although, in *Vampyros Lesbos* (1971), the portrayal of Linda (Ewa Stromberg) as the character who finally dispossess of Nadine aka Condesa Oskudar (Soledad Miranda) is unusual. The movie itself has been described as a "...ravishing spectacle of lesbian sexuality...obsessed with the female body..."³⁷ whereby "...the sex scenes of *Vampyros Lesbos* are the result of the male gaze and are created for the pleasure of the same."³⁸

However, one of the primary scenes in *Vampyros Lesbos* stages and repositions the male gaze by dramatising a meta-theatrical situation. On stage the character of Nadine (who is a vampire) performs as an actress playing a vampire who brings a female mannequin to life by being sexually intimate with the woman. Furthermore, the purpose of transforming the mannequin into human form is to kill her by draining her blood. This is all performed in front of a male and female audience who generates a rapturous applause of approval when the

³⁵ Weinstock, Jeffrey (2012) *The Vampire Film Undead Cinema* Columbia University Press: New York. (p.35)

³⁶ Case, Sue-Ellen (1991) „Tracking the Vampire“, *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Culture Studies*, 3, 2 1-20. (p.2)

³⁷ Weinstock, Jeffrey (2012) *The Vampire Film Undead Cinema* Columbia University Press: New York. (p.39)

³⁸ Annadale, David (2002) „Guirilla Vamping: *Vampyros Lesbos*, the Becoming-Woman of Women and the Unravelling of the Male Gaze“, *Paradox*, 17 257-70. (p.262)

theatre performance ends. This problematises the male gaze as it alters the normative scopophilic and voyeuristic exhibition through inclusion of the female spectator both within in the audience on screen and the auditorium. Also, the traditional order is subverted through the use of a female seducer who "...preys upon feminine beauty..."³⁹ further linking "...perverse" sexuality with vampirism."⁴⁰ Moreover, a woman performs many different identities in the theatre scene such as, actress, mannequin, vampire and victim. This suggests "...femininity, lesbianism and vampirism are literally constructed as performative identities."⁴¹ According to Judith Butler, „acts and gestures“ communicate and perform „desires“ which design the delusion that there is an established internal gender foundation. This is to reasonably justify the fantasy existing within the established regulations of sexuality under heterosexual and ontological structures. Furthermore, the fabrication becomes diluted because the fabrication is disguised within the core identity and established as an internal essence that is an indescribable a true identity.

Thus, the various performances undertaken by Nadine on stage can be seen as a form of female drag, she is perceived as possessing both butch/femme identities. This collates with what Butler believes insofar that "...drag, cross-dressing and the sexual stylization of butch/femme identities..."⁴² parody "...original and primary gender identity..."⁴³ The enactment of these types of performances highlight the juxtaposition of physical makeup of the performer „and the gender of the performer“. This emphasises three forms of representations: "...anatomical sex, gender identity and gender performance..."⁴⁴ It further reveals a variety of expressions that maintain a frictional performance between "...sex and

³⁹ Weinstock, Jeffrey (2012) *The Vampire Film Undead Cinema* Columbia University Press: New York. (p.39)

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* (p.39)

⁴¹ *Ibid.* (p.39)

⁴² Butler, Judith (1990) *Gender Trouble* Routledge: New York. (p.187)

⁴³ *Ibid.* (p.187)

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* (p.187)

performance...sex and gender, and gender and performance.”⁴⁵ Thus, although drag is deemed to personify a cohesive vision of the female, instead it exposes the fractious divide of varied gender experiences, which is incorrectly projected as amalgamated within the unified authoritarian dominant heterosexual matrix. As Butler states; “...in imitating gender, drag implicitly reveals the imitative structure of gender itself – as well as its contingency.”⁴⁶ The drag act is revolutionary exercise that emphasises the „fabricated unity“ within heterosexuality by dramatising sex and gender within cultural.

The meta-context of the movie centres on the ideologies in relation to „normalcy“ and „deviancy“. Ultimately, the lead female vampire Nadine abhors men due to the fact she was assaulted by a band of soldiers. The male characters such as Memmet (Jesús Franco) is stimulated by persecuting and murdering women and Dr Steiner (Paul Muller) keeps Agra (Heidrun Kussin) captive to dominate her for his own pleasure. Therefore, there is a paradox within the movie in relation to „norm“ and „deviant“ identities within the social construction. Clearly the male gaze is present and the females are objectified by the gaze whether naked on stage or through ambiguous, sexual interaction with male protagonists. However, although the female vampires and their homoerotic exchanges are presented as „deviant“, the men in this movie possess the same characteristics. Generally, in relation to the male gaze and as Laura Mulvey asserts “a male...characteristics are thus not those of the erotic object of the gaze, but those of the more perfect, more complete, more powerful...”⁴⁷ These features cannot be applied to the males in this movie due to the fact that “the men in the film are as much vampires as is Nadine, and lesbian sex – even vampiric lesbian sex – is presented as far

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* (p.187)

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* (p.187)

⁴⁷ *The Sexual Subject A Screen Reader in Sexuality* (1992) Chapter 1 “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” by Laura Mulvey Routledge: New York (p.28)

more sensual than heterosexual intimacy.”⁴⁸ This is a new way of presenting unorthodox culture structures, especially in relation to female representation.

Other movies which reinforce this type of vernacular are *Requiem for a Vampire* (1971) and the remake, *Daughters of Darkness* (1971). In the adaptation, *Daughters of Darkness*, the theme of newlyweds, honeymoon and the initial roles associated with the institute of marriage are introduced. The honeymoon is considered a transition phase whereby:

“...the husband asserts his power and control over his bride, winning or forcing her into institutionalized heterosexuality...both sexually and socially, to “bind” his bride to himself and the marriage structure.”⁴⁹

Interestingly, in this movie, the gender power structures are played out between Countess Bathory (Delphine Seyrig), the female vampire and Stefan (John Karlen). By the movies conclusion, it is revealed that Stefan is a sadist who is excited by subjugating women through violence, especially in sexual situations and who seemingly has had an unconventional relationship with his mother. As the film narrative unfolds, he asserts his male/husband authority by stating that his wife Valerie (Danielle Ouimet) is his possession. Similarly, the Countess appears to be performing as a woman in drag, “...a caricature of femininity.”⁵⁰ The Countess’ wardrobe consists of flamboyant gowns of fur and feathers and mirrors the attire of a drag queen. Essentially, she personifies a camp male and is an example of “...femininity in masquerade...”⁵¹ Essentially, these types of paradoxical gender performances from both characters stimulate a form of binary tension within the diegesis. The traditional and

⁴⁸ Weinstock, Jeffrey (2012) *The Vampire Film Undead Cinema* Columbia University Press: New York. (p.40)

⁴⁹ Grant, Barry Keith (ed.) (1996) *The Dread of Difference Gender and the Horror Film* University of Texas Press: Austin TX. (p.384)

⁵⁰ Weinstock, Jeffrey (2012) *The Vampire Film Undead Cinema* Columbia University Press: New York. (p.49)

⁵¹ Jenks, Carol (1996) „*Daughters of Darkness: A Lesbian Art Film*,“ in Andy Black (ed.) *Necronomicon: Book One* Creation Books: London. (p.32)

classical cinematic mode of representation where the male character "...controls the film fantasy and also emerges as the representation of power in a further sense: as the bearer of the look of the spectator..."⁵² has been challenged. The contradiction in the movie provides an alternative representation of the female which ultimately reveals an „Other“ image within sexual hierarchy. The male is exposed, as Stefan is not the main controlling figure in the movie. Thus, the male gaze is challenged as the traditional male fantasy projected onto the female within the gaze, which has been distorted along with the heterosexual verisimilitude by the implied phallogentric performance and characteristics occupied by the Countess. Consequently, this reveals the sadistic Stefan as the true monster.

This new type of representation of women on screen is also reaffirmed in the movie *Requiem for a Vampire* (1971). The „sexual perversion“ in this film is connected to humans as opposed to vampires. What is highlighted specifically within this coming of age narrative is the "...predatory nature of masculine heterosexuality."⁵³ The two runaway school girls, Marie (Marie-Pierre Castel) and Michelle (Mireille Dargent) are constantly pursued by male characters that seek to rape them. The Master Vampire (Paul Bisciglia) is interested in taking the girls virginities prior to allowing their inauguration into the vampire clan. This is despite the fact the girls have engaged in lesbian sex which implies this type of sex is not recognised. The film concludes with the two girls being abandoned by the two males they are connected to and they are left with each other. The reoccurring theme of the male gender characterising predatory and sexually brutal identities is present. Consequently, this restates that lesbianism "...is not only more sensual and gentle than heterosexual intimacy, but less fraught with

⁵² Kaplan, Ann E. (2000) *Feminism & Film* Oxford University Press: Oxford (p.41) *Chapter 2 Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema* by Laura Mulvey

⁵³ Weinstock, Jeffrey (2012) *The Vampire Film Undead Cinema* Columbia University Press: New York. (p.44)

issues of dominance and control.”⁵⁴ The premise of the narrative pivots around two school girls who runaway with each other because they are in love. Ultimately, what transpires is that throughout their trajectory and by meeting the vampires, there is an attempt to regulate them back to heterosexuality through control. However, the girls survive and end up with each other which “...turns the masculine gaze back upon itself by foregrounding its predatory nature.”⁵⁵

Ultimately, this is an alternative portrayal which, although contains plenty male sexual eroticism on screen, paradoxically develops a new vernacular in relation to female representation. The female characters are not one dimensional and experience a transient identity not seen prior to this era in movie making. This transition mirrors the cultural change females were experienced during this period, with the development of the feminist movement and the transformation of women’s traditional roles within society as a whole. Universally, gender roles appear to be redefined within this visual medium, borders are beginning to be blurred as to what constitutes male and female.

A new form of metamorphosis begins to emerge within the traditional representation and criticism of vampire movies during this decade. What this is indicative of is a changing perception of the modern world around the 1970s and 1980s. This new structure highlighted “...the transitory nature of modernity itself...”⁵⁶ The cultural revolution within Europe and America resulted in a reinvention of societal conventions which was reflected within vampire movie genre and gender identities. Also, during this period of change, what emerge are narratives reflecting diverse and subcultural social movements. These “...individual and

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* (p.49)

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* (p.45)

⁵⁶ Abbott, Stacey (2007) *Celluloid Vampires Life After Death in the Modern World* University of Texas: Austin. (p.75)

social groups gained strength from the fragmentation of society...⁵⁷, which allowed for the materialisation of new forms of representation. The new characterisation of the modern vampire now reigns within modern suburban communities and familial settings. An example of a vampire movie within this modernised setting is *The Satanic Rites of Dracula* (1973), which situates the famous count within the corporate executive world, constructing a metaphoric vampire for „global commodity culture“. Also, this foreshadowed future corporate authorial metaphorical commentary using the vampire in films such as *Underworld* (2003).

The effect of these distinctive characterisations is that marginalised groups such as women, people of race, homosexuals etc, can retain a form of power equality on screen. In *Blacula* (1972), the vampire is an African prince is repositioned to Los Angeles and this narratives “...backstory reinterprets the vampire myth through the discourse of racial oppression and slavery...”⁵⁸ *Deathdream* (1974) is themed within the Vietnam War and the returning soldier, “...tramatized and changed by the events he has experienced, and unable to live up to a family and social expectations.”⁵⁹ Furthermore, these contemporary male and female vampires “...possess very little of the metaphysical, anti Christian dimension...”⁶⁰ Instead, their actions contain forms of ambiguity and autonomy which makes the identification of evil more difficult to classify. In George Romero’s offering of a revisionist vampire *Martin* (1976), he captures what “...embodies the paralysis and identity crisis that characterizes America in the 1970s... vampirism itself undergoing an identity crisis.”⁶¹ The film’s grainier and grittier aesthetic distinctiveness, coupled with hypodermic needles to anaesthetise victims

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* (p.77)

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* (p.83)

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* (p.83)

⁶⁰ Gordon, J. and Hollinger, V. (eds.) (1997) *Blood Read The Vampire as Metaphor in Contemporary Culture* University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia. (p.18)

⁶¹ Abbott, Stacey (2007) *Celluloid Vampires Life After Death in the Modern World* University of Texas: Austin. (p.97/98)

before clinically slitting their wrists to extract blood, completely reinvents the vampire's stereotypical gothic traditional origins.

Nevertheless, what *Martin* overtly highlights is the male voyeuristic and scopophilic gaze. The eyes are considered by Daniel Pick to possess a "...penetrative effect of a hostile gaze..."⁶², a trope that prominently features throughout vampire genre. What this form of intense observation symbolises is fear and dominance and usually possesses and paralyzes victims. In relation to voyeurism and scopophilia, Laura Mulvey recapitulates this form of sinister intense observation from a psychoanalytical perspective in relation to cinema. Mulvey declares the scopophilic intuition attains "...pleasure in looking at another person as an erotic object...in contradistinction, ego libido forming identification processes..."⁶³

In other words, through structures of representation, what can be identified by this male form of gazing is woman, through the dominant patriarch eye by which she is being viewed, inevitably symbolising castration. Yet, the gaze is a controlling male mechanism which subjugates the female to a mere possession, "...thereby producing an illusion cut to the measure of desire..."⁶⁴ In *Martin*, the vampire character confirms his surveillance of his female victims, by stating; "...watch them. I watch them a lot. All the time. I have to."⁶⁵ In one particular scene Martin (John Amplas) watches a female conversing with a conductor. He listens and makes note of her destination and cabin number, making the audience aware that this is how he selects his victims. Evidently, this vampire acts like a surveillance camera who stalks, watches and listens to his female victims.

⁶² Pick, Daniel (2000) *Svengali's Web: The Alien Enchanter in Modern Culture* Yale University Press: New Haven. (p. 168)

⁶³ Mulvey, Laura (1989) „*Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*“ in *Visual and Other Pleasures* Indiana University Press: Bloomington. (p.25)

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* (p.25)

⁶⁵ *Martin* (1976), dir. George A. Romero, Laurel Entertainment Inc: USA.

The one distinctive trait he possesses is his ability to distinguish the difference between sex and feeding on blood. This new form of male vampire has the ability to be occupied by a humanistic condition. Robin Wood argues that "...by learning to have sexual intercourse instead of sucking blood, Martin can be „saved“ for normality.”⁶⁶ Conversely, the women in this film also experience a form of self-discovery. Both Mrs. Santini (Elyane Nadeau) and Christina (Christine Forrest) exploit the vampire to flee from their own unhappy existences. Mrs. Santini engages in an affair to escape the miserable marriage she is in and Christina attempts to rebel from the family heritage and uses Martin in the process. The modern cultural environment in which all these characters find themselves in has allowed them to transform and engage in an untraditional way. Even if the females remain subjugated, they are still somewhat allowed to choose their own actions. Interestingly, in relation to female representation, instead of being "...located as other (enigma, mystery) and is thereby viewed as outside of (male) language”⁶⁷, an alternative dictum is being created from the way the male gaze objectifies women through power, thus rendering them a possession. By subverting the male gaze in these movies, a shift in focus and authority is evident, bestowing some form of sovereignty to the female. This type of authority permits the female to have a more fluid identity on screen, a space to reinvent herself.

However, there is a dual effect when female characters and representations diverge from traditional hetero-normative images, which affects the female spectatorship. Mary Ann Doane describes this process of identification as the female having to adopt, which she distinguishes as „transvestism“ and „masquerade“ spectatorship. When inheriting these two observational positions, the:

⁶⁶ Wood, Robin (1986) *Hollywood from Vietnam to Regan* Columbia University Press: New York. (p.109)

⁶⁷ Kaplan, E. Ann (2000) *Feminism & Film* Oxford University Press: Oxford. (p.120)

“...female transvestism involves adopting the masculine spectatorial position; female masquerade involves an excess of femininity, the use of femininity as a mask, which simulates the distance necessary for the pleasure of looking.”⁶⁸

Hence, the position of the lesbian within a cinematic narrative can only be perceived by female audiences as a masculine characterisation negotiating within the patriarchal modes of masculine heterosexuality. This is what Teresa De Lauretis refers to as a:

“...contrast in interpretations...shows to what extent the paradox of sexual (in)difference operates as a semiotic mechanism to produce contradictory meaning effects.”⁶⁹

Evidently, in *The Hunger* (1983), the matriarchal ethereal vampire, Miriam Blaylock (Catherine Deneuve) embodies these characteristics, when examined at the side of her husband John Blaylock (David Bowie). She is the aggressor from inception with no guilt or remorse, the first to be seen make a sadomasochistic kill. It is her husband that takes on identifiable traditional female attributes, to the point that he nearly dies from refusing to kill to survive because he suffers from irreparable guilt. This female vampire has taken many lovers through the years and moves through each century acquiring new ones whilst disposing the old. She observes her next love conquest Dr. Sarah Roberts (Susan Sarandon), gazing at her with impenetrable eyes.

⁶⁸ Carson, D., Dittmar, L. and Welsh J, R. (ed) (1994) *Multiple Voices in Feminist Film Criticism* University of Minnesota: Minneapolis. (p. 336)

⁶⁹ Kaplan, E. Ann (2000) 'Sexual Indifference and Lesbian Representation' by Teresa de Lauretis in *Feminism & Film* Oxford University Press: Oxford. (p.388)

In this cinematic offering of the contemporary vampire movie, there are two female representations being established. Dr. Sarah Roberts is a different portrayal of female image, an independent self sufficient scientist who epitomises the successful working woman. She is intelligent and respected within her profession and the culture she lives in and adheres to the patriarchal conventions. What is unique about this character is that she can equally participate in and enjoy an erotic encounter with a female vampire willingly before she is turned into one. This character epitomises what Teresa De Lauretis believes to be a solution for acceptance by all female audiences in relation to depictions of lesbian homosexual encounters. She argues for a required:

“...assertion of sexual agency and feelings, but autonomous from men, a reclaiming of erotic drives directed toward women, of a desire for women that is not to be confused with women identification.”⁷⁰

Although, Dr. Roberts fully enjoyed her sexual encounter with Mrs Blaylock, she still has the autonomy to destroy her and attempt to protect her boyfriend from the vampire.

The common denominator of these revisionist contemporary vampire portrayals to date, is that all these aforementioned movies allow for multiple autonomous interpretation and rendition of a modern women and, curiously, a modern man. Ultimately, this a process which removes “...the supposed clichés of the ancient Other in favour of...”⁷¹ modern representations.

⁷⁰ Kaplan, E. Ann (2000) *Sexual Indifference and Lesbian Representation* by Teresa de Lauretis in *Feminism & Film* Oxford University Press: Oxford. (p.389)

⁷¹ Bell, James (2009:43) *“A Stake Through the Heart”*. Sight & Sound 19.11 Galileo. Web. 11 July 2013.

CHAPTER 3: THE POSTMODERN PARADIGM

By the mid to late 1980s, capitalism and mass consumerism were visibly prevalent within western society. The vampire was a perfect metaphor for the lucrative youth market and was utilised to represent “...a person who is not a kid...but who is not...an adolescent or an adult...an almost supernaturally transfigured being.”⁷² Thus there was an influx in the depiction of youth culture within cinematic narratives such as *The Lost Boys* (1987). The film’s setting on the Santa Carla boardwalk is an amalgamation of a “...open-air mall, gaming arcade, and amusement park.”⁷³ It depicts teenagers engaging within this hive of consumerism. Max’s video and the Frog Brothers’ comic store are just two of the choices available. These filmic texts had the ability to portray “...adolescent (sub) culture and thus identifies youth as hegemonic in the contemporary sphere of consumption.”⁷⁴

Furthermore, the vampire is an ideal symbol “...for the basic mechanism of capitalist development.”⁷⁵ What these specific texts encapsulated was “...dead labour which, vampire-like, lives only by sucking living labour, and lives the more...labour it sucks.”⁷⁶ Thus, the vampire metaphor in the 1980s reflected elitist capitalists, the wealthy entrepreneurs of society that amassed their fortunes by sucking “...the life blood and/or labor potential from the poor.”⁷⁷ These maverick tycoons are emblematic of celebrated heroic Reaganite Americans. As such, there was a development from the structure of the singular deviant vampire who is reconstructed into a satanic contingent which acted as an allegorical for an “...evil trade union that is bleeding the good entrepreneurs dry by cutting into their profit

⁷² Gordon, J. and Hollinger, V. (eds.) (1997) *Blood Read The Vampire as Metaphor in Contemporary Culture* University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia.(p.136)

⁷³ *Ibid.* (p.146)

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* (p.135)

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* (p.129)

⁷⁶ Moretti, Franco (1988) *Signs Take for Wonders: Essays in the Sociology of Literature Forms* ed. Trans Fischer, S., Forgas, D. and Miller D. Verso: New York (p.91)

⁷⁷ Gordon, J. and Hollinger, V. (eds.) (1997) *Blood Read The Vampire as Metaphor in Contemporary Culture* University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia. (p.121)

margin...⁷⁸ This was also clearly demonstrated in the coming of age movies *Near Dark* (1987). In the film, the contingent is represented in the form of Mae's vampire family, lead by Jesse. The entrepreneur is represented by Caleb's father, who owns his own farm and works for himself. The narrative sets this identification up as good versus evil. The vampire delegation is associated as, out of work nomads who travel the road, pillaging businesses and feeding on the local labour. These vampires attempt to influence Caleb, away from his working ethical lifestyle and induct him into their non-conformist way of life.

Furthermore, these two movies have the additional dimension of advocating the heteronormative family value system. The cluster of malicious vampires that preoccupy these locales within both films are indicative of a dysfunctional fabricated family unite. They are representative of the „anti-family“ that seduces the young protagonists in each movie by the allure of sexual awakenings coupled with untamed, experimental and debauchurous experiences. They are the embodiment of temptation but as the narrative progresses, these principal characters learn how tedious a routine partying through the night and sleeping all day can be. Inevitably, the protagonists always return to the safety of the familial structure and locale.

Most notably in *The Lost Boys*, the character named Star (Jamie Gertz) is the first to catch the protagonist Michael's (Jason Patric) attention. She is portrayed as a curious carefree spirit who snares Michael into the vampire lair. Michael is supposedly elected to be Stars first kill but her feminine sensibilities prevent her from fulfilling her task. Star's contribution within the narrative is at times of a romantic nature but „primarily maternal“ as her main concerns

⁷⁸ *Ibid.* (p.121)

surround the safety of the young near-vampire boy Laddie. Furthermore, she attempts to protect and warn Michael to her own detriment placing herself in danger.

Similarly, in *Near Dark*, it is the young female vampire Mae (Jenny Wright) who seduces Caleb (Adrian Pasdar). Mae never kills Caleb when the opportunity arises during an amorous exchange in the pickup truck. Mae is the love interest in the story and she protects her man at all costs. When Caleb cannot bring himself to kill another human to survive, Mae sacrifices “...her own well-being by sustaining him on her own blood...”⁷⁹, a fact she hides from the vampires to guard Caleb from harmful retaliation.

In both these cinematic texts, the male protagonists’ trajectories appear as forms of “...temptation-regret-rescue...”⁸⁰ The youthful female presence on screen, whilst initially being inviting seductive and dangerous, is subverted to the damsel in distress mode which needs saving by the male hero. These two film narratives have cleansed the vampire genre by reconstructing the traditional associations such as:

“...potentially transgressive homoeroticism...predatory individualism...permanent mortal danger...general allure of immortality and eternal young...the dangerous attractiveness of the vampire, all the components of vampire mythology that were realized so strongly...”⁸¹

Furthermore, what appears to replace these traditional vampiric tropes is a morality fable that maps “...provocative strategies of salvation...”⁸² Alarming, these parables depict women descending symbolically back to their traditionally dutiful maternal and virtuous roles *albeit*

⁷⁹ *Ibid.* (p.122)

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* (p.123)

⁸¹ Gordon, J. and Hollinger, V. (eds.) (1997) *Blood Read The Vampire as Metaphor in Contemporary Culture* University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia. (p.124)

⁸² *Ibid.* (p.126)

in a contemporary epoch. What is questionable about these archaic forms of female representations is the manner in which they ask if they are truly reflective of modern women in society. At a time when women's social roles had been completely altered, it is clear that traditional dominant patriarchal regulations were percolating back into the mainstream, emerging as a hegemonic governing force. Furthermore, this created a sense of society reverting back to the initial sovereignty of patriarchy in terms of its relation to female representation.

Ironically, in the 1990s, popular films such as Francis Ford Coppola's remake *Dracula* (1992) and Neil Jordan's adaptation *Interview with a Vampire: The Vampire Chronicles* (1994) are both revivals of the vampiric gothic aesthetics. By virtue of the fact that these two movies are gothic period dramas, it can be suggested that they are cinematic reflections of historic societies with antiquated attitudes. However, these cinematic extravagant texts manage to expose and examine relevant issues even if the characters are masquerading in different eras.

An example of a contemporary insight in *Dracula*, is the scene where Mina (Winona Ryder) and the disguised Count Dracula (Garry Oldman) unwittingly end up on a first date together at a screening of the first silent cinematographic exhibition in London. This is an example of a modern date in a Victorian period. The character of Mina is portrayed as a Victorian woman, a school teacher, who is engaged and awaiting to be married. However, Mina is reading *Arabian Nights*, a pornographically illustrated sexual text, discusses her friend's sexual encounters with her and drinks absinthe with the Count. Mina appears at odds with herself. She awaits news from her fiancé and is despondent at times because she longs to be married, yet Mina does not sit at home akin to conventional Victorian women. She attends

social gatherings and unconventionally walks the streets independently alone. She is not a woman that has the privileges of an aristocratic life. Yet, she chooses her own destiny by getting married, falling out of love with her husband and pursuing another life with her beloved Dracula. Notably, it is Dracula who is the sensitive romantic that seeks out his long lost love. He is passionate, emotional and willing to kill for her. When faced with the opportunity to give Mina never ending life, he struggles with his conscience and it is Mina who convinces him to convert her. Within this adaptation, Mina possesses a paradoxical and ambiguous identity, a dual dimension to her character. Ultimately, her final action of killing Dracula can be deemed both as an affectionate act and an act that ultimately offers her salvation. Mina slays Dracula not Van Helsing, performing and occupying the male gender's role. She emerges conservative and traditional and yet autonomous, strong and determined; a paradoxical modern woman living in a conventional period.

Interview with a Vampire: The Vampire Chronicles (1994) also demonstrates paradoxical dilemmas within its narrative. The movie revolves around a "subverted family structure"⁸³ between two vampires, Lestat (Tom Cruise) and Louis (Brad Pitt) and "...works the queer monster tropes usual (as well as unusual) ways..."⁸⁴ Their metaphorical „adopted daughter“ Claudia (Kirsten Dunst) is converted as a child and continually "...cursed her vampire birth..."⁸⁵ She is a child who develops and experiences life through centuries but will never reach physical womanhood. She is trapped in an existence that limits her ability to self express or experience society. Claudia's limited puerile state can be considered a metaphor

⁸³ Gordon, J. and Hollinger, V. (eds.) (1997) *Blood Read The Vampire as Metaphor in Contemporary Culture* University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia. (p.179)

⁸⁴ Benschhoff, Harry M. (1997) *Monsters in the Closet: Homosexuality and the Horror Film* Manchester University Press: Manchester. (p.272)

⁸⁵ Ed Pinter, David (2012) *A New Companion to the Gothic* Blackwell Publishing: Sussex. (p.230)

for women through centuries who experienced gender restrictions regardless of their physical developed state.

Furthermore, Lestat has the propensity to “...indulge in various impulses in his killing...” which “...may objectify men, women, and children alike to satisfy his rapacious hunger...”⁸⁶ Lestat’s demeanour towards his female victims can be interpreted as a “...masculine vampire’s misogynistic attack on women...”, which “...is a reflection of anxiety generated...” by “...his own gender confusion...”⁸⁷ Whilst, Louis struggles with his vampiric identity, he is a sensitive creature, a form of emasculated male that refuses to partake in bringing misery and death, unlike the other members of the dysfunctional family. Louis portrays a sensitive and compassionate vampire whose humanistic traits can be observed as “...traditional models of gender inversion are invoked to suggest the vampire’s queer Otherness...”⁸⁸ and both “...male vampires are feminized through lighting, make-up, and costumes.”⁸⁹ Notably, his relationship with Claudia from her conversion is blurred plus his intimate exchanges with the vampire Armand (Antonio Banderas) are inquisitive. Therefore, nothing is transparent when it comes to the identities of these characters and what they represent:

“peculiar human condition which has come to be termed
“postmodern”...paradigmsthrough which contemporary Western reality is
currently being conceptualized.”⁹⁰

⁸⁶ Silver, A. and Ursini, J. (eds.) (1993) *The Vampire Film from Nosferatu to True Blood* Hal Leonard Corporation: Milwaukee WI. (p.263)

⁸⁷ Weinstock, Jeffrey (2012) *The Vampire Film Undead Cinema* Columbia University Press: New York. (p.44)

⁸⁸ Benschhoff, Harry M. (1997) *Monsters in the Closet: Homosexuality and the Horror Film* Manchester University Press: Manchester. (p.272)

⁸⁹ *Ibid.* (p.272)

⁹⁰ Gordon, J. and Hollinger, V. (eds.) (1997) *Blood Read The Vampire as Metaphor in Contemporary Culture* University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia. (p.199)

The postmodern condition “...refuses to acknowledge there are any great truths or essential meanings in life.”⁹¹ It blurs boundaries and questions the foundations on which the supreme western world’s „grand narratives“ are based. Jean-Francois Lyotard defined these „grand narratives“ as “...“Democracy“, „Progress“, „Science“ and „Religion“...”⁹² Whilst, Craig Owens proclaimed that this narrative “...system of power...authorises certain representations while blocking, prohibiting or invalidating others...”⁹³ Therefore, postmodernism has the ability to include any marginalised narratives that would ordinarily be excluded within these „grand narratives“. Notably, these dominant discourses were all created by the patriarchal voice, leaving no room for the feminine dialect, amongst other subjugated narratives. The added element of intertextuality within postmodern theory allows for recycled images from the past to be assembled together in the form of bricolage, which can “...characterise the challenge of piecing together our own...” identity “...and implicitly to make us aware of the character of others...”⁹⁴ The postmodern condition compliments the vampire genre because “...it aims to incorporate the abnormal as it is within the field of analysis.”⁹⁵ Furthermore, it has the ability as an infamous transcript to introduce “...the „unreal“...set against the category of the real – a category which...interrogates by its difference.”⁹⁶ What Jean Baudrillard further exclaimed in relation to „reality“ was that if “...simulation is no longer that of a territory, a referential being or a substance...by models of a real without origins or reality: a

⁹¹ Creed, Barbara (2004) *Pandora’s Box Essays in Film Theory* Australian Centre for the Moving Image: Melbourne, Australia. (p.103/104)

⁹² *Ibid.* (p.103)

⁹³ Owens, Craig (1983) „The Discourse of Others: Feminist and Post-modernism“ in Hal Foster (ed.) *The Anti-Aesthetic, Essays on Postmodern Culture* Bay Press: USA. (p.62)

⁹⁴ Bennet, P., Hickman, A. and Wall, P.(eds.) (2007) *Film Studies: The Essential Resource* Routledge: New York (p.246)

⁹⁵ Gordon, J. and Hollinger, V. (eds.) (1997) *Blood Read The Vampire as Metaphor in Contemporary Culture* University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia. (p.200)

⁹⁶ Jackson, Rosemary (1981) *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion* Methuen: New York. (p.4)

hyperrealism”⁹⁷ is created. All these postmodern features are visible within the vampiric filmic aesthetics within the movies *Nadja* (1994) and *The Addiction* (1995).

Nadja (1994) is a remake of *Dracula’s Daughter* (1936) within a postmodern setting. It contains a uniquely scripted and visual style that consists of, “...four tightly interrelated sets of concepts: simulation, which is either parody or pastiche: pre-fabrication; intertextuality and bricolage.”⁹⁸ The opening sequence of this black and white film commences with a swirl of smoke rising out from the ground with waves of light altering on screen. Nadja’s (Elina Lowensöhn) voice narrates over a dreamlike dissolve of New York. A superimposed close-up of the main character’s face as the camera tracks along desolated streets with fluctuating flashes of light creates an imperturbable image. The scene is rife with a surrealist influence streaming significance into empty spaces which provide a poetic location. The audience is aware from the iconic images that location is New York but there is a dreamlike quality which provides a type of „hyperrealism“, where what is real and what appears to real is blurred together within the film.

This visual intertextuality connects “...meaning whereby the empty New York streets are infused with Nadja’s presence and subjectivity.”⁹⁹ Nadja’s further states “Europe is a village. Here you feel so many things a rushing together. It even gets more exciting after midnight.”¹⁰⁰ This sequence is examining the contrasting progression between modernity of Europe and America. In New York, Nadja has the ability to wonder as an independent female vampire, “...to embrace the stimulus, excitement, and nightlife of the city.”¹⁰¹ Nadja

⁹⁷ Baudrillard, Jean (1968) *Le systeme de objects* Denoel-Gonthier: Paris. (p.2)

⁹⁸ Howard, Susan (2006) *Cinema Studies: Key Concepts* Third Edition Routledge New York. (p.302)

⁹⁹ Gordon, J. and Hollinger, V. (eds.) (1997) *Blood Read The Vampire as Metaphor in Contemporary Culture* University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia. (p.146)

¹⁰⁰ *Nadja* (1994) dir. Michael Almereyda, October Films: USA.

¹⁰¹ Abbott, Stacey (2007) *Celluloid Vampires Life After Death in the Modern World* University of Texas: Austin. (p.147)

is seen dancing in clubs, chain smoking, conversing with strangers in bars and even embarks on an affair with a married woman. She is attempting to convert into a contemporary New Yorker. She is a vampire that has the ability to “...embody modernity by embracing the delirium that signifies modern New York.”¹⁰²

The character of Van Helsing (Peter Fonda) is used to reinforce the hyper reality of the filmic text. A character that is instantly recognisable as a fierce vampire slayer is replaced with the figure of Uncle Van Helsing. He is portrayed as a long haired charismatic and eccentric hippie who chases vampires through the street of New York on a bicycle. When discussing how he killed the Count, Helsing states: “He was like Elvis in the end. He was just going through the motions.”¹⁰³ He utters this while chewing on a croissant and sipping coffee, having just been released from prison after reputedly shoving a stake through a random man’s heart. He is a parody of the traditional and recognisable figure of Van Helsing. Uncle Van Helsing has “...become a sign with its meaning arbitrarily determined by its position in a self-referential system of signifiers.”¹⁰⁴ Van Helsing detects vampires by wearing a pair of John Lennon sunglasses and suffers from narcoleptic, a complete unconventional version of the traditional slayer. Therefore, he contributes in creating a hyperrealist state which is when “...an aestheticization of reality in which the masses become fascinated by the endless flow of bizarre juxtapositions which takes the viewer beyond stable sense.”¹⁰⁵

Nadja mirrors Countess Zaleska, her cinematic antecedent from *Dracula’s Daughter* (1936), with her hooded cape, dark features and a despondent demeanour which is reflective of a

¹⁰² *Ibid.* (p.147)

¹⁰³ *Nadja* (1994) dir. Michael Almereyda, October Films: USA.

¹⁰⁴ Featherstone, Mike (2007) *Consumer Culture and Postmodernism* SAGE Publications: Los Angeles. (p.53)

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.* (p.89)

form of “weariness with eternal life.”¹⁰⁶ Nadja’s point of view shots are filmed in video format which reflects a dissociative experience of observation from an external perspective. The modern locale symbolises a form of: “...liberation from the prevailing truth and from the established order; it marked the suspension of all hierarchal rank, privileges, norms and prohibitions.”¹⁰⁷ Traditionally, the female vampires are portrayed as deviant creatures that are ruined due to their „sexual lasciviousness“. The freedom Nadja is afforded and experiences in the modern city is generally reserved in the vampire canon for the male gender. What is imperative about this narrative is that it concerns itself with the trajectory of the female vampire and her experience which “...enables her to embrace her vampirism but also to appropriate a place for herself, both within the urban landscape as well as in discourse around the modern flâneur.”¹⁰⁸

The Addiction (1995) opens with footage of the My Lai Massacre.¹⁰⁹ This sets the amplified tone for an ethical examination of social annihilation juxtaposed with individual destruction. The story is conveyed through the eyes of Kathleen (Lili Taylor), a philosophy student who is turned into a vampire. The manner in which she is bitten and becomes a vampire is thematically important. When approached by the vampire Casanova (Annabella Sciorra), Kathleen is given an opportunity to vigorously resist being bitten and exert her free will. When Kathleen feebly mumbles „please“ she is bitten and her life changes. She becomes immersed in an addictive habit of slaying to feed her constant compulsion. In one section of the film she watches newsreel depicting images of a massacre with blood dripping from her

¹⁰⁶ Silver, A. and Ursini, J. (eds.) (1993) *The Vampire Film from Nosferatu to True Blood* Hal Leonard Corporation Milwaukee WI. (p.327)

¹⁰⁷ Bakhtain, Mikhail (1984) *Rabelais and His World*. Translated by Helene Iswolsky. Indiana University Press: Bloomington. (p.7)

¹⁰⁸ Abbott, Stacey (2007) *Celluloid Vampires Life After Death in the Modern World* University of Texas: Austin. (p.150)

¹⁰⁹ The My Lai massacre occurred during the Vietnam War on 16th March 1968. It was report that between 347 and 504 unnamed civilians were slaughtered. The victims included infants, children, women and men. Only Second Lieutenant William Calley was convicted of killing 22 villagers and sentenced to life. He only served three and a half years under house arrest.

mouth, placing both self destruction as well as human atrocities within the same inhuman sphere.

The filmic text is interwoven with vivid images of colossal human carnage such as the Holocaust, atrocities in the Middle East and other large scale human destructive massacres. This constant integration of intertextual reality with the films version of reality again creates a form of hyperrealism within the narrative. In addition, this highlights the motif of man's inhumanity coupled with the moral responsibility of the individual. In such a violently destructive world, Kathleen consistently advocates the policy of silence becoming a form of social consent which enables such evil to commit such atrocities. This is demonstrated through her processes of asking her victims to speak up for themselves and vehemently refuse to be her victim or suffer the consequences.

Thus the vampire is a metaphor for "...the evil in human nature...not abstract or religious but palpable: the inhumanity of man to man."¹¹⁰ Kathleen's character has the unusual ability to argue as a feminine character and, as Alice Jardine would assert, to stress the need for a "...redefinition of the world..." through "...complex destructuring, disintegration, of the founding structures in the West."¹¹¹ This is method in which Jardine suggests the „grand narratives“ created by patriarchy can be rearticulated. If modernity denotes a reclassification of western society, then by implementing this reconstruction, unrelated to patriarchal history and voice, there will be a possibility to create a „new language“ of the Other and the feminine.

The new millennium witnessed another mutation of vampiric tradition, in form of a preoccupation with "*hominus nocturna*;...genetic mutation...a genetically engineered

¹¹⁰ Silver, A. and Ursini, J. (eds.) (1993) *The Vampire Film from Nosferatu to True Blood* Hal Leonard Corporation: Milwaukee WI. (p.322)

¹¹¹ Jardine, Alice (1985) *Gynesis, Configurations of Woman and Modernity* Cornell University Press: Ithica. (p.72)

superrace.”¹¹² In particular, there was an influx of technically sophisticated action vampire films that integrated elements of the science fiction and fantasy narratives. Films such as the *Underworld* (2003), *Underworld: Evolution* (2006) and *Underworld: Awakening* (2012). The *Underworld* series saw the introduction of a female protagonist called Selene (Kate Beckinsale), a hybrid character who possesses paradoxical qualities, a combination of masculine and feminine power. She is physically equal to her male counterparts and has tactical acumen as well as the ability to use highly sophisticated weaponry. However, she also exhibits a sexualised female body through her latex ensemble. She is a symbol of righteousness within the battle for the common good. Selene manages to “...engage in heterosexually attractive bodily behaviour.”¹¹³ Her self-worth is achieved without “...sacrificing preoccupations with beauty, man and consumerism.”¹¹⁴ Selene is conceptualised as a powerful and progressive female agent.

Furthermore, in these cinematic texts, Selene asserts autonomy by murdering her adopted father in *Underworld*, “...she is no longer beholden to the patriarchal tradition of vampires in family.”¹¹⁵ In *Underworld: Evolution*, Selene embarks on destroying, the father of all vampires, Marcus (Tony Curran). This symbolic act connects her struggle with the patriarchal tradition whilst allowing her to reconfigure the vampiric ancestral bloodline. The narrative device of „blood memory“ enacts a mnemonic tradition that permits for the tracing of patriarchal ancestry within the story. Therefore, when Selene offers her blood to the wounded vampire Andreas (Steven Mackintosh), it is an emblematic transferral of patriarchal

¹¹² Abbott, Stacey (2007) *Celluloid Vampires Life After Death in the Modern World* University of Texas: Austin. (p.197)

¹¹³ Projansky, Sarah (2001) *Watching Rape: Film and Television in Postfeminist Culture* New York University Press: New York. (p.79)

¹¹⁴ Helford, Elyce Raae (ed.) *Fantasy Girls: Gender in the New Universe of Science Fiction and Fantasy Television* Rowman and Littlefield: New York. (p.59)

¹¹⁵ O'Connor, Tom (2010) „Uncontrollably Herself“: Deleuze’s Becoming-Woman in the Horror Films of Michael Almereyda, in *Horror Studies*, Vol 1, No.1, pp.111-128 (p.115)

authority, a form of synthesis that bequeaths power from a father onto a daughter. It is an example of a feminine character reclaiming authority in order to be born anew. This rebirth is reinforced in the last scene in the film where Selene is greeted by a new dawn. Selene is unlike Milton's Eve¹¹⁶, neither „born free of history“ or „Mother of Mankind“, but a new feminine hybrid, where a new history is generated by her and she becomes the matriarch of her own reincarnation.

¹¹⁶ Milton, John (2005) *Paradise Lost* Oxford University Press: Oxford.

CONCLUSION

The vampire legend has been active in primordial and sophisticated cultures since the chronicle of customs in society. Bram Stoker's gothic literary offering *Dracula* (1897) elevated the legend as an instantly recognisable mainstream cultural icon. The narrative offered many critical insights into contemporary Victorian taboos, as well as the reflections of what constituted Victorian female sensibilities. Furthermore, within this discourse the infamous vampire had the ability as a metaphor to offer awareness into a variety of societal concerns such as:

“...sexuality...power...inscribe more specifically contemporary concerns, such as relations of power and alienation, attitudes toward illness, and the definition of evil at the end of an unprecedentedly secular century.”¹¹⁷

The discrepancies within gender power struggles can be traced through topography of female vampiric cinematic representation. It was Theda Bara character in *A Fool There Was* who embodied and instigated the cinematic tradition of “...the vamp as female sexual vampire...cementing the association between vampirism and hyperbolic female sexuality...”¹¹⁸ A trend emerged in cinematic texts of this type of feminine portrayal in movies such as *Les Vampires* and *Lilith und Ly*. These forms of female representations denoted sexually deviant identities which were unconventional and acted as an allegory to both the male and female gender. These cautionary texts were produced to emphasise traditional patriarchal ideology and warn the male gender to stay within these confines “...by devoting themselves to family, country, God and industry.”¹¹⁹ If these conventions were not adhered to it would result in being excommunicated from family and society in general.

¹¹⁷ Abbott, Stacey (2007) *Celluloid Vampires Life After Death in the Modern World* University of Texas: Austin. (p.3)

¹¹⁸ Weinstock, Jeffrey (2012) *The Vampire Film Undead Cinema* Columbia University Press: New York. (p.24)

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.* (p.29)

Furthermore, the image of the Vamp acted as an instruction to females to remain within the guidelines of Victorian sensibilities set out by the dominant patriarchal system. If women positioned themselves outside these strict boundaries, they would become a casualty in society and inevitably acquire a role that mitigated them to status of „Other“. The subsequent movies that reaffirmed the roles of dutiful wife which would lead to everlasting contentment were cinematic narratives such as *Nosferatu*, *Dracula* (1931) and *Dracula* (1958).

Traditionally, the vampiric text intended to reinforce established boundaries of dominant society. However, cinematic vampires possess an ability to discuss and challenge alternative and traditional authority through binary hybrid identities. Thus, the vampire archetype has “...undergone a variety of fascinating transformations in response, at least in part, to ongoing transformations in the broader cultural and political mise-en-scène.”¹²⁰ These types of reconstructions are visible, for example, in relation to female representation within lesbian vampire films. In films such as *Dracula’s Daughter* and *Blood of Dracula*, the female vampires engage in homoerotic activities with female victims. However, this is achieved within a hierarchal class system. Therefore, although women are delegated positions of power normally afforded to males, the female power is obtained through her social status as opposed to her gender. Furthermore, these homoerotic sequences are only suggested on screen and therefore reinforce the dictum that lesbian and homosexual sex is unnatural.

In other lesbian vampire movies such as *The Vampire Lovers*, *Lust for a Vampire* and *Twins of Evil*, female vampire’s desires for other women are portrayed as a source of dispute. Whilst in *Vampyros Lesbos* the element of identity performance is present, which confirms Judith Butler’s assertions in relation to performing identities and performing gender, when

¹²⁰ Gordon, J. and Hollinger, V. (eds.) (1997) *Blood Read The Vampire as Metaphor in Contemporary Culture* University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia. (p.1)

staged within a drag/butch sphere, can reveal gender identities as fabricated within a white male heterosexual matrix. Also, this movie's meta-narrative reveals a subversion of the male gaze. Both genders are portrayed to possess similar types of „deviant“ identities and subvert Laura Mulvey's criteria in relation to the male gaze characteristics, which prevents males from taking the position of erotic object and needing to possess more ideal and powerful positions on screen. This subversion and gender ambiguity is further reinforced within the movies *Daughters of Darkness* and *Requiem for a Vampire*. Notably, these cinematic narratives were representing females in a diverse manner, which coincided with the evolutionary changes women were experiencing within society. They possessed a form of authorial commentary on social taboos whilst creating a forum where „Other“ identities could be examined. Examples of these contemporary films which emerged were *The Satanic Rites of Dracula* which positioned the Count in a metaphorical world of the „global commodity culture“. In *Blacula*, the Count re-emerged as an African Prince which opened an examination surrounding slavery and racism. In *Deathdream*, there was an exploration of the traumatised returning vampire soldier from the Vietnam War.

By the 1980s and 1990s a new form of metamorphosis emerged within the vampire trope. This coincided with universal cultural transformations especially within diverse and sub-cultural movements. The vampire genre was propelled into modern familial and suburban settings. *The Hunger* portrays female representation as an aggressor, as well as an autonomous modern working female within the capitalist system. Both female characters have the ability to assert their erotic drives for males and females, unusually within the boundary of dominant heterosexual acceptance. However, this form of female liberation was not reflected in film texts such as such as *Near Dark* and *The Lost Boys*, who advocate

heteronormative familial values and placed women back into a subjugated role of the love interest waiting to be saved by her white heterosexual male.

In postmodern renditions of vampire genre, there are many intertextual references to popular culture. *Nadja* explores the modern female experience in contemporary American society, thus exposing the female to liberties not traditionally associated with a female representation of cinematic vampiric narratives. Whilst, in *The Addiction*, the paradoxical character of Kathleen as both self destructive killer and humanist presents conflicting traits that would never be connected symbolically with the female.

Historically, the vampire genre “...demonstrates a self-conscious awareness of tradition by continually reinventing itself for new audiences.”¹²¹ Other possible areas of inquiry within these cinematic narratives, is the use of “...bodily transformations of vampirism to explore anxieties about the aging process and the desire for immortality.”¹²² Through the association of clinical occupation, *The Hunger*, along with *Lifeforce*, examine and reinterpret the original connection between the vampire and sexually transmitted diseases. Furthermore, both films, unconsciously expressed the anxiousness surrounding the AIDS epidemic “through the language of science rather than simply sex.”¹²³ *Near Dark* (1987) further explores the altering landscape between „modernity and postmodernity“ due to the setting being located in the American west. It epitomises a transformation of “...the history of the American frontier into the myth of the formation of a nation, the road movie has emerged with the development of the American highway and the rise of the automobile...”¹²⁴

¹²¹ Abbott, Stacey (2007) *Celluloid Vampires Life After Death in the Modern World* University of Texas: Austin. (p.11)

¹²² *Ibid.* (p.134)

¹²³ *Ibid.* (p.135)

¹²⁴ *Ibid.* (p.163/164)

The vampire has the ability to move at liberty amongst “...space, time, and body...embodies a legacy of transformation that expresses the experience of modernity.”¹²⁵ The vampiric trope has the ability to highlight diverse cultural consciousness. As such, the vampire genre has progressed within popular culture which enables the vampiric texts to explore diverse representations within race, class and religion. Hence, the vampire has ascended to iconic status within the cinema tradition and it is a prototype that possesses the ability to eclipse “physical boundaries, world politics, communications, and economy.”¹²⁶ Consequently, it is not a revelation that, as Nina Auerbach observes, “...every age embraces the vampire it needs.”¹²⁷

¹²⁵ *Ibid.* (p.215)

¹²⁶ *Ibid.* (p.215)

¹²⁷ Auerbach, Nina (1995) *Our Vampires, Ourselves* University of Chicago Press: Chicago. (p.145)

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Blacula (1972), dir. William Crain, American International Pictures (AIP): USA.

Brides of Dracula (1960), dir. Terence Fisher: Hammer Films Production: UK.

Deathdream (1974), dir. Bob Clark, *Quadrant Films: Canada*.

Dracula (1931), dir. Tod Browning, Universal Pictures: USA.

Dracula (1958), dir. Terence Fischer, Hammer Film Productions: UK.

Dracula (1992), dir. Francis Ford Coppola, *American Zoetrope/Columbia Pictures/Corporation/Osiris Films: USA*.

Dracula's Daughter (1936), dir. Lambert Hillyer, Universal Pictures: USA.

Daughters of Darkness (1971), dir. Harry Kumel, Showking Films/Maya Films/Ciné Vog Films/Roxy Film: Belgium.

Dracula has Risen from the Grave (1968), dir. Freddie Francis, Hammer Film Productions: UK.

Hunger, The (1981), dir. Tony Scott, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM): UK.

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Kiss of the Vampire (1963), dir. Don Sharp, Universal International Films (UI) and Hammer Productions: UK.

Le Manoir du Diable (1896), dir. Georges Méliès, Georges Méliès: France.

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Lost Boys, The (1987), dir. Joel Schumacher, Warner Bros: USA.

Martin (1976), dir. George A. Romero, Laurel Entertainment Inc: USA.

Nachte des Grauens (1916), dir. Richard Oswald, Arthur Robison, Unknown: Germany.

Nadja (1994), dir. Michael Almereyda, Kino Link Company: USA.

Near Dark (1987), dir. Kathryn Bigelow, F/M/Near Dark Joint Venture: USA.

Nosferatu (1922), dir. F.W. Murnau, Jofa-Atelier Berlin-Johannisthal/Prana-Film GmbH: Germany.

Prem Ane Vaasna (1925), dir. Lalitarai Vyas: Unknown: Indian.

Requiem for a Vampire [Vierges et vampires] (1971) dir. Jean Rollin, Les Films ABC: France.

Satanic Rites of Dracula (1973), dir. Jimmy Sangster, Hammer Film Productions: UK.

Son of Dracula (1943), dir. Robert Siodmak, Universal Pictures: USA.

Taste the Blood of Dracula (1969), dir. Peter Sasdy, Hammer Film Productions: UK.

Underworld (2003), dir. Len Wiseman, Screen Gems: USA.

Underworld: Evolution (2006) dir. Len Wiseman, Screen Gems: USA.

Underworld: Awakening (2012), dir. Måns Mårild and Björn Stein, Screen Gems: USA.

Vampire of the Coast (1909), dir. Unknown, Moving Motion Pictures: USA.

Vampyros Lesbos (1971), dir. Jesús Franco, CCC Telecine/Central Cinema Company Film (CCC)/Fénix Cooperativa Cinematográfica/Tele-Cine Film- und Fernsehproduktion: West Germany/Spain.

Velvet Vampire, The (1971), dir. Stephanie Rothman, New World Pictures: USA.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Extensive Filmography of Silent Era Vampire Films

A Vampire Out of Work (1916), dir. S. Rankin Dew, Vitagraph Company of America: USA.

An Innocent Vampire (1916) dir. Unknown, Kalem Company: USA.

Drakula Halála (1921), dir. Károly Lajthay, Unknown: Hungary.

Devil's Daughter, The (1915), dir. Frank Powell, Fox Film Corporation: USA.

Forest Vampires, The (1914), dir. Walter Edwards, Domino Film Company: USA.

In the Grip of the Vampire (1913), dir. Unknown. Unknown: France.

Latest in Vampires, The (1916), dir. Harry Myers, Victor Film Company: USA.

La Torre dei vampiri (1913), dir. Gina Zaccaria, Unknown: Italy.

London After Midnight [The Hypnotist] (1927), dir. Tod Browning, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM): USA.

Mr. Vampire (1916), dir. Francis Ford, Rex Motion Picture Company: USA.

Mysteries of Myra, The (1916), dir. Leopold Wharton and Theodore Wharton, International Film Service Wharton: USA.

Saved from the Vampire (1915), dir. Dell Henderson, Biography Company: USA.

To Oblige a Vampire (1917), dir. Louis Chaudet, Nestor Film Company/Universal Film Manufacturing Company: USA.

Vampire of the Desert (1913), dir. Charles L. Gaskill, Vitagraph Company of America: USA.

Vampire, The (1910), dir. Unknown, The Selig Polyscope Company, Incorporated: USA.

Vampire, The (1913), dir. Robert G. Vignola, Kalem Company: USA.

Vampires of Warsaw [Wampiry Warszawy. Tajemnica taksówki nr 1051] (1925), dir. Wiktor Bieganski:Mercurfilm: Poland.

Vampire's Trail, The (1914), dir. Robert G. Vignola and T. Hayes Hunter, Kalem Film Manufacturing Company: USA.

Vampyren (1913), dir. Mauritz Stiller, Svenska Biografteatern AB: Sweden.

Was She A Vampire? (1915), dir. Albert W. Hale, Universal Film Manufacturing Company: USA.