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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

SANTA CRUZ

WHERE IS DRACULA? UNRAVELING GEOGRAPHIC

AMBIGUITY IN *DRACULA* AND *CARMILLA*

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the
degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

LITERATURE

by

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Abstract

Where is Dracula?: Unraveling Geographic Ambiguity in *Dracula* and

Carmilla

Rafael Franco

In Victorian monster fiction, monsters are not bound by western cartography. Subsequently, western people imagine monsters' locality as contrasted with the geographic fixity of western cities such as London and Berlin. In doing so, western people imagine non-western geography solely in western terms. This approach to maps creates a geographic erasure of non-western cultures from cartography altogether. In doing so, not only does it make the monsters feared for their mysterious whereabouts and "otherness," but it geographically erases the monsters' existence from the western eye.

This thesis explores the implications of monsters' geographic non-representation in western cartography, specifically in terms of violence as a result of geographic erasure. I argue that monsters' geographic erasure rids him of subjectivity in the eyes of the west, for they are portrayed as already dead, per their absence from western maps.

Dedication

I am indebted to my family for their unwavering support in my time as a graduate student. To my parents, who learned about graduate school, research, and navigating higher education for and with me: los quiero, y mis gracias por sus esfuerzos. Thank you to my sisters, Alma and Laura, and my brother-in-law, Shawn. You've been the best support system I could ask for.

Thank you to my friends, old and new, who I carry with me everyday. You are my chosen family: Jonathan Vasquez, Kimberly Herrera, Michelle Gomez-Parra, Selene Islas, Stephanie Villa, Mercedes Madrigal, Rain Ramirez, Solange Ramirez, Hari Kuttivelil, Kimberly Flores, Alma Hidalgo, Andrea Alvarez, Roxanna Villalobos, Dominic Riccione, and Shravani Malipeddi.

And lastly, a special thank you to my incredible mentors, who helped transform this project into what it is today. Renee Fox, Kim Lau, and Carla Freccero—you have all pushed my thinking, writing, and book recommendations (of which there were many) to a place I am proud of, and I hope this thesis reflects that growth.

Introduction to Maps: Seeing is Believing

Already the certainty that the Count is out of the country has given her comfort; and comfort is strength to her. For my own part, now that this horrible danger is not face to face with us, it seems almost impossible to believe in it. Even my own terrible experiences in Castle Dracula seem like a long-forgotten dream.¹—Jonathan Harker, *Dracula*

After ruminating on Dracula's expulsion from Britain, Jonathan Harker expresses comfort that the vampire is now outside British borders. He describes Dracula's existence as "a long-forgotten dream," distancing Dracula's existence from reality itself. Now that the Count is geographically far away from Britain, Harker notes that he is "almost impossible to believe in." To Harker, Dracula becomes a mythological, unreal figure when not face-to-face with anything lying within British borders.

Moreover, Harker's frequent use of the word "seems" merits particular attention, for it signifies a reluctance to accept that Dracula is either real or fake now that he is not within British country lines. "Seems" suggests that the Count is somewhere in between the real and the fake, for he is not within close enough geographic proximity to be considered "real," but his past presence in Britain still haunts Harker and British life. Harker's claim suggests that Dracula is already slayed, for he lies outside British physical space, and is thus already dead and non-existent in the eyes of British subjects who have not come face to face with the vampire. He is, therefore, a "long-forgotten" dream due to his physical distance and his exodus from national borders.

¹ Stoker, Bram. *Dracula*. Broadview Press, 1997, 356.

Harker's use of the word "comfort" to describe the feelings his wife, Mina, experiences suggests that a certain level of relief accompanies the exclusion of the vampire from British space. Comfort arises from Mina's "certainty" that the Count is permanently banished from Britain. Mina's certainty contains a semblance of death-like language that harkens to the "certainty" that accompanies the ultimate slaying of Dracula at the end of the novel. Certainty here contains a funerary-like hue, meaning that the Count's physical distance assures Mina that he will not mix with British life, much like one can be sure that a dead person will not come back to life or that Dracula will not continue feeding off the blood of others after he is slayed in the end of the novel. Banishing and excluding Dracula past British country lines thus acts as a sort of preliminary slaying in the novel. It provides comfort that Dracula will be dead in the British cultural, geographic, and historical imagination far before his literal slaying, which offers comfort to the British people that a vampiric outsider will not threaten their lifestyles.

Geography plays a vital role in *Dracula* and many other monster novels of the 19th-century. Spaces that appear to be empty often house monsters. From the Arctic in *Frankenstein* to the deserted home in *The Beetle*, monsters often reside or are pushed to geographically ambiguous places, assuring British civilians that monsters will not linger around their homes. In these novels, a monster's physical distance, specifically their absence from a map, offers a false sense of safety, suggesting geographic certainty that anything not represented on a map is not actually there. Maps provide the illusion that only those territories marked on the map are

relevant to viewers' reality, and that all territories that are either unmarked or outside its boundaries are irrelevant and even non-existent. Thus, I suggest that maps—specifically western cartography— provide a false sense of reality, painting an image of the world that often does not acknowledge that people and places exist beyond its boundaries, which could expand its viewers' realities. Through this thesis, I hope to offer an alternative form of reading maps that acknowledges their limitations, recognizing that other entities and ways of being are unrepresented on maps, and could completely change our understanding of various social issues.

Western cartography acts as a form of violence that assigns personhood solely to those it is willing to represent. Dracula, vampires, queer subjects, and all who lie outside the scope of these maps are stripped of their subjectivity through their deliberate erasure from Western cartography. Moreover, I argue that such cartographic erasure functions as a preliminary slaying that occurs much before the literal vampiric slaying at the novel's end. By erasing non-Western subjects from maps, western cartography portrays them as already dead.

Additionally, I argue that racialized cartography informs the West's perception of non-Western sexualities. Western cartography defines Eastern subjects as regressive and animalistic, thereby extending that classification toward sexualities they attribute to individuals in the East. At the same time, those unrepresented on maps offer a queer potentiality in that they provide potential alternatives to the lifestyles and representations of the West. Their absence from a tangible source of geographic knowledge allows for a turning toward the body and its relationship with

space and time, rather than toward Western sources of knowledge (such as a map), for guidance and order.

Scholars such as Jack Halberstam and Christopher Craft have argued that the novel arranges a harsh dichotomy between East and West that demarcates racial differences through technology and sexuality.² Most famously, Stephen D. Arata's article titled "The Occidental Tourist" argues that *Dracula* details the West's anxieties about "reverse colonization," or the irrational fear that the East would colonize the traditions and lifestyles of the West as a result of decolonial movements.³ His influential article outlines the sharp distinctions the novel makes between "east" and "west" to highlight how late 19th century works emphasize Britain's greatness, defining the east as regressive and monstrous in comparison.

Despite Arata's and others' arguments, scholars have ignored cartography's central role in creating distance between Western 'normalcy' and Eastern 'deviation.' Using *Dracula* as my focal point and bringing in examples from Le Fanu's *Carmilla*, I will demonstrate that maps and Western representations of space utilize cartography and its units of measurements (such as mileage and physical distance) to place individuals into two categories: the acceptable identity categories that are allowed to exist within British reality and consciousness, and the unacceptable identity categories that live on the fringes of society and the world at large.

² For more information, see Halberstam's *Skin Shows: Gothic Horror and the Technology of Monsters*. Duke University Press and Craft's "'Kiss Me with Those Red Lips': Gender and Inversion in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*" and "Just Another Kiss: Inversion and Paranoia in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*."

³ Arata, Stephen D. "The Occidental Tourist: *Dracula* and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonization." *Victorian Studies*, vol. 33, no. 4, 1990, pp. 623.

Ultimately, I argue that binaries between ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ sexualities are exacerbated by geography, elevating differences between East and West. Represented places, though only sometimes integrated into British society and its customs, exist in close proximity to British life. In contrast, unrepresented places are ‘other,’ too distant and dissimilar to be in proximity to British life. Nonetheless, I suggest that maps and geography offer a plane to negotiate sexualities, generating a visual representation of the limits of allowable social identities. Geography materializes social and cultural boundaries, which get confused once we question what lies beyond those boundaries and what is represented on a map.

I begin my thesis with an analysis of *Dracula*, highlighting common arguments that liken the Count’s ‘othered’ sexuality to animality and bruteness. I will add to these arguments by suggesting that maps and Western perceptions of space heighten his animality, invalidating the queerness within his castle simply because he is physically distant and ambiguous. I continue by arguing that the Count’s absence from maps free him from the categories of sexuality that exist within British society, liberating him from any identity restraints or rules existing in Western society.

Still, I continue by acknowledging that the Count’s absence from maps facilitates acts of violence against him. Because the Count does not exist on a map, people viewing these maps assume he does not exist, taking their information as truths. Thus, violent acts against the Count and those unmapped go unnoticed and unchecked, for they are committed against an individual who many consider mythical.

I finish by offering a reading of Le Fanu's *Carmilla*, noting that it is precisely Carmilla's geographic ambiguity to live freely. I show how her freedom depends on her geographic ambiguity and, though her intentions are ultimately evil, she displays how the foundation of her homoerotic relationship with Laura is precisely a result of her untraceability on a map.

Maps as a Site of Social Negotiation

In her 1888 book *Land Beyond the Forest*, Emily Gerard describes Transylvania as “peculiarly adapted to serve as background to all sorts of supernatural beings and monsters.”⁴ According to Gerard, Transylvania serves as an elsewhere, a “land beyond the forest” containing that which is most strange, eerie, and transgressive. Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*, presumably gaining much of its inspiration for its Transylvanian setting from Gerard’s book, presents Castle Dracula as an elsewhere, or as a sort of “never-land,” in the eyes of Western society. Although impossible to know Stoker’s exact intentions when picking Transylvania, his choice reflects popular sentiments of the nineteenth-century, which experienced severe sociocultural shifts relating to race and sexuality.

The tumultuous nature of the nineteenth century, specifically the eighteen-nineties, has been extensively studied. Scholars have widely acknowledged the centrality of the Oscar Wilde trial’s publicity in questions of sexuality and its fluid nature. In addition to the widely publicized trial, this period was also a time of widespread decolonial movements, which challenged Britain’s status as a global superpower. Britain therefore faced uncertainty about its future, a sentiment which translated into social issues of the time, such as the women’s movement and the Wilde trials.

⁴ For more information on Gerard’s influence on Stoker’s setting, see *Bram Stoker’s Notes for Dracula: A Facsimile Edition*, compiled by the Rosenbach Museum in Philadelphia.

In her book, *Transgothic in Literature and Culture*, Jolene Zigarovich claims that popular monster literature of the time mirrored anxieties over changes in the nineteenth century:

Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, Florence Marryat's *The Blood of the Vampire*, and Richard Marsh's *The Beetle*—all popular horror novels published in 1897—serve to exemplify the plethora of fin de siècle social and cultural worries; frenetic calls for nationalism and strength in the face of crumbling domestic socio-economic structures, collapsing social and cultural boundaries and an increasingly expensive and decaying empire.⁵

According to Zigarovich, monster literature of the time reflects the renegotiation of socio-economic structures at a time when Britain was losing its status as a global superpower. Combined with socio-economic changes, Britain's decline coincided with the popularity of monster literature, which often contained a 'good' British protagonist defeating a foreign 'evil.' Individuals took solace in these novels, which offered them a sense of security that their nation's global power and internal customs were not being renegotiated.

In Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, for example, westerners classify vampires as beings who exist solely outside British borders, holding customs so different from British life that they are almost impossible to believe in. Much of the way vampires are defined as outsiders to British life is through physiognomy. Vampires are painted as criminals and threats to British order as a result of their physical traits. When Jonathan Harker, a traveler who comes to Transylvania to conduct a business deal

⁵ Zigarovich, Jolene. *TransGothic in Literature and Culture*. Ed. Jolene Zigarovich. New York and London, 2017. 100.

with the Count, encounters three sexually alluring female vampires, he states: “Two were dark, and had high aquiline noses, like the Count, and great dark, piercing eyes, that seemed to be almost red when contrasted with the pale yellow moon. The other was fair [...] I seemed somehow to know her face, and to know it in connection with some dreary fear.”⁶ Harker’s retelling of his experience with the vampire sisters paints them as if they were unnatural and evil beings, which he traces to their physical traits. He contrasts the eyes of the darker-skinned sisters with the moon, noting that they are fearful and red in contrast with the natural yellow lunar light. The natural lunar light therefore assures Jonathan that these vampires are separate from natural order, as they hold customs and rituals that he is not used to. Nonetheless, all three sisters strike fear in Harker, threatening to throw him into a state of disarray because they allow him to push his perception of the real and natural.

The description of vampires as having an “aquiline nose” has drawn significant scholarly attention. Many scholars have argued that the novel diagnoses vampires as emblems of prehistory due to their physical characteristics. Burton Hatlen, Ahmet Süner, Atilla Viragh, and Stephen D. Arata argue that British subjects consider Dracula a representation of prehistory who threatens British modernity through his dangerous, non-western, pre-modern practices, many of which the novel traces to physical difference.⁷ Oftentimes, scholars argue that this fear had its roots in

⁶ Stoker, *Dracula*, 69.

⁷ See Burton Hatlen’s “The return of the repressed/oppressed in Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*,” Ahmet Süner’s “The Representation of Time, Modernity and Its Prehistory in *Dracula*,” Atilla Viragh’s “Can the Vampire Speak?: *Dracula* as Discourse on Cultural Extinction,” and Stephen D. Arata’s “Strange Cases, Common Fates: Degeneration and Fiction in the Victorian Fin de Siècle.”

the nineteenth-century irrationality of reverse colonization, which based itself on erroneous interpretations of Darwin's theories of evolution. Perhaps most notably, Jack Halberstam notes that Harker's description of Dracula's physical traits draws connections to stereotypical depictions of Jewish people: "Dracula's physiognomy is a particularly clear cipher for the specificity of his ethnic monstrosity [...] Visually, the connection between Dracula and other fictional Jews is quite strong [...] Faces and bodies mark the Other as evil so that he could be recognized and ostracized."⁸

Halberstam cites a connection between the way Dracula's physical characteristics are presented in the novel and other anti-semitic characterizations in novels and news magazines of the time, including the character of Fagin in Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist* and the description of Jews in Eduard Drumont's *Libre Parole* as having a "hooked nose, shifty eyes, [and] protruding ears."⁹ Halberstam thus identifies a correlation between physiognomy and Britain's fear of Jewish people posing a danger to British society from within, tracing its tradition across a history of European anti-Semitism.

The novel's use of physiognomy to exacerbate differences between East and West reflects a theory of reverse evolution that circulated primarily in mainland Europe at the time. Perhaps the most popular and notorious theorist of the time was Cesare Lombroso, an Italian theorist who claimed that those who committed crimes were naturally born "degenerates." He theorized that this degeneracy could be traced

⁸ Halberstam, Jack. "Technologies of Monstrosity: Bram Stoker's 'Dracula.'" *Victorian Studies*, vol. 36, no. 3, 1993, pp. 337.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 338.

to physical traits such as the shape of an individual's head, ears, and nose. According to Daniel Pick, Lombroso made a connection between the "degenerate" and a "social vampire who preyed on the nation and desired, in Lombroso's words, 'not only to extinguish life in the victim, but to mutilate the corpse, tear its flesh and drink its blood.'"¹⁰ Lombroso thus considered degenerates, or criminals, individuals who preyed on the social well-being of others. They unnaturally drained the rightful life force of individuals for the sake of their self-advancement.

Although Lombroso's ideas were never very popular in Britain, his ideas are explicitly recognized in *Dracula*. Harker says of Dracula: "The Count is a criminal and of the criminal type [...] Nordau and Lombroso would so classify him."¹¹ The likening of an outsider to a criminal is a common line of thinking in the late nineteenth-century. Taken in the context of Harker's previous descriptions of vampires' physical traits, criminality here is likened to theories of physiognomy that circulated heavily throughout Europe. Harker takes the Count's criminality to the extreme of assuring that Nordau and Lombroso, two of Europe's most notorious physiognomists, would classify him as a criminal simply because he is physically different. Although theories of degeneration never took much hold in late nineteenth-century Britain, the use of Nordau and Lombroso to classify the Count as an outsider establishes him as a danger precisely because his physical features are different from those of the common British subject.

¹⁰ Pick, Daniel. 1989. "Fictions of Degeneration." In *Faces of Degeneration: A European Disorder, c. 1848-c.1918*. Britain: Cambridge University Press, 172.

¹¹ Stoker, *Dracula*, 383.

Indeed, some of the reasons the Count is seen as a dangerous outsider in the novel come down to his physical characteristics. However, I argue that scholars ignore the fact that this fear heightens as a result of his crossings into British space and borders, threatening to undermine British customs by physically, like a parasite, crossing borders and invading all parts of British life. Thus, the novel suggests that physical distance helps prevent the animal from crossing borders, ensuring that the wild and unnatural does not mix with a civilized, natural order. In the novel, Dracula comes to London to construct a vampiric army and feed off British subjects. When Dr. Van Helsing, who is extremely well versed in vampire lore, discusses the dangers of having Dracula in London, he describes him in animalistic terms, but he also utilizes spatial and geographic proximity to heighten the danger of his animality:

The brute beasts which are to the Count's command are yet themselves not amenable to his spiritual power; for look, these rats that would come to his call, just as from his castle top he summon the wolves to your going and to that poor mother's cry, though they come to him, they run pell-mell from the so little dogs of my friend Arthur.¹²

Van Helsing's description of the Count's followers makes note of his close relationship with animals, which again harks back to theories of reverse evolution. But Van Helsing fearfully claims that the vampiric race's animality and relationship with other animals is even more fearful when he and his animal-companions cross into British borders. He likens the Count's calling of rats to Britain in the same fearful experience that Jonathan had in Castle Dracula, hinting the same physical proximity

¹² Stoker, *Dracula*, 293.

to animals that led Jonathan to come face to face with ‘animalistic’ sexualities in Transylvania could cross borders and invade the rest of Britain too.

Thus, in addition to the frequent descriptions of the Count’s animalistic differences in the novel, much of the fear individuals have toward Dracula is a result of his ability to assimilate and physically invade London life, crossing British borders and threatening to alter British customs. Much of his assimilation depends firstly on his ability to know the British lifestyle. When staying at Dracula’s castle, Harker notes that Dracula contains a wide array of books varying in subjects from “history, geography, politics, political economy, botany, geology, law—all relating to England and English life and customs and manners.”¹³ Dracula’s possession of books helps him exploit Harker’s Anglo-centric view of life, as it allows him to hide his plans. As argued by Stephen D. Arata, Dracula utilizes books and the quest for knowledge in order to mask his “sinister plan to invade and exploit Britain and her people.”¹⁴ Dracula’s ease in hiding his plans further displays how Harker’s Anglo-centricism skews his ability to see Britain as vulnerable. When explaining the books to Harker, Dracula states: “These [books ...] have been good friends to me, and for some years past, ever since I had the idea of going to London, have given me many, many hours of pleasure. Through them I have come to know your great England; and to know her is to love her.”¹⁵ Dracula’s statement regarding the West contrasts Harker’s perception of Dracula and the East. Whereas Harker paints the East as mysterious and an

¹³ Stoker, *Dracula*, 293.

¹⁴ Arata, “Strange Cases,” 638.

¹⁵ Stoker, *Dracula*, 50.

emblem of prehistory, Dracula praises the West as well-recorded and full of a grand and impressive history.

Similarly, Dracula describes England as pleasurable, which Harker perceives as normal and unsuspecting. To Harker, the West is a desirable place all people view as the locus of pleasure and leisure. Thus, when Dracula desires to journey to London at the novel's beginning, Harker perceives this desire as normal, as he naturalizes British identity as globally renowned and naturally good. The fact that the Count reveals his plot to Harker prior to his enactment of that plot later on in the novel further suggests that Harker is blinded to views of Britain as anything other than desirable. In other words, Harker cannot see any possible threats to the British order, for in his eyes, Britain is, and forever will be, a global superpower.

While the novel upholds the idea that Britain is the locus of global pleasure and power, it also argues that its greatness lies in preventing invasive outside customs from coming into the country and diminishing its international greatness. For this reason, individuals must be careful with encouraging outsiders to come into the country and alter its sense of self, assuring that outsiders learn and actively practice British customs as a prerequisite for entering its borders. Harker is the central character in the novel who encourages the Count to travel to Britain, telling him that he “know[s] and speak[s] English thoroughly!”¹⁶ His enthusiasm for travel to Britain upholds his belief that Britain is the center of global desirability, and that its national practices, including languages, should continue with all who enter its borders.

¹⁶ Stoker, *Dracula*, 51.

Because the Count follows British customs, Harker is therefore blind to the fact that the Count will potentially undermine British greatness.

To Jonathan, and westerners in general, some of the ways that the Count threatens British greatness is through his monstrous sexuality. Harker's initial obliviousness to the transgressive sexualities existing within Dracula's castle suggests that he was unaware that the sexualities he observes in the castle were even possibilities.

His lack of awareness in this respect is closely related to his spatial disorientation. Jonathan notes that he draws many of his sources of this area's maps from the British Museum, which had opened its doors only forty years prior to the publication of the novel. Jonathan's retelling of his experience in the British Museum firstly positions the museum as a credible source of knowledge. His experiences with the British Museum echo a popular idea in anthropological studies, which cite the museum as a contact zone for colonization and political domination. Scholars like Zac Zimmer and James Clifford have acknowledged the museum as a site that individuals trust contains credible information when, in reality, it presents information from a solely western perspective.¹⁷ The museum therefore acts as a contact zone where the Western museum colonizes and controls the narrative it portrays of the colonized subject.

The western skewing of information through the museum presents itself in the novel through a lack of information on Dracula's geography. When speaking of his

¹⁷ See Clifford, James. "Museums as Contact Zones. Routes, Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century," In *Contact*. 1997, 188-219.

encounters with maps and historical documents in the British Museum, Jonathan notes that “some foreknowledge of the country could hardly fail to have some importance in dealing with a noble of that country.”¹⁸ Jonathan’s experience in the British Museum thus functions as a skewed perception of how the West perceives the East. The West perceives the East as nonexistent, unrepresented by cartography, and thus as unaware that it exists, which incentivizes Jonathan to carry that perception into his travels. The museum thus causes Jonathan to affirm his belief that the East is an area of geographic ambiguity and relative unimportance, for it is not represented by western sources of information.

When traveling to the Count’s residence, Harker feels disoriented, as he is unaware of where he is due to Britain having no maps of Castle Dracula or many other lands in the East. He notes he “was not able to light on any map or work giving the exact locality of the Castle Dracula, as there are no maps of the country as yet to compare with [the] Ordnance Survey maps.”¹⁹ Jonathan’s statement diminishes Dracula’s geography as undeterminable, for it is unrepresented by the Ordnance Survey maps, which is the national mapping service of Great Britain. Jonathan here describes his geographic location solely on the sources he defines as credible, that being any source of information originating from his home country.

Jonathan’s spatial confusion mimics his lack of awareness of the sexualities that openly exist beyond Britain. Just as Jonathan does not engage with the transgressive queerness that exists in Castle Dracula, Western maps do not engage

¹⁸ Stoker, *Dracula*, 32-33.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

with anything too far to the East, which they portray as merely dense forest and an array of nothingness. Dracula's deliberate exclusion makes western subjects ignorant of the non-heteronormative possibilities that exist within Castle Dracula's mysterious location. British maps represent solely the subjects it acknowledges as valid, marking those that exist in Castle Dracula as 'other.'

Thus, Jonathan feels confusion at the transgressive acts that take place within the castle. Perhaps the best example of the transgressive acts that occur due to this geographic othering is Jonathan's sexual encounter with three vampire sisters in a prohibited quarter of Castle Dracula. From his first encounter with the sisters, Jonathan defines them as beings that lie between the categories of human and non-human. He notes: "In the moonlight opposite me were three young women, ladies by their dress and manner. I thought at the time that I must be dreaming when I saw them, for, though the moonlight was behind them, they threw no shadow on the floor."²⁰ Jonathan's description of the women complicates the sisters' subjectivity. He describes them as if they were familiar and British, being that they are "ladies by their dress and manner." However, he notes that there is something off about them, something that lies outside the norms of British society when he notes that they "threw no shadow on the floor." Jonathan paints the sisters as beings who exist beyond the boundaries of identity that exist within British geographic borders. The sisters are an unidentifiable someone, or something, else to him. They are beings without shadows who are human but are, at the same time, not quite human. In other

²⁰ Stoker, *Dracula*, 69.

words, they represent the possibilities of human subjectivity in that they do not fully encompass British definitions of it, offering alternative ways of being.

Furthermore, the vampire sisters disrupt Jonathan's definitions of normativity, suggesting that these disruptions have the potential to occur in Jonathan's homeland of Britain. He expresses sexual arousal toward the vampire sisters, stating: "I felt in my heart a wicked, burning desire that they would kiss me with those red lips."²¹ Such arousal is out of the ordinary for Jonathan. He is used to repressing much of his sexuality and bodily needs, in that he must conform to heteronormative sexual roles in British society. His sexuality demands that he must consistently perform the role of the dominant man who enacts sexual advances on the passive woman. However, his newfound status of being untraceable by British society allows for a complete abandonment of these roles. As argued by Elizabeth Signoretti, his encounter with the vampires enables him to listen to his bodily needs and perform the role of the passive female.²² Here, the women make the advances, with Jonathan receiving their kisses in a passive languorous ecstasy.

This is not to say that space goes completely unmediated in Castle Dracula. Dracula makes clear that Jonathan is not to meander into some regions of the house. There are corridors he cannot enter, doors that remain locked, and windows he cannot open.

²¹ Stoker, *Dracula*, 69.

²² Signoretti, Elizabeth. "Repossessing the Body: Transgressive Desire in 'Carmilla' and 'Dracula.'" *Criticism*, vol. 38, no. 4, 1996, 623.

Still, the mediation that occurs in this space functions differently than the mediation of space that occurs in the west. While borders and space are strictly upheld and enforced more long-term in Britain, Dracula holds a promise of breaking down these borders, which signals a promised queer potentiality within the walls of his castle. When disrupting Jonathan's encounter with the vampire sisters, Dracula states: "Well, now I promise you that when I am done with him you shall kiss him at your will."²³ Dracula's promise signals a guaranteed indulgence in pleasure for Jonathan and the sisters. While the spatial mediation in Castle Dracula initially resembles the mediation in Britain, it is different in its acknowledgment of something else beyond the spatial limits it has for itself. Dracula establishes that soon, there will be something more for Jonathan and the sisters. Perhaps it will be something better or something worse. Regardless, it will be something beyond the limits existing in the spatial configurations that Jonathan experiences at that moment in the novel.

Thus, the simple occurrence of this encounter and Jonathan's need to record his disgust at his participation in it prove that Castle Dracula houses norms and traditions beyond western society's heteronormative boundaries. Ultimately, these acts are foreign and "other" to Jonathan and all other western beings. Nonetheless, they remind readers that a different world, an elsewhere of human connection with their environment, exists beyond what western society deems socially acceptable.

The policing of normativity through western cartography and the protection of borders further reveals itself through the assimilation that Dracula must undergo in

²³ Stoker, *Dracula*, 71.

traveling from east to west. Upon traveling across the continent to construct a vampiric army in Britain, Dracula must perform a British heteronormative subjectivity so as not to be evicted from London. Once on British land, he blends in seamlessly with London life, which he does by learning the way of the Londoner through British books and cartography. As a result, he goes unnoticed by everyone but Jonathan in Piccadilly, a famous tourist street in Victorian London.

His analyses of books and maps succeed, as he successfully acclimates to British customs in London. Here, he interacts with space differently. He walks the flat streets of London rather than climbs its walls. He lives in houses that are not on steep precipices and have specific addresses. In essence, he must be traceable and he must cede to normative western interactions with space. Due to this traceability, Dracula must hide anything British individuals may see as out of the ordinary, or queer, as it will make him stand out amidst the mediated spaces of heteronormative roles of western society.

Through the lack of information on the unrepresented lands of the East, the novel suggests that the West does not acknowledge Eastern life in its information systems (in this case, cartography) because they fear it will inform their subjects of alternative ways of being, displaying that categorizing individuals into identity formations is limiting and unreasonable. In fact, upon seeing the transgression within Castle Dracula, Harker experiences a change in his personhood, as he has now witnessed and experienced things that people in Britain are normally restricted from knowing about. After seeing Dracula stare down a woman in Picadilly, presumably in

order to feed off her blood, Harker exclaims: “My God, if this be so! Oh, my God! My God! If I only knew! If I only knew!”²⁴ Previously, Dracula had disclosed his plan to travel to England, and Harker interpreted his desires as a rightful romanticization of Britain. However, after witnessing and experiencing the transgressive sexualities within Dracula’s castle, Harker realizes that the Count’s presence in Britain could undermine British customs, inciting him to respond in fear rather than in excitement.

Meanwhile, when Mina, Jonathan’s wife, sees Dracula gazing at a woman in Picadilly, a popular street in London with clear cartographic representations, she does not mind his presence due to his performance of western norms. Mina first sees Dracula as he gazes at a woman in a public space as if he were a straight, white, Victorian British man. It is only once Jonathan points out Dracula’s identity that she states: “His face was not a good face; it was hard, and cruel, and sensual, and his big white teeth [...] were pointed like an animal’s.”²⁵ Dracula’s anonymity in London thus depends on his ability to blend into western laws of public space and heteronormative desire. By staring at a woman in a public and cartographically represented space, he goes unnoticed by everyone except Jonathan, who knows about the queerness in Dracula’s castle. In remaining oblivious to the queerness within the Castle, Mina therefore trusts that the Count is ‘normal,’ or that he is, just like any other man on the street, a heteronormative white male.

Per the reader’s knowledge of the queerness within Castle Dracula, one can see that Dracula’s very presence in London suggests that queerness exists within

²⁴ Stoker, *Dracula*, 210.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 209.

Britain's borders. Furthermore, Jonathan's previously described indulgence of that queerness in an untraceable land suggests that he, and perhaps others in Britain, find joy and pleasure in the indulgences of the pleasures that lie in the land beyond the forest.

These queer desires may thus be present within British society, but lie hidden and are untraceable, murky, and elusive. Subjects suppress their queerness for fear of being punished, evicted, or even killed. Dracula and Jonathan prove that queerness is an ambiguous *something* that floats within the crevices of the map that cartography and Western information systems refuse to trace. It exists perhaps in private spaces, densely forested areas, or the streets of Piccadilly. It even floats in cartographically represented areas such as Piccadilly—it simply hovers like a second shadow of the humans walking by its streets. Thus, the novel reveals that there are secondary, shadowy elsewheres that, if recognized, would disrupt the mediation of human-space relations through cartography. Nonetheless, in presenting threatening monsters, these novels show that power and the binaries of 'allowable' and 'unallowable' can constantly be renegotiated.

What Lies Beyond The Forest

By existing “elsewhere” or “beyond” the reaches of western society, Dracula holds an elusive and slippery identity. Without a place in western information systems that mediate human interactions with land and the environment, in this case, geography, Dracula becomes part of a matrix that is an *unidentifiable something* rather than a *definitive somewhere*. As previously stated, when traveling from London to Transylvania to conduct a business deal with Count Dracula, Jonathan notes that he never knows where Transylvania is: “I was not able to light on any map or work giving the exact locality of the Castle Dracula, as there are no maps of the country as yet to compare with our own Ordnance Survey Maps.” Jonathan’s analysis of maps suggests that the West sees Castle Dracula as existing nowhere. Still, the events of the novel and Jonathan’s urge to search Western records provide readers enough evidence that it exists, meaning that its very existence demands the question: is there something else, or somewhere else, beyond the furthest limits Western society has constructed for itself through cartography?

This unidentified elsewhere resonates with recent debates about queerness, a term with definitions as elusive as Dracula’s Castle. To quote Annamarie Jagose, “by refusing to crystallize in any specific form, queer maintains a relation of resistance to whatever constitutes the normal.”²⁶ As many literary theorists have argued, the acts Jonathan experiences and observes in Castle Dracula offer an alternative to the standard representations of gender and sexuality Jonathan is accustomed to. However,

²⁶ Jagose, Annmarie. 1996. *Queer Theory: An Introduction*. New York: New York University Press, 99.

I would like to add to these arguments by suggesting that Dracula's inability to be traced on a map contributes to his queerness through his murky characterization as a being existing "beyond the forest," or beyond any knowable categories of identity. As a result of his geographic untraceability, he lies beyond the confines of allowed human behavior Western society has spatially defined for itself within its cartographic representations.

Dracula scholars have long overlooked the vampire's mysterious geography but have nonetheless provided valuable insight into the specific anxieties felt by British civilians when the vampire is within close proximity to British subjects. Perhaps the most popular argument scholars have made is that the vampire creates anxieties about divergent sexualities in the British sphere. Christopher Craft, Jack Halberstam, Renee Fox, Kathleen L. Spencer, and Thomas M. Stuart have argued that the vampire practices a level of sexual freedom that is banned in the British sphere.²⁷ Critiques of sexual freedom often come as critiques of women's sexual freedom through the New Woman's movement of the late 19th century, in which women advocated for greater liberty over their own life choices. Recently, however, many critics have argued that *Dracula* exemplifies a more queer representation of sexual freedom, which directly retaliates against the heteronormativity of British society. However, many queer and feminist readings argue that the final slaying of the

²⁷ See Christopher Craft's "'Kiss Me with Those Red Lips': Gender and Inversion in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*," Jack Halberstam's "Technologies of Monstrosity: Bram Stoker's 'Dracula,'" Renee Fox's "Building Castles in the Air: Female Intimacy and Generative Queerness in *Dracula*," Kathleen L. Spencer's "Purity and Danger: *Dracula*, the Urban Gothic, and the Late Victorian Degeneracy Crisis," and Thomas M. Stuart's "Out of Time: Queer Temporality and Eugenic Monstrosity."

vampire as the reestablishing of a British social order, and fail to acknowledge the slaying which occurs prior to the novel's resolution.

Scholars fail to acknowledge that there are attempts to kill the vampire prior to the novel's ending that are not so literal. They overlook the fact that the measurement of the vampire's othered sexualities is also created through the vampire's erasure from western geography. Therefore, scholars overlook that the slaying of the vampire occurs not only with the literal death of the vampire, but also through the vampire's continuous exclusion from cartography. Through their exclusion from geography, vampires experience an ongoing slaying that positions them as always primitive, non-western, and ultimately non-existent. In doing so, they are killed even before their actual slaying, for their erasure from western forms of representation converts them into a myth rather than a reality. The literal killing of the vampire at the end of the novel thus functions as a re-killing, as the cartographic killing that precedes it is slow, ongoing, and thus barely noticeable.

As I previously stated, many scholars have also argued that vampires function as emblems of prehistory, inciting British fears that prehistory will rise and disrupt the forward progression of British history. In this section, I argue that this preliminary slaying of the vampire provides British subjects a false sense of security that they are safe from Dracula's othered sexualities and race. I say 'false' because despite his sexuality being 'traced' and killed off, 'othered' sexualities will continue to exist, but will lurk in the shadows—sometimes afraid to come out, other times preferring to remain separate.

Furthermore, the Anglo-centrism of maps leads the west to views itself as unerasable from the world map. In doing so, the novel displays the constructedness of cartographic boundaries, and asserts that western forms of knowledge are farcical representations of British perceptions of themselves and their alleged greatness on the world stage. Britain thus becomes so consumed in its greatness and the identity formations it has already created and recognized for itself, that it erases alternative ways of being, such as that of the vampire, from their global perception, as they believe that their greatness has cemented their practices on the world map as the only option for ages to come.

As suggested by Jonathan's experience looking at Western maps of Transylvania, the West refuses to represent the transgressive queerness in Castle Dracula per Dracula's exclusion from Western cartography. Dracula's deliberate exclusion makes Western subjects ignorant of the non-heteronormative possibilities within Castle Dracula's mysterious location. Whereas spatial boundaries define permitted activity for Western subjects, Castle Dracula presents other possibilities where gender and sexuality are more murky and fluid.

Still, I want to acknowledge and refute the problems that may arise from this reading. This reading does not aim to contribute to the dichotomies between east and west, nor does it seek to "other" minoritized bodies. Instead, this reading utilizes Dracula as a medium to understand the murkiness of the term "queer," and the possibilities that exist beyond the limits of what is considered normative human behavior within the policed borders of western society. Thus, I utilize Dracula and his

vampiric comrades as tools to read a murky identity that may even exist within Britain but is suppressed, expelled, and, in many cases, killed off. *Dracula* as a novel thus offers a perspective through which to imagine queerness and its potentialities.

Dracula's classification as a travel narrative renders it a text where geography is central to the novel's plot and its final resolution. As stated by Stephen Arata "the travel narrative concerns itself with boundaries—both with maintaining and with transgressing them [...] By problematizing those boundaries, Stoker probes the heart of the culture's sense of itself, its ways of defining and distinguishing itself from other peoples, other cultures, in its hour of perceived decline."²⁸

To elaborate on Arata's project, cartography in *Dracula* acts as a mediator between normative human behavior and the environment. I define the environment as everything that the human body can forge a relationship and interact with. Cartography plays a role in the novel that resonates with Kathleen Kirby's analysis of political geographies. She states that cartography "institutes a particular kind of boundary between the subject and space, but it also is itself a site of interface, mediating the relationship between space and subject and constructing each in its own particularly ossified way."²⁹ Cartography plays a larger role than merely assisting with direction and routing because it also controls and defines human behavior by delineating the spatial limits of human interactions with their environments.

²⁸ Arata, "Occidental Tourist," 626-7.

²⁹ Kirby, K.M. (1996) Re: mapping subjectivity: cartographic vision and the limits of politics, in Duncan, N. (ed.) *BodySpace: Destabilizing Geographies of Gender and Sexuality*. London and New York: Routledge, 47.

In the novel, interactions with the environment that stray from strict routing and cartographic tracing through western maps and technologies generate much anxiety in those who follow their directions daily. At a train stop in Budapest, Jonathan states, “I feared to go very far from the station, as we had arrived late and would start as near the correct time as possible.” Straying from the station threatens to throw Jonathan into a state of geographic disarray that will impact his timeliness and spatial order. He relies on the tracks as cartography, for they inform him of where he is at a specific moment. He opts to stay in one place, for staying inside the train keeps him connected to the train tracks that originate from the normality and routine gender performance Jonathan feels in the west.

Jonathan’s descriptions of Transylvanian land as lonely and unkept further the anxieties of untraceable space. He states of Transylvanian roads that “it is an old tradition that they are not to be kept in too good order”.³⁰ Subsequently, he states that “there was on it no sign of a vehicle.”³¹ His descriptions of his journey through the Carpathians differ from his journey across cities lying to the west in that he emphasizes Transylvanian difference through its eerie lack of directionality. He classifies the Carpathians as regressive in nature due to the lack of vehicles and paved roads. In fact, he even notes that the road is a “sandy road,” displaying how the wild overtakes clear directionality and markers of space the closer he gets to Castle Dracula.

³⁰ Stoker, *Dracula*, 37.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 40.

This lack of traceability leads Jonathan to question the safety he feels when traveling into the unknown geography of Castle Dracula. He panics when away from the cartographic security he feels around places that are either clearly mapped or clearly geographically connected to the west. However, this disassociation with western cartography's boundaries makes Castle Dracula an alternative space to western society. It is a space where definitive space matters less because the relationship between the body and its surroundings is less mediated than in the western world, which is mediated by maps, train routes, roadways, and other technologies that connect individuals to the West.

Dracula's ambiguous geography severely makes him dangerous to westerners, especially as others discover his power through deep archival research. Dr. Seward, Jonathan, and all others hunting for Dracula recognize that his few records in historical documents portray him as dangerous and powerful, making his literal slaying the only option for maintaining the British order. Dr. Seward notes that he "studied, over and over again [...] all the papers relating to this monster," meaning that he relies on their descriptions of the vampire for how to think about Dracula.³² He trusts all Western documentation that exists in his preconceptions of the vampire, and assumes that his reactions to these documents are indicative of the action he must take.

³² Stoker, *Dracula*, 343.

Of course, the documents that Dr. Seward encounters portray the vampire as evil, but most importantly they portray the vampire as evil because of his queer difference. Dr. Seward notes:

The more I have studied, the greater seems the necessity to utterly stamp him out. All through there are signs of his advance; not only of his power, but of his knowledge of it. [...] But he is growing, and some things that were childish at the first are now of man's stature. He is experimenting, and doing it well. And if it had not been that we have crossed his path he would be yet, he may be yet if we fail, the father or furtherer of a new order of beings, whose road must lead through Death, not Life.³³

Dr. Seward's descriptions of the vampire rely heavily on archival research, which portray the Count as antithetical to various 'good' careers – soldier, statesman, and alchemist. He notes that the Count is smart, and knows British customs well, making his otherness an even bigger threat.

However, this power seems to have a high semblance of danger due to Dracula's ability to create a new order and an other way of being. Dr. Seward not only deems the vampire as dangerous because he had the "highest development of science-knowledge of his time," but he also describes the vampire as capable of being a "father or furtherer of a new order of beings." Seward's fear suggests that he and the Crew of Light fear the Count's otherness, for it could overtake his and Britain's customs and categories of identity. He fears the Count can overtake Britain's power, creating a 'new order,' one which centers 'through Death, not Life.'

³³ Stoker, *Dracula*, 343.

Here, I would like to draw a comparison between Seward's language and Lee Edelman's arguments surrounding "the death drive." Edelman argues that the death drive "names what the queer, in the order of the social, is called forth to figure: the negativity opposed to every form of social viability."³⁴ I bring in Edelman's argument to display that Seward's language positions Dracula as a being who is 'negative,' whose sexuality, queerness, and ways of being opposes "life" and the natural order. To Seward, Dracula's invasion of Britain will only lead to death, destruction, suffering, and the creation of an 'other' society. This negativity, indeed, reflects in the Count's geographic absence, a negativity which positions him as nonexistent and socially unviable.

Therefore, it is this knowledge of Dracula's ability to create other ways of being that leads Dr. Seward to conclude that Dracula is a threat to the British social order. Dracula's need to feed off human blood, while dangerous, is only a secondary threat behind his primary threat of total domination through a different order than that existing already in the West. Moreover, the Count, an enlightened being who has the "brain powers" to conquer Britain, both literally and ideologically, freeing individuals from the defining, positive categories of identity and transitioning into a world of ambiguity and never-ending 'negative' possibility.

The literal slaying of the vampire depends on being able to subvert the Count's geographical ambiguity and negativity, thus ridding him of the freedom to wreak havoc whenever and wherever he desires. Dr. Seward notes in his journal that

³⁴ Edelman, Lee. "The Future Is Kid Stuff." 2004. In *No Future*, Duke University Press, 9.

the myths and legends in books and the British Museum allow for them to penetrate the Count's homes and fill them with garlic and crucifixes, all which are toxic to vampires. In doing so, Dracula has no choice but to go to the homes that do not have these toxic materials, thus limiting the options of homes he has access to and halting his geographic ambiguity.

This plot to find all of the Count's homes therefore allows the vampire slayers to undermine his cunning, for they are able to lure the vampire into a precise location, which reflects the precision of British maps and identity formations. One of Dr. Seward's journal entries states: "Already all of his lairs but one be sterilize as for him; and before the sunset this shall be so. Then he have no place where he can move and hide."³⁵ Dr. Seward's confidence that he and his team will eliminate the vampire lies in his "sterilization" of all the Count's homes "but one." Therefore, there is no way that Dracula can escape, for he only has one place to go, which they have all identified on the map thanks to their ability to track all of the Count's shipments. Geographic precision therefore gives British subjects an edge over Dracula, for they are able to combat the Count's geographic ambiguity.

However, after they find the Count and he manages to escape, the vampire slayers are again betrayed by the Count's geographic ambiguity, this time by his use of natural elements to subvert geographic precision. When traveling back to Transylvania by boat, the Count specifically relies on water in order to make himself hard to find. In her journal, Mina notes that "the Count wanted isolation," and the

³⁵ Stoker, *Dracula*, 344.

easiest way to do so was via “water, as the most safe and secret way.”³⁶ Traveling by ship allows the Count to make himself geographically ambiguous and remain in control of his self-preservation. Although he no longer aims to invade Britain, he nonetheless remains in control in order to escape his eventual slaying and persecution. In traveling by ship, Dracula thus gains isolation, and guarantees his self-preservation through the subversion of geographic precision. He utilizes his cunning in noting that the seas are not mapped as are roads, streets, or shops, which have precise names and easy access.

Despite the Count’s geographic ambiguity, the vampire slayers must find a way to be geographically precise to eliminate the vampire from existence altogether, undermining future threats to British identity categories. In her journal, Mina notes: “We know from the record that he was on the water; so what we have to do is to ascertain what water.”³⁷ Mina’s statement establishes a need for geographical precision in order to dominate the vampire successfully. While geographic ambiguity gives the vampire power, geographic knowledge gives those in western countries power over those who attempt to utilize this geographical ambiguity to their advantage. In order to successfully remain powerful and dominate those who lie to the East, the West must therefore enact a literal slaying of all who are politically and ideologically power while keeping them unmapped. Although such slaying already occurs through the vampire’s erasure from western cartography, Dracula’s invasion

³⁶ Stoker, *Dracula*, 293, 394.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 393.

from Europe shows that he still remains a threat to the British social order in the eyes of the West.

Jonathan realizes the need for geographic precision through his quick and precise measurements of the water routes that the Count likely takes, which give the vampire slayers an edge through their ability to subvert the power that accompanies Dracula's mysterious geographic ambiguity. He states: "If any waterway was chosen for the Count's escape back to his Castle, the Sereth and then the Bistritza at its junction, would be the one. We took it, that somewhere about the 47th degree, north latitude, would be the place chosen for crossing the country between the river and the Carpathians."³⁸ Jonathan's statement emphasizes the importance of precise measurements of geography in finding the Count. These precise measurements provide a roadmap and guide to the final act of slaying that uphold British customs and identity categories. Jonathan's emphasis on precise geography reinforces the need to assert western dominance over the East through maps and the exclusion of the East from these maps. Maps here serve western needs, ensuring that the only subjects who adhere to western ways of being benefit from their information.

The vampire slayers subsequently feel the need to slay Dracula as precaution against any future threats to the British social order. They reason that Dracula has both posed a threat to London and greater England in the past, and is bound to do it again in the future. Mina notes that "the Count is a criminal and of criminal type," as he seeks "resource in habit."³⁹ Mina's claim predicts the vampire's future actions

³⁸ Stoker, *Dracula*, 398.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 383.

based on the repetition of history. She takes the stereotypical belief that “history repeats itself” as a sign that the bad history must be killed off in order to put an end to these allegedly evil historical cycles.

Mina furthermore traces the need to learn from past histories to the crossing of geographic boundaries, a mission in which he had previously failed per its documentation in historical records. “His past is a clue,” she states “he went back to his own country from the land he had tried to invade, and thence, without losing purpose, prepared himself for a new effort. He came again, better equipped for his work; and won. So he came to London to invade a new land.”⁴⁰ Mina therefore suggests the Crew of Light ensure that Britain remains free of the Count’s outside influence, keeping him separate and alien from British land to preserve British customs.

Mina and the vampire slayers’ fears of the vampire’s invasion therefore lead her to continue to utilize language that undermines the vampire’s existence, specifically language that undermines the reality of his geographical imprint. When the crew travels to Dracula’s castle, Van Helsing writes of the route to Dracula’s land in his memorandum: “All yesterday we travel, always getting closer to the mountains, and moving into a more and more wild and desert land. There are great frowning precipices and much falling water, and Nature seem to have held sometime her carnival.”⁴¹ Van Helsing depicts the land surrounding Dracula’s castle as one in which nature has taken over, masking the evil that previously inhabited it. In this way, his

⁴⁰ Stoker, *Dracula*, 383.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 406.

language mirrors the language Jonathan utilizes to describe the castle at the beginning of the novel, which emphasized the natural beauty of the land over the people who inhabit it. Furthermore, Van Helsing amplifies the desertedness of this land by framing it as prehistoric. He even suggests that nature overtakes the human in this area, which is antithetical to humans' domination of nature in western society, as evidenced by the description of bridges, trains, and roads throughout the novel.

Subsequently, this representation of Dracula's land as "wild" and barren facilitates the final act of Dracula's slaying, for it allows for the slaying to be unseen, and thus to face no repercussions. Dracula's isolation from all society, especially on the map, allows for a slaying that has no repercussions, for all assume that this land is barren and uninhabited already. Therefore, Van Helsing's statements suggest that no one will care about what is, technically, an attempted genocide against vampiric people. The erasure of vampires from maps therefore functions as more than just their preliminary slaying from the western eye. Rather, it facilitates any and all violence against them by ensuring that the slaying will occur as if it never even happened. It will be, in other words, as if the vampire were already dead all along.

It is no surprise that no one believes that Dracula ever existed after his death at the end of the novel. At the very end of the novel, Jonathan notes that "we could hardly ask anyone, even did we wish to, to accept these as proofs of so wild a story."⁴² Although partly hyperbolic, the Count's absence from western sources of information, especially from maps, make it so that people are unaware of his existence, the

⁴² Stoker, *Dracula*, 419.

violence enacted against him, or the queerness that potentially exists beyond what lies represented on a map. Jonathan's final claim that the east is wild, non-existent, and that the Count was never alive in the first place thus eliminates the truth of the entire novel.

Because Dracula has no representation in western cartography, and therefore no history for his British adversaries, he was never even alive or human to begin with. He was just another animal who wandered aimlessly in the eyes of the West. He was a disposable life with animalistic interactions with space and desire. Western cartography and notions of space thus distinguish the living from the dead. It differentiates those who interact with their surroundings through western customs from those who interact with it through any other medium. Dracula's death is proof that the west slays the unrepresented through their exclusive definitions of acceptable and unacceptable human identity categories.

Monsters and Their Eternal Lurkiness

In outlining the queer potentialities lying in murky, ambiguous, and unmapped spaces, I would like to also offer a reading of *Carmilla*, a novel that allegedly inspired *Dracula*. *Carmilla* is a unique case study, as the protagonist, Laura, resides in Styria, despite being born to an English father. Nonetheless, her upbringing is similar to that of British folks in *Dracula*, *The Beetle*, and *She*. Laura notes that she “was one of those happy children who are studiously kept in ignorance of ghost stories, of fairy tales, and of all such lore as makes us cover up our heads when the door cracks suddenly, or the flicker of an expiring candle makes the shadow of a bedpost dance upon the wall, nearer to our faces.”⁴³ Laura measures reality according to British measurements, rather than stories, fairy tales, and other lore defined as “fiction.” She even notes that the nearest village is “about seven of your English miles to the left,” furthering her perception of British measurements as attributable to real and pleasurable joys.

Carmilla, the vampire guest in the novel, is interestingly visiting Styria from the West, though her geographic origins are ambiguous and unknown. “She would not tell me the name of her family,” Laura states, “nor their armorial bearings, nor the name of their estate, nor even that of the country they lived in.” Thus, although Carmilla lies more to the west than Laura, Laura applies British units of measurement and locality to her own residence, and attempts to do the same with Carmilla’s. Meanwhile, Carmilla refuses to disclose geographic specificity to her estate,

⁴³ Le Fanu, Sheridan. *Carmilla*. Pushkin Press, 2020, 13.

relinquishing herself from being measured through British units of geographic precision.

Notably, after Laura continues to demand information from Carmilla regarding her origins, Carmilla reorients her inquiries by engaging in homoerotic acts with her, including acts like kissing and embracing. Regarding these acts, Laura states: “Her evasion was conducted with so pretty a melancholy and deprecation, with so many, and even passionate declarations of her liking for me, and trust in my honor, and with so many promises that I should at last know all, that I could not find it in my heart long to be offended with her.”⁴⁴ Notably, Carmilla’s prettiness and declarations of her fondness for Laura successfully reorient Laura from focusing on questions of origins and measurable British units of measurement. Their homoerotic relationship supersedes any and all inquiries into geographic specificity, generating a relationship that spans beyond what Laura previously considered real, such as location on a map or the exact location of Carmilla’s estate. Instead, Carmilla reorients the real to a pleasurable moment in the present, eliminating the need to attach importance to geographic origin.

Still, Laura attributes a lot of her skepticism toward the strange feelings Carmilla incites in her seems to her geographic origins. Relating her confusion at Carmilla’s actions, she states:

She sometimes alluded for a moment to her own home, or mentioned an adventure or situation, or an early recollection, which indicated a people of strange manners, and described customs of which we knew

⁴⁴ Le Fanu, *Carmilla*, 46.

nothing. I gathered from these chance hints that her native country was much more remote than I had first fancied.⁴⁵

Laura is especially interested in Carmilla's geographic background, and she gathers that her strange behavior is a result of her native country being "more remote" than she had imagined. Moreover, Laura notes that she did not "fancy" Carmilla's remote origins, indicating that she sees her geographic murkiness as potentially dangerous, and related to her strange and 'other' customs.

Here, geography also creates distance between Carmilla's customs and her own, which are, as previously mentioned, British. Laura's lack of knowledge harkens back to her upbringing, when she attributed ghost stories, fairy tales, and other lore as solely fictional, and British modes of knowing as reality. Her language positions Carmilla's people as if they were not real, categorizing them as if they were part of a fairy tale precisely because their origins are geographically ambiguous. Thus, Carmilla's lack of a knowable geographic origin makes her stories nothing more than a vague mention, informing Laura that her companion's customs could potentially invade her own home.

However, much of Carmilla's ability to garner pleasure relies on her ability to lurk without having her physical origins or presence be known. When Laura asks whether she will ever disclose more information about herself, Carmilla claims that "the time is very near when [she] shall know everything."⁴⁶ Carmilla interestingly utilizes Laura's perception of geographic ambiguity as a bad thing to her advantage,

⁴⁵ Le Fanu, *Carmilla*, 50.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 71.

providing her with a false promise that eventually she will discover her geographic origins. She lies to get Laura to live for the pleasure they both experience in the moment, ridding her of her connections to the geographic specificity she was previously attached to.

Although her motive in stringing Laura along is ultimately to feed off her blood, Carmilla demonstrates that there is an alternative way of being. This way of being is not dependent on western sources of knowledge and embraces the idea that there is a mysterious “other” way of being that exists in the fictional realm in the public eye. In stating that soon, Laura shall “know everything,” Carmilla therefore forces Laura to live in a state of suspense, one where she ponders the possibilities of Carmilla’s origins, yet dismisses those speculations as unimportant due to the intensity of their connection.

As Laura’s health deteriorates and Carmilla’s true intentions are revealed, the novel notes that much of Carmilla’s power lies in her ability to stay geographically ambiguous. When General Spielsdorf and Baron Vordenburg, a descendant of the people who originally hunted Carmilla, chase Carmilla, the General tells the Baron: “You will have delivered this region from a plague that has scourged its inhabitants for more than a century. The horrible enemy, thank God, is at last tracked.”⁴⁷ Carmilla, who constantly avoids having her origins tracked, therefore depends on being untraceable for her pleasure and well-being. She depends on being unseen and untracked, for her traceability and visibility allows the west to police her identity and

⁴⁷ Le Fanu, *Carmilla*, 145.

eliminate her kind from the global map. In doing so, they create the illusion that Carmilla never existed and prevent people like Laura from falling “sick” to her vampiric lifestyle in the future.

Despite Carmilla’s eventual death, her effect on Laura lives on, as it caused Laura to realize that other ways of being exist that do not depend on those outlines in British information systems. The final sentence of the novel reveals Carmilla’s effect on Laura:

It was long before the terror of recent events subsided; and to this hour the image of Carmilla returns to memory with ambiguous alternations—sometimes the playful, languid, beautiful girl; sometimes the writing fiend I saw in the ruined church; and often from a reverie I had started, fancying I heard the light step of Carmilla at the drawing room door.

Similar to Dracula’s exodus from London, Carmilla’s death solely eliminates her from western forms of knowing, providing the illusion that she is dead and no longer real when, in fact, she still haunts Laura’s memories. Though she now knows Carmilla’s history and true intentions, Laura still notes that memories of Carmilla’s “playful, languid and beautiful” attributes still linger. She acknowledges the pleasure she experienced through their homoerotic relationship, acknowledging that despite the horror she ultimately wrought, she also provided “ambiguous alternations,” promises that things could be different than the boring and lonely life she lived prior to Carmilla’s arrival.

Carmilla’s death therefore enhances her previous promise to Laura that she “shall know everything,” as she provides her with the tools to understand that there is

pleasure that exists beyond the confines the west has constructed for itself. In haunting Laura, Carmilla continues to promise something else, perhaps something better, than the mundane life Laura used to live, when she attached importance to British maps and units of measurements..

Conclusion: Queer Is Not Yet ‘Here’

In his foundational work, *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*, Jose Esteban Muñoz makes the impactful claim that “queerness is not yet here.”⁴⁸ By “here,” Muñoz refers to the present, and queerness’s absence from it, noting that this absence signifies a potentiality to move toward queerness.

I would like to offer an additional reading to Muñoz’s quote than even he offers. I would like to suggest that “here” refers to not only the present, but also to queerness’s absence from western ways of knowing, particularly geography. As displayed by *Dracula* and *Carmilla*, queerness averts representation on maps precisely because maps represent only acknowledged and valid forms of living in the western imaginary.

Still, perhaps it is to the benefit of queerness, as displayed by the two novels, that it averts ways of knowing, like cartography. In avoiding western sources of knowledge, it suggests that something else will always exist than solely what is considered “fact,” broadening our perception of reality. Thus, in the geographic context, I would like to suggest that queerness is not yet here, but it perhaps never will be. In order for queerness to truly be “here,” it must not be assigned a geographic origin, for this assignment allows it to be categorized as deviant.

Queerness evades knowing, and this ‘knowing’ includes geographic precision. Although we may map ‘where’ queerness exists, it will always pop up where we least

⁴⁸ Muñoz, Jose Esteban. 2009. *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*. New York: New York University Press, 1.

expect it, for queerness is, I argue, precisely the unexpected. It is something that cannot be predicted or mapped out.

Knowledge itself can be a form of dismissing and invalidating peoples' identities, so for queerness to truly be here, it will be selective with what knowledge it will choose to insert itself into. Maps, often used to police individuals, can box individuals into categories that determine whether their lifestyles are western or not western enough.

Thus, queerness recognizes that not all knowledge is desirable, and will always be careful about which knowledge to insert itself into. In doing so, it will continue to resist forms of knowledge that limit queer potentialities, assuring that all existing knowledge is the root of all queerness. Perhaps one day, when maps are not used in such a way, queerness will willingly make its mark on the world map.

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