Vampiric Typewriting: Dracula and Its Media
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VAMPIRIC TYPEWRITING: DRACULA AND ITS MEDIA

BY JENNIFER WICKE

In the Introduction to the Grundrisse Marx asks, thinking about the relation of Greek art to the present day: "What chance has Vulcan against Roberts & Co., Jupiter against the lightning-rod and Hermes against the Credit-Mobilier? All mythology overcomes and dominates and shapes the forces of nature . . . it therefore vanishes with the advent of real mastery over them. What becomes of Fama alongside Printing House Square?" The incongruity—and mastery—of Dracula lies in its willingness to set the mythological, Gothic, medieval mystery of Count Dracula squarely in the midst of Printing House Square. The Grundrisse is Marx's complex meditation on the intertwined fates of production, consumption and distribution, prefaced by these worries about the place of the aesthetic in the modern socioeconomic landscape. Within its novelistic form, Dracula too could be said to pose and to enact the occultation of those three processes, by its privileging of consumption, which subsumes the other two. This engorgement is staged by the collision of ancient mythologies with contemporary modes of production.

Miss Mina Murray writes to Miss Lucy Westenra about her current preoccupations: "I have been working very hard lately, because I want to keep up with Jonathan's studies, and I have been practicing shorthand very assiduously. When we are married I shall be able to be very useful to Jonathan, and if I can stenograph well enough I can take down what he wants to say in this way and write it out for him on the typewriter, which I am also practicing very hard. He and I sometimes write letters in shorthand, and he is keeping a stenographic journal of his travels abroad." While such girlish pursuits, if slavishly dutiful, scarcely seem ominous, it is Mina's very prowess with the typewriter that brings down Dracula on unsuspecting British necks, even including her very own. In what follows I want to propose that as radically different as the sexy act of vamping and such prosaic labor on the typewriter appear, there are underlying ties between them that can ultimately make sense of the oxymoron of vampiric typewriting. The argument will turn attention to the technologies that underpin vampirism, making for the dizzy contradictions of this book, and permitting it to be read as the first great modern novel in British literature. In
doing so, I will be concentrating on the shabby, dusty corners of *Dracula*, inspecting its pockets for lint rather than examining its more delicious excesses, and putting pressure on the aspects of *Dracula* that have received less attention because they, like practicing shorthand, don’t immediately seem as pleasurable. *Dracula* cannot help but be a heady cocktail, even under inauspiciously stringent critical circumstances, and part of what I hope to show in so pursuing its media are its connections to the everyday life of typewriters, neon, advertisement and neoimperialism we are still living today. To drain *Dracula* of some of its obvious terrors may help to highlight the more banal terrors of modern life.

Franco Moretti bifurcates his stimulating analysis of *Dracula*: one strand follows a Marxist allegorical path, examining the abstract fears aroused by the specter of monopoly capital rising up in Britain’s free trade society, and centering on Count Dracula as the metaphoric instantiation of monopoly capital gone wild in its eerie global perambulations; his second appraisal locates Dracula’s terror, rather unsurprisingly, in the realm of eros, and advances the notion that the root fear vampirism expresses is the child’s ambivalent relation to its mother, and the psychosexual repressions that ambivalence exacts. Both vectors are vigorously and excellently argued, but my concern here is with Moretti’s ultimate acknowledgment that these are discrete analyses: “I do not propose here to reconstruct the many missing links that might connect socio-economic structures and sexual-psychological structures in a single conceptual chain. Nor can I say whether this undertaking . . . is really possible. I would merely like to explain the two reasons that—in this specific case—persuaded me to use such different methodologies . . . Marxism and psychoanalysis thus converge in defining the function of this literature: to take up within itself determinate fears in order to present them in a form different from their real one . . .”3 These are two disparate fears, then, with only overdetermination to account for their co-presence. The theoretical split Moretti chooses to elide is just as fraught as he describes it to be; I think it is possible, however, to find a way of addressing this text without accepting such hermetically sealed compartments of analysis. There can be more traffic across these divides; my choice of *Dracula* rests on a desire to investigate the uncoupled chain of materialist and psychosexual readings, because I see *Dracula* lodged at the site of that difficulty, at a crux that marks the modernist divide for both theory and literature. It is necessary to juggle several balls in the air at once, to force a collision between these vocabularies. What causes Moretti’s

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economic and sexual allegories to diverge so thoroughly, in my view, is the paradoxical absence of the category of consumption; what I will work through here is the uneasy status of consumption as it is poised between two seemingly exclusionary vocabularies that nonetheless intersect (often invisibly) precisely there.

In considering *Dracula*, I am turning the text to face forward into the twentieth century, rather than assessing its status as Victorian mythography, since what I want to give is a reading that opens up into a thesis about the modernity we can then read off the wildly voluptuous, and even Medusan, *volte face* thereby revealed. This is not to discount the probing and incisive readings that do annex *Dracula* to its very real Victorian contexts, but rather to shift the agenda in critical terms to the work that the text can do as a liminal modernist artifact, an exemplary text that then lies hauntingly behind the uncanny creations of modernism, at the borders of what is accepted as "high modernism," the high art tradition of its literature. The vampirism this text articulates is crucial to the dynamics of modernity, as well as to giving a name to our current theoretical predicaments. *Dracula* is not a coherent text; it refracts hysterical images of modernity. One could call it a chaotic reaction-formation in advance of modernism, wildly taking on the imprints of mass culture.

To begin by eliminating all the suspense of my own theoretical trajectory: the social force most analogous to Count Dracula's as depicted in the novel is none other than mass culture, the developing technologies of the media in its many forms, as mass transport, tourism, photography and lithography in image production, and mass-produced narrative. To take seriously the status of mass culture in an incipiently mass cultural artifact is to have a privileged vantage on the dislocations and transformations it occasions, especially because *Dracula* has been so successful in hiding the pervasiveness of the mass cultural within itself, foregrounding instead its exotic otherness.

What has been little remarked about the structure of *Dracula* is precisely how its narrative is ostensibly produced, its means of production. A narrative patchwork made up out of the combined journal entries, letters, professional records and newspaper clippings that the doughty band of vampire hunters had separately written or collected, it is then collated and typed by the industrious Mina, wife of the first vampire target and ultimately a quasi-vampire herself. The multiplicity of narrative viewpoints has been well discussed, but the crucial fact is that all of these narrative pieces eventually comprising the manuscript we are said to have in our hands emanate from radically

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dissimilar and even state-of-the-art media forms. Dracula, draped in all its feudalism and medieval gore, is textually completely au courant. Nineteenth-century diaristic and epistolary effusion is invaded by cutting edge technology, in a transformation of the generic materials of the text into a motley fusion of speech and writing, recording and transcribing, image and typography.

Dr. Seward, for example, the young alienist who operates the private insane asylum so fortuitously located next to Count Dracula’s London property, produces his voluminous journal not by writing it, but by recording his own words on gramophone records, which then must be transcribed. Since the gramophone is in 1897 an extremely recently invented device, even Dr. Seward is confused by some of its properties; his worst realization is that in order to find some important gem of recorded insight, he will have to listen to all the records again. 6 Never fear, since the incomparable Madame Mina offers to transcribe all the cylinders to typewritten form after she has listened to them, realizing their value as part of the puzzle of tracking the vampire. “I put the forked metal to my ears and listened,” she writes. And later, “that is a wonderful machine, but it is cruelly true . . . No one must hear them (his words) spoken ever again! I have copied out the words on my typewriter.” Despite the apparent loss of “aura,” in Benjamin’s sense, ostensibly found in the mechanical reproduction of Seward’s diary, what Mina is struck by is the latent emotional power of the recorded voice, whose spectacular emotion the typewriter can strip away. Her transcription of Dr. Seward’s wax cylinders occurs mid-way in the text, when the search for Dracula in London is begun in earnest. What that timing implies is that all Dr. Seward’s previous entries, and there are many, are recordings, as it were, voicings coded in the most up-to-date inscription, speaking to us from out of the text. There is ample textual confusion swirling about this point, and much inconsistency, since Dr. Seward’s diary includes abbreviations and chemical formulas that do not have meaning “orally”; moreover, when the machine is used by others, there is a vampiric exchange involved—a chapter title tells us, “Dr. Seward’s Phonograph Diary, spoken by Van Helsing.” The burden this mode of production puts on narration is expressed when Dr. Seward reacts to hearing the burial service read over Mina, a prophylactic act in case they have to kill her. “I—I cannot go on—words—and—v-voice—fail m-me!” (352). Such doughty sentimentality cannot mask the fact that Seward’s diary constitutes the immaterialization of a voice, a technologized zone of the novel, inserted at a historical point where phonography was not widespread, because
still quite expensive, but indicative of things to come. We are not dealing here with pure speech in opposition to writing, but instead with speech already colonized, or vampirized, by mass mediation.

The other materials forming the narrative’s typed body are equally mass-culturally produced. Jonathan Harker’s journal, which begins the novel and recounts the fateful discovery of Count Dracula as a vampire, only to have the memory of this insupportable revelation wiped out by a bout of brain fever, is “actually” a document in stenographic form, later itself uncoded by Mina’s act of typewriting. Stenography is a fortuitous code for Jonathan, since Dracula, who seems to know everything else, does not take shorthand, and doesn’t confiscate the journal, an act that would deprive us of the first-hand frisson of narrative in progress. We as readers don’t see on the page the little swirls and abbreviations we might expect from a manuscript in shorthand, since that would keep us from reading; it would produce cognitive dissonance for readers to be reminded that the terrifying narrative his diary unfolds is meant to be inscribed in that elliptical, bureaucratized form of writing known as shorthand. What, after all, is the stenographic version of “kiss me with those red lips,” Jonathan’s hot inner monologue as he lies swooning on the couch surrounded by his version of Dracula’s angels? Shorthand may seem to fall innocently outside the sphere of mass cultural media, but in fact it participates in one of the most thoroughgoing transformations of cultural labor of the twentieth-century, the rationalization (in Weber’s sense) of the procedures of bureaucracy and business, the feminization of the clerical work force, the standardization of mass business writing. The modern office is very far afield from Transylvania, the doomed castle, and the ghastly doings Jonathan experiences there, but shorthand is utterly material to the ramifications of vampirism. Vampirism springs up, or takes command, at the behest of shorthand. Although the pages we open to start our reading of the book look like any printed pages, there is a crucial sense in which we are inducted into Count Dracula lore by the insinuation of this invisible, or translated, stenography. This submerged writing is the modern, or mass cultural, cryptogram; the linkage of this mode of abbreviated writing with the consumption process is made apparent by our willingness to invest these abbreviations with the fully-fleshed body of typed and printed writing. Shorthand flows through us, as readers, to be transubstantiated as modern, indeterminate, writing.

Jonathan has begun his journey to that foreboding place as a tourist of sorts; the impressions he jots down with most relish initially are the recipes for strange foods he would like Mina to try—the “national

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dishes,” as he calls them: “(Mem., get recipe for Mina)” (1). He first tastes a chicken dish made with red pepper that, insidiously enough, makes him thirsty; even the red peppers are suspicious in a text with such a fixed color scheme of red and white. Count Dracula, of course, has a national dish as well, only it is comprised of the bodies not yet belonging to his nation, and Mina, who was going to get the chance to whip up the national dish of the Carpathians, is to become his food for thought. The local color Jonathan drinks in, as recipes and customs and costumes, has the form of regularized tourism; Dracula’s castle becomes an unwonted departure from the Transylvanian Baedeker. This may be the point at which to broach the larger argument that will dog the more local one I am making. I am trying to give a reading of the society of consumption and its refraction in Dracula, but that society rests on, is impossible without, the imperial economy. It is overly glib to talk about commodity culture without this insistent awareness; what particularly draws me to Dracula, and what makes it a modern text, is the embeddedness there of consumption, gender, and empire. Jonathan’s travels are made not to a specific British colonial or imperial possession, but to a place with a dense history of conquest and appropriation. He is funneled into this history by means of the accoutrements of modern travel and leisure; Jonathan, who is on business, is nonetheless a tourist manqué. In this instance too, Count Dracula and his extraordinary logic of production are encountered through the lens of mass cultural preoccupations and techniques.

Jonathan bears a gift of sorts for Dracula, a set of Kodak pictures of the British house the latter is interested in purchasing, although Dracula in fact has another motive for having brought the rather drab young law clerk so far from England: he wants to borrow his speech, to learn English perfectly from his captive, Harker Jonathan, as he occasionally slips in addressing him. The presence of the Kodak camera in the midst of such goings on is unexpected and yet far from accidental. Photography joins the list of new cultural techniques or processes juxtaposed with the story of the medieval aristocratic vampire, but the Kodak snapshot camera so many people were wielding at the time is really also a celluloid analog of vampirism in action, the extraction out of an essence in an act of consumption. For a time at the turn of the century, “kodak” meant eye-witness proof; a testimony to the accuracy of Joseph Conrad’s portrayal of circumstances in the Belgian Congo was headed “A Kodak on the Congo.” The photographic evidence Jonathan brings to Count Dracula is also a talismanic offering, a simulacrum of the communion wafer Professor Van Helsing will put to
Mina’s forehead with such disastrously scarring results. In the latter case, the alembic contamination of vampire blood produces the “image” of vampirism as a red mark on white skin; photography makes its images in a similarly alchemical, if less liturgical, fashion. Jonathan Harker and Count Dracula come into a relation of exchange with one another through the mediation of the photographic image; more than that, the untoward aspects of vampirism are first signaled by the mention of the Kodak, which precedes the Count’s version of vampirism by several pages. Both the history of photography as a domestic practice, as well as photography’s connection to ethnography and travel, are summoned up textually by Jonathan’s kodaks. Even the subsequent descriptions of what the Count looks like are altered by these initial references to photography, since his frightful looks bear such resemblance to the photographically cataloged “deviants” of Lombroso and others, and his quaint alterity seems to cry out for immortalization by the National Geographic (that is, photographic) touch. It is possible to speculate that if a vampire’s image cannot be captured in a mirror, photographs of a vampire might prove equally disappointing. That scary absence from the sphere of the photographable shunts the anxiety back onto vampirism itself: vampirism as a stand-in for the uncanny procedures of modern life.

The consumption of journalism’s anonymous textuality marks the book’s dialectic with mass culture as well. Large sections of the putatively typewritten manuscript derive from newspaper articles salvaged by the haggard participants in this dark tale—a reader is asked to imagine either that Mina’s transcript has redundantly retyped the newsprint, or that the newspaper pieces are literally collated with those typewritten pages, a collage or bricolage of versions of print. Mina, for example, preserves the newspaper accounts of the shipwreck that, it later emerges, has brought Dracula to Britain’s shores, there to wreak his havoc on Lucy Westenra, who has already begun to go into an insomniac decline. These extensive mass-mediated narrations are uncannily inserted amongst the other, purportedly “first-hand” reports of Jonathan, Mina, Lucy, Dr. Seward and Professor Van Helsing. Clearly there is a pragmatic narrative reason for this, since otherwise the exposition of such events would be highly suspect—how would Mina on her own have managed to gather the deceased ship captain’s log and find out about the mysterious cargo of boxes of earth the tragic ship carried? Beyond textual mechanics, however, lies the more intriguing fact that the anonymously-authored newspaper reports are coextensive with, and equally authoritative as, the other voices of

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the text. The text's action absolutely depends on the inclusion of mass-produced testimony; it absorbs these extraneous pieces within itself just as Dracula assimilates the life-blood of his victims. Even at the narrative level Dracula requires an immersion into mass-cultural discourse; its singular voices, however technologically-assisted, are in themselves not sufficient to exorcise an event which is unfolding at the level of collective consumption.

The transmogrification of the narrative's nominal events into mass cultural shards reaches its height when the posthumous whereabouts of Lucy Westenra, now a vampire in earnest, are revealed to the alert Professor Van Helsing and Dr. Seward by her mass-cultural incarnation as the "bloofer lady" of tabloid fame. Lucy has been preying on the lower-class children of London in her role as un-dead, stalking them after dark in the large London parks where they are left unaccountably alone. Her upper-middle class beauty is so miraculous to these waifs that she has achieved legendary status and a mass-cultural name. Without her tabloidization the men would have no chance to eliminate her with their ritualistic objects that can succeed in exorcising her—necklaces of garlic, doughy paste made up of communion wafers, stakes driven through the heart. As much as Lucy is taken up into the pantheon of Dracula's girls ("your girls that you love are mine"), she is also become currency within mass culture, where she circulates in the mass blood stream with a delicious thrill as the "bloofer lady." Lucy becomes an object of the mass press simultaneously with her assimilation into the vampiric fold; the two phenomena are intertwined in the logic of this vampirism. Unless and until Lucy is commoditized out over an adoring, and titillated, public by virtue of her exciting vampiric identity, she cannot be said to have consummated that identity in the terms of the text. While her vampling by Count Dracula precedes her "bloofer lady" role and indeed causes it, the un-dead Lucy is similarly vamped by the press, and vamps all those who come under her thrall by just reading about her in the morning newspaper. Dracula does not make distinctions among these consuming ontologies.

Other peculiar newspaper moments in the text include the Pall Mall Gazette account of a zookeeper whose wolf has escaped. We as readers are aware that Dracula has taken over its body for a night of rampaging, but the newspaper story is excitedly fixated on the raffish Cockney persona of the zookeeper, and on including his diction in the piece about this strange disappearance. Here as elsewhere the text pauses for a sustained entry into mass cultural territory; in this case there is not even the excuse of plot description, just the need to filter the

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vampiric through the mesh of a mediated response. Inclusion of the newspaper story also keeps up the pressure on the distinction between speech and writing that so fissures the text, because the point of the article seems as much to be transcribing the loquacious dialect of the zookeeper as adding to anyone’s knowledge of the habits of Dracula. The newspaper page serves as a theater for the staging of class differences when its “standard” written English can erupt with the quoted, vigorous orality of lower-class modes of speech. Lucy breaks the charmed circle of class by becoming a twilight apparition of interest to all classes, as they read about her in the newspaper. The zookeeper perhaps occupies so much textual space in Dracula because vampirization, or consumption, originally seems to threaten class distinctions.

A final irony in a novel so deranged by the mass voice of journalism is the fact that the band of fearless vampire killers manages to keep any notice of vampirism out of the papers, reserving that for its own “truthful” pages; the mass cultural forms skirt the knowledge of Dracula but never come to be in possession of it—in my argument, because Dracula himself is an articulation of, a figuration for, that same mass culture, as a consequence supervening any of its individual media, which are shown to be limited in scope unless taken together. Dracula’s individual powers all have their analogue in the field of the mass cultural; he comprises the techniques of consumption.

Consider all the media technologies the novel so incessantly displays and names: the telegraph that figures so largely in the communicative strategies that allow the band to defeat Dracula is an equivalent to the telepathic, telekinetic communication Dracula is able to have with Mina after sealing her into his race with her enforced drinking of his blood. The phonographic records Dr. Seward uses are the reproduction of a voice, of a being, without any body needing to be present, just as Dracula can insinuate himself as a voice into the heads of his followers, or call them from afar. The Kodak camera captures an image and then allows it to be moved elsewhere, freezing a moment of temporality and sending it across space, in a parallel to Dracula’s insubstantiality and his vitiation of temporality. Like such images, he continues to circulate even when separated from his source; in other words, his blood can circulate and have its drastic effects even when he is not bodily present. Dracula also vitiates space, of course, and in this shares the very ubiquity of the mass media: advertising’s anticipation of its readers into all the corners and matchbooks of their lives, the mass ceremonial of the press, a daily bestseller that has no shelf life and must be consumed immediately. Mass culture is protean, with
the same horrific propensity to mutate that also defines Dracula’s anarchic power, as he becomes a bat or a white mist at will. Even the subway, the Underground used by Mina and Dr. Seward in the novel, has its fearsome vampiric echoes, since like Dracula the subway uses an underground place for transport across space, a subterranean vault encrypted by modern transportation.

When Madame Mina, “pearl among women,” provides the typescript that resolves the incommensurabilities of the assorted documents, phonographic records and so on, she is able to do this because, as she tells Dr. Seward with rightful pride, her typewriter has a function called “Manifold” that allows it to make multiple copies in threes. This function is positively vampiric, even to the name it has been given, reverberating with the multiplicity of men Dracula is, the manifold guises of the vampire, and the copying procedure which itself produces vampires, each of which is in a sense a replica of all the others. Here we step into the age of mechanical reproduction with a vengeance, since the reproductive process that makes vampires is so closely allied to the mechanical replication of culture. The perverse reversals of human reproduction that vampirism entails, making a crazy salad of gender roles and even of anatomical destiny, have been well discussed, and assuredly impinge on the terrors of Dracula. The ties to cultural reproduction and to cultural consumption need to be acknowledged as well, to place the book in its genuine context of modernity. Because Mina operates the manifold function her relation to Dracula is as close as it is later perverse. Typewriting itself partakes of the vampiric, although paradoxically in this text it can serve also as an instrument used to destroy it.7

The gender division of labor in consumption strongly pervades the representation of this mass cultural vampire and helps to situate Dracula unmistakably as a figure for consumption. Dracula cannot enter your home and molest you unless invited in; that same invitation is the one extended to the mass cultural, in the sense that it is its seductive invasion of the home that allows the domestic to become the site, the opening puncture wound, for all the techniques of mass culture. Mass culture or consumption can be said to transform culture from within the home, despite the obvious fact that many of its cultural technologies are encountered elsewhere, in the department store, on the billboard, in the nickelodeon parlor, at the newsstand or the telegraph office. The book is obsessed with all these technological and cultural modalities, with the newest of the new cultural phenomena, and yet it is they that shatter the fixed and circumscribed world the novel seems
designed to protect through those very means, as the home is opened up to the instabilities of authority and the pleasures that lie outside the family as a unit of social reproduction. The same science, rationality and technologies of social control relied on to defend against the encroachments of Dracula are the source of the vampiric powers of the mass cultural with which Dracula, in my reading, is allied. Homes are the most permeable membrane possible for this transfusion, since by installing the middle-class and even the lower-class woman in economic isolation there by the end of the nineteenth century, a captive audience for the vampiric ministrations of commoditized culture, consumption and so-called “leisure,” in the case of upper-class women, is thereby created. Women are the ones who ineluctably let Dracula in.

It may seem that I accept the text’s ambivalence about mass cultural transformation in connecting Dracula to it, but what I want to propose is a very different spin on the notion of consumption—the need to see it as, as Pierre Bourdieu calls it, “the production that is consumption.” These changes are extraordinary and have powerful political effects; they are also, as I have claimed, premised on a cannibalization of resources from invisible places “elsewhere,” in global economic terms. The contradictions of consumption run like fault lines through this text, and correspondingly in our own contemporary theory. It should be underscored, however, that consumption is always a labor—I don’t at all mean the work of shopping, but a form of cultural labor, including the producing of meanings. Because Dracula focuses on the entry into mass culture, it becomes one of our primary cultural expressions of that swooning relation and thus has needed to be revived incessantly, in films, books, and other cultural forms. The vampiric embrace is now a primary locus for our culture’s self-reflexive assessment of its cultural being, since that being is fixed in the embrace of material consumption.

In the madman Renfield, Dr. Seward’s star patient as an example of “zoophagy,” we have a gloss on the psychic interiorizations of consumption. He is of course finally shown to be a disciple of Dracula, his master, in a theological partnership that runs roughshod over the psychoanalytic diagnoses Dr. Seward has been trying to make. Renfield’s underlying sanity seems to inhere in his acceptance of racial and class differences as a matter of blood, his stalwartly hierarchical common sense, and in his staunch support for imperialist projects. He praises the country of the Texan Quincey Morris: “Mr. Morris, you should be proud of your great state. Its reception into the Union was a precedent which may have far-reaching effects hereafter, when the
Pole and the Tropics may hold alliance to the Stars and Stripes. The power of Treaty may yet prove a vast engine of enlargement, when the Monroe doctrine takes its true place as a political fable” (257). Renfield actually adheres to an imperialism that has the fastest engine of enlargement in Dracula, but he is also able to admire a rival imperialism of great promise. The imperial nexus is also tied to the mass cultural through Renfield. When Mina Harker asks to meet this bizarre inmate, he agrees to converse with her, and he speaks about his own desire to devour living things as if it were in the remote past: “The doctor here will bear me out that on one occasion I tried to kill him for the purpose of strengthening my vital powers by the assimilation with my own body of his life through the medium of his blood—relying, of course, upon the Scriptural phrase, ‘For the blood is the life’” (247). The theological monologue represents vampirism’s literalization of Christian practices, so embedded that it will require equivalent literalizations to supercede it. But Renfield goes on to reflect on a new cultural instance: “Though indeed, the vendor of a certain nostrum has vulgarised the truism to the very point of contempt. Isn’t that true, Doctor?” (247) There was a British blood tonic that had adopted this phrase in its advertisements in “real life,” but what Renfield objects to is amusingly crazy: advertising’s debasement of the religious signification when Dracula, the original blood tonic man, is on his way to give the phrase his own supernally horrific debasement. This denigration of the popularizing and secularizing rhetoric of advertisement serves to underscore the conflation of Dracula with the world of advertisement and mass media made by the text, even where Renfield may make an invidious distinction. Advertisement itself, among many other forms, was a powerful recasting of the religious vocabulary, its translation into the promises of a salvational commodity culture; that language was, in a manner of speaking, lying around loose in a secularizing culture, and advertisement appropriated it for its own uses, as it recirculates all evacuated social languages.10 This may often look like a vulgarization, when it is additionally a resurrection; the vampire enters into this circulatory economy as well. Count Dracula’s more pointedly terrifying manifestation covers over the lurking fears, as well as pleasures, found in the deflating of spiritual rhetoric as it is recirculated as the currency of advertisement. Renfield’s erratic “madness,” his eating of live animals, is itself almost a pun on the tremors of consumption. He is unvampirized in the literal sense, only vampirized from afar, so at a double remove Renfield hypostatizes the consumer, directed by invisible longings and compelled by ghostly commands to
absorb everything in sight. His is one cautionary tale of the “phagous” nature of consumption.

Dracula’s own biorhythms are, paradoxically, very much those of everyday life under the altered conditions of the mass cultural; Dracula must consume on a daily basis. The outlandishness of Dracula’s behavior is simultaneously made quotidian, regularized, indeed, everyday, in the extended sense that word is given by Henri Lefebvre. It can be no accident that the overwhelming trope of this novel is also the word for this new social economy—consumption. Dracula drinks his victims dry, takes all their blood and consumes it, rather than ingesting it. Ingesting or digesting these sanguinary meals would imply a rather more stolid, alimentary process than the one we witness. Van Helsing tactlessly reminds Mina that the previous night Dracula “banqueted” on her, but this word too has some of the baroque bravura of consumption.

The vampiric consumption of blood in Dracula is simultaneously and complexly a sexual act, as commentators like Nina Auerbach, Christopher Craft and John Stevenson have variously shown, and its process holds both victim and perpetrator in a version of sexual thrall or ecstasy. I want to comment on the sexual thrust of Dracula’s dynamic, if you will, but first I want to trace out the implications of seeing these exchanges also in sumptuary terms.

Dracula takes blood, but he also gives something, that intangible but quite ineluctable gift of vampirism, which enters invisibly into victims during their act of expenditure. A model of the consumptive paradigm is enacted in their bloody congress; something is interiorized in the giving over to Dracula. Once the mass cultural makes its appearance it unleashes pleasure, it transforms attention, it mobilizes energies outside the norms of authority. I’m not giving this a utopian cast, simply remarking on the rearrangements of the social and the psychic consumption exacts, nowhere more specifically than in the realm of sexuality. The modern discourse of sexuality is indeed based on consumption, as Foucault’s work has demonstrated, and recently Lawrence Birkin’s book has annexed sexology to the epistemic shift of consumption. Dracula bears this out. The history of mass culture is at least in part the history of regaining and reasserting control over sexuality; in Dracula, this battle is still so new that the enemy is us.

The vampire yokes himself to the feminine because the mass cultural creeps in on little female feet, invades the home and turns it inside out, making it a palace of consumption. Dracula consumes but thereby turns his victims into consumers; he sucks their blood and renders
them momentarily compliant and passive and then wild, powerful and voluptuous. What the text can’t decide, nor can we, is how to determine which of these is likely, and then, which of these is preferable. This may help us to understand why Dracula, unlike, say, Jack the Ripper, feasts exclusively on British middle-class women, when, it would seem, the rest of the population, female and even male, is more readily available for his delectation. Lucy, for example, directs her vampire attentions to children of the lower orders; there is some evidence in the text that female vampires do tend to subsist on children, unless particularly enticing erotic possibilities present themselves. In this way the three vampire ladies of Dracula’s castle are thrown little children in sacks, but hunger for Jonathan Harker when he is within their spectral chambers; Lucy hunts the parks, but turns to her fiancé Arthur when she hopes to consummate her vampirism with an erotic meal. The connection between mass culture and the feminine has been made since its beginnings, and is arrestingly refigured in Dracula, since mass culture is appraised as feminizing, passive, voluptuous, carnal and anti-imperial, in the case of Lucy, and labor-intensive, productive and properly imperial where Mina is involved.

Lucy and Mina have shown themselves to be appetitive even before the attacks Dracula makes on them. The very day of Lucy’s vamping by Dracula, who as a secret stowaway on the ship that has wrecked against the coast has just arrived at the seaside town of Whitby where the two are staying, the women go out to share that very British meal of “tea,” a meal defined as a beverage. Mina says: “I believe we should have shocked the New Women with our appetites. Men are more tolerant, God bless them.” The tea that they devour so sensually, in defiance of the putative austerity of the New Women, is a foreshadowing of their exposure to vampiric lust, but also an index of their placement in the chain of consumption. Another striking detail of the text attests to the propriety and discipline of Mina, yet also hints at unexplored depths of commodity desire. She rescues Lucy, although too late, from her vamping by Dracula as she sits in a zombie state by the sea. Since Lucy has walked out to meet Dracula in a somnambulant trance, she has neglected to put on shoes, so Mina gives hers over to Lucy upon hastening to her side. This leaves Mina with an awkward predicament: if she is seen by any townspeople on the midnight trip back to the relative safety of bourgeois girlhood’s boudoir, they will draw inferences from her lack of footgear. Mina hits upon a startling trick, but one in keeping with her plucky pragmatism. She daubs her feet with mud, so that no reflection of white foot or ankle
twinkling in the night can alert any sleepy voyeur who might be looking out a window. So Mina makes the trip back with her feet coated in mud; that expedient is a brilliant one, but also presents us subliminally with the image of a Mina thoroughly earth-bound, enmired. The scandal occurs for the reader’s eyes alone, so that Mina’s earthiness will be underscored even in her hour of intense decorum. The text’s surface establishes the two women’s purity and asexuality, yet slips in a glimpse of their susceptibility to consumption—a consumption that also demarcates them favorably in opposition to the New Women who eschew marriage and home. You’re damned if you do, and damned if you don’t consume.

Lucy has given signs that she is not utterly passive prior to her vampirization; she has been proposed to by three men on one day—by Dr. Seward, the gallant Texan Quincey Morris, and by the Honorable Arthur Holmwood, whom she does indeed accept. Yet in her letter to Mina recounting all this she bursts out: “Why can’t they let a girl marry three men, or as many as want her, and save all this trouble? But this is heresy, and I must not say it” (62). Lucy gets her wish, in one way: all of these men, with the addition of Professor Van Helsing, will have to give her a blood transfusion, thus becoming her husbands, as Van Helsing piquantly points out: “Ho, ho! Then this so sweet maid is a polyandrist, and me, with my poor wife dead to me, but alive by Church’s law, though no wits, all gone—even I, who am faithful husband to this now-nonwife, am bigamist” (187). Lucy is so metaphorized by the text, in contrast to Mina, typist extraordinaire, that the wavering boundary of her sexual appetite has serious consequences. If one considers her name, Luce, light and illumination, emanating out of the West-era, she is clearly an overdetermined being, more than a woman, a civilizational cause. The sexual torque put on her vamping is indeed amazing, but I would claim that this must be considered beyond the level of the fear of women’s sexuality and examined also as a very particular convergence of questions. Lucy stands in for the project of empire; it is her ineffable whiteness that is so valuable an icon to her male protectors—these are men who, as Quincey Morris points out, have served together in exotic places of danger and violence, in some inexplicable blend of Indiana Jones-style ethnographic adventure and military colonial exploits (65). Their devotion to Lucy continues to unite them, and she becomes a kind of allegory of their mutual project in taming the rest of the world. Mina does not have this resonance, since she is resolutely plain and intelligent, and has not been sought over by a trio of explorers; her sole

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proposal was from Jonathan Harker, and he a home-bound lawyer. Lucy’s white westernness becomes totemic in her vamping; the crepuscular universe she inhabits is a twilight of the gods of Western hegemony. An advertisement for Pear’s soap of 1887, showing the legend “Pear’s Soap is the Best” spelled out in shining white against a glowing dark rock, as astonished natives fall in awe before the handwriting on the wall, also reads, “The Formula of British Conquest,” and in glossing its own trope, quotes the words of Phil Robinson, a war correspondent to the London Daily Telegraph, as follows: “Even if our invasion of the Soudan has done nothing else it has at any rate left the Arab something to puzzle his fuzzy head over, for the legend Pear’s Soap is the Best, inscribed in white characters on the rock which marks the farthest point of our advance toward Berber, will tax all the wits of the Dervishes of the Desert to translate.” 14 Lucy’s vampirization comments directly on the dark side of that boast and its certainty, since even the joint ministrations of her band of admirers are ineffective in staving off the return of the imperial repressed. It would be far too reductive to read Dracula as a transposition of the fear of a massive colonial uprising, a revenge taken on the imperial seat by those so dominated, in the person of Count Dracula. To extirpate the imperial context, however, makes even the sexuality of the text denatured, decontextualized, since Lucy’s iconic presence has as much to do with extended cultural preoccupations of the discourse of imperialism as it does with the “anxiety” about women’s changing roles. These aspects can be made to mesh, without reductive narrowing, through the complex of consumption, a process equally invoked and implicated by imperial discourse and psychosexual representation.

All the more shocking, then, when the living, female impetus for imperial energies succumbs to the lures of consumption. Van Helsing has to convince the other men that their Miss Lucy could indeed be doing such a thing as biting children, and to do that he takes them to a park where they watch her in action. This scene is renowned for its excesses; although Lucy is out for children’s blood, she’s described as wantonly voluptuous, red-lipped and voluptuous, extremely voluptuous—they’ve never seen her this way before, flushed with desire and flaunting her sexual charms. She actually offers Arthur a taste of the delights he has missed, since she was snatched away on the eve of the wedding: “Come to me, Arthur. Leave these others and come to me. My arms are hungry for you. Come, and we can rest together” (223). Arthur has to be restrained, of course, and when they prevent Lucy from getting into her tomb by the application of the communion

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wafer weather-stripping, there is a hilarious pun as she is compared to Medusa, the archetype of destructive female sexuality, giving them a hideous grimace as if, Dr. Seward says, "looks could kill." Medusa's "look" could turn men to stone; here it's really Lucy's looks, her voluptuous looks—her appearance, not her regard—that are so appalling and must be expunged. It should not seem trivializing to suggest that at least some of the fixation on carmine lips and cheeks is actually cosmetic—that Miss Lucy has been made over cosmetically by the pleasures of these new feminine products, the "paint" beginning to be available, if not worn by the middle-class virgin—in her posthumous state. Her sexuality is indeed excessive per se, but a large measure of its horror is yoked to its consumerist incarnadine as well, as if Lucy had availed herself of the rouge pot and the rice powder in dressing herself to kill. Such widely read "manuals" as Lily Langtry's treatise on the art of cosmetic use seem to have found their way into the lascivious descriptions of Lucy's unwonted sex appeal, and are consequently references to an arena of choice for women, however dimly articulated. Note too that the early Lucy of the text writes to Mina of her absence of interest in fashion, which actually displeases Arthur at that innocent stage! (69) This strange irony reverberates with Lucy's love of fashionable slang.

That these men are on a sex hunt is borne out from the beginning, when Van Helsing tells Dr. Seward that Lucy has become a vampire and then must take the enraged doctor to the cemetery to show him proof. Van Helsing is holding a candle in order to light up the coffin to be able to drill a hole in it; the text says that his "sperm" dropped in "white patches" which congeal on the coffin plate bearing her name. Even if we know that sperm is short for the spermaceti still used in making the candle wax, this is a vivid description of Van Helsing's premature ejaculation onto Lucy, a prelude of things to come. Arthur does the honors when the group of adventurers has agreed that this Un- Dead must be dispatched, even especially because she has the body of a provocative Lucy—a "carnal" appearance, the text says. As the men surround the coffin, Arthur puts the point of the stake to her heart, "and as I [Dr. Seward] looked I could see its dint in the white flesh. Then he struck with all his might. The Thing in the coffin writhed; and a hideous, blood-curdling screech came from the opened red lips. The body shook and quivered and twisted in wild contortions; the sharp white teeth champed together till the lips were cut, and the mouth was smeared with crimson foam. But Arthur never faltered. He looked like a figure of Thor . . ." (227). John Stevenson and others

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rightly view this as the picture of orgasm. It can’t be denied that the text is fascinated with this spectacle of sexual violation, and Lucy is undeniably being punished for her sexuality as a vampire; as the imperturbable Van Helsing asks Arthur after this, with postcoital nonchalance, “May I cut off Miss Lucy’s head?” The punishment is additionally inflicted for the separation of sexuality from reproduction, or its amalgamation; Lucy only procreates in the sense that vampiric attacks produce more vampires from the liaison. If this were all the text did with the cataclysm of female sexuality it would become yet another symptomatic document of sexual hierarchization. Yet more is entertained here than just the effacement of Lucy as a female character; what I want to urge is that there is a dialectical intertwining of the racial and national on the one hand, and consumption and femaleness on the other, that roughens such tidy analyses. It makes a difference that Lucy is the victim, so to speak, of the group of men who accompanied one another on their colonial voyages and who, as Quincey Morris puts it, “told yarns by the camp-fire in the prairies; and dressed one another’s wounds after trying a landing at the Marquesas; and drunk healths on the shore of Titicaca” (65). Their investment in expunging Lucy the vampire is inflected by this mutual history, and by Lucy’s emblematic status as Western icon.

The textual investment shifts when Mina is vamped. For one thing, as Van Helsing has already pointed out, Madame Mina “has man-brain,” so her relation to the equilibration of consumption and empire alters. Mina is an anomaly in evolutionary terms, and as such is affiliated to Dracula; her brain is not a female one, but instead is white, male and European, according to the brain science not merely of this book but of Western racial science generally until it peters out in the 1930s, to persist in Schockley and the sociobiologies. On that evolutionary scale the female brain, the criminal brain and the so-called savage or primitive brain are on a par; the adult white male brain is the evolutionary summit. By leaping over this divide Mina occupies unclear territory, and one way of reading what happens to her is to assume that she is set up as Dracula’s next victim as a means of establishing her femininity. With lavish abandon and extravagant bad faith her so-called protectors leave her alone in the insane asylum to spend the night, and congratulate themselves at every turn on having shielded her from unbearably painful knowledge; this, of the woman who has typed all the previous vampire documents, and is therefore the most fully in the know.

Having been imprinted with vampirism in a uniquely mediated

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way, by nursing from and fellating Dracula at the same moment, as she is forced to suck his blood from a wound in his breast, Mina becomes his telepathic double. There’s a kinky notion of cerebral sex involved in this, to be sure; at the same time, it begins to make perfect sense that Dracula would have this intimate cognitive relationship with Mina. If it is the case that at least part of Dracula’s marshaling of fear has to do with assigning a status to the mass cultural, and working through the anxieties it evokes, then the gender slippage that surrounds the characterization of Mina helps account for this. Consumption is psychosexual, yet also socioeconomic. Mina occupies a strange niche between these two, since she is consumed by Dracula, who banquets on her, and also consumes him, but without longing, without desire, and with all her cognitive faculties intact. She could be said to be a perfect replica of the labor of consumption in this regard: she is always doing something with it, always is consciously co-present with the act, unlike Lucy’s white zombiedom. The text wants to protect itself from Mina’s brain, from her knowledge. After her vamping, the men alternately need to tell her everything, and want to tell her nothing. Oscillating back and forth between these positions, Mina becomes more and more the author of the text; she takes over huge stretches of its narration, she is responsible for giving her vampire-hunting colleagues all information on Dracula’s whereabouts, and she is still the one who coordinates and collates the manuscripts, although she has pledged the men to kill her if she becomes too vampiric in the course of time. Her act of collation is by no means strictly secretarial, either; Mina is the one who has the idea of looking back over the assembled manuscripts for clues to Dracula’s habits and his future plans. Despite the continual attempts both consciously by the characters and unconsciously by the text itself to view Mina as a medium of transmission, it continually emerges that there is no such thing as passive transmission—invariably, intelligent knowledge is involved, and Mina goes to the heart of things analytically and structurally.

Mina is treated as a medium when Professor Van Helsing hypnotizes her repeatedly to allow her to reveal Dracula’s whereabouts; of course we recognize in this a version of the psychoanalytic “cures” beginning to be effected through hypnotism, by Freud and others. The woman is placed in a state where she does not know her own knowledge, she simply relates it as it is drawn from her by a man who knows what to make of it. All the reverberations to Freud’s Dora are in place; the mesmeric and hypnotic world of Charcot is an open intertext of the novel. On all these grounds, including the professional activities of

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Dr. Seward and the psychoanalytic mutterings of Van Helsing as he repudiates surface meanings for deeper trance states and hysterical body signs, psychoanalysis does a duet with Dracula. This should point us to Dracula’s role in making vivid the split nature of consciousness and the predatory energies of the libidinal unconscious, and yet it should also be an alert that psychoanalysis and the novel Dracula are up against the same problematic: describing or figuring a process that is both productive and consumptive, contradictorily placed both psychically and socially. Mina does tell what her shared or double consciousness is up to, as if she were in the enviable and dangerous position of having her unconscious, which she has in a sense swallowed, speak to her with an audible voice, absent the condensations and displacements of lesser mortals. And yet she is not a controllable medium for Van Helsing, nor just a transparent recording device of the id within, Count Dracula. She is productive in her consumptive possession: Mina essentially becomes the detective of the final segment of the story.

The situation has gotten desperate in London; the men have found all but one of the Count’s magic boxes and consecrated them, but he only needs one, and he has obviously departed in it from London. As the men fall prostrate in one or another ways, Mina sends them to lie down and vigorously applies herself to deducing the precise route Dracula must take to get himself carried back in his box to the Castle. For the first time an entry reads “Mina’s Memorandum” (371). With relentless logic, the keen use of maps, geometrical calculations and brilliant speculation, she provides them all with a plan of attack, deciding which river Dracula will need to use to get home and how he can best be countered. “Once again Madam Mina is our teacher,” Van Helsing cries out. “Her eyes have been where ours were blinded” (374). In a text that claims again and again that women need to be shielded from the reality of vampirism, a woman is responsible for seeing the way out. Yet Mina’s prescience and logical ability are predicated on her proximity to the mass cultural forms she has mastered: for example, her hobby is memorizing the train schedule, since she is, in her own words, “a train fiend,” which allows her to recreate Dracula’s line of escape. Additionally, she is a typist with a portfolio. “I feel so grateful to the man who invented the ‘Traveller’s’ typewriter,” she testifies in eerie simulation of the traveling count (371). Mina is that hybrid creature, the consumed woman whose consumption is a mode of knowledge, as Georg Simmel predicted. Mina is simply closer to what Dracula is than the men can be. In saying this, I am not privileging Mina as a heroine, or claiming that her deductive actions

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are some kind of subversion of patriarchal domination. For one thing, in my understanding of texts the characters aren’t really people; to valorize Mina as if she had some existence outside the dynamics of the text is, I think, to insert an allegory of our own making. Moreover, there is no neatly definable patriarchy available for subverting; the class and racial lines form a web that denies transgressive primacy to any one figure here, whether or not a female.

When Dracula comes to press his attentions on Mina he criticizes her for having played her brain against his, and he warns her that her male companions should feel grateful to him: “They should have kept their energies for use closer to home. Whilst they played wits against me—against me who commanded nations, and intrigued for them, and fought for them, hundreds of years before they were born—I was countering them. And you, their best beloved one, are now to me, flesh of my flesh; blood of my blood; kin of my kin; my bountiful winepress for a while; and shall be later on my companion and my helper” (304). It is worth remarking that this extended speech by Dracula is recounted by Mina herself, not available first-hand from the eyewitnesses to the vamping. Here is the paradox of Dracula. While he is perf erce racially other, of the alien vampire race, and while he has as a result of his racial otherness what Van Helsing calls a “child-brain” and a criminal brain, making him vulnerable to the tactics of the European adult male brain at its peak, he is also a partner in imperialism. In the “whirlpool of races” he describes to Jonathan at the beginning of the text, it is his race that emerges as the purest European, a noble race that in conquering this eastern territory in fact makes it historically possible to acquire the fruits of empire for the British, Dutch and Texan men who hunt him. One can readily imagine that the imperial situation produced a fear of that unspecified otherness coming for retaliation, but Dracula is not simply that apparition; he is an ally of imperial forces, and in some ways annexes his own project to that of imperial Britain’s, as an extension to it or an elaboration of it. This is why he is not content with any vampiric empire that would take shape in archaic ways—even the Oriental despotism Marx speaks of is too recherché for the Count. He must come to London to modernize the terms of his conquest, to master the new imperial forms and to learn how to supplement his considerable personal powers by the most contemporary understanding of the metropolis. Dracula has, in short, felt himself to be on the periphery, however powerful he might be there, and by coming to England he has an opportunity to meld vampirism to the modern forces of imperial control.
Benedict Anderson has shown that nations are, in his phrase, "imagined communities," and that the chief means of establishing these relatively fictive national unities has been through language, the "print-languages" made possible by capitalism. As Anderson says: "Nothing served to assemble related vernaculars more than capitalism, which, within the limits imposed by grammars and syntaxes, created mechanically-reproduced print-languages, capable of dissemination through the market."\textsuperscript{17} Dracula is a veritable whirlpool of language, a farrago of accents and dialects and classed speech; this polyglottal quality is the other determinative feature of the novel's form. As much as it is extruded, so to speak, in and through the modern technologies of production that elsewhere the text so abhors, so also the text relies on pushing at the limits of the common language of English to mark out its national boundary, and controlling the unruliness of speech by technologizing it—typing it—as a print-language of hegemony.

"The captain swore polyglot—very polyglot—polyglot with bloom and blood" (336), comes Dr. Van Helsing's report on the captain who has taken Dracula's box on board his vessel. Of course, the bloom and blood are the sprinklings of the most common British curses, but they also connect to the polyglot nature of national "blood" or language. Both Dr. Van Helsing and Count Dracula speak English with idiosyncratic results, especially in the doctor's voluble case. Dracula had wanted to perfect his English by using Jonathan as a model; he fears being a stranger when he goes to London. "Here I am boyar, I am noble, the common people know me and I am master. But a stranger in a strange land, he is no one; men know him not—and not to know is not to care not for" (21). Why Dracula needs linguistic proof of being master when he has so much physical proof is unclear, and he exhibits no particular longing for people to know him. Remarkably enough, I would suggest that Dracula experiences some of the poignant sense of estrangement of the colonial intellectual, who has utterly mastered the print language, is an adept in all things English, including the ascot, and yet who lacks that touch of spoken familiarity. Rather than seeing Count Dracula as a simple stand-in for the "fear of otherness" an imperial nation might well exhibit, his situation has a subtle specificity. He \textit{does} permit the text to express its confidence in the levels of mastery of English that "prove" the nationality. The text then veers off into the extended monologues of, for example, one Mr. Swales, the one hundred-year-old sailor whose speech is almost impossible to read as English, let alone to imagine being spoken, and the report of the cockney zookeeper that is similarly impenetrable as writing. What
unifies them is what must now be called vampiric typewriting, the face of print-language that can extirpate difference even at the margins of comprehensibility, an effacement devoutly to be wished, and brought about by the alchemy of a mass-cultural form.

The nation "has an inner incompatibility with empire," acutely shown in the predicaments that *Dracula* helps to reveal. The empire fans out across the globe, collecting its grab-bag of completely incongruous possessions, while at the same time the maintenance of a national community back in the metropole, as it were, siphons off tremendous amounts of ideological energy. "From the start," Anderson claims, "the nation was conceived in language, not in blood, and [one] could be invited into the imagined community" (133). Such an invitation would rest on linguistic grounds, language being a synecdoche for cultural solidarity. And the only means of producing a language center on a vast enough scale to indeed make a nation lay in and through the techniques of mass cultural dissemination.

Count Dracula is matched on the linguistic plane by Dr. Van Helsing, the Dutch lawyer, doctor and sage who produces the most amazing word salad put on the page. It is not incidental to the polyglot logic of the text that one of its chief characters would fracture English so magnificently; Van Helsing's flights of oratory are foreignness bounded by a rigid adherence to the primacy of English goals in the world. Where his side-kick Dr. Seward will concentrate on minds, Van Helsing's first loyalty is to blood, the purity and strength of which he seems able to determine intuitively. Van Helsing compares Dracula to a tiger: "Your man-eater, as they of India call the tiger who has once tasted blood of the human, care no more for the other prey, but prowl unceasing till he get him" (339). The professor is also knowledgeable about Dracula's motives for becoming a modern vampire. "What does he do? He find out the place of all the world most of promise for him. Then he deliberately set himself down to prepare for the task. He find in patience just how is his strength, and what are his powers. He study new tongues. He learn new social life; new environment of old ways, the politic, the law, the finance, the science, the habit of a new land and a new people who have come to be since he was. His glimpse that he have had, whet his appetite only and enkeen his desire" (339). Dracula's last attack on the vampire group is not represented in his taking over of Mina's soul; before he departs from London, Dracula mounts an attack on language, the language of print culture itself. He finds the manuscript of their trials and burns it to ashes, also throwing in the stray gramophone disk recordings of Dr. Seward's diary he finds

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until these are reduced to wax. Thankfully, Mina has kept a copy. This fortuitous reclamation of their labors, and also of the text held in the hand of the reader, all too ironically derives from a copy. If copying is the inevitable fate of the mass-produced, here it is also the salvation. The vampire hunters do not need sacral, original, authentic or auratic texts—copies will do, the more reproduced the better. Dracula’s pyrotechnic outrage implies the desire for a primal relation to texts, and certainly a desire to replace writing with speech, but his little apocalypse in the fireplace cannot succeed in annihilating the reproductive powers of technologized language.

As Van Helsing sees it, Dracula’s appetite is not for blood, but for a kind of knowledge and power he has become aware of as the attributes of modern, consumer capitalist culture. His “desire is keen” surely not just to enlarge the vampire dominions, but to transform vampire-dom, to take it to the heart of the metropolis, where it feeds on the forces already set in motion by technological development. “What more may he not do when the greater world of thought is open to him,” the professor muses, imagining Dracula’s feelings as he lies on the periphery in his moldy Carpathian tomb. This should make it clear that it is not merely the atavism of Dracula that makes his appearance in England so frightful; it is his relative modernity, his attempt to be more British than the British in consolidating his goals. Franco Moretti interestingly hypothesizes Dracula as the figure for the circulation of money in late capitalism; Dracula does have a vivid scene where coins shower out of his clothes. Nonetheless, that symbology may take too literally the meaning of the “economic,” since Dracula’s economy is so mediated by its relation to consumption and to the forces of empire.

Understandably, Dracula concludes haltingly, and can only end by letting the modern, urban world of technology and consumption recede altogether. The final confrontation with the vampire takes place on horseback in the countryside, Dracula’s coffin protected by a group of gypsy cart drivers. This low-tech ending allows the religiosity the text nervously relies on to resurface with less apparent anachronism, but the ancient and the modern cannot be made to converge. They each move on separate curves, asymptotically, never coalescing. Mina, the typist, has lost all her office equipment by the end, although she does narrate Dracula’s death and records his last look of peace—a far cry from the orgasmic turbulence that passes over Lucy’s visage. Mina’s vampire mark, the red scar burned into her forehead by its contact with a holy wafer, recedes with the setting sun, and Mina is free to become a mother, to reproduce what she has heretofore only copied.

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The novel doesn’t forget its complex relation to the techniques of modernity, however; the religious apotheosis is not its last gasp. *Dracula* is an unstable brew, because it is made up out of mass cultural forms, and yet tries to use this loose collection to mount a retrogressive search and destroy mission against itself. Only the Bible seems to be a text with enough authority to confront Count Dracula—a text that seems (although it is not) to be unscathed by the market forces of commodity culture, a written assemblage of the spoken holy word, as composite and palimpsestic as the textual production this novel itself claims. It would appear that Mina’s sudden unscarring would be proof of those powers, but the novel has already shown us again and again that these sacred words are not powerful enough, do not address the conditions of modern life, are not sufficiently passed through the crucible of mass culture to answer the problems of foreignness, otherness, and the unstable self. The baptismal font of language in this book has to be the typewriter, and it seems blasphemous to direct attention to the printed nature of the Bible, its role as the first printed book of Western culture, by Gutenberg’s hand.

As a final proof of the divisions within the text, divisions that fruitfully and fearfully show us the dislocations in cultural authority that prompt its new world of language, consider the last and then the first words of the text. The group gets together years later, huddling around the boy who is, through Lucy’s transfusions and the passage of her blood to Dracula, and hence to Mina, the putative son of all of the men and all the women, the “sexual history” going back to Dracula and his three brides, and “we were struck with the fact that, in all the masses of material of which the record is composed, there is hardly one authentic document: nothing but a mass of typewriting” (400). The only proof of the ravages of Dracula is the existence of the boy, young Quincey, named after the gallant Texan who gave his life for Mina’s unvamping, and while he may constitute bodily proof for the friends, his unmarked state would represent the opposite to most people. But the first thing we read as we begin the text is this: “How these papers have been placed in sequence will be made manifest in the reading of them . . . there is throughout no statement of past things wherein memory may err, for all the records chosen are exactly contemporary, given from the standpoints and within the range of knowledge of those who made them.” Which is it, truth, origin, the authority of knowledge, or a “mass of typewriting”? What makes this text so modern, not to say modernist, is that it knows that it will be consumed—it stages the very act of its own consumption, and problematizes it. The energies

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of modernity flow out of these same ineluctable wounds, and the undecidable nature of consumption. Most of all, the modernist text follows Dracula in acknowledging, however repressedly, the necessary relation of the modern world to its dialectical other, the rest of the globe. In that encounter, which Dracula enacts, a modernist writing begins.

The reading of the mass of typewriting is the labor of consumption the text requires of us. This mass is vampiric typewriting, this vampire is mass typewriting, this typewriting is mass vampirism. Under the sign of modernity we are vampires at a banquet of ourselves, we are Dracula and Madame Mina, the one who bites and the one who is bitten, the one who types and the one who is typewritten.

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NOTES

2 All quotes from Dracula refer to Bram Stoker, Dracula (1897; reprint, New York: Bantam, 1981). The citation of this perenially and immensely popular work from a mass-cultural paperback source seems appropriate; Mina’s remarks are found on page 57.
6 Dr. Seward follows recent medical practice in this, as Leonard Wolf’s The Annotated Dracula (New York: Ballantine Books, 1975) notes (118).
7 See in this connection of course Walter Benjamin’s “The Work of Art in an Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” in Illuminations, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken, 1969), 212–251, since despite its Brechtian utopianism, this essay forges the vocabulary for apprehending the mass cultural in modern critical theory.
8 Fine accounts of the relation of women to mass culture can be found in Andreas Hussen’s After the Great Divide: Modernism and Mass Culture (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1987), and in Tania Modleski’s essay “Femininity and Mas(s)querade,” in Feminism Without Women: Culture and Criticism in a “Post Feminist” Age (New York: Routledge, 1991), 23–34.
9 I have argued for the revisionary nature of consumption elsewhere; some of the theorists who provide ballast for the rethinking of the process of consumption include Pierre Bourdieu, especially in his Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1984), Michel de Certeau’s work, especially The Practice of Everyday Life (Berkeley, Univ. of California, 1984), and John Fiske’s Understanding Popular Culture (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989).
10 I argue for this in Advertising Fictions: Literature, Advertising, and Social Reading
(New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1988); the classic essay is Leo Spitzer’s “American Advertising Explained as Popular Art,” in Leo Spitzer: Representative Essays, ed. Alban K. Forcione, Herbert Lindenberger, and Madeline Sutherland (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1988), wherein Spitzer shows the relation of the Protestant spirit of capitalism, as it were, to the language of advertising.


13 In Consuming Desire: Sexual Science and the Emergence of a Culture of Abundance, 1871–1914 (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1988) Lawrence Birken suggestively argues that the climate of modern sexual discourse is affiliated with the culture of consumption.


16 Often mentioned, this link to a nascent psychoanalysis is laid out in John L. Greenway (note 12). Greenway concentrates on the historical forms of science Dracula is able to enact.

17 Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (London: Verso, 1983), 47. Eric Hobsbawm adduces further empirical claims for the importance of print culture in Britain’s nationalism, particularly, in The Age of Empire (note 14), chapter six and following.

18 Anderson (note 17), 89.