

Patrycja Pichnicka-Trivedi

Countering Anthropocentrism

Vegetarian Vampires, Ecology, and Non-Human Subjects



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Patrycja Pichnicka-Trivedi

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Contents

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------|----|
| Introduction | 11 |
| Methodology | 13 |
| Vampire Narrative | 15 |
| The Corpus | 16 |
| Terminology | 19 |
| Structure of the book | 21 |
| Notes on the Language and Transcription | 21 |

Part One: Ecologies

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Chapter I: Vampire Attack as Nature's Revenge or Rebellion | 27 |
| I.1 The Nature Still Attacks | 28 |
| I.1.1 The Civilisation Is Always Western | 34 |
| I.1.2 The Nature Is Female | 41 |
| I.1.3 The Nature is the Subaltern Other | 43 |
| I.2 Eco-Catastrophe as Nature's Revenge | 47 |
| I.2.1 The Nature Depraved by Civilisation | 50 |
| I.3 The Evil Vampire Environmentalist | 58 |
| Chapter II: Eco-Hunter in Defence of Exploited Nature | 61 |
| II.1 The Eco-Hunter as the Ethnic/Non-Western Other | 63 |
| II.2 The Eco-Hunter Is Female | 68 |
| II.3 Subaltern Other as the Eco-Hunter | 69 |
| Chapter III: What a Good Vampire Says and What He Does | 71 |
| III.1 Fake Ecology of the White Man | 74 |
| III.2 The Eco-Female Vampire | 85 |
| III.3 The Eco-Decolonial Vampire? | 87 |

| | |
|------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Chapter IV: Body and Mind | 93 |
| IV.1 The Hero's Combat with the Body | 94 |
| IV.2 The Fake Body Appreciation | 108 |
| IV.3 The Body (Almost) Gets Affirmed | 111 |

Part Two: Animal Issue(s)

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Chapter I: Animalisation of the Vampire (and Not Only) | 123 |
| I.1 Vampires <i>as</i> Animals | 124 |
| I.2 Vampires Changing <i>into</i> Animals | 124 |
| I.3 Vampires Being <i>like</i> Animals | 125 |
| I.4 And What If Vampires Treat Humans Like Animals? | 128 |
| I.4.1 Subverting and Not So Much Subverting | 129 |
| I.4.2 On the Abjection of Animalising Humans | 133 |
| I.4.3 Everyone Is Cattle for the Super-Humans | 134 |
| Chapter II: Animal Rights | 137 |
| II.1 Animals as Inferior Beings | 138 |
| II.2 How We Love the Animals | 146 |
| Chapter III: Hunt | 151 |
| III.1 The Vampires' Hunting | 153 |
| III.2 The Vampires' Hunted | 154 |
| III.3 The Hunter Hero | 154 |

Part Three: The Diet

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Chapter I: The Vampire "Vegetarianism" | 161 |
| I.1 The Vampire Consuming "Canned" Blood | 164 |
| I.2 The Animal-Eating "Vegetarian" | 167 |
| I.3 The Artificial Blood | 171 |
| I.4 No Blood at All | 176 |
| I.5 The Actual Vegetarianism | 176 |
| Chapter II: The Man-Eating Vampire | 179 |
| Chapter III: And If We Do It Differently? | 185 |

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----|
| Chapter IV: What the Humans Eat | 189 |
| IV.1 Human Diet versus Vampire Diet | 189 |
| IV.1.1 Vegetarians | 189 |
| IV.1.2 Carnists | 191 |
| IV.2 What Do Normal Humans Eat? | 193 |
| IV.3 Human Bites Vampire | 195 |

Part Four: PostHumanism

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Chapter I: The Posthuman Monsters | 203 |
| I.1 The Hive | 204 |
| I.2 Multiple Minds | 209 |
| I.3 Posthuman Composition | 211 |
| I.4 Multi-Body—Micro-Hive | 214 |
| Chapter II: The Posthuman Solar Heroes? | 215 |
| Chapter III: Ambivalent Narrative: Affirming (Posthuman?) | |
| Monstrosity | 223 |
| Conclusions | 231 |
| Bibliography | 233 |
| Annex 1 | 239 |
| 1. Dagmara Adwentowska, “Niezwykła kobieta”, 2016 [Polish] | 248 |
| 2. K.M. Ashman, <i>Vampire: The Curse of Sekhmet</i> , 2013 [English] | 248 |
| 3. Georges Bess, <i>Dracula</i> , 2019 [French] | 249 |
| 4. Georges Bess <i>Le Vampire de Benares</i> trilogy, 2011–2012 [French] | 249 |
| 5. <i>Castlevania</i> Netflix animated series, 2017–2021 [English] | 249 |
| 6. Manou Chintesco, <i>Les Compagnons d’HeLa</i> , 2004 [French] | 250 |
| 7. Simon Clark, <i>London Under Midnight</i> , 2006 [English] | 250 |
| 8. Douglas Clegg, <i>THE VampYrIcon</i> Trilogy, 2005–2007 [English] | 251 |
| 9. Frank D’Angelo, <i>Sicilian Vampire</i> , 2015 [English] | 252 |
| 10. Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan, <i>The Strain</i> (book) series, 2009–2011 [English] | 252 |
| 11. <i>The Strain</i> FX Network series, 2014–2017 [English] | 252 |
| 12. Gabriel Delmas, <i>Vampyr Draco Maleficus Imperator</i> , 2004 [French] | 253 |

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 13. George DeVein, <i>Renfield's Journal: Dracula's Protege</i> , 2018 [English] | 254 |
| 14. <i>Dracula</i> BBC mini-series, 2020 [English] | 254 |
| 15. Daniel Espinosa, <i>Morbius</i> , 2022 [English] | 254 |
| 16. Francesca Flores, <i>The Witch and the Vampire: A Novel</i> , 2023 [English] | 255 |
| 17. <i>From Dusk till Dawn</i> El Rey Network series 2014–2016 [English] | 256 |
| 18. Yuliya Gavrish, <i>Безу</i> , 2022 [Russian] | 256 |
| 19. Seth Grahame-Smith, <i>Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter</i> , 2010 [English] | 257 |
| 20. Krzysztof Haczyński, <i>Grabarz</i> , 2013 [Polish] | 257 |
| 21. Mary Harron, <i>The Moth Diaries</i> , 2011 [English] | 257 |
| 22. <i>Hemlock Grove</i> Netflix series, 2013–2015 [English] | 258 |
| 23. Aleksey Viktorovich Ivanov, <i>Пищеблок</i> , 2018 [Russian] | 258 |
| 24. Philippe Jaenada, “Bogdana”, 2013 [French] | 259 |
| 25. <i>Карамора [Karamora]</i> Start series, 2022 [Russian] | 259 |
| 26. Jasper Kent, <i>The Danilov Quintet</i> saga, 2008–2014 [English] | 259 |
| 27. Alex Kosh, <i>Ремесло</i> saga, 2005–2013, [Russian] | 259 |
| 28. Krzysztof Kotowski, <i>Trzech Gości w łódce plus wampir</i> , 2022 [Polish] | 260 |
| 29. Francis Lawrence, <i>I Am Legend</i> , 2007 [English] | 260 |
| 30. Christian Léourier, “Quelques moments dans la carrière d’un honorabile homme d’affaires”, 2014 [French] | 260 |
| 31. Ian R. MacLeod, <i>Red Snow</i> , 2017 [English] | 261 |
| 32. Maks Maksimov, <i>Видеоблог вампира</i> , 2020 [Russian] | 261 |
| 33. Stephenie Meyer, <i>Twilight</i> saga, 2005–2020 [English] | 261 |
| 34. Jarosław Moździoch, “Chłopiec z aluminiowym kubkiem w dłoni”, 2007 [Polish] | 262 |
| 35. André Øvredal, <i>The Last Voyage Of The Demeter</i> , 2023 [English] | 262 |
| 36. Viktor Pelevin, <i>Ампу В. Повесть о настоящем сверхчеловеке and Бэтман Аполло</i> , 2006–2013 [Russian] | 262 |
| 37. <i>Penny Dreadful</i> Showtime series, 2014–2016 [English] | 262 |
| 38. Olivier Peru, SteFano Martino, and Digikore Studios’ <i>Nosferatu d’Ilogy</i> , 2011–2012 [French] | 263 |
| 39. <i>Пищеблок [Pishcheblok]</i> KinoPoisk series, 2021 [Russian] | 263 |
| 40. Galina Polynskaya, <i>Тайные стражи</i> series, 2018–2021 [Russian] | 263 |
| 41. Martin Powel, “The Evil of Dracula: A Prequel to Bram Stoker’s Novel”, 2009 [English] | 264 |
| 42. Gary Shore, <i>Dracula Untold</i> , 2014 [English] | 264 |
| 43. Dmitriy Sillov, <i>Кровь Охотника</i> , 2011 [Russian] | 264 |

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 44. Aleksandr Slepakov, <i>Повесть о советском вампире</i> trilogy, 2014–2018 [Russian] | 265 |
| 45. Scott Stewart, <i>Priest</i> , 2011 [English] | 265 |
| 46. Dacre Stoker and J.D. Barker, <i>Dracul</i> , 2018 [English] | 265 |
| 47. Agata Suchocka, <i>Daję Ci wieczność</i> series, 2018– [Polish] | 266 |
| 48. Drew Hayden Taylor, <i>The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel</i> , 2007 [English] | 266 |
| 49. Jessica M. Thompson, <i>The Invitation</i> , 2022 | 267 |
| 50. Grzegorz Uzdański, <i>Wypiór</i> , 2021 [Polish] | 267 |
| 51. <i>Van Helsing</i> Syfy series, 2016–2021 [English] | 268 |
| 52. David Wellington, <i>Laura Caxton Vampire Series</i> , 2006–2012 [English] | 268 |
| 53. Peter Watts, <i>Firefall</i> series, 2006–2014 [English] | 269 |
| Annex 2: Analytic corpus | 271 |

Introduction¹

As Robert Craig and Ina Linge noticed: “Perhaps no genre more urgently explored the convergence of biological discourses, and its themes of gender, sexuality and species differentiation, than that of the Gothic”.² The issues of biosciences, posthumanism, and ecology are entangled into issues of gender, sexuality, and humanity as such, and they are indeed crucial for present-day cultures as the world is facing multiple crises, ecological and climate ones being one of the most serious.

Jeffrey Jerome Cohen pointed out that one can read a culture from the monsters it engenders.³ Monsters are Others, emblems of difference—and few Monster figures are as important as vampires. But the Vampire Narrative offers us even more than a perfect image of the Otherness. It pictures a much broader range of figures. It also presents a role model (Hero) and a Victim, a subaltern whose fate is at play—an image of the Other alternative to the Monster.

This book reads the cultural approach(es) to ecological and posthumanist questions through the Vampire Narrative and its figures. It explores the non-anthropocentric dimensions of Western and non-Western vampire narratives.

1 Some of the ideas included in this book were presented in my articles “Ecological Thinking in Fantastic Literature. Symbolism of New Heroes: A Case Study of 21st Century American Vampire Narrative,” in *Eco-Consciousness in American Culture: Imperatives in the Age of the Anthropocene*, ed. Adina Ciugureanu and Eduard Vlad (Lausanne: Peter Lang, 2023), 283–300, and “Posthuman(?) Agency and Vampire Narrative(s),” in *Re-Thinking Agency: Non-Anthropocentric Approaches*, ed. Joanna Godlewicz-Adamiec and Paweł Piszczatowski (Göttingen: Brill/V&R Unipress, 2024, to be published). This book develops some of the topics from those articles and omits some that were thoroughly explored in them. It also uses and develops the methodology applied in the latter article.

2 Robert Craig and Ina Linge, “Introduction: Can Science and Literature Share a Language?” in *Biological Discourses: The Language of Science and Literature Around 1900*, ed. Robert Craig and Ina Linge (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2017), 16.

3 Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, “Monster Culture (Seven Theses),” in *Classic Readings on Monster Theory: Demonstrare, Volume One*, ed. Asa Simon Mittman and Marcus Hensel (Amsterdam: Arc Humanities Press, 2018), 43–54.

Both ecology and posthumanism are explicit topics of the stories, as well as analysing tools. This means that diverse ecological and posthuman theories can be used to examine vampire narratives but can also be embodied inside vampire narratives. They can be applied by the narrator, represented by protagonists, and spoken about by the story actors. The ecological theories used as tools (primarily, but not exclusively, ecofeminism, postcolonial ecocriticism and ecological Marxism) can differ from the “environmentalisms” represented inside the stories. My posthumanist stance is radical: I understand posthumanism as breaking up with a humanistic perspective.

Therefore, this book offers an ecocritical deconstruction of ecologies, environmentalisms and posthumanism(s) represented in the 21st-century Vampire Narrative. It focuses on both Western and non-Western narratives to explore diverse approaches, entanglements, and uses, including the political uses of the eco- and posthuman stances. Anglo- and francophone narratives of the Western European countries and their cultural heirs (such as the USA, Canada, or Australia), as well as Eastern European narratives (Polish and Russian), form the analytic corpus of the book.

Eastern European Vampire Narrative(s) are not the only ones, and not even the earliest adaptations of the Vampire Narrative by non-Western cultures.⁴ However, Eastern European narratives are particularly interesting because the vampire figure came from Eastern European folklore. Western culture then appropriated it to construct the modern Vampire Narrative. Finally, in the process of modernisation, the figure has (re)turned East within this Narrative to be (re)adapted.

The central *topoi, lieux*,⁵ that help to explore the ecological and posthuman issues within the Vampire Narrative are ecological attitudes and statements as expressed by the actors of the stories themselves, their diet(s), the animals and the animalisation, and the actors’ and the narratives’ definition and positioning of the non-human. All of those *topoi* are entangled.

4 See, e.g., *Transnational and Postcolonial Vampires: Dark Blood*, ed. Tabish Khair and Johan Höglund (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

5 See Pierre Nora, “Mémoire Collective,” in *Faire de l’Histoire*, ed. Jacques Le Goff and Pierre Nora (Paris: Gallimard, 1974), 398–401; *Les lieux de mémoire, Tome 1*, ed. Pierre Nora (Paris: Gallimard, 1984).

Methodology

In analysing the meanings of the narratives, I use grounded theory with elements of Marxism, feminism, postcolonial (or rather decolonial⁶) studies, intersectionality, queer theory, ecological, ecocritical, ecofeminist and posthuman studies, and others. As mentioned, the enumerated theories have a double existence within the Vampire Narrative: they can be used by the author, expressed and represented within the narrative itself. They are thus *read* in the text. I also use these theories as an analysing tool—thus, they are *re-read* (sometimes “resistantly read”: their lack is read and interpreted). Some of those theories are particularly foregrounded in specific book Parts (e.g. posthumanist theories in the Fourth Part).

However, the meanings are extracted first and foremost thanks to the structural analysis. My research has a narratological character.⁷ Analysing a broad corpus of works has allowed me to identify the basic (meta)structure—the Narrative—that emerges from and is embodied in those narratives. As was shown by the works of poststructuralists such as Umberto Eco⁸ and Jacques Derrida,⁹ the centre of the structure is its internal function and the relations between elements. The semiotic basis of the Vampire Narrative consists of the relations between three central figures: the Monster, the Hero, and the Victim.

The first step of the analysis is to look at the figures in their relations and state which figure is presented as positive and which is negative. In this step, I also determine which figure is passive and which is active (which has agency). The thorough analysis of each figure helps to determine what each figure represents in the narrative: reason, scientific viewpoint, pureness, contagion, wildness, etc. (Re)organising them within the context of the triangular structure of relations described above permits me to see the actual meaning of the narrative—in other words, what the narrative supports or advocates and what it condemns, discourages or simply neglects.

6 For the difference between the two, see Madina Tlostanova, “Between the Russian/Soviet dependencies, neoliberal delusions, dewesternizing options, and decolonial drives,” *Cultural Dynamics* 27, no. 2 (July 2015): 267–83, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0921374015585230>.

7 Vladimir Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968); Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1949); Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Anthropologie structurale* (Paris: Plon, 1958); Roland Barthes, “Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives,” in *Image-Music-Text*, comp. and trans. Stephen Heath (London: Fontana Press, 1977); Algirdas Julien Greimas, *Sémantique structurale: Recherche de méthode* (Paris: Larousse, 1966).

8 Umberto Eco, “The Semantics of Metaphor,” in *Semiotics: An Introductory Anthology*, ed. Robert E. Innis (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 250–71.

9 Jacques Derrida, *L'écriture et la différence* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1967); Jacques Derrida, *De la grammatologie* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1967).

However, I find that placing the whole meaning/significance solely in the metastructure is a little reductive. What I find interesting is the structure's variations (as opposed to variants)—its versions, particular features, hybridisations and elasticities. The analysis of the Vampire Narrative is, first and foremost, the analysis of the constant play of stories (narratives) with their fundamentals (the Narrative). Every narrative is built upon the tension between the invariant (and its variations) and the variant.

My structural analysis will focus not only on the existing elements but also on the lacking ones. In other words, my analysis will contain elements of Derridean deconstruction. Thus, the narratives will be read according to the apparent intentions and re-read against them, using a *resistant reading* technique described by John Tulloch and Henry Jenkins.¹⁰ Thus, I will analyse the text's explicit, intentional reading and use an alternative reading, scrutinising the gaps, silences and contradictions. I define the intentional meaning of the narrative as the point of view expressed explicitly or implicitly by the narrator/enunciator/monstrator (Tzvetan Todorov's "vision", Gérard Genette's "focalisation"). By a "narrator", I mean the totality of ways in which the narrative function(s) is(are) carried out. To avoid any confusion caused by the metaphorical personalisation [narrator, enunciator, etc.] of those functions in the narratological theory, I prefer to use terms such as "standpoint of the narrative"¹¹. "A consideration of what is foregrounded, what is backgrounded and what is simply omitted [...] throws further light on the hierarchy of values which [...] [the stories] construct. Analysis of narrative point of view, focalisation and narrative voice can show how the reader's sympathies are manipulated."¹²

A posthumanistic approach deeply uproots my narratological analysis. As Donna Haraway has said: "figures are never innocent".¹³ My deconstruction of the figures is posthumanist, as I treat them as relations, and I seek to reveal their entanglements and trans-corporeality, which the narrative both masks and un-

10 John Tulloch and Henry Jenkins, *Science Fiction Audiences: Watching Doctor Who and Star Trek* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995).

11 I do agree here with classic French narratology (with Tzvetan Todorov, Gérard Genette or Paul Ricoeur) that the narrator is present in every story (narrative) in the sense that every story needs to be recounted to be a story (otherwise, it is just the event happening)—even if some stories may try to look as if they were telling themselves, or try to extricate the person of the Narrator as one of the actors of the narrative and in that way hide the actual narrator (narrative vision). Some media, like film or performative art, are especially prone to hiding the narrative instance.

12 Margery Hourihan, *Deconstructing the Hero: Literary Theory and Children's Literature* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 4.

13 Nina Lykke, Randi Markussen, and Finn Olesen, "There Are Always More Things Going on Than You Thought! Methodologies as Thinking Technologies: Interview with Donna Haraway," in *Bits of Life: Feminism at the Intersections of Media, Bioscience, and Technology*, ed. Anneke Smelik and Nina Lykke (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), 38.

masks. Fictional bodies are as much a part of posthuman entanglements and trans-corporealities¹⁴ as material bodies, or instead all bodies are material in diverse types of materiality—all are relational and transversal: *Dracula*; Ashkenazi migration; the discovery of pathogens as foreign agents; professor Van Helsing and doctor Seward fighting the vampire; vampires as polymorphous, gender-fluid, living (or rather walking) cancers that can be cured and returned to unclear, human families; or Trumpist anti-Mexican politics, *culebras* and Texas rangers.

In a sense, the Narrative is treated as a posthuman entity, holding a creative agency of its own: it is something that realises itself through and on its concrete embodiments and embedments, respectively. Yet, it is not a Platonic abstract ideal: as much as the Narrative realises itself through the bodies of the concrete narratives (movies, serials, comics, novels, novellas, etc.), it is composed and created by them. Therefore, the Narrative is a virtual yet embodied spatial structure performed by the narratives that construct and transgress it, making the transgression a part of the structure itself.

Vampire Narrative

Narratives are representations that are semiotic and, therefore, have significance. A structural analysis shows that many stories form one Narrative. The basic (meta)structure of the Vampire Narrative consists of the relations between three main figures: the Hero(es) (also called Solar Hero(es)¹⁵ or the Crew of Light¹⁶), the Monster and the Victim.

I call the Vampire Narrative, created in the times of Enlightenment, the Primary Vampire Narrative. In the Primary Vampire Narrative, the Monster is a non-human vampire, the Hero is a brave man (or men), and the Victim is usually a passive female. In the present day, the Primary Vampire Narrative still finds many embodiments (e.g., Stephen Sommers *Van Helsing* (2004), David Slade *30 Days of Night* (2007), Scott Stewart *Priest* (2011)). However, the Vampire Narrative has evolved since its emergence at the beginning of modernity.

The changes moved essentially in two directions. The first, which I call the New Primary Narrative, gave the actors new features (be this another gender, sexu-

14 See Stacy Alaimo, *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010); Stacy Alaimo, "States of Suspension: Trans-corporeality at Sea," *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 19, no. 3 (Summer 2012): 476–93, <https://doi.org/10.1093/isle/iss068>.

15 Maria Janion, *Wampir: Biografia symboliczna* (Gdańsk: słowo/obraz terytoria, 2002).

16 Christopher Craft, "Kiss Me with Those Red Lips": Gender and Inversion in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*," *Representations* 8, no. 8 (Autumn 1984): 107–33, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2928560>.

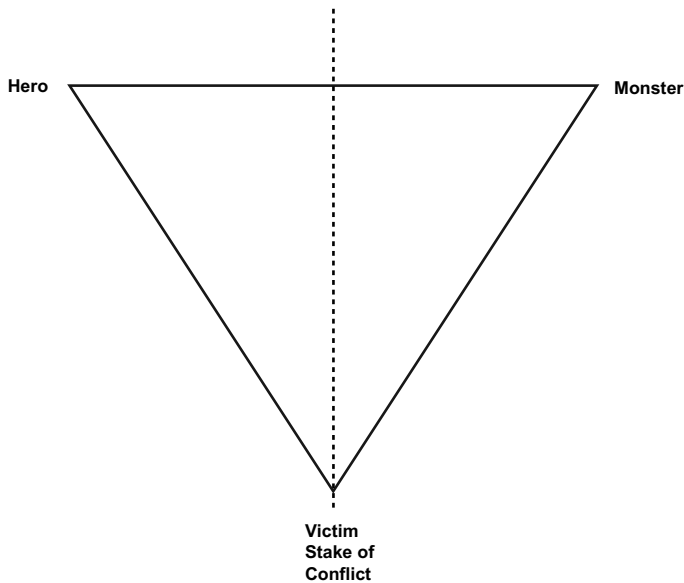


Figure 1.

ality, colour or class or simply new characteristics like more openness or tolerance). The second, which I call the Reversed Narrative, reversed the structure: it made the Vampire into the Hero and the Slayer/Hunter into the Monster, or at least the adversary. Finally, I identify the Ambivalent Narrative, the rarest variant, in which all the actors are equally monstrous and heroic, passive and active.

The structure is pivotal to the analysis of the non-anthropocentric tropes and *topoi* within the vampire narratives. The meaning strongly depends on who represents nature or environmentalism (Evil Vampire, Evil Hunter, the Hero Hunter, the Hero Vampire), who is the posthuman creature (the Victim, the Monster, the Hero), etc.

The Corpus

The examined materials are works of intended fiction (in contrast to folkloric legends designed as objects of belief of groups of people). The material is narrative (which excludes the graphic arts, poems, advertisements, video clips and songs)¹⁷ and encompasses vampire works from the 21st century. These works

17 Though some video advertisements, clips, or songs can present a story, they are not a narrative genre by definition.

date from 2001/2002, with the most recent works published in the 2020s.¹⁸ By “vampire”, I understand a fantastic (however, it can be rationalised within the narrative itself) entity sucking blood. I omit works about “psychic vampires”, or vampires that absorb lives without the intermediary of blood. I also omit works about vampiric creatures that are not explicitly vampires. This means that the creature must be called a “vampire” (or a Russian/Polish “upyr”, “upiór”) within the narrative itself.

My research has a narratological character; thus, I am interested in something other than the medium differences between the narratives. I acknowledge the importance of medium differences and the fact that the narratives unfold thanks to different ways of expression in various media (textual, visual, multimodal). However, for my studies, I am interested in narratives as such. By vampire narrative, I mean a narrative in which a vampire has a central or crucial role.¹⁹ I also omit films produced directly for television or video (DVD) release, and I do not analyse fanfiction, unprofessional material or internet creations.

I do not analyse vampire games, role plays, computer games or video games. These are a particular kind of works; notably, in game studies, some scholars “argue that the narrative is an important organizing feature of games, while ludologists Gonzalo Frasca and Jesper Jul argue that games are not narratives and do not share the defining features or functions of stories”.²⁰ For similar reasons, I do not analyse performative art, theatre spectacles included. I also do not analyse comic books that, according to Susan Napier, have internal structural restrictions and subcultural rather than cultural status.²¹ I make an exception for the Franco-Belgian BD (*bande dessinée*), which has a totally different status within Franco-Belgian culture. BDs are the very centre of French and Belgian culture, frequently listed as best-selling books in France or Belgium.²²

With a few exceptions, I do not include unfinished narratives or examine remakes or remediations of older works unless they introduce an essential difference in the narrative.²³ I am not interested in pornographic works, child or

18 For series and serial works, I consider the date of the first work’s release/publication.

19 In the case of serial works (series, serials, sagas), this applies to the whole series, which means I analyse only series wholly devoted to vampires.

20 Katerina Lakhmitko, “Modes of Perception in Transmodal Fiction: New Russian Subjectivity,” in *The Human Reimagined: Posthumanism in Russia*, ed. Colleen McQuillen and Julia Vaingurt (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2018), 189.

21 Susan J. Napier, *Anime from Akira to Howl’s Moving Castle: Experiencing Contemporary Japanese Animation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

22 Numbers quoted by David Barroux confirm the distinctive status of Franco-Belgian comic art (or, rather, of comic art in France). (David Barroux, “Comment la France est devenue la terre de l’accueil de la BD,” *Les Echos*, January 30, 2014, <https://www.lesechos.fr/amp/1100865>).

23 I do acknowledge that, in essence, every remediation creates a difference; however, the examination of remediations of vampire narratives would require a separate study using different tools.

teenage literature, films or series, except for a few “young adult” works that can be considered as targeted both to teenagers and to adults (20 to 30 years old).²⁴ Finally, I am not interested in parodic or comedic vampire works, and I include just a few examples of vampire romances. It is a vast domain of creation and a genre which has gained its own name (“paranormal romance” in English, or “bit-lit” in French).²⁵ From the abundance of such works, I chose the most emblematic ones or the narratives that differ considerably from others.

I analyse francophone and anglophone narratives of countries performed as Western, i. e., French, Belgian, Swiss, Canadian, American, Australian and British franco- and anglophone vampire narratives. I also analyse Russian and Polish vampire narratives. Those are in the particular position of being not-fully-Western: more Western than some oriental countries, and yet not actually Western Secondary Empires²⁶ or Subaltern Empires.²⁷ The designation was shaped for Russia, an uncontested imperial state, but it also suits Poland.²⁸ Their Westernness is disputed, negotiated, rejected, and resisted—between the West and between each other.

There is an obvious problem in such a research setup: it is the problematic definition of what the French, American, British, Russian, Polish, etc., narrative

24 The term “young adults” is problematic: for some, it includes people over 13 (that is how some editors target their books and define them as “YA literature”), and for others, it includes people over 18 until 30 or even 35 years old (this definition is commonly used in psychological or sociological surveys).

25 French name comes from the English “bite” and “literature”. For a setting of “paranormal romance” or “bit-lit” as a separate (sub)genre, see, e.g., Joseph Crawford, *The Twilight of the Gothic?: Vampire Fiction and the Rise of the Paranormal Romance, 1991–2012* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2014); or Sophie Dabat, *Bit-lit!: l’amour des vampires* (Bordeaux: Moutons Électriques, 2010). The personages and the plots are schematised, and a love affair is at the centre of attention. I follow the definition given by Lorna Piatti-Farnell, *The Vampire in Contemporary Popular Literature* (New York, London: Routledge, 2014), 11–12. She uses genre category as an important tool for analysing vampire stories and the differences between urban fantasy and paranormal romance based on the importance of the love plot within the story. Contrary to paranormal romance, a love plot can be present in urban fantasy, but it is not “the centre of the narrative, and not the ‘selling point’ of the fiction itself” (p. 12). While I sometimes differ from Piatti-Farnell in classifying the particular narratives (the centrality of the love plot being a fluid category), I agree with the definition itself.

26 Madina Tlostanova, “Can the Post-Soviet Think? On Coloniality of Knowledge, External Imperial and Double Colonial Difference,” *Intersections. EEJSP* 1, no. 2 (June 2015): 50, <https://doi.org/10.17356/ieejsp.v1i2.38>.

27 Viatcheslav Morozov, *Russia’s Postcolonial Identity: A Subaltern Empire in a Eurocentric World* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

28 See Aliaksei Kazharski, *Central Europe Thirty Years after the Fall of Communism: A Return to the Margin?* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2022), 16. See also Dariusz Skórczewski, “Postkolonializm jako metoda: konserwatywna czy ‘postępowa’? Wstępne oczyszczenie przedpola,” in *Debaty Artes Liberales, Tom X: Perspektywy postkolonializmu w Polsce, Polska w perspektywie postkolonialnej*, ed. Jan Kieniewicz (Warsaw: University of Warsaw Press, 2016), 135.

is. While the language criteria are evident, they need revision. In colonial and post-colonial conditions, there are works created in English, French, or Russian, which are, however, parts of other cultures, like Indian or Nigerian literature written in English or Kazakh literature written in Russian. The author's residence is also not a deciding factor. Neither is the publication place, especially for countries with some form of censorship (censorship inside the country can force the author to publish outside of it, even if their works are still targeted primarily to internal audiences). Self-identification could be such a factor, but it is not always done. The author's provenance seems crucial, but reducing the question to the author's origin seems a little presumptuous. Provenance is a controversial notion, for some countries and nations follow *ius sanguinis* (the law stating that parents transmit nationality) and others *ius soli* (the law stating that nationality is obtained by birth on the land). It also becomes problematic for authors born in non-existing countries such as the USSR or disputed areas.

Moreover, some kinds of works, like films or serials, usually require more than one author. On the other hand, their classification is the easiest: it is commonly agreed that the film or serial is of the same origin as its production company location. The latter is understood as the place where the film production studio or TV station is registered/has headquarters.

For individual works, I employ a comprehensive set of criteria: language, self-identification (if provided), citizenship/nationality, and the author's provenance (thus, I exclude works of authors whose provenance is unknown or disputed, for example, those from Crimea even if writing in Russian). In the case of collaborative works, such as BDs, I only include works made by at least one French/Belgian author (scenarist or cartoonist) and published by a French publishing house in my corpus.

The corpus for this study encompasses 112 narratives, i. e., 1065 series, films, novels, and stories. The titles were searched for in Internet browsers, library catalogues, bookshops, fan pages, TV programs, and film festival programs. Furthermore, another vital source of information about vampire works can be found in numerous vampire bibliographies, as well as on the websites and in the papers of associations such as The Dracula Society, academic organisations such as Lord Ruthven Assembly or Transylvanian Society of Dracula.

Terminology

This book uses three terms to describe other-than-human beings: non-human, un-human and in-human, written with or without dashes. "Non-human" expresses a simple statement that a being does not belong to the human species. "Un-human" implies negation, symmetrical opposition. "In-human" implies in-

version. A vampire was constructed as a liminal creature, similar to humans, yet not human. It was not only a non-human being but an un-human and in-human being.

A vampire can be the perfectly symmetrical opposite, the negation of the human—the un-human, un-dead thing. And it can be the inverse (and reverse) of the human—the in-human alien being, a human *a rebours*, subverting the current norms of humanity and therefore seen as cruel, anti-social, and deviated. A vampire can be both at once: an un-human thing that is nonetheless judged as cruel in a way that the living beings are judged.

The term “abhuman”, introduced by Kelly Hurley in *The Gothic Body: Sexuality, Materialism, and Degeneration at the Fin de Siècle* (1996),²⁹ could be useful here. The term is akin to Kriteva’s abjection. Robert Craig and Ina Linge also referenced it: if abjection is when “the ego at once defends a sense of self-identity and welcomes the erosion of its boundaries”, then the concept of abhuman redefines the human as “bodily ambiguated or otherwise discontinuous in identity”, and questions human’s sexual and species specificity.³⁰ Like in the case of abjection, this evokes both fascination and fearful repulsion; the latter expressed in violent re-solidification narratives (like *London Under Midnight* or *The Strain*). I find the category of “abhuman” brilliant. However, it might intersect with the categories of non-human, inhuman and unhuman that I use. Notably, abhuman could apply to any of them, when abjectified, i. e., simultaneously met with fascination and disgust. To avoid further confusion, I am not using it in my book. However, I do keep in mind the signification implied in the term.

I frequently use the terms “liberal” and “macho” (machist). This refers to Diana Taylor’s typology of domination: “liberal” domination consists of protective leadership, while “machist” one consists of violent submission or even destruction. Both position the object of domination either “under one’s wing” or “under one’s boot”.³¹ While I reference Diana Taylor’s text in some places, I do not always do it for the comfort of reading. The term “abject” or “abjection”, introduced by Julia Kristeva,³² is treated similarly. The verb “abjectify” or the noun “abjectification” refer to this term.

29 Kelly Hurley, *The Gothic Body: Sexuality, Materialism, and Degeneration at the Fin de Siècle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

30 Craig and Linge, “Science and Literature,” 16.

31 Diana Taylor, *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina’s “Dirty War”* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1997).

32 Julia Kristeva, *Pouvoirs de l’horreur: Essai sur l’abjection* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1980).

Structure of the book

The book is structured into four equal parts, following the above-mentioned *topoi* of ecology, animals, diet, and posthumanism.

The book's First Part is devoted to the Ecologies of the vampire narratives. It is composed of four Chapters. Chapter I focuses on the trope of the Vampire attack as nature's revenge or rebellion. It explores how nature is presented in the vampire narrative, how it is still opposed to civilisation or entangled with it, but ultimately still a force to be tamed. Chapter II focuses on the figure of the Vampire Hunter as an eco-warrior. Chapter III focuses on the explicit advocacy of the environmentalism contained within the vampire narratives and the figure of the Good eco-Vampire. Chapter IV analyses how the nature-civilisation conflict is internalised and replayed in the psychological ecologies of the protagonists, frequently in the form of body-mind conflict.

The Second Part is devoted to the Animal Issues. Chapter I focuses on the animalisation of the actors of the vampire narratives. Chapter II focuses on the question of animal rights, or lack thereof, in the vampire narratives. And finally, Chapter III focuses on the trope of the hunt in Western and non-Western narratives: how Vampires hunt, how Vampires are hunted, and how the Hunter figure is represented.

The Third Part is devoted to the types of diet within the vampire narratives. Chapter I focuses on the diverse types of vampire "vegetarianism". Chapter II focuses on man-eating vampires. Chapter III presents alternatives to both kinds of vampire diets. Chapter IV explores the diets of human actors within the vampire narratives, observing that, interestingly, very similar diets can get a very different moral evaluation depending on who is eating whom.

The Fourth Part is devoted to posthuman *topoi*. Chapter I explores the types of posthuman Monsters, and Chapter II explores the types of posthuman Heroes. Finally, Chapter III focuses on the ambivalent figures and ambivalent narratives, arguing that they are perhaps the most posthumanist of all. The book ends with a short Conclusions Chapter.

Notes on the Language and Transcription

A few more notes need to be made. When writing general statements, I mostly use the neutral pronoun "they" unless the implicit meaning is different, e. g., in the case of Hero, who is frequently conceived as implicitly male. There is also an issue of subjectivity as expressed by pronouns, notably the use of pronouns he/she/they versus the pronoun "it", then pronouns "who" versus "what" or "that", etc., when it comes to non-human beings. I generally follow the line of the narrative: if

the narrative objectifies non-human beings, I use the pronouns “it”, “that”, etc. If the narrative tries to recognise non-human subjectivity, I use pronouns he/she/they, “who”, etc. I also use them when I make my statements.

I try to avoid terms such as “disabled” (preferring “differently abled”) and use them only when the narrative implies so. The same applies to ethnonyms perceived as offensive, such as “Gypsies” and others—I only use them to present the original vocabulary of the analysed material. The narrative stance should not be confounded with mine.

I use the structural analysis, as described in Chapter I. I use diverse capitalisation of certain words (notably: H/hunter/S/slayer, V/vampire, V/victim, H/hero, M/monster). A capital letter is used when the word refers to the narrative structure, and a small letter is used when the word refers to a generic name.

I also use the term “medicalisation” rather than the narrower “pathologisation”. “Medicalise” refers to the whole range of discursive practices, specifically operationalising within the domain of medicine and medical studies and defining with the aid of medical apparatus or medical terminology.

When it comes to the transcription from the Cyrillic alphabet, I follow a few rules. For the names of the authors, in every case, when possible, I try to use the transcription that the author has used themselves or then the relatively established one (for that, I browse the author in Google Scholar and diverse scientific repositories, as well as search for the transcriptions of their name in other scientific articles, but also in the press, in Wikipedia, or on their personal profiles in social media). For other proper names, including widespread Russian first and second names given to fictional personages, for greater reading comfort, I also use the most pervasive transcriptions, again identified using primarily Google and Wikipedia. When not possible, I make transcription according to the rules of the BGN/PCGN romanisation system for Russian (with a sign “ë” romanised as “yo” for greater consistency of the text overall). To keep consistency with previously mentioned cases, I do not transcribe special signs ъ and ъ, unless for cases of glaring importance for pronunciation. When it comes to titles, I keep them in Russian original notation. As I find the practice of transcription problematic in its core, i. e., potentially colonial, I try to avoid it when possible. I opted to use the original titles in other languages as well until and unless there is a well-established version of the title in English. The list of the analysed titles in English, French, Polish, and Russian, as well as their translations, is attached in Annex 2.

Part One: Ecologies

Simply put, one can say that ecology is the relational study of nature. Yet humans can exclude or include themselves in nature, establishing a nature-civilisation or nature-culture dichotomy. The objects onto which nature and culture are contrasted, clashed, or negotiated include humanity itself, human society, or space (the world). The discussions about whether a space should remain “in the state of nature” are not discussions about human presence *per se* but about the civilisational changes that this presence implies.

The same conflict is re-enacted at the micro-scale of a human individual: nature and civilisation are supposed to compete inside a human being. This competition is another reframing of the body and mind/spirit/soul dichotomy.

The shape of humanity and society is negotiated within the vampire narratives. Some narratives perform an absolute division between nature and civilisation. Some narratives claim to promote balance, regardless of how they understand it.

The ecological triangle Civilisation—Society/Humanity/Space—Nature can be superimposed onto the Narrative structure triangle (Solar) Hero—Victim—Monster (Figures 2 and 3).

The Vampire can play the role of the Monster (Primary Vampire Narrative) and the Solar Hero (Reversed Vampire Narrative). Similarly, Vampire’s opponent, the Vampire Hunter, can play the role of the Solar Hero (Primary Vampire Narrative) and the Monster (Reversed Vampire Narrative). As a result, there exist hypothetically four triangles (Figures 4, 5, 6 and 7).

However, some variants are very rare or almost nonexistent. This Part is organised according to how the diverse ecological, anti-ecological, and fake-ecological ideas are expressed. It analyses the environmental tropes and *topoi* mostly using ecocritical methods (including postcolonial ecocriticism) and ecofeminist deconstruction. Chapter I focuses on the *topoi* of the evil vampire as a representative of dangerous nature. Chapters II and III focus on the seemingly positive representations of nature and environmental advocacy. Chapter II focuses on the figure of the eco Vampire Hunter and Chapter III on the eco-Vampire. Chapter IV analyses the internalised version of the nature-civilisation conflict, transposed into the body-mind conflict.

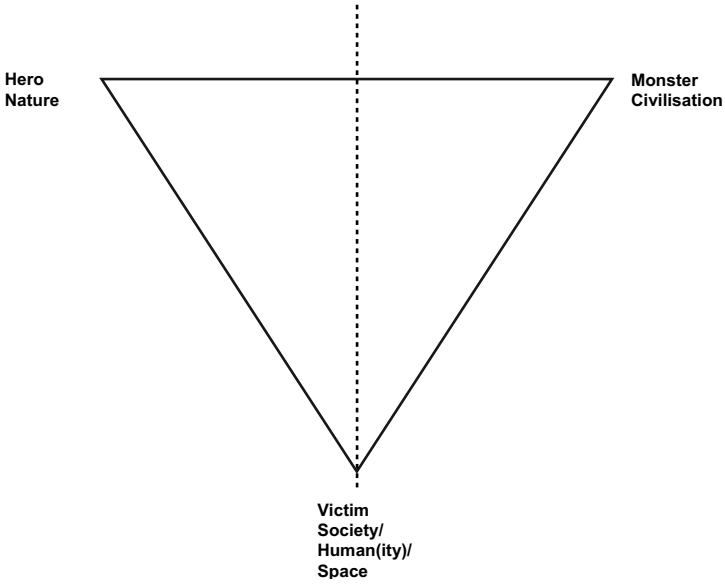


Figure 2.

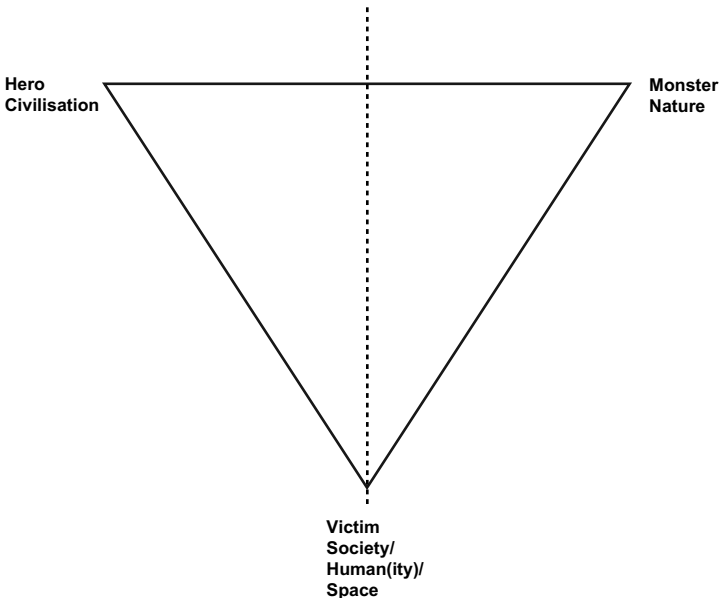


Figure 3.

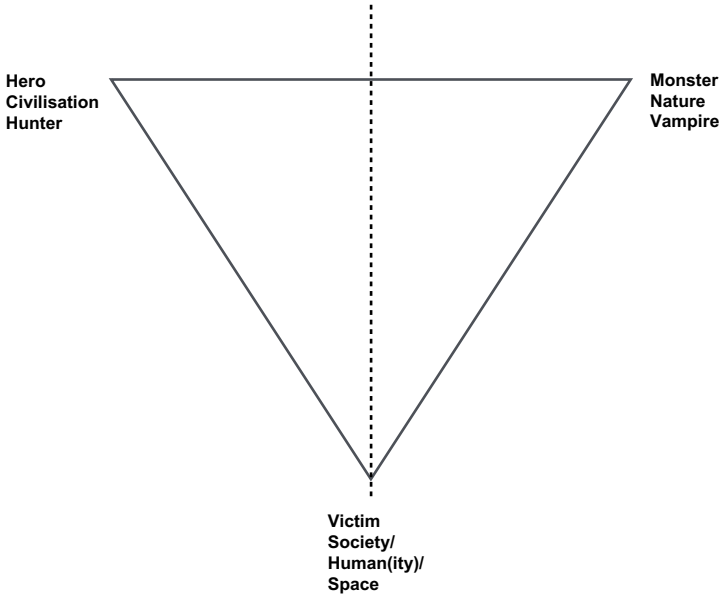


Figure 4.

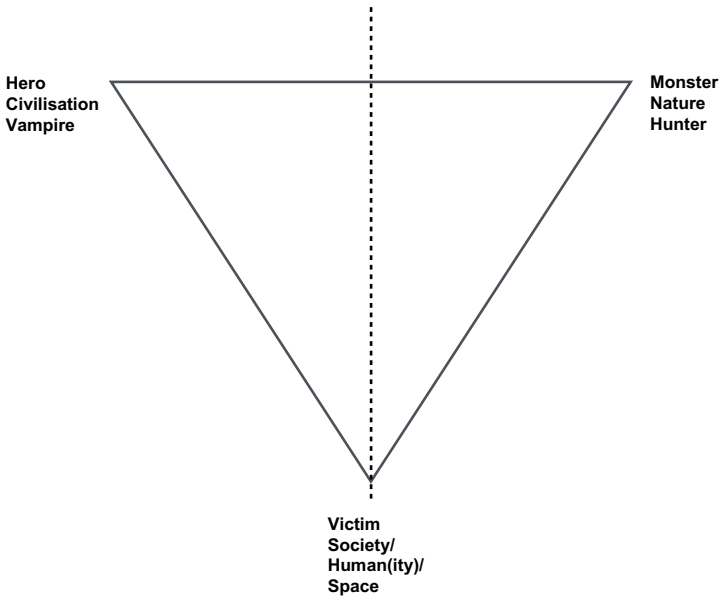


Figure 5.

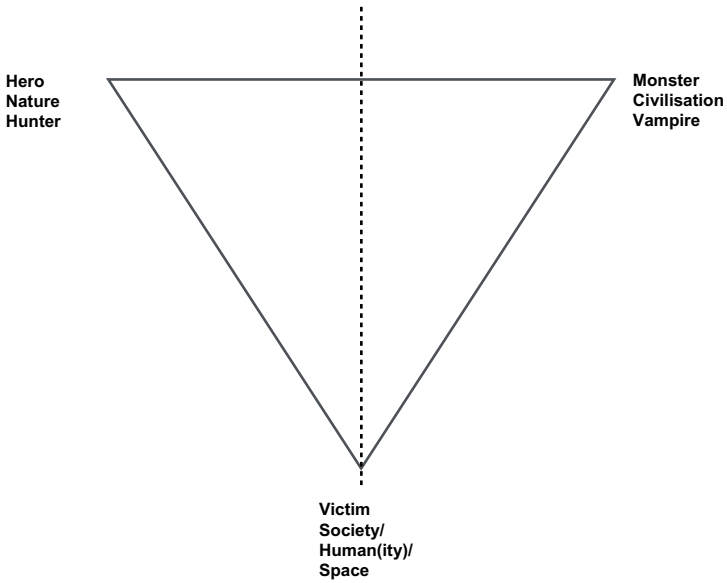


Figure 6.

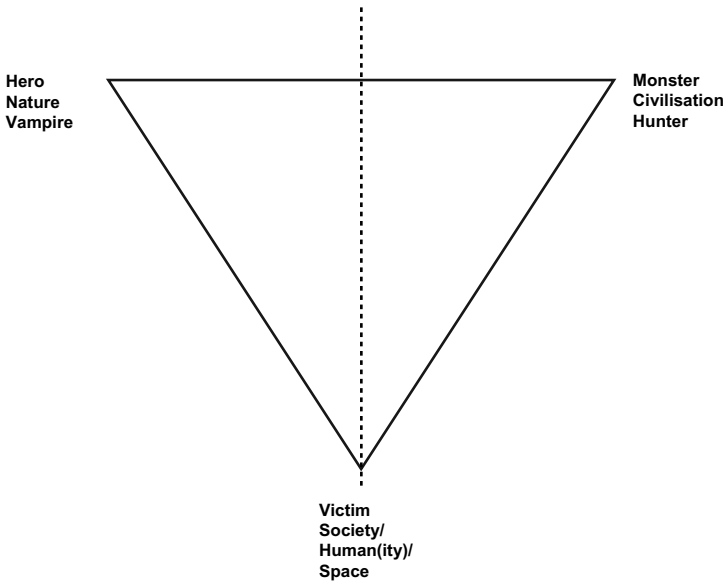


Figure 7.

Chapter I: Vampire Attack as Nature's Revenge or Rebellion

The ecological dimension of the Vampire figure has been present in the Vampire Narrative since its beginning. Vampires could assume animal shapes and could command forces of nature, such as the wind or the fog. Attacks of vampires rising from the dead could be seen as the symbolic revenge of subdued, exploited earth. According to Simon Bacon, Dracula or Orlok from Friedrich Murnau's 1922 *Nosferatu* movie could represent the whole ecosystem trying to save its integrity.³³

Modern fear of nature and its positioning in contrast to civilisation had strong colonial hints. Land, the local ecosystem, and the local people merged under the gaze of the coloniser, who was scared that the colonisation could be reversed:³⁴ that the colonised people and land could rebel. The coloniser projected his fears onto the colonised, who became dreadful vampires in his eyes.

In many Primary Vampire narratives, the Vampire was eventually killed, and the order was restored. This order consisted of the white (hu)man's domination of nature. Paradoxically, it claimed to be natural; this is because "naturalness" is not the same as nature. As Zygmunt Bauman observed: "Nothing is more artificial than naturalness".³⁵ Thus, the Vampire was both a figure of nature and was unnatural in their revolt against civilisation. It was natural for nature to be passively submitted, conquered, subdued, formed according to human wishes and needs, and even defeated or destroyed.

33 Simon Bacon, "Dracula the Environmentalist: The Land Beyond the Forest," in *Eco-Vampires: The Undead and the Environment* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2020), loc. 363–1178, Kindle. Bacon writes profusely about the simultaneous development of the narratives about the vampires and about the vampiric landscape or vampiric plants. See also Terry Adams, "'To Believe in Things That You Cannot': Dracula and the Unthinkable," *Gnovis Journal* 18, No. 2 (2018): 17–27, Başak Agin Dönmez, "A Gothic Ecocritical Analysis of Bram Stoker's Dracula," *Journal of Faculty of Letters* 32, no. 2 (2015): 15–24.

34 Stephen D. Arata, "The Occidental Tourist: Dracula and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonisation," *Victorian Studies* 33, no. 4 (Summer 1990): 621–45.

35 Zygmunt Bauman, "Modernity and Ambivalence," *Theory, Culture & Society* 7, no. 2–3 (June 1990): 165.

Humans who sided with nature (Vampire)—weak, seduced women, ethnic Others, or sick people like Renfield in *Dracula*—were not considered fully human. They were either meant to perish with the Vampire or convert back to humanness and civilisation.

The classic confrontation between the evil Vampire, representing nature, and the good Hunter, representing civilisation, is still very popular and will be presented in the first subchapter. The newer, interesting variation is presented in the second subchapter: it is an eco-catastrophe as the revenge of nature. Finally, the last subchapter presents the evil Vampires not as much as embodiments of nature, but the advocates of environmentalism.

1.1 The Nature Still Attacks

It is probably not coincidental that the latest *Dracula* movie, André Øvredal's *The Last Voyage of the Demeter* (2023), underlines so much the name of the ship that transported the vampire to England. The ship, coming from Eastern Europe, bore the name of the goddess of nature. In C.J. Henderson's short story "Dracula: Long Live the King" (2009), *Dracula* "threatened the fabric of [weakened] civilization".³⁶ *Dracula* unleashes nature into society: he destabilises human politics and economy and incites the rebirth of tribal conflicts, especially in (again) Eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa.³⁷

As written above, the classic imagery of the vampire as the wild nature attacking society, frequently represented by one particular person, the Victim, is still vastly popular. This Victim is defended by the Solar Hero, who represents civilisational order.

In David Slade's *30 Days of Night* movie (2007), vampires attack a small town in Alaska. According to Dale Hudson, the plot is built on the schema of a *Western*: the savage Other and the wild nature need to be overcome by the forces of civilisation brought by a white man.³⁸ According to Simon Bacon, vampires embody the wild nature of Alaska.³⁹ Indeed, the plot has a form of a *slasher*: a group of humans tries to survive the polar night, where the vampires roam and hunt freely. They represent a society that tries to survive the invasion of nature. Significantly, they are deprived of civilisational facilities: the coming of the

36 C.J. Henderson, "Dracula: Long Live the King," in *Vampires: Dracula and the Undead Legions*, ed. Dave Ulanski and Garrett Anderson (Calumet City: Moonstone, 2009), loc. 3742, Kindle.

37 C.J. Henderson, "Dracula: Long Live the King," loc. 3927, Kindle.

38 See Dale M. Hudson, *Vampires, Race, and Transnational Hollywoods* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 177.

39 Simon Bacon, *Eco-Vampires: The Undead and the Environment* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2020), loc. 780–858, Kindle.

vampires is preceded by the mysterious Renfield-like figure who steals mobile phones and kills the dogs, and the vampires themselves start their attack by destroying the power plant.

All of those are symbols of civilisation and, in the case of the power plant, of the exploitation of nature by man. Vampires come from outside civilisation, simultaneously with the dark of the 30-day-long polar night. The narrative shows them as abject and repulsive, and they represent everything that the civilisation is not: the amount of violence, sexual, sadistic drives, and hunger. The Solar Hero of the story, representative of the civilisation, is brave, noble, protective, and ready to sacrifice himself for the woman—and the society—that he defends.

In rarer cases, specifically in the apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic narratives, the Crew of Light must restore society or the land to its civilised state. Finally, some narratives, like Stephen Sommers' *Van Helsing* (2004), present civilisation's conquest of wild lands. The very existence of the still non-civilised remote land where nature rules is considered a threat to civilised society. The brave Western conqueror needs to go there to kill the Vampire Monster.

The more "liberal"⁴⁰ narratives promote the alternative versions of civilisation. Usually, the narratives have two Monsters, one representing civilisation in its too-rigid form and one representing wild nature. The new civilisational proposal is to loosen up civilisational oppression, include some natural elements, and, if the civilisation is conceived in terms of Westernness, include some non-Western elements.

In George DeVein's *Renfield's Journal: Dracula's Protege* (2018), the benevolent religion is opposed to the rigid modern science, and there is a protest against the colonisation and exploitation of Africa. Renfield claims that: "The balance of nature must be restored and if we do not do it consciously, ourselves, nature will do it for us".⁴¹ "We are like a pestilence whose only intent is to multiply, returning poison for all we take in. We have become as parasites infesting the host..." But then he reveals that the objects of his care are humans only: "...yet, if the host dies, so shall we".⁴² Dracula explicitly says: "I have come from afar to claim my rightful place as the Corrector. Nature has sent me..."⁴³ Despite being harmed, the nature is presented as evil for being vengeful. It is not better than too harsh

40 The vagueness of the term is intended: it refers to Diana Taylor's "liberal" and "machist" ways of subduing (Diana Taylor, *Disappearing Acts*), Marcin Napiórkowski's "liberal" types of narratives (Marcin Napiórkowski's classification: Marcin Napiórkowski, *Turbopatriotyzm* (Wołowiec: Wydawnictwo Czarne, 2019), 120), as well as to generic "liberal" as a generic term, or to the familiar use of "liberal" as "less strict".

41 George DeVein, *Renfield's Journal: Dracula's Protege* (Scotts Valley: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2018), loc. 3110, Kindle.

42 Ibid., loc. 3109.

43 Ibid., loc. 3164.

civilisation, as represented by Hunters such as Dr. Seward. Renfield imagines the middle ground in the virtues of Anglicanism.

* * *

In Clay and Susan Griffith's trilogy *Vampire Empire* (2010–2012), a non-white female empress tries to find a nature-civilisation balance in geomancy. In *Blood Ties* (2007) series, the human heroine Vicki chooses between the human Hunter Mike and the Vampire Henry. Mike, a policeman, represents the civilisational order, and Henry represents nature. She forms the detective team from both, constructing a civilisational institution enriched by the element of nature. In Glenn Stranding's *Perfect Creature* (2006), the emissary of the patriarchal church fights with the rogue evil vampire. But the Hero also defends the eponymous perfect creature, a female vampire baby: the Brothers can be enriched by her appearance.

Indeed, a liberal version of feminism is frequently included or even cast as a "liberalised" version of modern civilisational order. In the *Underworld* saga, Lycans and vampires are two immortal races with unequal social position. At first, werewolves had only wolf form, while vampires—human one. Vampires lived in the castles, formed an aristocratic class, and fought with werewolf beasts living in the forests. Vampires represented all the power of civilisation in fight against wild nature. After some time, Lucian, the first werewolf in human form (Lycan), was born and rebelled against the vampire rule. In Måns Mårilind and Björn Stein's *Underworld: Awakening* (2012), the hierarchies are subverted, and werewolves rule the world. But the system remained the same. Werewolves secretly control all the civilisational institutions of power and science. At this moment, the Lycan leaders are exclusively white, upper-class male scientists. Eventually, a new, benevolent coven emerges, composed of hybrid and female figures: Selene, Eve, David, and Lena. It represents the new form of civilisation.

In Xan Cassavetes' *Kiss of the Damned* (2012), the Solar Hero is a woman, moreover a labour class non-white one. Yet the anti-ecological meaning of the Primary Narrative remains. The action revolves around the love triangle: good vampire woman Djuna, her sister, evil vampire woman Mimi (the Monster), and Paolo, Djuna's husband, seduced by Mimi. Djuna is quite stereotypically a fragile blonde, and Mimi is a sensual brunette. Djuna wears ethereal Victorian-like dresses and skirts, is surrounded by flowers, and drinks animal blood. She represents the harmless and even pretty side of nature. Mimi is stronger; she wears skimpy, contemporary outfits and hunts people. She brings out the worst in every actor: she seduces Paolo, she incites Djuna to hunt Paolo's agent, and she makes Xenia, the vampire ruler, drink the virgin's blood. And then, Irene, a seemingly background and inconspicuous figure, enters the action.

Irene is an elderly woman of Asian descent, a cleaner servant of the vampires. For generations, her family has taken care of the house where Djuna and her husband live. She turns out to be the true Solar Hero of the story: indeed, she is not the vampires' servant or protector, but their guardian. Mimi has a car accident on the road right before sunrise, and Irene prevents her from reaching home. She watches her burn. She erases the dangerous Other. Significantly, the road where Mimi burns is in the middle of the wild forest: the wild woman burns in the wilderness. Irene represents civilisation, taming the dangerous aspect of nature.

* * *

Since civilisation is a modern Western concept,⁴⁴ some narratives search for a more "liberal" and closer-to-nature version of civilisation in non-fully Western cultures. Such cultures are Western but not "quite".⁴⁵ In the Western imagination, they can constitute a balance of civilisation and nature.

Eastern Europe sometimes plays such a role. In Gary Shore's *Dracula Untold* (2014), Dracula and his country embody the relatively Western civilisation fighting the non-Western Muslim invasion. Yet, to combat the Ottoman invasion, Dracula needs to gather all his country's forces and ally with nature. Its embodiment is the evil, repulsive first Vampire, living in one of the caves of the wild forests. He gives Prince Dracula powers to control the weather, command the animals, and transform into them. According to Simon Bacon, the country as a political-geographical whole defends itself from invasion, control and exploitation, and Dracula embodies the national nature.⁴⁶ He manages to defeat the invader. Then, he destroys his vampire army and tries to destroy himself to restore civilisational control over the forces of nature. Dracula represents a new version of civilisation that uses some elements of nature, where, nonetheless, the Western civilisational element needs to prevail.

In *Castlevania* Netflix animated series (2017–2021), the Crew of Light lives in Eastern Europe but is Westernised: Trevor comes from the Belmonts, an ancient Western family of hunters, Alucard is the son of Dracula and Lisa, an adept of (Western) science, and Hypha Belnades comes from the nomad people. They all fight both the old Western patriarchal religious system (the Church) and the unleashed forces of nature (Dracula and his undead army). The antagonism between the Solar Heroes and their fathers does not rely on a total difference:

44 Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 1–16.

45 See Ivan Kalmar, *White But Not Quite: Central Europe's Illiberal Revolt* (Bristol: Bristol University Press, 2022).

46 Simon Bacon, *Eco-Vampires*, loc. 1589–671, Kindle.

Alucard is a half-vampire, and Trevor successfully uses holy tools. Their antagonism depends on the fathers' radicalism and the sons' moderation. The sons bring the milder version of Western civilisation.

Jasper Kent's *The Danilov Quintet* British book saga (2008–2014) idealises pre-revolutionary Russia as a bulwark against both Western revolutionary madness and Eastern wildness. Russian narratives themselves promote this idea. Like Kent's narrative, they link nature and Western civilisation as two nefarious forces Russia opposes.

Russian discourse frequently represents the West as refined to the point of degenerating and collapsing into most primal behaviours. In Dmitriy Sillov's *Кровь Охотника* (2011), or Yuliya Gavrish, *Безу* (2022), the monsters represent both Western civilisation and nature. In Gavrish's novel, vampires come from the West. Still, they are also described as evil elements of nature that lack God's light.⁴⁷ As forces of nature, they cannot have any individuality. They want to efface every trace of human individuality on earth: art, culture, craftsmanship.⁴⁸ The super-human communities that resist vampire oppression are seemingly ecological, but in fact, nature is defined as bad, as opposed to culture.

In Dmitriy Sillov's novel, the Monsters, vampires, and werewolves represent Western civilisation. Most of the werewolves bear Germanic, and most vampires have Anglo-Saxon names. They are not necessarily of Western origin, but they are Westernised elites. There is even, just as Ilya Kalinin notices for Victor Pelevin's works,⁴⁹ the link between the blood and the resources such as petrol: the elites drink blood, oil and power.⁵⁰ Therefore, the opposition is doubled: Russia versus West, and truly Russian people versus Westernised elites. Yet the Monsters also represent nature.

The Solar Hero is a super-man hybrid, the ultimate warrior of humanity, and a representative of the Russian civilisation. The scene of walking through the Blue Fog metaphorically describes the dominance of the Russian supermale over nature and the female motherland. This walk permits the protagonist to cross a considerable part of Russia without being seen or caught by anyone.

The womb-like world of the Blue Fog can be seen as Mother Russia herself ("fog" is a feminine noun in Russian). She consumed all the invaders that came in: on their way through the Blue Fog, Lada and Andrey see the skulls of a French Napoleonic soldier and the German Nazi one. But the Blue Fog submits to the Russian man who knows how to subdue her properly. He finds not only his way in but also forces his way out and does not hesitate to cut the Fog when he finds it

47 Yuliya Gavrish, *Безу* (Moscow: Проект Livres, 2022), loc. 1426–30, Kindle.

48 *Ibid.*, loc. 787.

49 Ilya Kalinin, "Petropoetics," in *Russian Literature Since 1991*, ed. Eugeny Dobrenko and Mark Lipovetsky (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 120–44.

50 Dmitriy Sillov, *Кровь Охотника* (Moscow: Издательство АСТ, 2011), loc. 3422, Kindle.

too voracious. The civilisational power of a man over the feminised land and national nature is affirmed in the whole of its splendour.

Galina Polynskaya's *Тайные стражи* book series (2018–2021) affirms that Russian civilisation is the only actual one, as the Western one degenerated⁵¹. The Spaniard Feliks chooses to Russify himself and oppose his former Western vampire friends. He also brutally submits Daana, the female demon of the desert, an incarnation of fire and flame. In the end, Daana disappears as if she never existed, just after their physical intercourse. The sex with Daana, impregnated with sadism, is a conquest—and a destruction. The complete and brutal submission of the forces of nature made the man fully regain his strength. In this case, the Russian culture does not offer a balance between nature and civilisation but rather a sharper version of civilisation that the effeminate West supposedly lost.

Polynskaya's Vampire Hero is a city inhabitant: the civilisation finds its embodiment in the Russian city. Similarly, Aleksey Viktorovich Ivanov's *Пищеблок* (2018) novel idealises Moscow. The action takes place in 1980. A Russian village surrounded by nature is a dark place outside the time, outside the “actual life”: only old people live here⁵² and, of course, the vampire. In Moscow, on the contrary, there are the Olympic Games, bright Soviet modernity of skyscrapers, transatlantic ships, and Space exploration.⁵³ The narrative shows that modern Russian, or rather Soviet civilisation, should regain its revolutionary impetus and become international.

Even more frequently, however, the Russian civilisation finds its embodiment in the village, the space that can seem a space of nature but indeed is not. Those cases are discussed further in this chapter.

Polish narratives also present Poland and Poles as embodiments or guardians of the perfect balance. In Magdalena Kozak's *Tajne Akta Vespera* cycle (2006–2017), there is a conflict between the vampires who traditionally hunt humans (Renegades) and those who stopped doing it, specifically the Nighters (Nocarze). It is also a conflict between the nature and the civilisation. Nighters Clan are “civilised” and even “obsequious”.⁵⁴ The vampire Renegades embrace nature.

51 Claims of Western degeneration are frequent in Russian discourse. Sometimes, it is claimed that now Russia is the actual holder of Western values, as the West degenerated itself by migrations, “gender ideology”, LGBTQ+ “ideology”, etc. See, e.g., the shocking text by Timofey Sergeytsev: “Что Россия должна сделать с Украиной,” *RIA Novosti*, April 3, 2022, <https://ria.ru/20220403/ukraina-1781469605.html>. Among open callings for the cultural and physical annihilation of the Ukrainians, the author makes some statements about Russia itself. Russia will recognise itself as the last instance of defence and preservation of the historical European values that the West has lost.

52 Aleksey Viktorovich Ivanov, *Пищеблок* (Moscow: Издательство АСТ, 2018), 14.

53 *Ibid.*, 14.

54 Magdalena Kozak, *Nocarz* (Lublin: Fabryka Słów, 2006), 260.

The proposed solution is balanced with the prevalence of the civilisation. Renegades get accepted on the condition they drink supplied packet donors' blood and do not hunt humans. The new Innanits Clan is created to keep a truce between the Renegades and the Nighters. Their Lord is a Polish policeman.

* * *

Non-Western Primary narratives presenting evil nature—good civilisation confrontation have to deal with the fact that civilisation was usually associated with the West. The *topos* of non-Western as wild is very persisting. In the West, the idea that nature is, or should be, outside the society introduced the concept of it being foreign. Foreign wildness and wild foreigners were at the core of the Vampire Narrative in the 19th century. The wild nature was non-Western, and a non-Westerner was always somehow wild. While adapting the Vampire Narrative, non-Western cultures can launch their own vision of the civilisation or cast themselves as the Western civilisation by juxtaposing themselves with a less Western Other.

Below, I analyse the cases of vampire narratives presenting non-Western Vampire Monsters as embodiments of nature. This is still a recurrent *topos*. Perhaps more popular is only the very old *topos* of nature-as-female, which I discuss consecutively. The two can converge into the nature-as-a-foreign-female, a subaltern Other figure, that I discuss at the end of this subchapter.

1.1.1 The Civilisation Is Always Western

Bram Stoker's seminal *Dracula* (1897) is a prominent example of the West-East confrontation. As Zümre Gizem Yılmaz Karahan noticed, *Dracula* represents nature as opposed to the Western white men representing culture (civilisation)⁵⁵. The novel's successive reinterpretations or spin-offs frequently follow the path of the original. In the already mentioned *The Last Voyage of the Demeter*, the wildness comes from Eastern Europe. Similarly, in the BBC *Dracula* mini-series (2020), in episode one, significantly titled "The Rules of the Beast,"⁵⁶ *Dracula* transforms into a wolf and storms the monastery that serves as a fortress of civilisation, protected by a Catholic nun, Agatha Van Helsing. Significantly, race (the Black Hero in *The Last Voyage of the Demeter*) and gender (the Heroine in

55 Zümre Gizem Yılmaz Karahan, "A Posthuman Vampire: Rational Science and Racial Views in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*," *Social Sciences Research Journal (SSRJ)* 9, no. 1 (March 2020): 73–80.

56 *Dracula*, Episode 1, "The Rules of the Beast," directed by Jonny Campbell, written by Mark Gatiss and Steven Moffat, aired January 1, 2020, on BBC One.

BBC *Dracula*) do not connote the same Otherness as the non-Westernness of the Monster.

The location of the wild non-West is intensely political. For example, in an American El Rey Network series, *From Dusk till Dawn* (2014–2016), vampires come from the bloody gods of the Pre-Columbian Americas, mostly from Quetzalcoatl, the Feathered Serpent. They can transform into serpent-like beasts called *culebras*. Seth, a white U.S. man, calls them “Mexican vampires”.⁵⁷

However, the modern division into the civilised West and the non-civilised “Orient”⁵⁸ still seems the most prevailing. As analysed below, it groups together territories from Asia to Eastern Europe. Interestingly, even the Eastern European narratives themselves represent evil vampires as incarnations of Eastern Europe.

* * *

Eastern Europe as a source of wildness is evident in many adaptations, spin-offs, and reboots of *Dracula*. Like Stoker’s original novel, Hippolyte’s *BD Dracula* (2003–2004) starts with Jonathan Harker’s travel to the Eastern European wild lands. In Pascal Croci and Françoise-Sylvie Pauly’s *Dracula* (2005–2007), the lack of direct representation of Dracula implies that he is represented only by his surroundings, mainly by the landscapes of his native Eastern European country.

Similarly, a close connection between the vampire and the Eastern European land is achieved in Georges Bess’ *BD Dracula* (2019). Dracula’s face or body is frequently visually superimposed over the frames representing the natural landscapes of his country. The narrative saves Stoker’s division between the West and the East, remarked by Jonathan Harker, and stresses it even more thanks to the graphic representation. This is the division between civilisation and nature. Eastern Europe is a wild, hostile space, seen only in the snow: a home for all types of animals but unfriendly to people—a place where natives live in fearful backwardness and only vampires and their servants thrive. Nature is horrifically abundant. Landscapes are organised according to the *horror vacui* rule: crowded with mountains, trees and extremely dense snowy forests. Or, on the contrary, they are empty, showing Eastern Europe as a place of depressing and disturbing white nothingness, crossed only by brave men from the West—the only actually living persons.

In contrast to the uncanny space of the Other, the West is defined as a civilised, modern human home space (“un chez-soi rassurant”)⁵⁹. Its borders are traced,

57 *From Dusk till Dawn*, Season 1, Episode 8, “La Conquista,” directed by Fede Álvarez, written by Marcel Rodriguez, aired May 6, 2014, on El Rey Network.

58 Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon, 1978).

59 Bram Stoker and George Bess, *Dracula* (Grenoble: Éditions Glénat, 2019), 26.

just like in Stoker's book, somewhere along the Budapest line.⁶⁰ The West is represented by urban landscapes (Whitby and London) and then by lord Godalming's manor. Dracula calls Harker "citadin", a city inhabitant.⁶¹ All of those urban spaces are sunny places populated by well-dressed people.

In BD, upon Dracula's death, his castle crumbles and falls, bats fly away, lizards run, wolves start to howl in grief ("hurler à la mort")⁶², and the sky begins to burn. Such a scene is absent from the book. The accumulation of radical conservative elements unconsciously perverts the conservative order, creating Derridean aporia. It makes visible the grief and sufferance of the colonised land losing its protector, lamenting its colonisation by the Western strangers, crying about its devastation. But the narrative ignores it and continues till the end, praising the tremendous civilisational mission the Westerners did when subduing the wilderness of Eastern Europe.⁶³

Works featuring Dracula are not the only ones presenting Eastern European vampires as representatives of the forces of nature. In the French novel of Manou Chintesco, *Les Compagnons d'HeLa* (2004), Balsamo, the Solar Hero, is a discoverer who represents civilisation. In contrast, the Evil Vampire represents nature even if he wants to appropriate the mysteries of science. Significantly, this evil vampire Saint-Germain somehow comes from Eastern Europe. In the 2023 film adaptation of Aleksey Tolstoy's story by Adrien Beau (*The Vourdalak*, original title: *Le Vourdalak*), the eponymous monstrosity emerges from the wild Eastern European forests—first reaching his family house, and from there, through a curse passed on to his daughter, it travels to the West.

In the American franchise *The Strain* (2009–2017), vampirism also comes from Eastern Europe. It is associated with the disease, the posthuman collective consciousness, and nature. Vampirism is an unbridled element (a virus), an uncontrolled "force of nature who invades us and exploits our bodies".⁶⁴ Like in Slade's *30 Days of Night*, the vampires' coming is preceded by the symbolic deprivation of civilisational tools, in this case, the Internet. Solar Heroes represent the civilisational forces of technology and science. Setrakian, the patriarch of the Crew of Light, sometimes criticises human civilisation for its hubris⁶⁵ or

60 Ibid., 43.

61 Ibid., 43.

62 Ibid., 196.

63 A more developed analysis of the Eastern Europe image in French BD can be found in my article "Imagining Eastern Europe—representations of Eastern Europe in 21st century French Vampire bandes dessinées," *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics* 15, no. 4 (December 2023), <https://doi.org/10.1080/21504857.2023.2298238>.

64 Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan, *The Night Eternal*, (New York: William Morrow, 2011), 123.

65 See, e.g., *The Strain*, Season 3, Episode 10, "The Fall," directed by Carlton Cuse, written by Carlton Cuse and Chuck Hogan, aired October 30, 2016, on FX.

cruelty.⁶⁶ Still, he never questions its superiority and main components, including the monopoly of violence.

The narrative also shows civilisation as more humane for everyone, including non-human beings. The cruelty of the vampire Master is demonstrated when he makes a boy kill his beloved feline (in books, it's a snow leopard; in the series, it's a tiger). Before the vampires took over the world, the cat lived safely in the zoo. The zoo, as a symbol of "liberal" and protective earth domination by humans, is considered an ideal in contrast to the brutal machismo of Master.⁶⁷ Human control over nature is desirable and necessary. Without it, nature self-destructs, just like the animals in an abandoned zoo kill each other or are killed by vampires.

* * *

As a symbolic classic colonial Orient, India seems to be a second favourite place to represent foreign Otherness and wildness in the vampire narratives. That is where the vampire is found in Olivier Peru, Stefano Martino, and Digikore Studios' BD series *Nosferatu* (2011–2012). In Georges Bess' *Le Vampire de Benares* trilogy (2011–2012), the action takes place in India. Solar Heroes are representatives of Western civilisation: they are Westerners or Westernised. The main Hero is British journalist Mircé. His beloved Anja is an Indian living in London; she came to India only to search for her father. Deepak disappeared, and the private investigation by Mircé and Gopal, Anja's colleague, leads to the temple, from where Beasts of the Night crawl at night.

When the heroes enter the temple, they enter the realm of nature: they see a mist in the immense interior, hear the sound of a heartbeat and smell flowers, soil, skin and animals. They are cut off from civilisation: there is no phone signal. They enter the vampires' world called Deva's (bee)hive. It is also compared to anthills or termite mounds.⁶⁸ Descending into the hells, the heroes see the surroundings that look like spider nets, and spider-like creatures accompany them. A non-Western world again embodies the abject nature confronted by the Western civilisation.

In some narratives, India and Eastern Europe constitute pivotal points of gradation of the wildness in the Western mental mapping of the world. They map

66 Vampire Master learnt how to implement the administration of extermination from humans in Nazi camps (*The Strain*, Season 4, Episode 7, "Ouroboros," directed by Thomas Carter, written by Andy Iser, aired August 27, 2017, on FX).

67 As already mentioned (in the Introduction and then in footnote 39), I use the categories of liberal and machist domination by Diana Taylor, *Disappearing Acts*.

68 Georges Bess, *Le Vampire de Benares. Tome 2: L'Origine du Mal* (Grenoble: Éditions Glénat, 2011), 16.

Immanuel Wallerstein's world-system,⁶⁹ Irvin Schick's world-archipelago,⁷⁰ or global coloniality as described by Madina Tlostanova.⁷¹ That is what happens in Barbara Hambly's *Renfield: Slave of Dracula* (2007), where the vampire Hero claims it is ethical to hunt in India. Moreover, his Eastern European female companion would be considered white and civilised in India, while she would never be regarded as such in fully civilised and Western Britain.

Ian R. MacLeod's novel *Red Snow* (2017) does almost the same mapping. Orientalist gaze unifies the lands in the East. The first Sybilla was a priestess of a chthonic god on the shores of the Black Sea at the foot of the mountain Pahar. Although the word "pahar" exists, for example, in Romanian (it designates the glass), there is no mountain named Pahar in the Black Sea region. However, "pahar" means "mountain" in Hindi.

Vampirism comes from this mysterious chthonic god. Sybilla was actually a ritual function: there were many Sybillas, and all of them were eventually sacrificed and pushed into the cave where the deity resided. Each next one was fed with the blood of the predecessor. People had been coming to the cave and the priestess-oracle, but eventually, they stopped. This was probably due to the development of civilisation instead of the cult of nature. Finally, a boy came, and he took Sybilla West.

The boy went to Eastern Europe and became master of the Skała castle, the domain that supposedly later became a part of Warsaw. The boy became a vampire and continued making Sybillas. He became genderless. The narrative considers it specifically abject; thus, it inscribes gender to civilisation and sees it as one of its outstanding civilisational achievements.

The vampire created Sybilla from a Polish girl named Sybka. Sybilla/Sybka went further West to escape him. She came to Strasbourg during the French Revolution. She changed a man into a vampire. He migrated to America. During the Civil War, he changed Karl, the narrative Hero. The vampirism spread from the East to the West.

When Karl, investigating the origins of his vampirism, travelled to Warsaw, he looked at the city with an orientalising gaze. He found it strange, chaotic, disorienting, smelling differently, inhabited by effusive religious and superstitious people—and Hungary and Romania seemed the same to him. In Eastern Europe, he felt the primal cave that came here from further East. In the narrative,

69 Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System I: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Academic Press, 1974).

70 Irvin C. Schick, *The Erotic Margin: Sexuality and Spatiality in Alteritist Discourse* (London and New York: Verso, 1999).

71 Madina Tlostanova, "Postcolonial Theory, the Decolonial Option and Postsocialist Writing," in *Postcolonial Europe? Essays on Post-Communist Literatures and Cultures*, ed. Dobrota Pucherová and Róbert Gáfrík (Leiden and Boston: Brill Rodopi, 2015).

the master of Skala takes the cave from Eastern Europe to America, where Karl finally destroys it and saves the American girl Harriet from becoming the next Sybilla. The vampirism is an Eastern wildness that invades the West but is finally defeated by the forces of civilisation.

* * *

In a truly colonial gesture of mimicry,⁷² the negative associations between the wildness and the non-West are adopted by some non-Western narratives. In the first decade of the 21st century in Russia, Alex Kosh wrote his *Ремесло* book saga (2005–2013), where the Craft stands for Western science and technology and is the highest form of magic. In the Polish short novel *Grabarz* by Krzysztof Haczyński (2013), Eastern European nature is the villain force combatted by Western civilisation. Vampires nest in the forest and persecute the village, while Solar Hunters, coming to fight them, reside in the monastery near the same town. Solar Heroes are Western(ised), and the villain vampire is local, Slavic. Heroes fight for the Westernisation of the land.

Stefan Darda's *Jedna krew* (2020) presents a more complex relationship. The Polish novel affiliates vampires with the land in both senses of their affiliation with nature and the locality, specifically the unwanted past/memory. The action takes place in the region of Bieszczady (currently Poland), but the lands of Roztocze and Volhynia (formerly Polish, then Soviet and now Ukrainian) are equally important. All those regions were culturally and ethnically diversified: "Many cultures, the multiplicity of confessions, and nations' melting pot in one region (...). Sometimes, a coupling of such circumstances causes development; sometimes, it wakes the demons".⁷³

Those lands were indeed spaces marked by Cain's syndrome,⁷⁴ from the Volhynia massacres to the pacification of Bieszczady. People were displaced from one region to another. That is what happened to some Poles from Sokal who were displaced within the frame of Action H-T in 1951 when the USSR took some of the Polish most fertile lands in exchange for the primarily sterile lands in Bieszczady. This action contributed to the further ethnical unification of Poland. But the bloody Cain's history of the erased diversity has been taken with the displaced to their new sterile and sterilised homes.

72 See Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994). See also Alexander Kiossev, "Notes on the Self-colonising Cultures," in *Cultural Aspects of the Modernization Process*, ed. Dimitür Ginev, Francis Sejersted and Kostadinka Simeonova (Oslo: TMV-senteret, 1995), 3.

73 Stefan Darda, *Jedna krew* (Chorzów: Videograf, 2020), 260.

74 *Ibid.*, 260.

The protagonist's family were one of those displaced. Vampirism comes from the land and its history and finds its embodiment in Wieńczyk's family. The bloody history of conflicts juxtaposes the family history: vampires are one-blood people. After death, those who are the fruits of incest rise from the graves as vampires. They are the spectres of the family past but also the spectres of the history of the lands where so much has been done to achieve one-blood ethnic unification. Having only one blood in their veins, vampires desire another blood. When they drink another person's blood, this person becomes one-blooded: a new vampire who will seek to drink another blood. The circle of historical trauma never ends.

This trauma is abject, but the story does not claim reconciliation, exposition of the painful past, or reparation. The story claims that vampires need to be kept in the ground, killed, and stopped. This means that the drives for ethnic unification need to be stopped, but it also means that historical traumas are to be kept hidden and unworked. Meaningfully, Wieńczyk, the Vampire Hunter, becomes a fanatic who also needs to be stopped.

In fact, the narrative is a reversal of the eco(critical) post-displacement post-dependent/postcolonial narratives described by Dorota Kołodziejczyk.⁷⁵ Those narratives rework the postcolonial state in a hybrid unhomeliness that nonetheless creates "the new poetics of place [that] manages to transcend anthropocentric limitations of identity discourses".⁷⁶ They bond with the environment, accept and recycle the location's historical, cultural, and spatial palimpsest, and construct new memory politics that transgress the essentialising discourses. One of the actions and embodiments of this attitude is "Digging into the Underworld" as a postcolonial post-displacement re-enacting of the up-rooting.

Surviving is made possible only through reconnection with the underworld. (...) The recuperation of the severed links between place, self, and language can be attempted only through the work of imagination that itself figures digging—an unearthing of that which was hidden from view or collapsed to create the narratives of memory and fiction, which could, possibly, restore the sound to its message, the word to the thing, and, subsequently, the self to the place.⁷⁷

In Darda's book, the chthonic creatures who themselves rise from the underworld and the madness they evoke and incite must be put back down. There is no

75 Dorota Kołodziejczyk, "The Organic (Re)Turn—Ecology of Place in Postcolonial and Central/Eastern European Novel of Post-Displacement," in *Postcolonial Europe? Essays on Post-Communist Literatures and Cultures*, ed. Dobrota Pucherová and Róbert Gárik (Leiden and Boston: Brill Rodopi, 2015), 261–80.

76 *Ibid.*, 280.

77 *Ibid.*, 279.

connection with the ground and no transgressing of the identity; on the contrary, the triumphant pure national self is reasserted. More than 50 years after the displacement, actors still do not manage—and do not really seem to want to—to uproot themselves in the environment, nor to acknowledge their own and their lands’—the lost and the new ones—history. The postcolonial deconstruction is replaced by the national(ist) construction of homogeneity. It is backed up by the inferiority complex of the land that is not civilised enough compared to both more Western regions of Poland and the Western countries.

Wildness is associated with the non-West, both in Western and non-(fully) Western vampire narratives. Almost as frequently, it is associated with the female, a trope that I explore in the next section.

1.1.2 The Nature Is Female

It is prevalent for the narratives to associate bad femininity with degenerate mother nature who wants to harm their human children. In the vampire narratives, such nature is embodied by the abject vampire mother, who can also represent voracious feminism. The narrative either sides with the father figure as the defender of the civilisation, or the father can become too fanatic. Then, the son figure proposes his own more “liberal” version of the civilisation. The chain of equivalence⁷⁸ remains female-nature-evil and male-civilisation-good. The two exciting examples are Scott Stewart’s movie *Priest* (2011) and David Wellington’s *Laura Caxton Vampire Series* (2006–2012).

David Wellington’s book series is definitely an example of siding with the father even though the Hero is female. Vampires symbolise the wild. People know about their existence but think they went extinct in the West long ago. Their appearance in the most civilised Western space, the North of the United States of America, is an intrusion of the wild into the civilised society. It seems unnatural in the sense that civilisation gave to the naturalness.⁷⁹

Vampires are represented by monstrous femininity, the vampiress Malvern, the creator of many vampires. The eponymous heroine, a policewoman, embodies the civilisational order and, despite being a woman, a patriarchal one. She is chosen to be the vampire hunter above all men, “real hotshots (...) Cowboy types”.⁸⁰ She is schooled by a legendary male Vampire Hunter. She joins the male society of the defenders of civilisation: “The men—and the boys”, “their duty.

78 See Ernesto Laclau, *On Populist Reason* (London: Verso, 2005).

79 Zygmunt Bauman, “Modernity and Ambivalence,” 165.

80 David Wellington, *13 Bullets: A Vampire Tale* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2006), 31.

They understood their terrible, grievous losses were the only way to protect their villages and their families”,⁸¹ and symbolically, she becomes one of those men.⁸²

Scott Stewart's movie *Priest* (2011) is in some ways similar to Stranding's *Perfect Creature*. The patriarchal Church confronts the vampires, sending its emissary to fight the threat. The Church is portrayed as too fanatic and power-hungry, while the narrative advocates for more moderation, as represented by the truly Solar eponymous Hero. In the end, however, civilisation must triumph over nature.

The narrative shows vampires as repulsive monsters. They live in the beehive, ruled by the Queen., which connotes them with nature and femaleness. Usually, vampires procreate sexually, and a vampire bite cannot change a human into a vampire, but bitten humans who drink vampire's blood degenerate and get some un-human features. Notably, they stop living in civilisational facilities and instead hide in caves and similar places.

However, in one exceptional case, the Vampire Queen managed to create a human-vampire hybrid with her blood. The scene of transforming one of the priests into a hybrid resembles a sexual orgy. After the hive of vampires tears the priest's body apart in a symbolic sadomasochist orgy, the Queen, male and female at the same time, injects her body liquid into his mouth in a parody of communion—but also of fellatio. This act is an act of humiliation of the man, a symbolic emasculation.

The Hunter (Priest) may be unorthodox, but his confrontation with vampires is still a fight of male civilisation against the invasion of female nature. The final duel between the Hero and the renegade vampire-human hybrid is a duel of true maleness against the queer feminised female-serving degenerated one.

While nature is associated with the foreign and the female, it can also be associated with both at once: Gayatri Spivak calls this figure the Subaltern Other.⁸³ The last section of this subchapter analyses such a vampire female Other figure.

81 Ibid., 155.

82 It is a phenomenon that I would call multigender patriarchy, analogical to cultural racism in multiracial neoliberalism as defined by Dale Hudson (Dale M. Hudson, *Vampires, Race*, 164).

83 Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 66–111.

1.1.3 The Nature is the Subaltern Other

The subaltern Other has been represented by the vampire figure since the beginning of vampire fiction. Florence Marryat's *The Blood of the Vampire* (1897) is an eminent example: Harriet Brandt, the protagonist, is the illegitimate daughter of a Black woman from Jamaica and a vampire. She was born this way because her maternal slave grandmother had been bitten by a vampire bat while pregnant with her mother. Through her mother's milk, Harriet has absorbed Black and vampire identities, each characterised by animal voracity.

In the figure of the subaltern Other, two categories of Otherness intersect, and the Otherness becomes multiplied and doubly radical. That is why evil vampire women representing the forces of nature proliferated in modern vampire narratives. A non-Western and/or non-white female was perceived as doubly wild and dangerous.

The best-known vampire subaltern Others were Carmilla, the eponymous villain of Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu's story (1872), and Elizabeth Báthory. They were Eastern Europeans like Dracula, and just like him, they are still present in 21st-century narratives, some of which I analyse below, along with new personages.

* * *

In the Netflix animated series *Castlevania* (2017–2021), the Council of Styria comprises Queen Carmilla, the chief diplomat Lenor, the general of the army Striga, and the chief of administration, Morena.⁸⁴ The latter is triply Other: Morena is a woman of colour; both she and Striga are queer and form a lesbian couple, and both are orientalised.

Carmilla is demonstratively female: the narrative highlights her long nails and high stilettos. But significantly, those are also phallic items: just like Carmilla's femininity is abjectly phallic. She is ruthless, aggressive, cruel, and sexually emancipated. She wants to kill all the old oppressive men and rule over all the young ones. She wants power over humans, and she wants to use the powers of nature to achieve her goal: she enslaves a necromancer, Hector, who is capable of raising demons. Carmilla's co-ruler, Lenor, seduces Hector and places a magic collar on him to make him her "pet", as she refers to him. It is unclear whether Carmilla embodies the unleashed nature (she takes the legacy of Dracula) or tries to dominate it. In any case, she is the villain.

84 All the names refer to the vampiress figures from literature or folkloric names of female vampiric creatures.

As discussed earlier, the Crew of Light of the narrative offers a moderate version of the civilisation. However, this new civilisation is still male, and it still opposes the forces of nature. Yet, curiously, Carmilla is not defeated by them but by Isaac. Isaac is a man of colour who tries to create a sort of eco-utopia with his army of demons. In the narrative, the maleness seems primary to race or civilisation-nature divides. All the forces are against matriarchal Styria.

In Pascal Croci's BD *Carmilla* (2016), just like in his *Dracula* (2005–2007), the vampire is strongly linked with Eastern European nature. The landscapes are always winter, presenting lands of Eastern Europe as snowy wilderness in white, grey and black. Those colours dominate also in interior scenes, with rare red, green, blue and yellowish accents. It is as if nature from the outside invades even the insides, just like the intrusive Carmilla sneaks into the family manor.

In Philippe Jaenada's short story "Bogdana" (2013), the narrator's uncle was supposedly turned into a vampire by a Slavic vampiress from the Romanian forest named Bogdana. In Adrien Beau's *Le Vourdalak* (2023), vampirism also originates from the Eastern European forest. The narrative is filled with references to fairy tales: it begins with a line evoking *Little Red Riding Hood*: "go through the forest, do not stop". Notably, the advice for the traveller is to head West—towards civilisation, through the domain of dangerous Eastern European nature. Indeed, the protagonist traveller has already been robbed in the forest by some savage Turks, Moldovans, or Greeks.

On his way West, he is seduced by a female singing voice—evoking another fairy tale motif of an enchanted princess imprisoned in the forest. However, the woman embodies nature and Eastern wildness. Sdenka wears a veiled head, Byzantine clothes, oriental bangles and *mehndi*⁸⁵-like paintings on her hands. The bottom of her dress is greenish, with the colour gradually rising up her body as the narrative progresses. When the Western protagonist decides to seduce her, she leads him to the abyss, where he nearly falls. The abyss symbolises the *vagina dentata* of Sdenka, especially since the edge of the abyss is where she was supposed to meet her first lover on the day he died. The abyss also symbolises the *vagina dentata* of nature and the Eastern European land that Sdenka represents—indeed, at the end of the film, the protagonist voluntarily jumps in there, marking his final defeat. Sdenka herself underscores her connection to the land and nature: she says she would like to leave but cannot, as all her memories, dreams, and the body of her beloved lie in this forest and this land. When her brother is killed, and she plans to commit suicide, she claims to have had a vision of a bird guiding her path.

85 Mehndi (mehendi) is the traditional art of henna painting in India, but also in some Arabic and African cultures.

Eastern European men are not representatives of nature: Jegor (Sdenka's older brother) even attempts to emphasise their kinship with Western men, claiming that he has an education similar to that of d'Urfé, the protagonist. For centuries, Eastern European men have combated an even greater Eastern Other, the Turks. However, through their combat, they become infected by Eastern wildness: Jegor and his father, Gorsha, wear Eastern European clothes, visibly inspired by Oriental designs; Gorsha goes to fight the Turks and returns as a *vourdalak*. Significantly, even as a monster, he wields the symbol of nationalist-patriarchal Eastern European half-civilisation—his old rifle “that still protects this family”.

D'Urfé kills the *vourdalak* and burns the whole house with all the infected members of the family inside. As he also gets infected, he decides to end the curse and kills himself. On his way through the forest, he meets Sdenka and gives her a horse and a map showing how to reach Paris, the heart of Western civilisation. He wants her to be free from Eastern European wildness. He jumps into the abyss. This way of suicide shows his ultimate mistake and defeat: Sdenka is already infected, and he gives her the means to penetrate the West.

* * *

Some narratives contain the figure of subaltern Other from the classic colonial Orient. Such is the case of K.M. Ashman's novel *Vampire: The Curse of Sekhmet* (2013). Vampire Nephthys is a model subaltern Other: an Egyptian woman transported from Egypt to England; she remains in the hands of both white Englishmen and the Egyptian man serving them.

Nephthys embodies the forces of nature: to be tamed, slain, or exploited. She is all that the “enlightened” are not. By this term, vampires designate humans, even in Ancient Egypt, long before the Enlightenment.⁸⁶ The designation points to something more profound than a simple division between daylight humans and nighttime vampires. Ramesses the Pharaoh already anticipates and embodies the forces of modern progress. His patriarchal project is continued in the 21st century by two groups of humans. The first one wakes up and controls the vampire Nephthys through UV light. Like Ramesses, they seek to use the vampiress to achieve immortality or slow ageing. However, Ramesses' initial desire changed: he ultimately decided to eliminate vampires. That is what the heroic Crew of Light does: they combat to destroy the vampire and manage to do it through the fire. The narrative is severe: it shows any “liberal”, non-machist ways of dealing with the vampire as a betrayal of civilisation and humankind.

In the narrative, only women can become vampires. Quite stereotypically, vampires are monstrous and unnatural yet represent nature. Nature is primitive

86 K.M. Ashman, *Vampire: The Curse of Sekhmet* (Silverback Books, 2013), loc. 1404, Kindle.

but eternal, and it links life with death. This links nature and the woman: "Isn't it appropriate that only those who deliver life into the world can enjoy life everlasting? Man is fleeting, Ramesses, woman is immortal", says Sekhmet.⁸⁷ However, the fact that a vampire only does "what nature had intended her to do"⁸⁸ does not justify her. Moreover, only (male) civilisation contains real life: reason, science, modernity, and progress as opposed to the endlessly same eternity.

The vampire society forms a contra- and counter-project for the human patriarchal one. In Ancient Egypt, vampires lived in a purely female society; they subdued and castrated men. While Ramesses sexually enjoying his harem slaves is hardly mentioned, the narratives longly elaborate how abject the male slaves are: naked, with wounds from penetration (fangs) on their bodies, "desperate figures", "feet (...) tethered close together and his head hung low".⁸⁹ Ramesses formulates his protest against it in terms: "Yet he is a man".⁹⁰ The triumph of nature over man is indignation.

In Ancient Egypt, Ramesses and vampire Sekhmet were in rivalry for domination over the world—and by that, over each other. Finally, Sekhmet proposed an alliance in exchange for full inclusion into man's world. This gesture can already be seen as an act of submission: the vampires agreed to do the king's bidding. And yet, Ramesses needed more. If he couldn't get the vampires' secrets, absorb their power for his own benefit, and become an eternal vampire-king, then he preferred to get rid of the vampires. If he couldn't control and possess nature, he preferred to destroy it. Centuries later, the British Solar Hero repeats his action by destroying Nephthys, the heir of Sekhmet.

Vampires are profoundly ecological. Since humans provide their sustenance, they never kill too many. In ancient times, Sekhmet regulates the number of vampires. She does not hesitate to kill her best friend when Mukarramma creates too many vampires in her kingdom: "The surrounding lands were devoid of animal life and every human was either dead or tethered as a food source".⁹¹ She disapproves of the unsustainable existence.⁹² Significantly, when Samari, the Egyptian man, thinks about releasing vampire Nephthys, he quotes some ecological reasons:

the world can hardly maintain the population as it stood now. Millions already went hungry and the human race was stripping the planet of resources faster than they could be replaced. What would happen if you threw immortality into the pot? (...) The

87 *Ibid.*, loc. 1870.

88 *Ibid.*, loc. 3557.

89 *Ibid.*, loc. 1412–13.

90 *Ibid.*, loc. 1416.

91 *Ibid.*, loc. 1816.

92 *Ibid.*, loc. 1823.

population would implode and the human race would be wiped out apart from a few privileged individuals.⁹³

Yet release cannot be a solution; only destruction is. By showing the vampire as monstrously evil, the narrative promotes a radically non-ecological standpoint. Nature, as embodied by the subaltern Other, an Egyptian female vampire, should not even be used but brutally subdued by the civilisation, as represented by a white Englishman.

Nature's attack on civilisation is frequently presented in the form of females attacking males, and foreigners attacking "us". The attack is revenge or a rebellion. A particular form of this revenge is presented in the following subchapter.

1.2 Eco-Catastrophe as Nature's Revenge

In Francis Lawrence's *I Am Legend* (2007), people changed into vampires due to medical experiments with vaccines. They lost all their humanity and even some of their instincts at the expense of their bloodthirsty appetite. Simon Bacon points out that vampirism and nature's emancipation converge here. Nature takes over New York at the same time as the vampires do, illustrating the collapse of civilisation: wild animals who escape the zoo, lush vegetation, and the vampires are signs of wilderness.⁹⁴ They are faced by the lone heroic man fighting to restore the social order, representing the lost civilisation.

Quite paradoxically, narratives can recognise the reality of human-caused eco-catastrophes and still be anti-ecological. The new variation of nature's attack within the vampire narratives features eco-catastrophes as the source of vampires. Even if humanly caused, it is still nature's revenge, and nature is cast as evil. The solution is not to atone but to restore nature to human civilisational custody. Even if some moderation in human domination of nature is promoted, in the end, nature still needs to be controlled. Including some (more) elements of nature into society does not mean symbiosis but rather the re-conceptualisation of "naturalness". This is the case with Netflix's discontinued series *V Wars* (2019) and Syfy's *Van Helsing* series (2016–2021).

In *V Wars*, the pathogen of the vampire disease was frozen in the icebergs, which started to melt due to human-induced climate change. The series' intro shows it clearly: blood rises from the ice, spills among the breaking floe, and from there, to the whole Earth globe, as the view zooms out. In the first episode, Dr. Swann, an epidemiologist, announces that the Arctic ice contains prehistoric

93 Ibid., loc. 3510–12.

94 Bacon, *Eco-Vampires*, loc.2117–30, Kindle.

bacteria and viruses that the ice melting can release. The prion of vampirism turns out to be one of those. Dr. Swann and his best friend, Michael Fayne, discovered it during their research trip to the pole.

Those with a specific gene can mutate into vampires when infected with the prion. Significantly, the white Dr. Swann and his son do not mutate, but Black Michael Fayne becomes the first vampire. Swann's wife also becomes one of the first changed people: Swann needs to kill her to protect his son. Danika and Mila Dobov, Eastern European female immigrants, follow. Women, people of colour, and migrants—all the groups traditionally associated with nature—are the weak chains of society.

In his speech in the first episode, Swann highlights that nature is warning humans. He positions it as an opponent. Swann speaks not of the ways to help nature but of the means to protect humans from it. The solution is not to resign from the domination of human civilisation over nature; on the contrary. When vampirism spreads, Swann treats it as a disease: he wants to study it, create the vaccine, cure all the vampires—and restore nature to its previous state. Vampires, on the contrary, see themselves as rebels. When transformed, Michael Fayne meets Swann; he denies the implication that he is evil or sick. He does not want to be cured; he claims the right to be as he is: strong and free. In his online speech, he associates vampires' position with nature's one in the resistance discourse: humans hunted other creatures for centuries on the excuse of their evolutionary superiority. The new vampire species has come to take revenge and hunt humans.

The action of Syfy's *Van Helsing* series (2016–2021) begins in a world dominated by vampires, just like Lawrence's *I Am Legend*. Vampires had risen, taking some undefined catastrophe as an opportunity, and had taken over the world. A small group of humans is sieged in the hospital, which becomes a fortress of civilisation within the wildness. The fortress is defended by the Solar Hero, a brave male American marine soldier who does his duty till the end. The task he was assigned a long time ago is to protect the unconscious woman, Vanessa Van Helsing, who can be the solution to the vampire problem. American soldier's purity gets only more visible during the whole series—while vampirism is a sort of infection, anyone can theoretically get—the marine, when infected, is able to resist his vampire thirst, while others are not.

Another fortress of civilisation within the series is the Denver military zone, again male, white and techno-medical. It is threatened by the hordes of day-walking vampires coming from the surrounding forests and fields—from nature's domain. One of the most threatening vampire groups is the Sisters, led by a Native woman, Ivory. Native elements (e.g., the war cry) are exposed in the narrative, along with voracious feminism.

When Ivory finally becomes human again, she recalls the Native people worshipping nature in a non-patriarchal society. It all ended with the brutal Spanish men's colonisation: they killed the Native men and forced Native women to convert to Christianity, or they burnt them at the stake. Ivory and Zuma were burnt in that way: their barely breathing bodies were found by Michaela, who turned them into vampires. Their vampirism is the Native-nature-female revenge, but it is considered abject. Ivory finds redemption in fighting the vampires along with other Heroes.

The last fortress of civilisation is the whole human-dominated zone, including Washington. The protagonists finally discover that the USA is divided into the still civilised human part and the wild vampire part. But Dracula herself rises, and then even Washington, the heart of civilisation, is endangered. She and her female harem penetrate there: Dracula impersonates the female president. Fortunately, she is defeated by the Crew of Light, specifically Vanessa Van Helsing.

Vanessa represents civilisation: she (her body, her blood) turns out to be the cure for vampirism. Whenever she bites a vampire, or a vampire bites her, they turn into humans again, and they become immune to vampirism. As a female, she is a modification of the Solar Hero figure, as are other members of the Crew of Light: Vanessa's daughters are even women of colour. On the contrary, the male version of civilisation has some critical flaws: ruthless Blek Tek organisation, gender and sexually oppressive Denver militaries, and other macho men. Yet the female version of civilisation is more an offer of symbolic access to the dominating paradigm than a real subversion. The Crew of Light still represents civilisation against nature, the West against the East (Dracula comes obviously from Eastern Europe), and the symbolic white against the non-white. Ivory becoming human again by the bite of the Black woman Violet, Vanessa's Van Helsing daughter, is a picture of cultural racism in multiracial neoliberalism, as defined by Dale Hudson.⁹⁵ Even gender emancipation is doubtful: installing a male president in the White House is needed for the order to be completely restored.

Against all appearances, the *topos* of the human-caused eco-catastrophe does not advocate the emancipation of nature. It instead shows the catastrophe as yet another form of nature's abject revenge that needs to be overcome by the civilisational struggle. Another trope of the entanglement of ecology and nature in the form of the catastrophe, or even (ecological) Armageddon, is to present vampires as nature-degenerated-by-the-civilisation. This trope is analysed in a separate section below.

95 Hudson, *Vampires, Race*, 164.

1.2.1 The Nature Depraved by Civilisation

Perhaps one of the most interesting narratives is those that demonstrate evil as being both nature and civilisation, nature depraved, degenerated and deformed by the civilisation into a monstrous form. As Hannah Arendt wrote, modern civilisation masters nature to the Promethean point. And by that Promethean transgression, it returns to the state of hyperbolised (indeed monstrous) nature.⁹⁶ Like in Netflix's *Hemlock Grove* series (2013–2015), Ouroboros eats its own tail. The vampirism becomes a sort of social tumour.

The contemporary vampire is a creature made of the surplus of civilisation that turns the animal into the monster, the instincts into deviations, desires into depravities. Contemporary vampires join predatory animal consumption with civilisational consumerism. In such narratives, civilisation is to blame, and yet nature remains the enemy to be fought.

Beneath, I analyse three such narratives: Simon Clark's novel *London Under Midnight* (2006), Showtime series *Penny Dreadful* (2014–2016), and Netflix's *Hemlock Grove* series (2013–2015). They encompass the broad spectrum that perhaps could be called conservative-liberal-leftist, following the typology given by Marcin Napiórkowski,⁹⁷ converged with the machist-liberal division given by Diana Taylor,⁹⁸ and the exclusion-inclusion-resistance given by me in my dissertation.⁹⁹

Clark establishes distinct borders between the good “us”—Western male civilisation and evil “them”—non-Western female nature. The division into good and bad ones is seemingly more complicated in *Penny Dreadful*, but in the end, the Solar Hero performs a clear cut and distinguishes the good from the evil. He represents the refreshed, more inclusive version of Western civilisation but still fights non-Western and female rogue nature. The American Hero is both an heir to the British culture and its renewal: through him, Native American elements are woven into the White Western legacy. Finally, *Hemlock Grove's* action differs from the two former ones, and as I argue later, in the end, it offers an emancipatory posthuman solution to the nature-civilisation conflict.

* * *

In Simon Clark's *London Under Midnight* (2006), the cities under the vampires' attack are the crucial Western centres, London (where the novel's action takes

96 Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

97 Marcin Napiórkowski, *Turbopatriotyzm*, 120.

98 “Machist” stands for “conservative”, and “liberal” stands for “liberal” from Napiórkowski's typology.

99 To be defended in 2024.

place) and New York (that is only mentioned). The disease attacks people and the city itself: Father Thames and She-London,¹⁰⁰ who are somehow conceived as living creatures. Their symbiosis is described in terms of human anatomy, of the blood circulation system pumping blood to the heart.¹⁰¹ Therefore, the vampires are able to harm the city not only in the social sense but in the very biological one: “Not only did the vampires infect humanity, they had the potential to infect the very fabric of the city”.¹⁰² They are the pollution¹⁰³ conceived in terms of disease, an infection¹⁰⁴ transported by the city's aorta—the river—to the inside of the organism, its heart—the city.

The symbiosis of the city and its river points to the symbiosis of nature and society, and the overcivilisation, bringing overconsumption, is the source of evil. Elmo Kigoma, preacher-prophet, first tried to convert people to temperance, and then he became the Vampire Hunter. The primary feature of bloodthirsty vampires is “gluttony”.¹⁰⁵ They are the consumption itself: exuberant, unconscious and denied (alienated), it returns in monstrous form. Moderate consumption comes from the instinct of life and gives life. Still, the unmoderated one comes from the perverted libido. Such consumption gives death: “Food and drink in moderation gives you life. Excess is death”.¹⁰⁶ “...food can change from a source of nourishment (...) into your enemy”.¹⁰⁷

Vampires are the forces of nature contaminated by human. Nature, the object of human consumption, returns to consume humans. However, once nature returns this way, it must be fought—and not amended. If the city is a living creature, vampires who attack it are undead monsters. The promoted ecology is human-centred: nature should be an object of consumption, just a moderate one. And that is for the humans' own good, not the whole ecosystem's sake. The Crew of Light protects the city, the only system that really counts.

The vampires are created and combatted in a symbolic way. One of the first attacks described is the attack of a female vampire on a man: she pierces his torso with her fangs and then moves to “another part of his body”.¹⁰⁸ The ellipsis points at the penis, and the consumption becomes oral castrating intercourse by a monstrous woman. Another attack is made by a male vampire on a female victim, and it also looks like sadist-masochist “sex games, a late-night fuck in a public

100 Simon Clark, *London Under Midnight* (Surrey: Severn House Publishers, 2006), loc. 3103, Kindle.

101 Ibid., loc. 54.

102 Ibid., loc. 3065.

103 Ibid., loc. 2817.

104 Ibid., loc. 54.

105 Ibid., loc. 1924.

106 Ibid., loc. 1052.

107 Ibid., loc. 1050.

108 Ibid., loc. 116.

place”.¹⁰⁹ He also attacks genitalia. The masochist pleasure of a raped victim is suggested: “A large, male shape leaned over her. The masculine image oozed predatory power. (...) She was moaning, her head rolled”.¹¹⁰ All the attacks by April have features of monstrous fellatio, with a woman taking her sadist abject pleasure from it. She rips off and sucks the aorta, which causes the spurt (symbolic ejaculation) of blood that she swallows with satisfaction: “She pushed the severed end of the artery into her mouth. Then she sucked hard (...) For a second, she made kittenish cries of delight as the severed artery spurted blood into her face”.¹¹¹ Inside the vampire, there is the same mixture of pleasure and pain, libido degenerated by overconsumption into death instinct: “a state that combined ecstasy and agony”.¹¹²

Attacks symbolise defloration (opening of a body) and usually end up in turning a victim into a vampire. The victims of unmoderated consumption become unmoderated consumers. Overfed vampire vomits the blood they drank back into the wound of the victim: the consumed blood returns inside the victim's body, but it is already contaminated. This puking ritual represents the logic of overconsumption: it necessarily contaminates whatever it touches. It becomes an epidemic.

Then, the victim is thrown into the gender-transgressive womb-waters of Father Thames. Waters bring the victim to an island, where they go out of the water in a symbolic act of rebirth. This is the place of nature, outside the time and normative space: Elmo recalls that in his native place, in Africa, such a place was in the forest. On the island, victims turn into vampires: it is a change inside the bowels.¹¹³ The human instinct of consumption is now alienated and consumes their whole identity. They now embody the unrestrained consumption of the society they come from—and return to it. They start to feel overheating hunger that damages their brain, and they become mindless monsters, reminding sharks or alligators. Mad with hunger, they jump back into Thames water, which brings them back to the city, where they emerge “from the waters after their transformation into New-Life”.¹¹⁴

Those vampires are conjecturally female. Elmo calls them with the term of his native culture, Dead-bone-Woman.¹¹⁵ The defence of the Western civilisation is performed by the homosocial Crew of Light onto a female body of vampirised April that they want to restore to “normality”. This fight entangles the general

109 Ibid., loc. 254.

110 Ibid., loc. 254.

111 Ibid., loc.1913–29.

112 Ibid., loc. 3218.

113 Ibid., loc. 543.

114 Ibid., loc. 1857.

115 Ibid., loc. 103.

fight for the city, Western society, and the world: “The life of London and her people hang in the balance now. You have become its champions (...) you are being tested”.¹¹⁶ The Western and Westernised men duel with the African trickster god Edshu, who sent the vampires. Western overconsumption and nature exploitation are mostly sensible in non-Western places such as Africa, and vampires also represent colonial revenge that needs to be tamed.

* * *

Penny Dreadful presents the solution in another American form of Western civilisation, supposedly simpler and healthier, with elements of Native-and-nature. Such a civilisation is nonetheless male, white, patriarchal and imperial. In the end, the American white man saves London from the vampire apocalypse introduced by a desperate woman who had abandoned herself to her instincts.

Ethan Chandler is a gunslinger and a werewolf who is called to London to become a guardian. His American simplicity is an asset in the overly sophisticated 19th-century British capital. The latter one borders decay. It is represented by Dorian Gray's cultural overrefinement, Sir Malcolm Murray and Vanessa Ives' social overrefinement, and Dr. Frankenstein's experiments (scientific overrefinement). London is always shown in gloomy, dark colours, usually greyish and blackish, in rain, fog or snow; if there is any sunlight, it's cold and dim. The famous London smog is the symbol of nature (fog) as deformed by civilisation (pollution) and returning to haunt society (the city). And so do the vampires.

Malcolm is a fatherly figure of the Crew of Light—indeed, he fathers for Vanessa and is called father by Ethan Chandler and Victor Frankenstein. He represents all that the British empire is in its ambiguity. He is a white heterosexual Protestant, well-educated gentleman, a proud patriarchal colonial explorer of Africa, putting his mission above his family. His desire to conquer caused the death of many local people and his son: he died alone from malaria in Africa. Malcolm left him sick in the camp and went to reach the summit of the nearby mountain, then buried his body and explored the shores of Lake Tanganyika. His patriarchal attitude makes his daughter Mina fall into vampires' hands. His frisky heterosexuality (as evidenced by his affair with Vanessa's mother) disturbed both Mina and Vanessa. His colonial conquests were also sexual: he frequently says he penetrated African land, and he abused African women, saying that “they like it”,¹¹⁷ and forced his son to do it.

116 *Ibid.*, loc. 3103.

117 *Penny Dreadful*, Season 1, Episode 7, “Possession,” directed by James Hawes, written by John Logan, aired June 22, 2014, on Showtime.

Vanessa is an example of what the civilisation represented by Sir Malcolm did to the women: her repressed desires and needs torture her and threaten the very civilisation that established those norms of repression. The ideal of this civilisation is a submissive, almost dead woman,¹¹⁸ and an outstanding woman simply does not fit in.

Ethan is similar to English people but different: he is an ideal opponent of vampires. Vampires represent the bad nature polluted with the worst from the civilisation. Ethan grows up to represent the good civilisation enriched with nature's good, pure elements. His animal, nature side was indeed released during the extermination expeditions against the Native Americans:¹¹⁹ he became a werewolf. But he managed to embrace it by putting it under civilisational control. He can use it to protect the woman (Vanessa) and the society. Therefore, one of the witches calls him "lupus dei", God's wolf.

Most witches are evil. Like vampires, they represent degenerate nature and nest in London among the society. They do not age, always dress up and style their hair carefully, wear make-up and many accessories, and live in refined interiors, surrounded by plenty of luxurious unnecessary items. But there are also good witches; there is white magic as opposed to black magic, and there is good nature. Episode 3 of Season 2¹²⁰ shows Vanessa schooled by Joan Clayton, called Cut-Wife, a good witch. Cut-Wife is, just like Vanessa, an outstanding woman, unfit for the restrictions that the civilisation puts on women. She resists those restrictions by helping women, specifically by assisting them to deal with their oppressed sexuality. She gives them treatments to soothe the pain during intercourse and offers contraception and abortion—briefly, she helps women to get agency of their bodies. She sides with the female body-and/as-nature against the male civilisational repression imposed on society.

This siding is underlined by space positioning: Joan chose to live outside the village, and her simple hut in the middle of the forest and sunny moors is contrasted with the gloomy London. In her treatments, unlike modern doctors, she uses only what nature offers (herbs), she eats only what she harvests or catches herself, she ages, she wears her hair carelessly, she wears no jewellery, no make-up, the simplest clothes in earthy colours, made of linen, cotton, wool. And so does Vanessa when she stays with her: Vanessa's clothes are usually fair, as contrasted with her dark clothes while in London. When Vanessa enters her teacher's house, Joan tells her to abandon everything she brought from the

118 *Penny Dreadful*, Season 1, Episode 6, "What Death Can Join Together," directed by Coky Giedroyc, written by John Logan, aired June 15, 2014, on Showtime.

119 *Penny Dreadful*, Season 2, Episode 7, "Little Scorpion," directed by Brian Kirk, written by John Logan, aired June 14, 2015, on Showtime.

120 *Penny Dreadful*, Season 2, Episode 3, "The Nightcomers," directed by Brian Kirk, written by John Logan, aired May 17, 2015, on Showtime.

civilisation. In nature, as represented by Cut-Wife, Vanessa finds peace: she is no longer tortured by monstrous desires.

Unfortunately, the white heterosexual Protestant gentleman witch Hunter, Sir Geoffrey, leads the village mob to kill Cut-Wife. Sir Geoffrey is an arrogant dull boorish sexual abuser who tries to rape Vanessa and is outraged by her resistance. The men burn Joan alive and mark Vanessa with a hot iron stick to put her in a proper female place. This time, the narrative presents the Hunters as villains. Sir Geoffrey's deeds were steered by the night witch. He was a slave to his civilisational hypocrisy and the monstrous desires it engendered.

Joan Clayton's ecofeminism failed when confronted with Evil. Vanessa needs to return to London under the custody of men. They protect her. She returns to Cut-Wife's hut once more with Ethan, and there she rejects his courting, which is probably the biggest of her mistakes. Symbolically, she chooses nature and ecofeminism, as represented by the late Cut-Wife, over the new civilisation-enriched-with-nature and liberal male leadership, as represented by Ethan. She chooses the female over the male, and she must fail as Cut-Wife did. She first fails morally, then she fails in her personal love life, and then she finally dies.

Vanessa is called back to London to help Sir Malcolm: she rejected Ethan's renewed civilisation and is now coerced into the old rigid one. Before returning, she must wear her sophisticated dress, style her hair, and put on the jewellery. When she turns towards Ethan, it is already too late.

Abandoned by Ethan, Vanessa desperately searches for her place in London, unable to embrace the civilisation she was forced to return to fully. When she discovers the identity of Dracula, she intends to confront him and kill him with a civilisational phallic weapon—a gun. Yet, being a woman, she falls for the temptation of love and freedom. Significantly, the role of the vampire castle is played by the Museum of Natural History, the symbol of nature shaped by civilisation. Full of stuffed dead animals, it represents the degenerated nature, and Dracula is its director. For Vanessa, the world of vampires is no less patriarchal than the human society. Contrary to Cut-Wife's matriarchal world of nature, Dracula's community is formed by "brothers (!) of the night".¹²¹

The introduction of the element of nature into society needs to be done by the white man. Ethan went away to make a journey, reunite with another father figure (Indigenous Wiseman), and accept American Indigenous culture as a part of himself. However, he remained Sir Malcolm's spiritual son overall and a Western civilisation representative. Indeed, the series is "reworking heritage into critical nostalgia by questioning the past while evoking longing for it".¹²²

121 *Penny Dreadful*, Season 3, Episode 7, "Ebb Tide," directed by Paco Cabezas, written by John Logan, aired June 12, 2016, on Showtime.

122 Hudson, *Vampires, Race*, 220.

Ethan returns to London, the core Western city, for the final battle for a world as a true self-disciplined Hero. Vanessa has already turned into a vampire. Thus, the liberal means of the liberal Hero (protection) change into the machist ones: he takes the gun, the phallic symbol of the male civilisation, and shoots Vanessa as she wishes him to. The series ends with the Crew of Light standing around Vanessa's grave. Women (Dr. John Seward, Catriona Hartdegen) and the Native man are in the distance, and white men (Sir Malcolm, Ethan, Dr. Frankenstein) are close to it. They form a trio of father-lover-brother figures. Their leading role is preserved.

* * *

The *Hemlock Grove* series (2013–2015) is perhaps the narrative that most closely links vampirism and the degenerated-civilisation-as-degenerated-nature. Vampires are both monstrous by nature and highly civilisational. They hold the highest social positions and own a medical concern. They represent the state of matter characteristic for the Virocene, where the “socially embodied force of nature colonizes, overpowers, and catastrophically affects humans and ecosystems”.¹²³

In the narrative, the monstrous Virocene nature is also represented by vargulf, the extreme nature monster who acts like no animal would. It is a rogue werewolf: someone who turns into a wolf independently of the moon cycle, outside nature's rhythm. Destiny, the oracle, classifies the vargulf as something against nature.¹²⁴ One of the motifs of Christina's becoming a vargulf is purely civilisational: she wanted to become a writer and needed something interesting to describe.

Christina drank water from Peter's footprints in his werewolf form and became a werewolf, then a vargulf, because she wanted to be free, she says.¹²⁵ Christina's friends pressured her to start a sexually active life, perhaps even to become their lover, the thing that she both wanted and feared. They symbolically express this by inciting her to look into the hole in the old ironworks. She says she already did it, probably alluding to her highly sexual ways of killing her victims. As a vargulf, Christina jumps on the young girl, puts her muzzle between their

123 Jude L. Fernando, “The Virocene Epoch: the vulnerability nexus of viruses, capitalism and racism,” *Journal of Political Ecology* 27, no. 1 (January 2020): 640, Table 1, <https://doi.org/10.2458/v27i1.23748>.

124 *Hemlock Grove*, Season 1, Episode 3, “The Order of the Dragon,” directed by Deran Sarafian, written by Brian McGreevy and Lee Shipman, aired April 19, 2013, <https://www.netflix.com/title/70242310>.

125 *Hemlock Grove*, Season 1, Episode 13, “Birth,” directed by Deran Sarafian, written by Brian McGreevy and Lee Shipman, aired April 19, 2013, <https://www.netflix.com/title/70242310>.

thighs, and starts consumption from there. She also says that the upcoming transformation reminds her of orgasm.¹²⁶

The series is a TV adaptation of Brian McGreevy's novel of the same title (2012). However, the book is entirely covered by the series' first season, whose plot is described above; the two other seasons constitute its sequel. Exactly like *Penny Dreadful*, *Hemlock Grove* contains werewolves (Peter Rumancek above all), vampires (called upirs; Roman Godfrey above all), and Frankenstein's Monster (Shelley¹²⁷ Godfrey). Contrary to *Penny Dreadful*, all the monsters have one origin, Olivia Godfrey. She was born with a tail in the 19th century in a noble family in Romania. When she was thirteen, she ran away with a "Gypsy" slave, Dmitri, who slept with her and then abandoned her. The child she bore from this relationship was the ancestor of Rumancek's werewolf Roma family. Desperate, Olivia mutilated her tail, in a gesture of symbolical cassation of the nature in herself. She bled and died, and then rose as an upir. In the 20th-century United States, Olivia married JR Godfrey and bore Juliet Godfrey. The narrative implies that since Juliet had no signs of being a potential upir, Olivia killed her. She was resurrected as Shelley by Dr. Pryce from Godfrey's medical concern. Olivia then engaged in a hidden romance with her husband's brother, Dr. Norman Godfrey, and bore Roman, an upir.

The civilisational forces have had some successes in fighting evil. In season three, Roman meets Annie and other upirs who create a whole secret community. They live without harming people. Yet, finally, Roman fails to control his degenerate nature. He gets involved in a sexual relationship with Annie and cannot stop even when he gets to know she is his half-sister. Together, they break into a blood bank, drink, suck and shower in blood while copulating. Roman kills the guard who disturbs them. Annie comes to her senses and condemns all that they did, but Roman gradually gets more similar to Olivia, as noticed by both Shelley and Olivia herself.¹²⁸ *Hemlock Grove* differs from both *London Under Midnight* and *Penny Dreadful*: not only does civilisation not triumph here, but the narrative does not see such a potential triumph as an optimal solution.

The vampires in the narratives analysed in this chapter represent the abject nature attacking, invading, and destroying society. They represent nature by symbolising, embodying, incarnating, or embedding it. The last subchapter explores how evil vampires explicitly express their ecological missions or environmentalist attitudes.

126 Ibid.

127 Significantly, Shelley was the surname of the author of *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus* (1818).

128 *Hemlock Grove*, Season 3, Episode 10, "Brian's Song," directed by Russell Lee Fine, written by Charles H. Eglee, Lorna Clarke Osunsanmi and Peter Blake, aired October 23, 2015, <https://www.netflix.com/title/70242310>.

1.3 The Evil Vampire Environmentalist

Contemporary vampires do not have to embody or symbolise nature. They can represent ecological and environmentalist attitudes and ideologies by advocating for them explicitly. Such evil vampires, just like those who embody the forces of nature, are shown not only as anti-civilisational but also as antisocial and anti-human in general. Frequently, they belong to the upper classes, who do not care about average human beings but have plenty of time to invent new fashions, including environmentalism. That is what vampires in Georges Bess' *Le Vampire de Benares* BD trilogy (2011–2012) do. In the *True Blood* HBO series (2008–2014), Russell Edginton, the gay vampire king of Mississippi, is interested in ecology but doesn't care about humans. In *The Strain*, the evil vampire Master¹²⁹ and evil businessman Palmer,¹³⁰ who helps him take over the world, quote the laws of nature, humanity infringing them, and natural selection rule.

In the already analysed *Castlevania* series, necromancers, the demon-makers, fight on Dracula's side. They revive dead bodies by calling souls from Hell to possess them; in the process, bodies get transformed into monstrous ones. The Brown necromancer Isaac has radically ecological views: he wants to relieve the Earth. He thinks condemned souls can redeem their sins by erasing human pest species. When Dracula dies, he continues his self-appointed mission. He decides to use his powers and the monsters he rose as tools of conquest and extermination. With time, he also decides to build the new world on the ashes of the old one. This new world is a sort of eco-utopia in which he recognises his monsters as subjects.

Narratives also adopt a mocking stance towards contemporary environmentalism and eco-lifestyle. In the world presented in Philippe Curval's French short story "Pire que le vent" (2014), alcohol is prohibited, people produce artificial meat, and groups of anti-meat activists attack butchers.¹³¹ It is effortless for interplanetary villains to create vampire creatures and rob the whole Earth. Alex Kosh's *Ремесло* book saga (2005–2013) and Yuliya Nabokova's *VIP значит вампир* book series (2008–2010) mock the vegetarian lifestyle. In Gavriš's book, pre-apocalypse vegans are defined as hypocrites.¹³²

Yet perhaps the most interesting example of ecological anti-utopia is a short French story by Ugo Bellagamba. "Icare" (2014) presents the world of the future, where people are fat and asexual like eunuchs, all of them beside the Deviants, who are punished for not fitting in. The oppressive scientific-ecological Natural

129 del Toro and Hogan, *The Night Eternal*, 133.

130 Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan, *The Fall* (New York: William Morrow, 2010), 312.

131 Philippe Curval, "Pire que le vent," in *Vampires à contre-emploi*, ed. Jeanne-A Debats (Saint-Laurent d'Oingt: Mnémos, 2014), 13.

132 Yuliya Gavriš, *Безу*, loc. 1757, Kindle.

Eucharistic State (L'Etat Eucharistique Naturel) rules the Earth. It has used the "universal language of Science" to proclaim the "Sacred Union of the Eucaryote".¹³³ This means that human and non-human animals are seen as one group, a part of the animal kingdom. The consciousness of the self is regarded as irrelevant, much like the random fact of bipedalism, and human uniqueness has been rejected. The Earth is not seen as belonging to humans; on the contrary, humans are to serve the Earth. Thanks to planetary engineering, the impact of Humanity on the environment has been reduced, and the population has been regulated.

The author shows this system as monstrous and inhuman. The ecological stance towards the Earth has resulted in cruelty against fellow humans and totalitarian terror. It also led to hypocrisy and further exploitation: only the exploitation has moved to more remote places. In that way, the narrative expresses criticism of eco-colonial practices of the Western world that move polluting enterprises to the so-called Third World countries. Extractivism is not abolished: the wealthiest countries simply move away the garbage and the exploiting work away from the eyes of their citizens. In the narrative, a new energy is needed to reestablish the ancient balance and the healing of the Earth. Terraforming machines need platinum, and this element can be extracted from Mercury.

Vampirism is the tool of exploitation used by the hypocritical eco-state. The deported inmates are changed into vampires and sent to Mercury to work in temperatures below 700 degrees, in darkness, as "stone suckers" ("suceurs de cailloux"). The references to Nazi camps, or even more to Soviet gulags, are understandable.

Nature (the Sun) is the enemy of the vampirised inmates—the only genuinely human beings in the world of the narrative. As sunset happens only once on 88 days on the Mercurial Pole, they usually only need to wear protective helmets and look away on their way to the wells. Still, the sun constitutes a constant threat and prevents any insubordination.

In this eco-totalitarian world, the main hero, vampire Icare, wants to prove the importance of humanity. He and his peers want to immortalise themselves in a gesture of resistance against the system that takes away human dignity and negates human uniqueness.¹³⁴ True immortality is understood here in a very anthropocentric way: it is an eternal memory of fellow human beings.

Icare (Icarus in English) is a self-given name. The eponymous hero plans to challenge the oppressive system by facing the sun, just like the mythical Icarus, knowing it will kill him. He and a group of vampire inmates decide to wear

133 Ugo Bellagamba, "Icare," in *Vampires à contre-emploi*, ed. Jeanne-A Debats (Saint-Laurent d'Oingt: Mnémos, 2014), 139.

134 *Ibid.*, 136.

protective suits and helmets, have platinum injected in their veins, and expose themselves to the sunlight: the suits, helmets and platinum will prolong their agony and make it extremely painful but will prevent them from turning into ashes. Instead, they will turn into statues, a collective monument. They will stand in a way so that once they die, their petrified corpses compose a cross.

There are 300 vampire inmates determined to do it, which refers to the 300 soldiers of Leonidas who died for freedom in Thermopile. They plan to show their refusal of submission to the Earth:¹³⁵ a refusal of the vampires to submit to the political power of the Earth State and, more broadly, the refusal to submit humans to Earth's requests and the ecological paradigm. Vampires want to manifest their consciousness and point out that the uniqueness of human consciousness should be recognised and cherished. The rebel vampires want to return the world to its primary mythological function, as Icare tells. This means returning the world to humans: it belongs to them, as only they give meaning to it.

Notably, humanity is strongly linked to Western culture, as evidenced by Christian and Greek mythology and history references. In a colonising way, the narrative claims that Western symbols are transcultural.¹³⁶ At the same time, Western, individual, human(ist) values that dominate the present-day world are represented as minority ones, oppressed, rebellious, and in need of defence. Ecological, communist values are seen as dominating, hypocritical, and dangerous.

* * *

As Bruce McClelland points out, anthropocentrism is proper for any Western conception of evil. Evil was always defined and constructed by human optics: it harmed humans, destroyed, disturbed or undermined the order built by them. To be called evil, something needed to concern humans. Death can be universal, but evil is anthropocentric.¹³⁷ And as nature is not always what humans would like it to be, defining it as evil seems, *nomen omen*, natural. As proved by this chapter, in the 21st century, there are still many narratives about evil vampires representing nature. However, the next chapter analyses some rarer examples of narratives where the bad vampires represent the civilisation.

135 Ibid., 142.

136 Ibid., 142.

137 Bruce McClelland, *Slayers and Their Vampires: A Cultural History of Killing the Dead* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2006), 1.

Chapter II: Eco-Hunter in Defence of Exploited Nature

This chapter explores the Primary Vampire Narrative as a metaphor for exploitation. Vampire as an exploiter figure has been well-known since Marx' and even Voltaire's works. However, as such, it was more willingly used in political or social discourse than in cultural narratives¹³⁸. Nevertheless, some 21st-century narratives contain vampire-exploiter figures and metaphors of entangled exploitation: gender, economic, political, colonial, imperial, and the exploitation of nature. They show vampires-exploiters in the position of power. Exploitation is a well-established *status quo*.

Probably the best example of such a narrative is Michael and Peter Spierig's *Daybreakers* (2009). In the movie, vampire medical and pharmaceutical corporations rule the world by monopolising the human blood market. Simon Bacon claims that it is a hyperbolic metaphor of the contemporary civilisation that consumes itself until the only thing that stays are the zombie-like monsters. He argues that the disease spread by bats that changed most humans into vampires at the beginning of the movie was the Earth's reply to its extensive exploitation.¹³⁹

Middle and upper-class humans used epidemics as an opportunity to dominate the world even more intensively. The power is concentrated in the hands of the few; the big concerns rule the world in a totalitarian way as they control the food supply necessary for survival. They are supported by the multitude of subaltern-accomplices, soldiers and scientists. They help the system that dominates them, giving them a position of privilege vis-a-vis other subalterns—other vampires and humans. Vampirism embodies the predatory economy of the hyper-capitalist system.¹⁴⁰

138 See: David McNally, *Monsters of the Market: Zombies, Vampires and Global Capitalism* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011).

139 Simon Bacon, *Eco-Vampires*, loc. 2296–362, Kindle.

140 Sorcha Ní Fhlainn, *Postmodern Vampires: Film, Fiction, And Popular Culture* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), loc. 6506, Kindle; Stacey Abbott, *Undead Apocalypse: Vampires and Zombies in the Twenty-first Century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), 185.

Vampires are now the majority, and humans are treated as a food source. They are now in the role of the exploited nature. Bred in cages to provide blood for the vampire population, with pipes tangled around them, they represent the Earth exploited by the oil companies and the animals exploited by food companies.¹⁴¹ The rare free humans are hunted down like wild animals. The viewer can now feel how it is to be on the other side of the table—or rather on the table.

But as humans are a minority, soon the vampires can run out of food sources: one more metaphor for the exploitative capitalist economy and the consequences of human civilisation. Capitalism has reached the limit behind which cumulation and capitalisation are no longer possible. According to Dale Hudson, this alludes to the energy and economic crises in 2008.¹⁴² But the allusion to the upcoming food crisis is as much readable.

In the narrative, the companies try to invent synthetic blood, but they do not intend to create a cure for vampirism: the high-placed vampires do not treat it as a disease but as doping. Vampirism for them is a form of super-humanity: it is a way to get the most loyal workers (dependent on the blood supply), a way to get loyal and dependent clients (again reliant on the food supply) and to hold power over the global society (by deciding about the blood supplies).

According to Lars Schmeink, the film shows the production of Bauman's human waste within the capitalist system.¹⁴³ The narrative accentuates social stratification: both the horizontal, geopolitical kind and the vertical kind. The first means that the world is divided into the rich Global North and the poor Global South. The second social stratification is the vertical division into the poor, the middle class and the rich. The Northern/Western poor and the Global South are the first victims of any shortage: in the narrative, such vampires starve. Starvation results in neurologic disorders, and finally, the starved vampires turn into bat-like zombie-like beasts. The private armies of the corporations exterminate them, and the ruthless soldiers do not seem to reflect on the fact that the only difference between the exterminated and themselves is the blood that the corporations offered to ones and denied to others. For the corporations, the zombies are a threat not only because they can attack the rich in their desperation. They threaten capitalist cumulation, as their existence generates unnecessary costs. Perhaps they are also a threat because they best embody the core of the capitalist system: zombie-like vampires demonstrate what every vampire is.

141 Sarah McFarland Taylor, "Vegetarian Vampires: Blood, Oil, Eros, and Monstrous Consumption," in *Ecopiety: Green Media and the Dilemma of Environmental Virtue* (New York: New York University Press, 2019), 123–63.

142 Dale M. Hudson, *Vampires, Race*, 190.

143 Lars Schmeink, "Of Posthuman Vampires: Science, Blood and Becoming-With," in *Posthuman Gothic*, ed. Anya Heise-von der Lippe (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2017), 54–73.

The capitalist world of CEOs, scientists, and soldiers is male. The system is enacted on the female bodies, including the body of Alison, the CEO's daughter. Alison revolts against her father's power, refuses to become a vampire, and joins the rebel humans. Her father captures her and subdues her with the most brutal means: he makes his employee, Frankie, drink her blood in an act of symbolic rape. She becomes a vampire.

The Victims—and nature—cannot fight by themselves. The Eco-Solar Hunter is needed. Edward Dalton, a vampire and a haematologist, accidentally changes into a human again. This happens thanks to the forces of nature: water and fire. He embraces the rebels' cause, and he fights his former employers.

This Eco-Hunter is a white middle-class man. He does not embody nor represents nature; he simply advocates its case. And what he proposes is not the actual revolution. Similarly to Ethan in *Penny Dreadful*, or even more to Renfield in DeVein's *Renfield's Journal*, he promotes another, more moderate version of Western civilisation. However, in some narratives, the Eco-Hunter can be precisely what the Vampire was in the Primary Narrative—a non-white/foreign, female, or subaltern Other—and be the Hero. This chapter examines such cases in the following subchapters.

II.1 The Eco-Hunter as the Ethnic/Non-Western Other

As mentioned, nature has been associated with the non-Western Other within the colonial discourses of the conquest. Decolonial discourses frequently preserve and affirm this association. They unmask the entanglement of the white colonial/imperial exploitation and the exploitation of nature. Therefore, the ethnic/non-Western Other seems to be the proper eco-warrior. Peter from *Hemlock Grove* and Pierre/Owl in Drew Hayden Taylor's *The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel* (2007) are the champions of nature fighting in its name against the white/Western civilisation.

In *Hemlock Grove*, vampires embody degenerated civilisation. In Roman's katabasis, the figure of a psychiatrist explains that too much culture causes a disease.¹⁴⁴ And that is what vampires are. That is also why medicine cannot cure them: Roman submits himself to medical treatment, but civilisational illness cannot be cured by civilisational means.

The differences between the two protagonists, Roman the vampire and Peter the werewolf, are visualised in the series: Peter is a low-class Roma, and Roman is a high-class white American. Peter lives with his mother in a barrack near the forest; Roman lives in a big house on a hill. Peter and his mother are quite short,

144 *Hemlock Grove*, "Catabasis."

somehow close to the ground, while Roman and his mother are unnaturally tall and slim, with big hands and feet. Olivia's foot size is visually highlighted by her high-heeled shoes and explicitly noticed: a werewolf huntress, Chasseur, points out that Olivia's feet are size 11, or European 42.¹⁴⁵ Like the rest of the Roma, Peter and his mother look a little mucky (again referring to the closeness with the earth), while upirs are always impeccably clean. The series starts with a scene where Olivia tells her son to buy and wear "decent" clothes. Olivia's clothes are always white, in a perfect housewife's style. Peter's clothes are never neat.

The Rumancek family are incomers to the town and are perceived as outsiders. Godfrey's family are the town's elite. They own a big house and a big phallic¹⁴⁶ White Godfrey's Tower, the headquarters of their medical concern. The house is decorated in the sweet '50s style. The Tower is disturbingly high and white, looks sterile and inhuman, strangely futuristic and threatening—and resembles Olivia. In season two, Roman cuts himself off from his mother, symbolised by his moving to his own house. This house is beige and minimalistic but is nonetheless sterile, monochromatic, and full of sharp geometrical items. In the end, Roman returns to the family manor.

The vampires' alliance with civilisation is also evidenced by their relations with the community of fanatic werewolf Hunters. The emblem of this community is a dragon with its tail wrapped around its neck, another version of the Ouroboros figure important for the narrative as a whole. The pivotal project of Godfrey's White Tower was named Ouroboros, and its sign was a snake eating its tail. In Roman's katabasis, Shelley warns him about the dragon inside him.

Peter and Roman's friendship embodies the nature-civilisation balance enacted on the female bodies of their common lover and the baby Nadia, whom they raise together. Peter and Roman form the Crew of Light, which confronts Dr. Spivak to defend both women. But the fragile balance cannot survive, the Crew of Light falls apart, the homosocial bond is broken, and nature fights civilisation. Peter fails to control the wildness inside his Roma community. He grows wilder and eventually becomes a vargulf, destined to remain in wolf form forever. Roman becomes like his mother, the evil vampire, and Peter storms his manor

145 *Hemlock Grove*, Season 1, Episode 7, "Measure of Disorder," directed by Deran Sarafian, written by Brian McGreevy and Lee Shipman, aired April 19, 2013, <https://www.netflix.com/title/70242310>. Vampire size refers to the tradition of vampire cinema: in Hammer studio movies, vampires are always tall and cast giant shadows.

146 This is explicitly stated in the narrative by Norman Godfrey (*Hemlock Grove*, Season 1, Episode 5, "Hello, Handsome," directed by David Semel, written by Mark Verheiden, aired April 19, 2013, <https://www.netflix.com/title/70242310>).

and kills him. That is when the posthuman solution, embodied by Shelley Godfrey and studied later in this book, emerges.

* * *

In Drew Hayden Taylor's *The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel* (2007), the action takes place in the Native reserve, a space of yet untamed nature. The "swamplike terrain and the forbidding nature of the forest"¹⁴⁷ "render it decidedly Gothic: it is dark and isolated";¹⁴⁸ it also has a mythical history, memory of murders, demons, evil spirits, witch lights, wendigos, and other monsters. Yet, it is affirmed as a home space.

The colonisation of Native people is entangled with the civilising of nature—their land. The shore of the lake in the reserve retired because the white government fiddled around with the rivers, regulated the water levels, took water out of some places and put it into other areas, says Tiffany.¹⁴⁹ They built "trails, and paths, and roads, and hydro lines criss-crossing the land he had called home", notices Pierre/Owl.¹⁵⁰

There was a deep ecological dimension in the Native lifestyle. Old Native wisdom teaches that man and animal are brothers and responsible for each other.¹⁵¹ The Native people are "close to the land".¹⁵² And the land, especially the actual earth, is praised for its stability.¹⁵³ The changes were only introduced by white men. Before their arrival, the Native community lived in the country with "no European milfoil clogging up the waterway. No cottages on the far end of the lake. Just pure water, forest, and rivers as far as the eye could see".¹⁵⁴

At that time, vampire Pierre was called Owl. Then, the colonisers came and took him to Europe, where he became a vampire. His vampirism is the embodiment of his colonised whitened condition, its separation from both the Native community and his land. His vampirism kept him away from his native village for centuries. Now, dogs fear him; the creatures flee before him, and his very presence breaks nature's order.¹⁵⁵

147 Drew Hayden Taylor, *The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel* (Toronto and New York: Annick Press, 2007), loc. 219, Kindle.

148 Maureen Clark, "Postcolonial Vampires in the Indigenous Imagination: Philip McLaren and Drew Hayden Taylor," in *Transnational and Postcolonial Vampires: Dark Blood*, ed. Tabish Khair and Johan Höglund (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 133.

149 Drew Hayden Taylor, *The Night Wanderer*, loc. 1528–9, Kindle.

150 *Ibid.*, loc. 1762.

151 *Ibid.*, loc. 795.

152 *Ibid.*, loc. 601.

153 *Ibid.*, loc. 1003.

154 *Ibid.*, loc. 2680–81.

155 *Ibid.*, loc. 602.

Yet, despite his vampirism, his literal whitening (as a vampire, his face got paler), and his (post)colonial condition of assimilation, he had never really become white. He had always missed his land and finally returned to reunite with it.

Nature and the Native people, the Anishinaabe, are the Heroes of the narrative. The vampire is abject because he is disjointed with his land and people. Yet he never stops missing them, and finally, he becomes a Solar Hero and reconnects with them. “He breathed in the air deeply. (...) This land had aroma that he had waited so long to smell again. He was home. And this time, he would not leave again”.¹⁵⁶ He kills the Vampire inside him: he purifies himself, commits suicide, and ultimately rejoins his community, his land and nature in a blissful moment of watching a sunrise.

* * *

Taylor’s novel is structurally similar to the Russian Oleg Divov’s *Night Wanderer* (2004). Divov’s novel also seems to carry decolonial meanings. Western civilisation, as embodied by the Westernised city of Moscow, colonises and destroys the native Russian people and their land. This is symbolised by the vampirism that comes from there. The small, remote village is a magical-realist Arkadia, distant or even cut off from the destructive Western civilisation. It has fairy-tale features: forest, lake(s), river(s), and silence.¹⁵⁷ The Hero, a mythical wanderer, a prodigal son of this land, comes back from the Westernised world he used to live in. He returns to his birthplace to purify himself from the Western civilisational influence in nature’s bosom and find his ancestors’ forgotten wisdom.¹⁵⁸ The native identity comes from the land, conceived in terms of nature and history, a land to which the native people are organically linked.

But the significant differences are remarkable. If Taylor’s novel is decolonial, Divov’s one uses decolonialism within nationalist and even imperial discourse. This is part of the broader phenomenon in Russia, which Madina Tlostanova sums as the decolonial discourse being appropriated by the power.¹⁵⁹ And so is the apparent turn to nature. Ilya Kalinin wrote, “within the context of the patriotic discourse of identity that predominates today, the sphere of cultural values is perceived and described in terms of natural resources”.¹⁶⁰ Both the land and the Russian people are conceived as resources of Russianness.

156 Ibid., loc. 776–78.

157 Katarzyna Arciszewska, “Fantastyczna przestrzeń rosyjskiej prowincji: Wilkołaki—wampiry—ludzie w powieści Olega Diwowa *Nocny obserwator*,” in *Fantastyka rosyjska dawniej i dziś*, ed. Andrzej Polak (Katowice: Wydawnictwo Naukowe “Śląsk”, 2013), 140.

158 Ibid., 140.

159 Madina Tlostanova, “Between the Russian/Soviet dependencies,” 267–83.

160 Ilya Kalinin, “Petro-poetics”, 122.

It is also noteworthy that this is not the nature that is positively valued within those narratives; it is the village, as a space of pure Russianness, contrasted with a Westernised city.¹⁶¹ The “village pastoral” as “juxtaposed to the falseness of urbanity” is a way “in which Russians express their *ressentiment* toward the West, which the cosmopolitan and Westernized Moscow may imitate in a provincial fashion to the point of losing its national character”.¹⁶² The village is “located in the countryside, which is treated as a repository of purity and tradition (...) reinvented by various communities of men who want to restore Russia”.¹⁶³ The “natural” is Russian and good. “By the same token, everything that is unnatural must be evil”.¹⁶⁴

Divov does not promote ecological balance but his own vision of civilisation: Russian civilisation as embodied by the village, where nature is not symbiotic to the culture but controlled by it. In this power-submission relation, the Western city civilisation should be simply replaced by the Russian village civilisation.

A very similar opposition can be found in Sergey Ginzburg’s *Vamps* (2017).¹⁶⁵ The brave Russian men fight the vampire who bears a Hungarian-sounding name. The Crew of Light is formed by the Orthodox monk and the nobleman coming from the capital but finding love and home in the village—another prodigal son figure. It is said that Westernised Russian capitals cannot handle the vampire crisis properly.

What comes from Central Eastern Europe is both wildness and degenerate Western civilisation: vampires make animals wild and steer them. Vampires’ words refer to the Nazi claims of race supremacy. Humans live in bright, sunny Russian villages, and their animals are domesticated, which involves a great deal of oppression, as evidenced by brutal cockfights jauntily affirmed by the narrative. Vampires live in the Western-like castles in the middle of the dark forest and on steep slopes. The wildness and degenerate Western civilisation merge and are opposed by the pastoral Russian civilisation.

While Hayden Taylor’s novel offers an emancipatory exploration of (de)-colonial and ecological entanglements, Divov or Ginzburg’s narratives instru-

161 See Alexander Genis, “Perestroika as a Shift in Literary Paradigm,” in *Russian Post-modernism: New Perspectives on Post-Soviet Culture*, ed. Mikhail Epstein, Alexander Genis, and Slobodanka Vladiv-Glover, trans. Slobodanka Vladiv-Glover (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2016); Lyudmila Parts, *In Search of the True Russia: The Provinces in Contemporary Nationalist Discourse* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2018); Yuliya Minkova, *Making Martyrs: The Language of Sacrifice in Russian Culture from Stalin to Putin* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2018), 107, 120.

162 Yuliya Minkova, *Making Martyrs: The Language of Sacrifice in Russian Culture from Stalin to Putin* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2018), 119–20.

163 *Ibid.*, 107.

164 *Ibid.*, 119.

165 I give here the title of the movie that was given for its international premiere.

mentalise decolonial and environmental discourses to construct a nationalist vision of purity and innocence. The following subchapter analyses another eco-Hunter figure.

II.2 The Eco-Hunter Is Female

The same patriarchal-colonial discourse that linked the ethnic Other with nature also linked nature with the female. Analogically, the discourse of resistance exposes this patriarchal discourse as the abusive discourse of exploitation but also affirms the female identity as linked with nature. Neil Jordan's *Byzantium* (2012) presents the female Eco-Hunter as confronting the patriarchal system of women and nature exploitation.

The movie casts two women as both vampires and vampires' opponents. In the narrative, vampirism is nature's gift. One becomes a vampire by going to the remote island to go through the initiation. One enters the cave—a womb-like space of the painful rebirth. In the cave, a human meets oneself, and the new version of the self murders the old one and drinks their blood. The transformation relies on one's determination: it happens already when one longs for it to happen. Then the cave spills rivers of blood, and one gets out of the cave in an epiphany, bathing in those rivers.

The female character of this place-as-metonymy-of-the-nature is evident: cave spilling blood symbolically refers to menstruation, defloration, and childbirth. Yet white upper-class men appropriated this space, just like they dominated nature and the female bodies, especially reproduction.¹⁶⁶ They expropriated the females from the agency of their bodies and expropriated nature from the self-agency. They keep the island's location secret. They created a map of the itinerary leading to this island and transmitted it to each other only. Only men become vampires, and they choose their future peers.

The constructed character of the system of oppression is made evident. On the island, one transforms into a vampire by oneself, which permits one to avoid entanglement into the violence-victimisation relations somehow always implied in the image of vampirism as being transmitted from one person to another. Especially the motif of the vampire bite suggests the perpetuation of violence always embodied in the oral act of penetration. In *Byzantium*, no domination is encoded in the vampirism transmission. In that way, the narrative underlines that any domination system is imposed from the outside: only men with their map made the vampirism exclusive.

166 Natalie Wilson, "Introduction: Monster Matters," in *Willful Monstrosity: Gender and Race in 21st Century Horror* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2020), loc. 2537, Kindle.

The narrative demonstrates other consequences of patriarchal capitalism¹⁶⁷ that leaves nothing but ruins, abandoned amusement parks, decaying strip-tease clubs, repulsive buildings where lonely people live, and hospitals where lonely people die.¹⁶⁸ It is also capitalism that commodified women, as evidenced by Clara's fate: a better woman, or rather a better female body, was destined for marriage and reproduction; it was acquired. A worse one, as an exchangeable good, was destined for prostitution; it was borrowed and returned.

The decaying landscape of capitalism stays in contrast to the flourishing landscape of nature-island. The subaltern position of women in the capitalist-patriarchal world stands in opposition to the emancipation a woman can achieve when she reaches the island. That is what Clara does: steals the map and reaches the island that men forbade to women and wish to keep in their power only. Then, she leads her daughter to the island. The next subchapter continues the analysis of the eco-feminist figures while examining the Subaltern Other eco-Hunters.

II.3 Subaltern Other as the Eco-Hunter

If the colonial discourse linked nature with the native and nature with the female, logically, the link between nature and the subaltern Other was doubly strong. The eco-feminist and eco-decolonial potential of the subaltern Other figure is also double. However, the narratives featuring a woman of colour in the role of the Eco-Solar Heroine are rare. L.A. Banks' *The Vampire Huntress Legend Series* (2003–2009) is perhaps the most eminent.

The feminist character of the story is exposed already in the book series title; notably, the narrative explicitly uses a feminine version of the "hunter" term. One of the background heroines is the biblical Eve. She is Adam's second wife and the first female Neteru, a light warrior. She wields the powers of nature and fertility. In Eden, she was indeed seduced by Satan's son, Dante, and she bore Cain, but she never became evil or corrupted. Eve never revolted against God; the original sin was committed by Lilith, Adam's first wife, who had rebelled against God, left her husband and married Satan himself. The narrative specifies that the history was written by men and blamed Eve in order to give men excuses and tools to dominate women.¹⁶⁹

Eve is an empowered woman of colour, and femininity is pivotal here; it brings light and life. As Neteru Queens say, a woman cannot sacrifice it for anyone, not

167 Ibid., loc. 2499.

168 Ibid., loc. 2501.

169 L.A. Banks, *The Wicked* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2007), 242, Kindle.

even her child.¹⁷⁰ Eve finally kills Cain when he sides with Hell and after she hears what he has done to Damali, one of her Neteru Sisters. He had mentally raped Damali, brutally bitten her, and almost forcefully impregnated her, posing as her husband. Female solidarity is primary, even to motherhood.

Eve, who wields the forces of nature, is good. Forces of Good act in symbiosis with nature.¹⁷¹ Nature is God's domain, a source of epiphany.¹⁷² Civilisation, on the contrary, is evil. It is symbolised by the vampire city of New Orleans, the vampire Big Apple (a reference to New York, a human Big Apple). Actually, the whole civilisation, with its patriarchy, white supremacy and exploitative capitalism, is the empire of vampires whose powers consist of violating nature. "Earth is out of balance (...). Evil has a stranglehold on mankind..."¹⁷³ Civilisation is polluting, consuming, and producing unnecessary commodities that corrupt people.

And yet, the view of nature is highly anthropocentric. It is also still Western-centric, shifting Otherness from the category of race to the category of geopolitics.¹⁷⁴ Damali, the protagonist, is female and Black, but she is U.S. American. In Brazil, the good femininity of Damali confronts the bad one. The monstrous native femininity-as-embodiment-of-nature rose to take revenge. A former Guardian sold her soul to the Devil to avenge her people. She draws her strength from the earth: the primary energy of nature mixed with the spilt blood of native people is the source of her power. This female Monster is slain by the Western Heroine Damali.

Moreover, the capitalist system provides Damali and her team with the money necessary for her fight and opportunities to spread the Good News as famous hip-hop singers. The oil and pharmaceutical industries are evil, but the capitalist system is the pillar of reality to the point that its disruption is one of the apocalyptic plagues.¹⁷⁵

* * *

As evidenced by the first and second chapters, the narratives with evil Vampires struggle to side with nature. In most of them, bad vampires represent nature. In some, they represent civilisation, yet even then, the Eco-Hunters are sometimes far from being truly ecological. The next chapter explores the narratives built around the figure of a Good eco-Vampire.

170 Ibid., 27.

171 L.A. Banks, *The Damned* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2006), 290, Kindle.

172 L.A. Banks, *The Hunted* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2004), 11, 412.

173 L.A. Banks, *Minion* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2003), loc. 2526, Kindle.

174 Dale M. Hudson, *Vampires, Race*.

175 L.A. Banks, *The Shadows* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2008), loc. 1696, Kindle.

Chapter III: What a Good Vampire Says and What He Does

In theory, Good Vampire should be a pro-nature figure. If the Vampire connotes nature, making the Vampire into the Hero should represent and promote the change in the perception and conception of nature. The Vampire is not an outsider; nature is not the opposite of humanity; it is not a threat but a symbiont. Indeed, the newest discoveries proved that purity can be deadly. Therefore, the contamination, impurity, fluidity, and transgression represented by the vampire should be valued positively. This chapter examines whether the very popular *topos* of the Good Vampire indeed fulfils those assumptions.

While examining the possible good eco-Vampire figure, one must consider the ecological discourses' entanglements. Catriona Sandilands traces their history in her brilliant article "Unnatural Passions?: Notes Toward a Queer Ecology".¹⁷⁶ She notices that they have always been entangled with racial, class and power issues.

At first, discourses about nature relied on the Christian religion with its commandment for Christian men to subdue the Earth. They were the tools of the first colonisation era, as experienced by the Indigenous peoples of the Americas. Those discourses only got reinforced by the medical ones and became more entangled with the discourses about sexuality. They became the tool of the second colonisation era, of modern patriarchy and heteronormativity. Specifically, Darwin's theory became a tool of the dominant discourse of heterosexuality despite the evidence of multiple documented cases of animal homosexuality. Procreation became the central element of the theory of evolution, and all the observed cases of non-heterosexual animal behaviour were either ignored, somehow crammed into heteronormative explanations, or treated as deviations. The same bio-medical discourses proved the superiority of male over female, white over non-white, and even Western over non-Western when the theories of

176 Catriona Sandilands, "Unnatural Passions?: Notes Toward a Queer Ecology," *Invisible Culture: An Electronic Journal for Visual Culture*, no. 9 (Fall 2005), <http://hdl.handle.net/1802/3756>.

evolution spread onto cultural theories. They were also used to prove that social stratification is legitimised because it aligns with the law of natural selection.

Sandilands analyses the first ecological discourses as they appeared in the 19th century. She proves that the discourses of nature protection were at first based on the scientific discourse of the white heterosexual, middle-class men and that nature was to be protected by them and for them only. She quotes the examples of the first American Parks, Yellowstone and Banff. They were created so that white middle and upper-class city men had a place to come and perform their masculinity through “male” activities such as hiking, climbing, hunting, or other sports. They were spaces to create white homosocial communities, away from the women, the working class, and the non-white people. Those groups had just started to emancipate, which was perceived as a threat to white masculinity and the world in general. It was something unnatural—and the natural parks were supposed to be white men’s shelters. They were a fortress of “naturalness”. Sometimes, white men made exceptions, and instead of homosocial white spaces, they created heterosexual ones, such as family camping grounds or city parks. There, the space was arranged to favour and facilitate heterosexual behaviours, controlled by their very visibility. In fact, the space was simply arranged to expose women to the male gaze.

The same ecological discourses presented homosexuality in the framework of the environmental disaster.¹⁷⁷ Every non-normative sexual behaviour was classified as deviation or disease, and an unhealthy environment explained many diseases.

The first ecological discourses warning about the planet’s destruction came from the dominant group concerned about their world. Concern about the environment was just another way to express their male patriarchal white identity. Their ecological activities aimed to preserve nature as they wanted it to be. Those discourses were frequently linked with pastoral and national(ist) ones.

Paul Weindling notices how, in Germany, “forest hygiene” and the concept of sick forest was a counterpart of “racial hygiene” as endangered by diseases carried by inferior races. Poison gas was used to cleanse pests from the sick German forest, symbolising the struggle to defend German territory and culture.¹⁷⁸ The same gas was used to cleanse “human pests” in gas chambers. Within the “forest hygiene” framework, actions were taken to preserve the plants only, fully knowing that the gas would kill the animals. While insects were targeted, other animals, including bison, were affected and depleted.¹⁷⁹

177 Ibid.

178 Paul Julian Weindling, *Epidemics and Genocide in Eastern Europe, 1890–1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 46–7.

179 Ibid., 123.

Those ecological discourses were highly anthropocentric and performed humanity as white heterosexual middle-class maleness. The same reproaches are directed towards “green orientalism”. Larry Lohmann argues that such orientalist ecogism and ecocriticism may take two forms. It may assume Western superiority over the non-West, claiming that non-Western people need to be taught how to use their resources properly, how to get empowered, and how to manage their land and environment. The non-Western voices are silenced. “The US idea that ‘real nature’ is not to be touched by human hands, applied in the South, reinforces the view that hundreds of thousands of people living in protected areas are either ‘encroachers’ subject to eviction or, at best, merely part of the wildlife.”¹⁸⁰ On the other hand, non-Western cultures can be viewed as primarily ecological and then fetishised, frozen in time, and condemned if they try to modify anything in their lifestyles—while their ways of being are appropriated and used by Western discourses.

Some Good Vampire narratives perform precisely this¹⁸¹ version of ecology and environmentalism. Vampire Edward from the *Twilight* franchise (2005–2020), vampire Stephan from *The Vampire Diaries*, The CW series (2009–2017), and vampire Bill from *True Blood* HBO series (2008–2014) all perform their eco-attitude, expressed explicitly or represented symbolically by their “vegetarianism” as a way to accomplish their white male self-discipline.

It is also noteworthy that, with few exceptions, a Good Vampire figure does not possess the form-changing abilities that Dracula, Carmilla, or even folkloric vampires held. The Good Vampire does not transform into an animal, much less into a plant or a natural phenomenon. If he flies, he does it as a super-human being. Good Vampire also loses connection with the earth: Carmilla and Dracula needed to return to their grave, or at least have some of their native ground in their coffin; Bill does not need it, Stephan sleeps in a bed, and Edward does not

180 Larry Lohmann, “Green Orientalism,” *The Ecologist* 25, no. 6 (1993): 203.

181 It might be called shallow, following the definition given by Arne Naess, “The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement: A Summary,” *Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy* 16, no. 1–4 (1973): 95–100. Notably, for the author, shallow ecology movement fights pollution and depletion for the health and affluence of people in developed countries, while deep ecology movement is concerned with diversity, complexity, autonomy, decentralisation, symbiosis, egalitarianism and classlessness. However, Naess’ theories themselves face well-grounded accusations of being centred on the white male Western subject (see e.g. Cara Cilano and Elizabeth DeLoughrey, “Against’ Authenticity: Global Knowledges and Postcolonial Ecocriticism,” *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 14, no. 1 (January 2007): 71–88; Laura Wright, *Wilderness into Civilized Shapes: Reading the Postcolonial Environment*, Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010).

sleep at all. The link to the ground, which had as much ethnic/geopolitical as ecological dimension, disappears from those narratives.¹⁸²

Finally, it is worth mentioning that some of the narratives are the basis of the great franchises: “Green vampires embody environmental moral critiques of *extractives capitalism* and its resource-sucking planetary consequences. And yet, ironically (...) they fuel this moral engagement through the very extractives consumerism they purport to trouble”.¹⁸³ The narratives promote ecological restraint, yet the franchises incite consumerist desire. They do this by practices external to narratives (gadgets and more) and internal to them: they are “tapping into audiences’ own erotic desires to be all-consumed”¹⁸⁴ and to consume.

This chapter first examines the most widespread Good Guy Vampire¹⁸⁵ Narrative in its ecological or rather fake-ecological/fake-environmentalist dimension. Then, it examines eco-feminist narratives and eco-decolonial narratives featuring Good Vampire figures.

III.1 Fake Ecology of the White Man

The Good Vampire story is very frequently an urban romance. Probably the most popular of those were mentioned above: *Twilight*, *True Blood*, and *The Vampire Diaries*. All of them feature the white male Hero who is somehow vegetarian, fights with his blood thirst as much as with his other sexual appetites and the temptation to kill, and sometimes explicitly expresses his eco-attitude. Bill Campton in *True Blood* promotes recycling while linking it to his practice of

182 Simon Bacon, “Introduction,” and “Dracula the Environmentalist: The Land Beyond the Forest,” in *Eco-Vampires: The Undead and the Environment* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2020), loc. 55–361, 363–1178, Kindle.

183 Sarah McFarland Taylor, “Vegetarian Vampires,” 124–25. Regarding vampires being a commodity and a brand, also see Lorna Piatti-Farnell, *The Vampire in Contemporary Popular Literature* (New York and London: Routledge, 2014), 187–92. The author argues that not only specific franchises (*Twilight*, *True Blood*, *The Vampire Diaries*, etc.) are brands, but so are vampires. Certain types of vampires, within certain literary contexts [she uses the category of literary genre], promise to provide certain feelings, whether the dreamy fantasy of a fanged lover or the thrill of an uncanny encounter with a ruthless, inhuman creature. Just like any other brand, the vampire is not actual—it cannot really be touched as such—but is, in the Baudrillardian sense, “real”. (p. 192).

184 Sarah McFarland Taylor, “Vegetarian Vampires,” 144.

185 The term was forged by Margaret Louise Carter in *Shadow of a Shade: A Survey of Vampirism in Literature* (United States: Gordon Press, 1975), *Specter or Delusion? The Supernatural in Gothic Fiction* (United States: UMI Research Press, 1987), *Dracula: The Vampire and the Critics* (United Kingdom: UMI Research Press, 1988), *The Vampire in Literature: A Critical Bibliography* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1989), *Different Blood: The Vampire as Alien* (Bloomington: Xlibris Corp, 2001).

restraining from drinking human blood.¹⁸⁶ However, the only actual link between the two is his person as the (non)doer of both. Thus, what those actions really perform is his masculinist noble white man's self-control.

The self-restraint, as noticed by Sarah McFarland Taylor, can be recast as an ecological struggle not to consume. She points to the connection of idioms used to advocate sexual and procreative temperance, the ecological virtue of individual abstinence from consumerism and consumption, and advocacy to stop extractivist consumerist civilisational activities such as fossil fuel extraction.¹⁸⁷ Specifically, it is about "the moral act of not doing", recast as active, empowering and even erotic, mirroring "the dual-sided nature of piety, which can be associated as much with virtuous renunciation (...) as with virtuous ecstasy".¹⁸⁸ This "longitudinally promised payoff" is "the creation of a more peaceable earth community for all beings".¹⁸⁹ In green vampire stories, "the conventional associations of environmental virtue with a piety of self-denial gets restoried as an *ecstatic* piety of the senses (...) recasts the seemingly dour obligations and collective moral restraint associated with environmentally virtuous behaviour in terms of erotic self-interest".¹⁹⁰ It is also framed as self-enhancing.¹⁹¹

However, all of those possible ecological dimensions of Good Vampire's attitude get undermined within the narratives themselves. McFarland defines ecopiety as the "contemporary practices of environmental (or 'green') virtue, through daily, voluntary works of duty and obligation" that evoke a "harmonial model of proper relations cultivated between humans and the more-than-human earth".¹⁹² Those practices can be individual or collective, private and public, ascetic or ecstatic or all of those.¹⁹³ But most popular culture, including narratives, promotes personal, individual, and private acts of ecopiety as moral of everyone doing their bit.¹⁹⁴

Firstly, this promotes individualism as a fundamental attitude. Secondly, it creates the impression that there is no need for any fundamental structural changes. It constructs "an imagined moral economy, in which tiny acts of voluntary personal piety, such as recycling a coffee cup (...) can be exchanged as an offset to justify the continuance of current consumption patterns and volume".¹⁹⁵

186 Sarah McFarland Taylor, "Vegetarian Vampires", 156.

187 *Ibid.*, 140.

188 *Ibid.*, 141–42.

189 *Ibid.*, 162.

190 *Ibid.*, 142.

191 *Ibid.*, 142.

192 Sarah McFarland Taylor, "Introduction," in *Ecopiety: Green Media and the Dilemma of Environmental Virtue* (New York: New York University Press, 2019), 3.

193 *Ibid.*, 5.

194 *Ibid.*, 3.

195 *Ibid.*, 4.

Thirdly, this stance perpetuates the existing relations of power—McFarland focuses on the economic ones, but this is also applied to political, symbolic and other powers as well: “Ecopiety, as represented in and through contemporary popular culture, is about cultivating a proper and (...) responsible connection, between individual citizen consumers and the more-than-human earth, but on *whose terms and by whose definition*”.¹⁹⁶

Fourthly, as McFarland notices, this individual ethos is deeply capitalist in the core. “[G]reen consumer marketing is quick to offer a template”¹⁹⁷ of what one should do: global capitalism and market ideology convince it “requires the performance of a correlative ‘consumopiety’ or ‘virtuous consumption’”.¹⁹⁸ Therefore, such practices can sustain the system responsible for the planet’s ecological draining. This is perhaps the best visible in the *True Blood* series, where eco-pious vampire vegetarianism depends on buying the proper product: *True Blood* artificial blood. Moreover, eco-piety becomes a lifestyle and, thus, a commodity to sell and buy.¹⁹⁹ The practice of restraint as a way to increase pleasure inscribes into capitalist politics of pleasure,²⁰⁰ and self-restraint as a healthy lifestyle is a part of the same politics: healthy consumers can enjoy more and longer.

Below, I analyse in more detail some tropes from *Twilight*, *True Blood*, and *The Originals*, an arguably more complex spin-off of *The Vampire Diaries*. They range from conservative (*Twilight*) to liberal. Then, I analyse Douglas Clegg’s *The Vampyricon* trilogy (2005–2007), the series outside of the urban fantasy/vampire romance genre. *The Vampyricon* takes place in feudal, somewhat imaginary Britain. It proves that a non-capitalist narrative shares the same features as a capitalist one: it is male, patriarchal, Western/white, anti-nature, and classist. Lastly, I analyse the Polish novel *Trzech gości w łódce plus wampir* (2022) by Krzysztof Kotowski. The narrative tries to inscribe Poland within the Western civilisation (as opposed to Russia) and seemingly promotes contemporary ecological trends. Yet they are also patriarchal, classist, and even fascist-like.

* * *

True Blood and *Twilight* share important references to American symbolic geography and, through that, nature. In *Twilight*, the most subaltern space of

196 *Ibid.*, 4.

197 *Ibid.*, 5.

198 *Ibid.*, 4.

199 Susan Chaplin, *The Postmillennial Vampire: Power, Sacrifice and Simulation in True Blood, Twilight and Other Contemporary Narratives* (Leeds: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), loc. 1199–1201, Kindle.

200 *Ibid.*, loc. 1256.

nature is the space of the Native reserve, connoted by the Indigenous werewolf who loses the competition for the land—connoted by Bella’s body—to the white middle-class Northern American Protestant man.²⁰¹ However, if Edward and Jacob, the werewolf, are two sides of the spectrum of white dominating civilisation—wild subaltern nature, other figures are on this spectrum. The Cullen patriarchal family is white and rich; Dr. Cullen is its head, and Edward seems the favourite son. They are the role models. Then comes Emmett and Jasper.

Emmett comes from the Appalachian Mountains, which, in American imagery, are perceived as wild but still white periphery, and people from there—as provincials, naive but sometimes dangerous, as Elizabeth Baird Hardy notices.²⁰² According to her, they were fetishised into the figures of true Americanness (tradition, creativity, “natural” simplicity), or demonised as depraved, xenophobic, ignorant primitive people, degenerated because of incest and diseases, drunkards, lazy, violent, preferring crime to the honest work. Their contact with the nature was to result in their unrestrained drives: brutality and lust. Indeed, in the narrative, Emmett is a bear-like simpleton.

Jasper comes from the U.S. South, the region beloved by American vampire narratives from Anne Rice’s *The Vampire Chronicles* to *True Blood*, *The Vampire Diaries* and *The Originals*. But even earlier, in narratives such as Robert Siodmak’s *Son of Dracula* (1943), the action takes place in the South. Significantly, the Southern heir invites the evil vampire to the United States. The South is a liminal space, a gate through which evil comes. The same happens in Seth Grahame-Smith’s novel *Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter* (2010) and its movie adaptation by Timur Bekmambetov (2012): the European exploiters and the old corrupted order come to America through the South. Vampires become Southern planters.

The North won the Civil War and became the dominant model for American culture. The echoes of this war itself are present in many vampire narratives (*Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter*, *Twilight*, *True Blood*, *The Vampire Diaries*, *The Originals*, *Being Human* and others). The burden of the traumatic memories was put on the South, which was also held responsible for it. The South became somehow colonised while remaining colonising for the Black Southern minority. The white population of the South were seen as influenced by the cultural practices of Black communities.²⁰³

201 Judith Leggatt and Kristin Burnett, “Biting Bella: Treaty Negotiation, Quileute History, and Why ‘Team Jacob’ Is Doomed to Lose,” in *Twilight and History*, ed. Nancy R. Reagin (Hoboken: Wiley, 2010), 26–46.

202 Elizabeth Baird Hardy, “Smoky Mountain Twilight: The Appalachian Roots of Emmett McCarty Cullen and His Family,” in *Twilight and History*, ed. Nancy R. Reagin (Hoboken: Wiley, 2010), 106–26.

203 Dale M. Hudson, *Vampires, Race*, 152.

The South is the intra-national Other,²⁰⁴ slightly abject, fascinating, disturbing, attractive, and repelling.²⁰⁵ The image was shaped even by classic authors such as William Faulkner, who is often referred to as the father of Southern Gothic. The land outside of the time is a vampire in itself.²⁰⁶ The South is a national American “land beyond the forest” (*trans-sylva-ania*): a primitive, half-real, half-fantastic land of superstition, backwardness, cruel history, and abundant nature. Eastern Europe’s wild, humid, cold forests are replaced by the wild, humid, hot bayous, and severe freezes—by strong tornados and hurricanes. Still, nature remains indomitable, excessive, extravagant and exuberant.²⁰⁷ And, of course—there are monsters.

Exactly like in Eastern Europe, nature seems to influence people—locals are linked to nature and take its qualities. The Southerners are animalised. In *Twilight*, Jasper is the most impulsive, unstable, violent, and abject of the Cullens family. *True Blood*, on the contrary, wholly takes action in the South.

Tara K. Parmiter²⁰⁸ claims that *Twilight* fights ecophobia by familiarising the reader with the wild nature through the personage of Bella, who gradually evolves from hating the forest and the greenery of Forks to embracing and appreciating it when she becomes a vampire. Yet Bella, by joining the Cullens family, adopts their fake version of ecogism. As Parmiter enumerates herself, the ecology professed by the Cullens consists of them being “outdoorsy”, going hiking and camping, and finally, going hunting (!). All of those are white activities characteristic of the type of “ecological” discourse described by Sandilands. Parmiter also quotes the specific vegetarianism of the Cullens, who ate animals but thoughtfully: she mentions these white ecogists as performers of the (super)human regulations of the animal populations. This is one more “ecological”

204 Michelle J. Smith, “The Postmodern Vampire in ‘Post-Race’ America: HBO’s *True Blood*,” in *Open Graves, Open Minds: Representations of Vampires and the Undead from the Enlightenment to the Present Day*, ed. Sam George and Bill Hughes (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2013), loc.6162, Kindle. See also the interview with Anne Rice, which was realised by the author and quoted in Morgane Caussarieu, *Vampires & bayous. Sexe, sang et décadence: La résurrection du mythe en Louisiane* (Saint-Laurent-d’Oingt: Les Éditions Mnémos, 2013), 53. Rice calls New Orleans a city that is not comprised of American normal, a city alien (*étranger*) to the rest of America.

205 Kimberley McMahon-Coleman, “Myriad Mirrors: Doppelgängers and Doubling in *The Vampire Diaries*,” in *Open Graves, Open Minds: Representations of Vampires and the Undead from the Enlightenment to the Present Day*, ed. Sam George and Bill Hughes (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2013), loc. 6160–62, Kindle.

206 Morgane Caussarieu, *Vampires & bayous. Sexe, sang et décadence: La résurrection du mythe en Louisiane* (Saint-Laurent-d’Oingt: Les Éditions Mnémos, 2013), 52–3, 56.

207 *Ibid.*, 74–5.

208 Tara K. Parmiter, “Green is the New Black: Ecophobia and the Gothic Landscape in the *Twilight* series” in *Bringing Light to Twilight: Perspectives on a Pop Culture Phenomenon*, ed. Giselle Liza Anatol (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 221–33.

activity that the white men assume the right to. Parmiter's article seems to embrace the same white "ecology" standpoint as the narrative, and it ends with the eulogy of the *Twilight* tourism that supposedly has eco-educational value. This eulogy is all the more striking because, in the monograph, the article is immediately preceded by another one, written from the Native perspective by Brianna Burke.²⁰⁹ She writes about Twilight tourism in the area: "truly one of the more beautiful reservations in the United States and now [is] the victim of endless tourism because of the novels"²¹⁰

Parmiter's claims of the Cullens' environmentalism hardly stand up to "endlessly reiterated descriptions"²¹¹ of their luxurious and energy-consuming cars, villas, and vacations. For Michael J. Goebel,²¹² *Twilight* is about capitalist consumption:

the conspicuously consumptive nature of the family fade[s] into the background as a nuance that highlights the American ideal that hard work will bring you happiness, but this is precisely where the narrative becomes dangerous. The naturalization of the Cullens' near limitless wealth and continual consumption in forms that range from excessive (purchasing a luxury car to use as a bribe) to the categorically absurd (purchasing an island as an anniversary present) are highly romanticized in the texts, and with this romanticization comes a deeper connection between the act of consumption, ideas of beauty, and identity formation²¹³.

Indeed, every aspect of identity, including gender, becomes a tenant of capitalism.²¹⁴ *Twilight* characters "illustrate one-dimensional reductions of personality that only allow for individuation through materiality".²¹⁵ The individuality, another highly civilisational feature of the *Twilight* vampires, is contrasted with the lack thereof in the nature-Native community: "the individualized special powers designated to the vampires compared with the homogenized powers of the Quileute werewolves".²¹⁶

Even if it does not seem so at first, *True Blood* treats women and nature in a way similar to *Twilight*. Structurally, every time a female figure embodying the forces of nature rises, they are combated by the Heroes. The same schema repeats

209 Brianna Burke, "The Great American Love Affair: Indians in the *Twilight* Saga," in *Bringing Light to Twilight: Perspectives on a Pop Culture Phenomenon*, ed. Giselle Liza Anatol (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 207–19.

210 *Ibid.*, 214.

211 Michael J. Goebel, "'Embraced' by Consumption: *Twilight* and the Modern Construction of Gender," in *Bringing Light to Twilight: Perspectives on a Pop Culture Phenomenon*, ed. Giselle Liza Anatol (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 174.

212 *Ibid.*, 169–78.

213 *Ibid.*, 174.

214 *Ibid.*, 173.

215 *Ibid.*, 169.

216 *Ibid.*, 176.

throughout the seasons. If the Fellowship of the Sun seems too fanatical in season two, its opposite, Maenad Maryann, the worshipper of Dionysus, and her promiscuous transgressive community, are equally bad. Maenad incited the Nietzschean frenzy that gives absolute freedom, absolute transgression, absolute connection with nature and one's nature, and the community. Her community represents the very abject dissipation of individuality in the eco-communist disturbing collective. Maenad's followers engage in uncontrollable acts of sex and aggression, including cannibalism. They have no social order—unlike the vampires with their queens/kings, sheriffs, League, Authority, and seniority hierarchy.

Indeed, the threat that Maryann poses consists less of actual physical violence than of undermining the order imposed by white male civilisation: she makes people manifest their hidden drives and tell the hidden truth. Hoyt's mother finally tells his son the truth about his father but also confesses her sexual dreams she never realised because of social norms.²¹⁷ Maryann introduces anarchy and destruction, and the vampires defend the town and the civilisation. Male Solar Heroes, vampire Bill and shapeshifter Sam finally defeat the Maenad by piercing her with the horn.

The figure of Maryann, especially her obsession with sacrificing Sam, recalls the stereotypes of the rapacious man-eating feminist from the late '70s.²¹⁸ And even she, from the very beginning, only serves the man and longs for him to take her, even if it means pain and death: she lets the horn pierce her, as she takes it for the sexual act of Dionysus. This scene resembles torture porn, claim Lillian E. Craton and Kathryn E. Jonell.²¹⁹

Fanatic feminism linked with nature returns in the fourth season, where vampires fight with the witches, a motif present in *The Originals* series as well. The witches' leader, Marnie, is consensually possessed by the spirit of Antonia, a witch who was captured, tortured, and raped by the vampires from the Catholic Inquisition in 17th-century Spain. Marnie also takes her revenge for being marginalised and disrespected all her life. Her group collects all the marginalised people: people of colour, queer people, low-class people; Antonia proudly affirms she was a peasant.²²⁰

217 *True Blood*, Season 2, Episode 11, "Frenzy," directed by Daniel Minahan, written by Allan Ball, aired August 30, 2009, on HBO.

218 Lillian E. Craton and Kathryn E. Jonell, "'I Am Sookie, Hear Me Roar!': Sookie Stackhouse and Feminist Ambivalence," in *True Blood and Philosophy: We Wanna Think Bad Things with You*, ed. William Irwin, George A. Dunn and Rebecca Housel (Hoboken: Wiley, 2010), 109–21.

219 *Ibid.*

220 *True Blood*, Season 4, Episode 12, "And When I Die," directed by Scott Winant, written by Raelle Tucker, aired September 11, 2011, on HBO.

The organisation becomes totalitarian: Marnie massacres human opponents, terrorises her followers and even kills one of them. She forces Antonia to stay in her body and finally—as a spirit—possesses the body of Lafayette, a gay Black man, against his will. Marnie is ultimately killed by two white heterosexual male vampires, Eric and Bill.

This time, however, the feminism is not fully condemned. Marnie's spirit is exorcised by Sookie, the spirit of Sookie's grandma, and the spirit of Antonia. They do it by appealing to the solidarity of the subalterns. When leaving, Sookie's grandma's spirit also tells her granddaughter not to fear being alone, without a man. Yet this feminist message gets lost in the continuation of the narrative.

Another eco-feminist group is the community of faeries, from whom Sookie is descended. Sookie goes to their world, an eco-utopia ruled by the Queen. However, the faeries turn out to be ugly, fanatical and despotic creatures. They imprison Sookie and force her to stay with them, just like they forced her grandfather. Later, Sookie meets Warlow, a faerie and a vampire. He looks like the epitome of the romantic lover, but he turns out to be obsessive, possessive and violent. He obsesses about marrying Sookie to join their royal faerie bloodlines. Warlow massacres the faeries and imprisons Sookie. Thankfully, once again, the Solar white male Heroes—beloved vampire Bill, policeman Andy, and Sookie's male relatives (brother and grandfather)—come to the rescue and pierce Warlow with a phallic stake.

Lilith²²¹ and her cult are introduced in season five. According to the Vampire Bible, vampire Lilith was the first creature made by God in His (?) image, while Adam and Eve were only created to be Lilith's food. Lilith is worshipped as a vampire Goddess, akin to how Christ is worshipped as a human God, and her blood is a relic. Fanatic vampires from the Sanguinista Movement seek to restore the primary order, take over the world and enslave humans as a food source. They reject artificially created blood and prepare a *coup d'état*. Their leaders are, obviously, female: Salome and Nora. They want to abolish the male Guardian of the vampire social order. Notably, the Guardian treats Lilith's blood as a symbol, while Sanguinistas want to consume it. This is a reference to the differences between the Protestant—symbolically male—Christianity and the Catholic/Orthodox—symbolically female—one, with its cult of the Virgin Mary and the transubstantiation communion. This connection is also made in *The Vampyricon*. At the same time, the Sanguinista religion resembles Islam, another faith with a different Holy Book than Protestant Christianity.

221 For the ambivalence of Lilith and her cult, see Maureen Attali, "Fondamentalisme religieux et féminité démoniaque: réflexions autour du personnage de Lilith dans *True Blood*," *TV Series 5* (May 2014): 20–37, <https://doi.org/10.4000/tvseries.439>.

Yet the new religion is, above all, transgressive, linked to nature, and emancipating for the marginalised. After the *coup d'état*, the new authorities, apart from Bill, whom Lilith possesses, are composed of women, gays, and a Black man. They are, therefore, similar to the Maryann community and the witches' organisation from season four. Finally, the movement is contained by Bill's ability to self-discipline.

Similarly, in *The Originals* series, Mikaelson's vampire family, led by Klaus, is constantly under attack by some representatives of the forces of nature. In the series and its prequel, *The Vampire Diaries*, vampires are called abominations to nature, and vampirism is a civilisational invention. It was created as a weapon of the first Viking white settlers against the Native American werewolf community. It is worth remembering that Vikings as "Norsemen" were considered Anglo-Saxon: in the 19th century, when the term Anglo-Saxon entered into use among the English writers, it encompassed the Celts who are present in *The Vampyricon* analysed below, and the Vikings,²²² who are present in *The Originals*. Significantly, Eric Northman (!) from *True Blood* is also a Viking.

The fight with nature, again embodied in the female figures, gets very heated when the Mikaelsons confront their mother and then their aunt, her sister. Both Esther and Dahlia are powerful witches, representatives of nature. The mother wants to kill all the vampires as beings against nature. Dahlia holds a grudge against her sister for having married and, therefore, abandoning their sisterhood in the bosom of nature and witchcraft. Esther submitted to the male civilisational order and, thus, as a nature drop-out, was even unable to get pregnant until her sister helped her. Betrayed Dahlia turned into a monster. She claimed the first-born Mikael's daughter, Freya, would stay with her. Then she requires Hope, Klaus Mikaelson's daughter. In this fight, Klaus and Mikael, his father, despite the mutual hate, join forces to protect their respective daughters. And Esther, again surrendering nature to civilisation, kills herself and her sister.

Vampires sign an alliance with the witches. They fight their too-fanatic father. In the fifth season, they fight too fanatic Nazi vampires who want to return to the purity of blood, kill hybrids and werewolves. Mikaelsons defeat them, but they do not really side with nature. They want to establish their own civilisational order in the city. The Mikaelsons are a male-led, white upper-class family, and the inclusion of a Black man as a brother-in-law or a werewolf lesbian sister-in-law looks rather like a token. The Viking, indeed WASP, civilisation gets modified and more inclusive, but it remains fundamentally the same.

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222 Dale M. Hudson, *Vampires, Race*, 210.

In Douglas Clegg's *The Vampyricon* trilogy (2005–2007), the Hero, Aleric, is the Celtic child of the Forest, standing against the new Christian civilisation embodied by the castle, the manor, and the city. Celts, mostly worshipping nature goddesses, hide in the forest from the conqueror Christian noblesse. The first side of the opposition seems strongly valorised: it is a green wood against the dead, rotten wood of the infested castle.²²³ Aleric first surrendered to the colonising processes: after coming to the baron's castle, he tried to become one of the castle's people, but finally, he started to affirm his identity.

After travelling the world, Aleric returns to his land as a vampire. This is a complicated legacy. On the one hand, all the "bastard" undead vampires, such as Aleric, are children of Medhya, the embodiment of the female wildness and anti-patriarchal revolt: Medhya seduced, deceived and imprisoned her father, the Great Serpent god. Yet undead vampires are born out of patriarchal vengeance: the Priests avenged the Great Serpent by tearing Medhya into pieces. Undead vampires were born from her blood. She hates them.

Aleric comes from a family of priests whose mission was to stop Medhya: to contain nature, not to side with it. In the end, Christianity is evil not because it brings civilisation but because it becomes a tool of Medhya's return and, therefore, unleashes the wild forces of nature. It is evil because it contains the woman's cult. Baron's daughter became queen Enora and introduced Madonna's cult, which is, in fact, Medhya's cult. Significantly, Enora also revolted against her father: the fact that she did it for her beloved Aleric is inconsequential to his moral judgment. When he returns and sees the matriarchal system she implemented, he is determined to destroy her. Some Christian knights join vampires to fight Enora and Medhya.

Aleric is the world's leader, saviour, and messiah (Maz-Sherah). As an undead vampire, he is from the blood of Medhya and the Serpent, but he sides with the father against the mother. The Great Serpent anoints him to be his spiritual son. He reproves even the priestesses of the Celtic religion: his Celtic heritage is only valued as the heritage of the Priests. Vampires are supposed to be super-human defenders of society against nature.

* * *

In Krzysztof Kotowski *Trzech gości w łódce plus wampir* (2022), the super-human vampires are seemingly environmentalists and ecologists, specifically Alek/Wiktor, the protagonist. National nature is highly valued. The narrative quotes the laws of nature. Predator is a role model. However, what the narrative advocates under the excuse of a pro-nature attitude is a vision of hierarchical

223 Douglas Clegg, *The Vampyricon, Book 1: The Priest of Blood*, 2005. loc. 1076, Kindle.

civilisation where superior human beings are outside social rules that bind the ordinary people. Predator's nature is positively valued as something that distinguishes a super-human from the average man and permits him to cross social restrictions. Understanding nature means understanding vampires' superiority: Zeniu's "instinct of nature" whispered to him that vampires are beings superior to him.²²⁴ And nature itself confirms it: wolves back off with respect when Wiktor wants something.²²⁵

Environmentally concerned, Wiktor/Alek elaborates on how much more stupid humans are than vampires: out of this stupidity, they destroy the planet, the animals, the flora, and each other²²⁶ and take global warming lightly.²²⁷ He, Wiktor, obviously is much wiser. In the Promethean-romanticist tone in the whole narrative, Wiktor/Alek deplors the violation of nature by the "coarse roller of civilisation". The narrator instrumentalises nature to demonstrate how much better he is: only a vampire sees the beauty of nature, and only the sensitive, exceptional super-humans feel that particular euphoria is present while communing with it.²²⁸

The passages about the forest—Puszcza Białowieska—actually discuss its protectors rather than the forest itself. The foresters protect the land, its peace, and animals' habitats.²²⁹ They intervene to move the boars or to take a deer away from the hunting wolves' pack.²³⁰ Indeed, they shape the nature by their decisions about what to preserve.

A super-human vampire unifies with nature only to perform his maleness and masculinity: identifying with nature—the forest and the predators above all—performs here the same function as conquering it used to perform in some classic colonial narratives. Unifying with nature also serves to prove male domination over women: avenging the lynx permits Wiktor to lessen Agnieszka's memories' influence on him: "the woman (...) grew weaker. (...) The anger and the goal prevailed".²³¹ The link with nature allows the man to exercise violence, or even the link is established through the performance of violence—killing people he judges as bad.

A similar super-man figure is the protagonist of Maks Maksimov's novel *Видеоблог вампира* (2020). Fyodor expresses some ecological ideas, such as the

224 Krzysztof Kotowski, *Trzech gości w łódce plus wampir* (Poznań: 5WhyPromotion, 2022), 345.

225 *Ibid.*, 350–51.

226 *Ibid.*, 216.

227 *Ibid.*, 283.

228 *Ibid.*, 284.

229 *Ibid.*, 346.

230 *Ibid.*, 350.

231 *Ibid.*, 358.

idea that vampires must preserve their food source from extinction.²³² In the future of the 2100s, Fyodor enjoys Russia finally closing the last atomic plant and switching to solar power energy. On the occasion, he frames it as finally catching up with the West.²³³ He feels empathy towards animals, but, just like Alek/Wiktor in Kotowski's novel, mostly with predators, to whom he compares himself to argue that social laws do not apply to him.

The vampire narratives that contain a male Good Vampire protagonist are usually ecological in the way described by Sandilands and indeed fake-ecological. The Hero's efforts perform his male self-discipline—indeed his *ego*—rather than genuine care for other beings. The environmentalism in those narratives is superficial, or again, it is used instrumentally, sometimes slipping into the dangerous theory of supremacy. The next subchapter examines the narratives in which the protagonist is a female Good Vampire.

III.2 The Eco-Female Vampire

The narratives about female eco-warriors, such as Jordan's *Byzantium*, analysed earlier in this chapter, seem to be more genuine. This is also the case of the short French story by Christian Vilà, "Les Ravageurs: une histoire d'amour" (2014). The vampires in this narrative are truly vegetarian: they do not eat any non-human animal products. The vampire narrator also expresses a very environmental and anti-anthropocentric statement: notably, he says that the anti-V (anti-vampire) police do a good job killing vampires because there cannot be too many vampires for sustainability reasons. That would damage both the world and the vampire population itself. If vampires are figures of the eco-friendly people, that is indeed a bold statement.

They are persecuted by the anti-V police, the Hunters, who use silver bullets and torture to get information. The persecution of vampires evokes the persecution of racial and sexual minorities, hippies, and socialists.

Indeed, the vampires form an eco-hippie and socialist commune. Their Mistress is female, and they share everything, including the blood: when one is hungry, another offers themselves, not wanting anything in return, as anything can be regained, blood regenerates. Vampires are polyamorous, sex being again something they share in a selfless act of compassion, comfort, and non-romantic as well as romantic love. They are classless and equal, and that is why the capitalist establishment and their "vassals from media and politics" hunt them. Yet

232 Maks Maksimov, *Видеоблог вампира* (Moscow: Эксмо, 2020), loc. 907, Kindle.

233 *Ibid.*, loc. 3264–66.

they are getting stronger anyway, and they are marching in the sense of History,²³⁴ as the narrator announces in the clear reference to Marxism.

The emergence of the vampires has a posthuman origin: the Mistress and the mysterious parasite form a new entity. On the contrary, in the short French story “Les Miroirs de l’Éternité” by Simon Bréan (2014), analysed further in this book, posthumanism, perceived as a product of hyper-civilisation, is opposed to nature and ecology.

In the narrative, vampires’ existence is entangled with nature. The radiation from the depths of the Earth is responsible for vampire mutation. Vampire’s existence on Earth is thus linked to the whole biotope.²³⁵ Vampires are the ultimate users of the Earth, and yet they are dependent on the whole of it. That is why when the Aliens come and begin to suck the energy out of the planet, the vampires start to feel pinches in the neck and then extreme pain, hunger and madness. They murder anyone they get nearby, only to feel self-despise afterwards, and many commit suicide. Some become cannibals. Vampires stop being able to hypnotise and turn people into vampires. All of that happens because the quality of their blood is gradually diminishing, their DNA regressing to human one, which is to the state of corpses.

While the male leaders of the vampire community side with the Alien posthuman civilisation in exchange for a place on the Alien spaceship and a share of privilege within the Alien system of Cosmic domination, the female vampire fulfils the mission of saving the whole Earth eco-system for everyone. However, she thinks mostly about her species and achieves her goal through sci-tech methods. She is a scientist, explicitly praising civilisation: the narrative indeed shows that without humanistic civilisation, neither nature nor humanity can survive.

As proved by those examples, while eco-feminist narratives can indeed offer a more equalised and authentic version of environmentalism, it is not always the case. The following subchapter examines the ecological dimension of the decolonial Vampire figure.

234 Christian Vilà, “Les Ravageurs: une histoire d’amour,” in *Vampires à contre-emploi*, ed. Jeanne-A Debats (Saint-Laurent d’Oingt: Mnémos, 2014), 111.

235 Simon Bréan, “Les Miroirs de l’Éternité,” in *Vampires à contre-emploi*, ed. Jeanne-A Debats (Saint-Laurent d’Oingt: Mnémos, 2014), 131.

III.3 The Eco-Decolonial Vampire?

Decolonialism has vast ecological potential, and this was used in vampire narratives such as *The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel* by Drew Hayden Taylor, which is already analysed in this Chapter. However, as already demonstrated by Divov's *Night Watcher* example, it can be appropriated in civilisational rather than ecological, nationalistic, and secondary-imperialist discourses. The same thing happens in Aleksandr Slepakov's trilogy *Повесть о советском вампире* (2014–2018).

Most of the action takes place in a kolkhoz (a Soviet collective farm owned by the state) in the 1980s. The connection to the earth seems essential. In practice, however, the land is valuable as a natural resource that can be exploited to harvest, breed animals, and serve human society. Even if the local community is presented as a traditional country community regarding social relations and ways of living, its link to the land is mediated through socialist ideology and modern technology: kolkhoz is organised as a modern factory, and production is the key.

The good vampire Frolov is a chthonic being in a social and national sense only: he represents the Russian land. He is only strong on the land he was born, he worked on, for which he fought. In fact, without the softening power of Russianness, he immediately goes rogue: that is what happens on his trip to Poland. When he first rises from the grave, he is a rather abject creature: only the communion with the Russian woman, the traditional wisdom provided by the village wise-woman, and the remembrance of his glorious army past make him into a Solar Hero.

Russian land is God (and foreign land means foreign God), but only in the sense of being a part of the nation, not as a deified nature. The giant Reptile from the second and third part of the cycle is evil. It is a great lizard/crocodile/dragon coming from inside the earth, and it embodies the non-human agency of the world. In fact, if the world is described as living, it is in the sense of being populated by some mystic creatures, not in a profoundly Latourian sense of the world-as-agent.²³⁶ And if, in the end, the Reptile needs to be preserved in order to keep the world's balance, it also needs to be controlled by human beings (be it humans, human giants, angels or God). And just like nature should be controlled by humans, the Soviet state's control over the Russian people was beneficial and should have been more robust: the order needed to control the chaos. Those are Soviet tanks that, at the end of the story, save the protagonists from the mob,

236 Bruno Latour, "Agency at the Time of the Anthropocene," *New Literary History* 45, no. 1 (Winter 2014), <https://doi.org/10.1353/nlh.2014.0003>.

prevent the murder and the injustice and restore the order that permits everyone to live more or less happily.

Interestingly, the narrative refers directly to ecology:²³⁷ condemning world pollution and, at the same time, criticising ecological practices. The narrative also shows the difference between the West and Russia, framing it as a contrast between the city and the village, with Russian society being a society of villagers. The Westerners pollute because they don't care. The Russians pollute because they, as villagers, have a cosmic stance towards the world. Cosmos starts right outside the door and never finishes; everything is a part of it, and therefore, it is impossible to pollute it: such an attitude leads to the same effects as American carelessness. From a cosmic attitude, nothing is trash. Thus, old tyres are used as fencing; a TV casing is made into a flowerpot, etc. If such a practice could be seen as ecological recycling, the narrator sees it as the aesthetics of death. He claims it harms the environment. It was also a reason for the decomposition of the USSR: people just wanted to escape such a flawed environment, no matter how.

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Francesca Flores' *The Witch and the Vampire: A Novel* (2023) is a subaltern Other narrative: the two main Heroines are non-white lesbian women. It presents the vampirism as the anti-colonial resistance.

The novel's world is organised as a spectrum from nature to civilisation, with the society represented by the people of Arborren literally between those two extremes. Arborren is a city. Its centre embodies the civilisation of the Empire, with its treasury and the town hall, with a "grandiose stone fountain (...) decorated with a statue of the emperor".²³⁸ But its name refers to the "tree" (*arbor* in Latin, and similarly in most Romance languages—*árbol* in Spanish, *arbre* in French, etc.). It is a town in the East of the Erlanis Empire. It is situated between the capital (in the West) and the wilderness. It borders the forest where the vampires live, and the Heart Tree grows.

The Heart Tree produces a transparent but strong barrier (the Bone Wall) that locks the vampires inside the forest. Vampires can cross the barrier to get inside but cannot get out of it unless there is a crack in it: the crack "heals" relatively quickly, but vampires can go out of their zone while it remains open. Humans can cross the barrier as much as they want, in both directions, but they do not do it,

237 Aleksandr Slepakov, "Глава [Chapter] 43. Как Евгений Петрович Гущин охранял популяцию белого медведя," in *Повесть о советском вампире, Книга 3: Вампирский спецназ*. The last two volumes proved unavailable in Poland, so I used the manuscripts shared with me by the author. Therefore, the page numeration cannot be given.

238 Francesca Flores, *The Witch and the Vampire: A Novel* (New York: Wednesday Books, 2023), loc. 570, Kindle.

fearing the vampires. Trained hunters or Fire witches, who are also trained to hunt vampires, are exceptions. There is even a special village of hunters inside the forest zone.

The position of its witches also reflects the in-between situation of Arborren. Local witches are mostly Root witches, still more connected to the earth and nature: “our connection to the earth and everything in it: soil, rocks, plants, flowers, roots”.²³⁹ The ancient gods first gifted mortals with magic that connected them with nature. “They imbued the forest (...), giving it sentience. And only Root witches still feel this connection”.²⁴⁰ But even they are in the service of the Empire: they produce food in greenhouses, while wild nature (forest) is the domain of the vampires. The vampires embody the pure forces of nature. Ava, the vampire, says that trees

“are not different from me at all; they’re alive, but they’re capable of death. (...) And in the spring, they are reborn, forever undead. I feel more alive now than I ever have before, and more connected to the ancient magic of this forest. I want to defend it, protect it, and carry it through the danger it faces”.²⁴¹

Finally, the Flame witches were sent to Arborren by the Emperor to combat the vampires, and they represent civilisational imperial powers. But here, the story of the vampires creation is instructive. All the witches were created by Arkana, gods of nature, who bestowed magic onto humans: they took human form and gave birth to witches. But for the humans of the Empire, the representatives of the civilisation, witches were Others to be explored by cruel experiments so that their powers could be exploited. Witches were the representatives of nature, and nonetheless, they were labelled unnatural. One of the Root witches, in fact, one of the Arcana herself, Casiopea, captured and experimented upon, fled and rebelled. She used imperial experiments to change herself into a vampire to better resist the oppression of humans against the witches. She also created more vampires to protect the witches better. The emperors tried to “conquer the witches and steal their powers for themselves, and out of that pain, vampires were born. Out of greed, humanity created its own predator”.²⁴² But once the vampires emerged, the Empire decided to accept and assimilate the witches and use them and their powers to hunt vampires: some powers of nature, fire and light above all, were since then used by the civilisation to fight the wild nature itself.

The Flame witches embraced civilisation the most, viewing their powers as separate from and opposed to nature: “While many witches receive their power from nature (...), Flames receive ours from light itself”, say the teachings of the

239 Ibid., loc. 181.

240 Ibid., loc. 774–75.

241 Ibid., loc. 4255–57.

242 Ibid., loc. 4575–78.

Academy for Young Witches of Arborren.²⁴³ Significantly, the local government's name is also Clarity.

When Flame witches go to conquer the forest, to extort it from the vampires' hands, and when they push back vampires from the city of Arborren, they admit: "Flame witches are not made for this land of trees; we are anathema to it. But nonetheless, we have been called to protect it".²⁴⁴ Fire and light are dangerous for nature, and civilisational "protection" means the protection of imperial control over the lands. Flame witches are trained to "master these woods".²⁴⁵ They assert their domination of the land by bringing their families on vacation into the forest to prove "their strength and that the forest didn't really belong to the vampires".²⁴⁶ They show that wild nature has been eradicated from the land and society: it is now for humans to decide the fate of the land, and the decision to eventually preserve it in its state is also theirs.²⁴⁷

The separation of civilisation and society from nature seems to be the best thing at first. The Bone Wall, the barrier produced by the Heart Tree, seems to keep humans and the vampires safe. For the vampires, the forest is a haven where they stick together, and people, reassured by the thought of the barrier, do not resort to desperate measures to destroy the vampires. Ava, a Root witch who turned into a vampire, thinks she needs to leave the town forever and join vampires in the forest. She disapproves of her mother's trials to change the *status quo*.

While Ava does not want both opposite forces (humans and vampires) to fight, she believes there is no place for vampires in human society. She thinks vampires (nature) should peacefully exist, but outside the society, which is justly protected by the Hunters (human hunters and Flame witches). Even if Ava finds Hunters too fanatic, she assumes the role of the Solar protector herself: "As much as they have reason to fear me and other vampires who must drink blood to survive (...), I still care for these people and this place, even if they'll never love me back".²⁴⁸ Only slowly, she rises to actually treat vampires and humans equally, and claims murdering vampires is morally equal to murdering humans: "These witches, these hunters, they still convince themselves they're better than us. We're all killers; they're just allowed to get away with it",²⁴⁹ she states, referring to unjust inequality of positions. Ava also realises that maintaining the Bone Wall harms

243 Ibid., loc. 2009.

244 Ibid., loc. 1118.

245 Ibid., loc. 1277.

246 Ibid., loc. 1373–74.

247 See Catriona Sandilands, "Unnatural Passions?"

248 Francesca Flores, *The Witch and the Vampire*, loc. 214–15, Kindle.

249 Ibid., loc. 3031–33.

both the humans, from whose dust bones it is made, and the vampires it imprisons: the costs of maintaining isolation are too great.

Ava decides to let nature and civilisation coexist within society: she lets the vampires roam into the human world, bringing nature to villages and cities. Yet, she does not change the hierarchy of power. That was Ava's mother's plan, which Ava violently opposed. On the contrary, Ava introduces changes in the subordinated group: she replaces Casiopea as the queen of vampires and decides to teach vampires how to adjust to live among humans. In fact, she embraces the path of assimilation of the Others and modification of nature. The diet she proposes to the vampires, as I argue later, in fact, turns them against nature.

Casiopea, the Vampire Queen, embodied the harmed nature: "Her hair is made of gray, dry leaves that fall down her back. Her skin is smooth and unblemished, but with sharp features and hardened deep-set eyes".²⁵⁰ She was nature's queen, but nature (the forest) was sick because of her. The water sources were dwindling, and the trees were touched with some disease; they seemed barely alive and gasped for breath²⁵¹. Under her influence, nature's sentience got a twisted Gothic form. The inanimate nature gets animalised to be subjectified and even personalised: "seems to breathe (...) feels alive",²⁵² "trees rising like soldiers standing sentinel".²⁵³ But this process gets perverted in an abject way. The forest gets the "reaching arms of a giant"²⁵⁴ and becomes like a hungry vampire,²⁵⁵ consuming living and already rotten bodies of animals and humans. Indeed, Casiopea and her vampire son used the forest as his feeding machine: they were "leeching"²⁵⁶ it. Finally, it degraded into roots that "crawl out of the earth like spiders and gather around" Casiopea.²⁵⁷ The opening, all-consuming earth was not a maternal womb: just like Casiopea's maternity had gotten twisted, nature's maternity also got twisted. The earth was a mouth or a *vagina dentata* of the vampire.

While Casiopea claimed that, being nature, she contained human life, the narrative shows that nature cannot live without humans. Casiopea only managed to make the forest sick by her revengeful practices and no regard for human life. The message is simple: when nature rebels, it harms itself. Too much ecological and eco-feminist zeal finally takes totalitarian forms and damages nature and humans, including its followers. The unifying view of Casiopea—all is nature—is

250 Ibid., loc. 3682–83.

251 Ibid., loc. 1195.

252 Ibid., loc. 3114.

253 Ibid., loc. 3105.

254 Ibid., loc. 1432.

255 Ibid., loc. 1662–65.

256 Ibid., loc. 1666.

257 Ibid., loc. 3686.

denied by the strong individualism of all the main positive heroes: Kaye, Tristan, and Ava.

In the end, the narrative is disturbingly similar to the “fake” ecology of the male Good Vampire narratives, including even the motif of the problematic vegetarianism I study later in this Chapter. It promotes an ecological discourse of individualism, human-nature differentiation, and nature’s compliance with civilisational norms.

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Ultimately, the Good Vampire narratives struggle to be genuinely ecological as much as the bad Vampire narratives do, perhaps because mainstream narratives call to modify the system rather than abolish it, notices Sarah McFarland Taylor.²⁵⁸ Flores’ novel can be the best example. It is queer and eco-feminist, yet abolishing the Empire never crosses the Heroine’s mind; on the contrary: she fights both her mother and the vampire Queen who wants to challenge the imperial system. The final chapter of the book’s first part focuses on the micro-ecology of the human being and the relations between civilisation and nature as internalised by humans and put as body-mind dichotomy.

258 Sarah McFarland Taylor, “Vegetarian Vampires,” 160.

Chapter IV: Body and Mind

The vampire narratives' actors frequently confess to fighting their "nature". The use of the word "nature" in such statements is significant. The nature-civilisation dichotomy is reconceptualised into the dichotomy of body and mind, and the disputed space is the individual. To put it differently, the body (and this encompasses all the "bodily" desires, drives, and reflexes), perceived as nature, negotiates the human being with the mind (and this encompasses the spiritual abilities, the reason, the internalised norms, self-discipline, and consciousness), perceived as civilisation.

It does not mean that the body is "natural": as has been frequently reminded in this book, naturalness is a construct, and indeed, the body of an individual can be perceived as something unnatural, even monstrous. It also means that the body can be alienated, and a person can only be defined as a mind.

What is defined as the "body" and what is defined as the "mind" remain an object of negotiation. Re-enacting Aristotelian division, the body is usually defined by carnality, materiality, and sexuality, while the mind is determined by rational functions, moral norms, and creativity. Creation is opposed to procreation. However, affects and emotions are sometimes inscribed to one domain and sometimes to another. On the other hand, the opposition of the body-mind can be put as the opposition of the brain-mind. The mind can be understood even more narrowly as self-consciousness only.

It is fascinating that a person has a double role of subject and object in one's internal negotiations. The personality is inherently split in a more-than-Freudian sense. Self-discipline becomes the best summary of this phenomenon and its most advocated solution. The triumph of the spirit and the submission of the human to his mind are the most frequently promoted results.

The mind, like civilisation, is conjecturally white, and, following Aristotle, it is male, while the body is female. Thus, submission of the body also reflects the submission of the woman to a man, frequently done by the same act: a man contains his desire for the female body. With that gesture, he submits both his body and her body to his mind.

The Primary Vampire Narrative is full of such gestures of the Hero resisting the temptation of the female vampire. But the Reversed Vampire Narrative contains them as well. Perhaps nothing embodies the internal body-mind fight better than the fight of the Good Vampire with his vampire “nature”.

It is striking that even those narratives that try to include ecological discourses do not assert body over mind. It is also striking how non-Western Vampire Narratives embrace the very Western dichotomy of body-mind and tend to, again following Western evaluation, favour the latter over the former.

This chapter is organised into subchapters to examine the narratives that openly assert the superiority of the mind over the body, the narratives that contain “fake” body appreciation, mirroring “fake” ecology from the previous section, and finally, the body-positive narratives.

IV.1 The Hero’s Combat with the Body

In this subchapter, I analyse the narratives where the Solar Heroes, Hunters and Vampires alike combat with their body. Their Solarity frequently relies precisely on their ability to defeat and subdue the body as nature.

The Heroes are usually male, and the narratives treat female and male bodies differently. Through male bodies, their spirit/mind is visible. Female bodies are just bodies. They can become incarnations of male corporeality, projected outside so that men can appear to themselves as purely spiritual beings. Good women can have the light (spirit) of love for the spiritual man: female bodies then express this love, frequently demonstrated by painful sacrifice. They can joyfully embrace their bodily subordinate functions and fulfil the feminine roles of mothers to spiritual men’s children. Many Solar Heroes are deeply concerned with the female procreative role: they worry about their partner having a “normal” life, i. e. becoming a wife and a mother. They do not worry if she wants this normality, though.

I start this subchapter by analysing the narratives with the Solar Hunter figure: the already mentioned *The Strain*, *London Under Midnight*, *The Danilov Quintet*, *Penny Dreadful*, *Les Companions d’HeLa*, but also Peter Watts’ *Firefall* series (2006–2014), and Gavrish’s *Bezu*. Finally, I study one of the narratives in which the female hunter embodies the mind, the BBC *Dracula* series.

Subsequently, I analyse well-known Good Vampire narratives, specifically *Twilight*, then *The Vampyricon*, the short story “Icare”, and Eastern European narratives: Viktor Pelevin’s Russian vampire diology: *Empire V*, and *Batman Apollo* (2006–2013), Slepakov’s trilogy, Polynskaya’s cycle, and a Polish novel by Kotowski. Lastly, I analyse Flores’ narrative, where the mind seems to be embodied by the good female vampire.

Ultimately, I analyse the specific Evil Vampire Hero of Gabriel Delmas' BD *Vampyr Draco Maleficus Imperator* (2004).

* * *

In *The Strain* franchise, the vampires, of whom the worst was the Master, spawned from Ozryel, the fallen angel, whose torn body God spread all around the world. In *The Strain* books by Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan (2009–2011), the fall of the Archangel Ozryel was the fall into the body through non-normative sexuality. A woman in Sodom tempted him, and, being an angel and not having genitals, he drank her blood. Then he homosexually and sadistically attacked and tried to drink the blood of his fellow archangel “brother”.

Vampires, especially those created by the Master, form a repulsive collective consciousness that is studied later in this book. But this collective consciousness is probably abject only because it is material/bodily. The spiritual, mystical unity with God was good only: it was what Ozryel had and what he abandoned to fall into physical existence. While the godly union was the union of spirits, the ungodly one was the union of bodies steered by the will of the Master. Those bodies do not even have blood: the narrative defines blood, in line with some Christian and Jewish interpretations of the Bible, as a space of contact between the material and the spiritual, the body and the soul. The lack of blood is a visible sign of the vampires' disconnection from God.

In the books, Ephraim is God's Chosen One, whose coming is anticipated by God's sign and who finally brings triumph of the spirit over the matter. It helps that he is a doctor: the narrative conceives old theological truths in terms of modern science. Biology is God's language.²⁵⁹ The dichotomy God-spirit-mind versus Devil-matter-body is expressed as energy versus matter. God is energy.²⁶⁰ The only earthly power equal to His power is the nuclear bomb.²⁶¹ This power is first misappropriated by the devilish Master and then well-used by Ephraim. Atomic blast is the final triumph of male mind-spirit-energy over the body-matter, including any bodily attachments. In the books, Ephraim kills his son and himself; in the series, his son kills them both, fulfilling the last wishes of his father: in both cases, spiritual connections are more important than bodies. The world is freed from the vampires, and Ozryel is freed from the bonds of the body—just like Ephraim and his son are. Redeemed, Ozryel becomes one with God's immaterial energy again.

259 Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan, *The Night Eternal*, 241.

260 *Ibid.*, 183.

261 *Ibid.*, 276.

Similarly to *The Strain*, Clark's *London Under Midnight* contains the triumph of mind over matter/body performed by male individuality: "The power of thought is a remarkable thing in all of us".²⁶² The mind decides (hu)man's superiority over the bodily animal. Un-human vampires are interested only in their bodies: hunger and satisfaction.²⁶³

As stated in another place, in *London Under Midnight*, the vampire body is conjecturally female; therefore, the human mind is conjecturally male. April becomes a vampire and needs to be saved by men. Ben's power of mind saves her, and the rescue is only possible because of Carter's mind. When they both came to the vampire island, his composure and cognitive capacities permitted them to keep their humanity; notably, he discovered that salty water could replace blood to some extent because humans evolved from sea creatures composed mainly of water and electrolytes.²⁶⁴

Les Compagnons d'HeLa offers a similar vision of curing and normalising females. This final solution is surprising, as the narrative initially looks pretty appreciative of the female/queer body. Lorenza's bold statement that not only the soul counts²⁶⁵ is doubly empowering: she asserts her bodily femininity and right to gaze at male bodies and recognise men as bodies. She breaks the taboo and reverses gender roles. The narrative also appreciates carnality as sexuality through erotic, and even sadist-masochist, female domination scenes of intercourse. Moreover, Lorenza's body is gender-fluid; she can become Lucio at wish. Yet, in the final twist, the supremacy of the mind as a proper self ("moi propre") is asserted, the gender fluidity of Lucio-Lorenza is erased, and so is Roman's homoerotic attraction to Lucio. Lorenza is not only turned into a human female by her husband but to fix this change even better, she is impregnated by him. Her body is a space of doubly asserted triumph of the male mind.

In *Penny Dreadful*, Vanessa's body cannot be saved, and she becomes another willing victim of man's mind assertion. As explored previously, the narrative offers a vision of a good nature as a component of the renewed civilisation and a vision of an evil corrupted nature. They are both expressed by the good and bad carnality and sexuality. The narrative maintains the division into "natural" and pathological, or even monstrous desires, specifically the sadist-masochist ones.

Throughout the narrative, Vanessa struggles for her mind/spirit to triumph over her body. It is always through her body that she falls: her first sexual transgression puts her in a psychiatric hospital, and even if the coercive means used there were too harsh, she indeed has issues. She gets possessed, and that

262 Simon Clark, *London Under Midnight*, loc. 3158, Kindle.

263 *Ibid.*, loc. 555.

264 *Ibid.*, loc. 2207.

265 Manou Chintesco, *Les Compagnons d'HeLa*, (Aix-en-Provence: Nestiveqen Éditions, 2004), 91.

repeats every time she has transgressive intercourse. She manages to triumph over Satan, who wants her soul with the power of her spirit, but she falls for Dracula, who comes for her body. It is significant that among the two sides of the Devil (Lucifer and Dracula), the one who wants her body and blood proves to be more dangerous.

Vanessa's beloved Ethan, the werewolf, also struggled with controlling his nature (his werewolf body), but he managed to make his mind triumph over his impulses. A man triumphs where a woman cannot: he manages to control his nature and then control the woman's one, even if, in this case, it means slaying the woman by killing her.

Peter Watts' *Firefall* series (2006–2014) is very purist in terms of body-mind division. The brain, and even the mind itself, is situated on the side of the body, and only the specific mind function, the consciousness, is valued. While the consciousness needs to be embodied in the individual human body, the body itself, either as given by nature or as biologically or technologically enhanced, is the domain of Otherness. Like in "Icare", humanity is defined in terms of consciousness, consciousness being unique to humans only. Vampires are far more intelligent than humans but far less conscious, and Scramblers (the Aliens) are not conscious at all. They process information in a motoric-sensory way, which is an epitome of non-conscious body-brain cognition.

Siri, the protagonist of *Blindsight* (2006), is also mostly deprived of self-consciousness: he lacks the individuality, personality, and empathy. He is a technologically enhanced human transmitter: he transmits data from one person to another, translating words and reading emotions without a fundamental understanding. He regains consciousness at the end of the first novel, and then he becomes an embodiment of it—and thus, the embodiment of humanity.

It is significant, therefore, that the last human, the ultimate carrier of consciousness, is a white heterosexual man. Anyways, in the narrative, most of the men are white (Jews included), while many women are people of colour. Amanda Bates is Indigenous, and Chelsea, Siri's love, is mixed-race.

Women seem to advocate consciousness and identity: Siri's mother, Chelsea, and then his spaceship colleagues, Susan James (the Gang James) and Amanda Bates. Nonetheless, their conceptions are all imperfect. Siri's mother chooses the un-bodied virtual world. This "Heaven" gathers the consciousnesses of people in one virtual space. They chose trans-human transmigrated²⁶⁶ existence as body-less consciousnesses, but the gathering of them all in one place makes Heaven close to posthuman collective consciousness. They perish by the same weapon when trans- or posthuman vampires destroy Heaven.

266 For the conception, see Hans Moravec, *Mind Children: The Future of Robot and Human Intelligence*, rev. ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990).

Chelsea, Siri's lover, is obsessed with the body; she insists on bodily intercourses instead of virtual ones. Just like Siri's mother, she is killed with what she chooses. Her body is contaminated by the Realists' bomb (Realists oppose virtuality).

Susan James was so obsessed with consciousness/identity that she decided to have several. She split her consciousness, sliced her mind, and got four identities (consciousnesses) inside her body. Again, she is punished by what she chose: Alien Scramblers use her weakness to incite the creation of another personality inside her. This one brings catastrophe to the whole spaceship.

Amanda Bates, the soldier, is the only non-man example of a positive identity. However, she is also symbolically male by her profession and position, and she embraces this role like Laura Caxton in Wellington's book series. Bates gives Siri the final advice when she sacrifices herself with the whole spaceship so that Siri can escape and bring the testimony of his consciousness to the Earth. Ultimately, even when a woman is as close to being a man as possible, the best thing she can do is sacrifice herself to enable a man to complete his noble mission.

All those female figures play instrumental roles in the narrative: they mark and symbolise the phases of the development of Siri's consciousness. He starts with a complete aversion towards self-consciousness, as symbolised by the reluctance towards his mother and her decision to join Heaven. He goes through difficult relations with the individual body as a consciousness holder, as represented by his relationship with Chelsea. He experiences the negative example of the multiplicity of consciousness in one body when James' new personality takes over the spaceship Theseus. And he finishes with a meaningful dialogue with Amanda Bates. Amanda's last words are that life without consciousness is not worth living.

The body is essential because it influences the consciousness: "Change the eyes that look at the world, change the me does the looking".²⁶⁷ That is precisely why consciousness is so precious and should be protected. The body, brain included, should be used as its holder: it should not be modified or given too much attention.

There is a similar radicalism in Gavriš's *Bezu*. Notably, the mind seems to be narrowly defined. Vampires don't have souls. This qualification performs the division between vampire-materiality-body versus human-spirit/soul/reason. Newly evolved super-humans have super-bodies, but humanity relies on their souls and minds. Sub-humans who were changed into cattle by the vampires are also only bodily creatures.

Importantly, super-humans do not have emotions and affections. As Sofya Khagi argues, analysing *Gray Goo*, reason is seen as a fundament of free will,

267 Peter Watts, *Blindsight* (*Firefall* book 1) (London: Head of Zeus, 2014), 193–94, Kindle.

while affective and bodily faculties are despised for being biological.²⁶⁸ This is linked with female—male dichotomy conceived as emotions/affects—rationality dualism. Humanity-as-spirituality remains male: the human community is run by fathers and awaits its male saviour. Vampires are mostly represented by vampiress Rita.

In that context, the BBC *Dracula* series seems subversive, as, while traditionally praising mind over body, it represents the mind as female and the body as male. Sister Agatha represents spirituality, will, and mind, while Dracula represents carnality, desire, and matter. He has no self-control over his drives and his fears. She is the self-control incarnated, and her descendant, Zoe, is the same. Agatha is a nun who points at her religious state as the epitome of self-discipline. Zoe is a doctor who masters even her disease as another body feature. Finally, Agatha-Zoe defeats Dracula's carnality; ultimately, he acts against his body.

* * *

“Mind Over Matter” is the title of the 14th chapter of Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* (2005). It is the chapter in which Edward uses Bella to test the power his mind has over his body: it seems that he approaches her less for the sake of it than to prove his self-discipline. He manages to resist the double temptation of her body: the temptation to eat and the temptation to have sex. His mind dominates his body and her body.

From this time on, he “protects” her from his vampire nature against her will by restricting her freedom and her autonomy, and sometimes even by the use of physical coercion. Specifically, he wants her body “pure” from his sexual penetration and the vampirism: her body is to mirror his pure mind by the reflection of her true love. As Edward confesses in his retelling of the story, when he saw Bella infected and changing with another vampire's venom in her body, he wondered if he should not kill her.²⁶⁹ Finally, he sucked the venom out of her body. He also disliked doctors' blood transfusion orders for Bella: “I resented the intrusion”.²⁷⁰ The fear of vampirism is also linked with the fear of empowering Bella by giving her super-human status. When this finally happens, her powers are overshadowed by his tutoring of her.²⁷¹ The man needs to teach the woman how to control the body he gave her.

268 Sofya Khagi, “Humans, Animals, Machines: Scenarios of *Raschelovechivanie* in *Gray Goo* and *Matisse*,” in *The Human Reimagined: Posthumanism in Russia*, ed. Colleen McQuillen and Julia Vaingurt (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2018), 81.

269 Stephenie Meyer, *Midnight Sun* (New York and Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 2020), loc. 10707, Kindle.

270 *Ibid.*, loc. 10776.

271 Sorcha Ní Fhlainn, *Postmodern Vampires*, loc. 6135–41, Kindle.

The *Twilight* saga is the epitome of male domination, which is expressed by self-control. Much has been told about the anti-feminist character of Bella's figure, but some voices searched to see in Edward a new model of masculinity and even a queer figure. Tracy L. Bealer,²⁷² Joseph Michael Sommers and Amy L. Hume's²⁷³ main argument for Edward's supposed challenge-to-the-normative-masculinity role is precisely his self-restraint, expressed mainly by his refusal to penetrate Bella. This is to be a way of containing his toxic masculinity. In fact, the model of a self-disciplined, resisting-the-temptation hero is one of the oldest models for toxic masculinity, vastly used by the fascist movement and brilliantly analysed by Klaus Theweleit on more than a thousand pages of his *Male Fantasies*.²⁷⁴ He also describes the fantasy of a woman-less birth, which is very much present in *Twilight*. This fantasy would permit men to manage without women at all and to manage to procreate without tainting their spirituality by female bodily matters. Indeed, the *Twilight* saga partially realises this fantasy: as Merinne Whitton²⁷⁵ notices, the method by which Meyer's vampires are made effaces maternity

by departing from the tradition established by Stoker and Rice, in which the new life is acceded to by an exchange of blood reminiscent of a mother suckling her child. In Meyer's version of vampirism, transformation is achieved solely by the overtly phallic bite and consequent injection of 'venom,' a method that recreates McElvaine's 'seed' metaphor, in which life is seen as the consequence of the active male element (sperm/seed) in the passive female one (womb/earth). By this method, Carlisle can 'mother' his children without attaching any value, even by appropriation, to female methods of generation and nurture—this is male mothering in which mother is entirely eclipsed.²⁷⁶

Similarly, once pregnant, Bella hopes her baby will be a son and a perfect copy of his father. She wants Edward's child, and the child is indeed Edward's. Bella is pregnant for a remarkably short time, and Edward has a better connection with the baby than she has. He reads the baby's mind, which "also falls in with the father-focused keynote of antiabortion rhetoric—that life proper begins at

272 Tracy L. Bealer, "Of Monsters and Men: Toxic Masculinity and the Twenty-First Century Vampire in the *Twilight* Saga," in *Bringing Light to Twilight: Perspectives on a Pop Culture Phenomenon*, ed. Giselle Liza Anatol (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 180–98.

273 Joseph Michael Sommers and Amy L. Hume, "The Other Edward: *Twilight's* Queer Construction of the Vampire as an Idealized Teenage Boyfriend," in *Bringing Light to Twilight: Perspectives on a Pop Culture Phenomenon*, ed. Giselle Liza Anatol (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 199–214.

274 Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies*, trans. Stephen Conway, in collaboration with Erica Carter and Chris Turner (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

275 Merinne Whitton, "'One is not Born a Vampire, but Becomes One': Motherhood and Masochism in *Twilight*," in *Bringing Light to Twilight: Perspectives on a Pop Culture Phenomenon*, ed. Giselle Liza Anatol (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 163–79.

276 *Ibid.*, 174.

conception, rather than being a gradual process taking place over many months in the womb".²⁷⁷ Bella is unconscious during the childbirth and

her depersonalized body "worked over" by Jacob and Edward (Carlisle is absent when labor begins, fortuitously clearing the way for Edward to assume the role of patriarch as he ascends to the role of father/husband in his own vampiric family unit). Both of these men will ultimately express a superior claim over Bella's child, Jacob by imprinting on Renesmee and Edward by hint of Renesmee's predominantly supernatural nature—it is later remarked that her special gift "could only have come from a very gifted father".²⁷⁸

The indeed brutal and horrific childbirth is the more striking that Bella never actually wanted to become a mother before she got pregnant with Edward. But like in *Les Compagnons d'HeLa*, her sexual desires—her female body—needed to be tamed by the male power implicit in the institution of marriage and canalised into the motherhood, yet the motherhood "elided with a patriarch from whom they [mothers] draw legitimacy but no authority",²⁷⁹ as "in the *Twilight* universe, unequal monogamy and castrated maternity are the limits of female destiny".²⁸⁰

Bella's childbirth is only one of the long chain of mutilations and suffering she endures in the narrative, all of them provoked by the presence of Edward in her life. Sara Wasson and Sarah Artt tried to give Bella's pain some Deleuzian-masochism agency.²⁸¹ Still, such an agency does not work on the social level: as a social subject, she is inexistent; she is always the object of protection or attack, and even when she gets vampire powers (she holds them for the unproportionate time compared to the long-lasting descriptions/visualisations of her helpless agonies), she can only have the passive power of shield. Her masochism is framed as self-sacrifice, which finds its epitome in "a maternal ideal in which self-sacrifice amounting to masochism is inherent".²⁸²

In the figure of Bella, the body itself is mutilated and submitted over and over. The whole responsibility for the body's temptations is projected onto Bella (her appealing blood), and Bella gladly assumes this responsibility. She must help her man not to hurt her. It is also her guilt that she attracts other vampires. At first, Edward openly hates Bella for being a temptation to him, then he claims he does

277 Ibid., 176.

278 Ibid., 176.

279 Ibid., 168.

280 Ibid., 177.

281 Sara Wasson and Sarah Artt, "The *Twilight* Saga and the Pleasures of Spectatorship: The Broken Body and the Shining Body," in *Open Graves, Open Minds: Representations of Vampires and the Undead from the Enlightenment to the Present Day*, ed. Sam George and Bill Hughes (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2013), loc. 5410, Kindle.

282 Merinne Whitton, "One is not Born a Vampire, but Becomes One", 164.

not, but he behaves as if he did. The narrative seems to share this loathing and punish Bella's body for tempting the Solar Hero.

Simultaneously, Edward is presented as perfect. Strong, brave, determined,²⁸³ of "uncompromising discipline".²⁸⁴ He controls his body, its bloodlust, and its sexual appetites. It is Bella who changes their kiss into a passionate scene, and it is Edward who manages to withdraw himself: the male ability to self-control (and parallel female inability to do it) is a reason why it is a man who has to control their relationship. Once he fully defeats his vampire nature, the girl is an obvious reward: a prince who slays monsters always gets the princess' hand.

The conservatism of the original series is even more visible when confronted with *Life and Death: Twilight Reimagined*, a book supposedly written to prove that the original was not sexist, that all the inequalities between the lovers resulted exclusively from one being human and the other being a vampire. Therefore, in the retelling, Bella becomes Beau, and Edward—Edythe. However, this only demonstrates the differences in treatment between female and male bodies. Edythe asks Beau for consent,²⁸⁵ and she does not embrace her leading role conjecturally. She excuses herself: "I don't mean to insult your manliness, anyone human is fragile to me".²⁸⁶ Beau is never a potential victim of a rape. He is much taller than Edythe, just like Edward was taller than Bella. Therefore, both men look down on their women. He cuddles her to his chest, sits her on his lap, and wraps his arms around her. He still feels protective. He is possessive: "I felt a strange sense of pride, being able to claim her this way. Kind of Neanderthal of me, but there it was. 'Yeah, she's my girlfriend'."²⁸⁷ While Bella feels safe with Edward, Beau feels "at ease"²⁸⁸ with Edythe. And most importantly, Edythe never uses physical coercion with Beau; on the contrary, Beau tries to use it when Edythe cannot self-control (!).²⁸⁹ After he turns, Beau assumes the coercive role completely: "My grip on her hand pulled her back".²⁹⁰

Beau's suffering is not aestheticised. The author admits: "As a human, Bella had to endure a lot more pain than Beau did".²⁹¹ Beau becomes a vampire within one book, which, according to Meyer, "had nothing to do with the fact that he is a boy, not a girl".²⁹² She claims she just wanted to try another ending. Yet it is

283 Stephenie Meyer, *Midnight Sun*, loc. 6877, Kindle.

284 *Ibid.*, loc. 247.

285 Stephenie Meyer, *Life and Death: Twilight Reimagined* (New York and Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 2015), loc. 4406, Kindle.

286 *Ibid.*, loc. 4542.

287 *Ibid.*, loc. 5196.

288 *Ibid.*, loc. 2231.

289 *Ibid.*, loc. 2223.

290 *Ibid.*, loc. 6777.

291 *Ibid.*, loc. 7214.

292 *Ibid.*, loc. 7210.

obvious she would not be able to get Beau pregnant as she did with Bella, and she saved Beau's male body a great deal of suffering, humiliation and helplessness. Beau was fully conscious when he was turned into a vampire, and he explicitly expressed consent. Male Beau is not a body to the extent female Bella was.

The *Twilight* case is symptomatic of vampire romances. It is hard to imagine that such an erotic narrative as *True Blood* can also praise body over mind attitude. And yet it is so. From his struggle with his nature to the need to contain Lilith to the final suicidal wish, Bill controls his body.

The Vampyricon offers the same vision of the struggle of the Vampire Hero, finished with his complete success. He struggles with his vampire "maternal" nature, helped by the spirituality of the God-father who anointed him. As a vampire, he was made by Pythia from the blood of Medhya, daughter of Ixtar. But the Great Serpent assured him that his bodily origin does not matter; what matters is his spiritual filiation: he is the son of the Great Serpent and Merod the Priest. That is why Aleric is not what he sees in the mirror (a rotting body), nor what others see (a mesmerising body).²⁹³ he is not a body at all.

Ugo Bellagamba's "Icare" offers an exciting interpretation of bodies as means of spirits' expression. In the final act of collective suicidal resistance, the inmates' male bodies are used as the last and ultimate tool of consciousness.

However, despite the action being collective and the sign of the cross only getting its meaning when made by many bodies at once, the signification of the gesture is for the individual consciousnesses. The collective act is an act for individuality and against collective and communist conceptions of the world.

The story values consciousness as strongly as Watts' *Firefall*. Despite bodies being used, consciousness is put forward. The body/-ies need(s) to be transgressed. The sacrifice is a show-off of human agency that survived in the muted vampire bodies: human characteristics of bipedalism and self-consciousness, found so unimportant by the eco-state, are exposed through their bodies that stand still while being melted—as a gesture of protest against the eco-state and its posthumanist conceptions of equality of beings.

In Kotowski's novel, the mind also has priority over the body. Vampires' super-bodies are the result of their super-minds. The mind is linked to the brain, and the narrative asserts that brain capacities decide bodily ones. The bodies, on their turn, should be controlled. Self-control is a crucial notion: pain serves to control what happens to the body²⁹⁴, and a vampire needs to have full control over his fangs²⁹⁵ (a metaphor for sexuality), etc.

293 Douglas Clegg, *The Vampyricon, Book 3: The Queen of Wolves* (New York: Alkemara Press, 2007), loc.497, Kindle.

294 Krzysztof Kotowski, *Trzech goście w łódce*, 88.

295 *Ibid.*, 211.

Pelevin's conceptualisation of body-mind relations is far more complicated and involves Hindu and Buddhist conceptions of Self: *atman*. However, a vampire is a symbiosis of a human carrier and the actual vampire, the vampire tongue. For a better understanding of the meaning that Pelevin expresses, it is crucial to keep in mind that in the Russian language, "tongue" and "language" are designated by the same name, *язык*. Therefore, in the vampire super-human being, as Pelevin himself calls vampires,²⁹⁶ the language is constitutive, just as it is constitutive for the whole vampire and human society, which are directed by discourse and glamour. The spiritual dimension is once again more important than the material, bodily one.

The only vampires that are different are the Big Mice. Big Mice are the reversal of ordinary vampires: they are bodies that change heads, while the rest of vampires are tongues that change bodies. The bodies are female (once again, the Vampire Narrative is playing on the association of carnality with femininity), and Big Mice are Feeding Mother Goddesses. Big Mouse is both magnificent and monstrous, a deeply masculinist image of femininity. Her body produces bablos to feed vampires and consumes naive young females; their bodies are sacrificed to give the Goddess new heads.²⁹⁷

When Hera, Rama's lover, becomes the new Ishtar, the Russian Big Mouse, she becomes tyrannical and possessive. Her body is dead, and therefore, she is sterile, yet her appetites are insatiable. She condemns Rama's mental and physical infidelity, yet she needs it to feed her hatred for men and, therefore, for humans in general. Indeed, Ishtar is used by vampire men; they control her activity. Even her hatred is induced because it helps her produce bablos and to ignore the suffering that the substance comes from. Her meetings with Rama in limbo are controlled by the oldest male vampires, who decide about the images she will get so that Ishtar is in a proper state of mind after such a meeting. She doesn't determine what will happen with the bablos she produces. Ishtar symbolises Motherland, just like the Blue Fog in Sillov's novel: the femininity to be subdued.

There is only one Big Mouse who transgresses the limitations. Batman Apollo, an American Big Mouse, matches the eternal female body with the eternal male head. But this American transgender queer figure is even more repulsive; in fact, it is totally abject. Apollo is called "He or She" in a mocking way, and he is the source of highly criticised transgender tolerance that invades the world.²⁹⁸ The borders between the body and the mind, the female and the male, should not be transgressed.

296 The original title of the first part, *Ампир В: Повесть о настоящем сверхчеловеке* (literally: Empire V. Novel about a Real Super-Man) alludes to Nietzschean and later Soviet concepts of the super(hu)man.

297 Viktor Pelevin, *Бэтман Аполло* (Moscow: ЭКСМО, 2013), 29.

298 *Ibid.*, 469.

In Slepakov's novels, vampires symbolise nature outside and inside the human. The romance of vampire Frolov with Tamara is intense, even sado-masochist and polyamorous. Vampire emancipates internal desires; intercourse with him is compared to masturbation, to being with herself²⁹⁹ or with the wind. But those are not only sexual desires that get emancipated; it is generally the body. The hunger, the drugs, the sex, the simple satisfaction with one's own body, and even the pleasure of peeing are all affirmed now and intensified. However, Frolov's vampire nature is projected onto the female body of Tamara so that he can embrace his male civilisational role and control his bodily urges; thanks to the romance with Tamara, Frolov manages to tame his blood appetite.

The narrative tries to be more subtle in its division between body and spirit, mind and soul. It claims that humanity as a collective is based on the similarities of bodies rather than souls. That is why everyone understands rogue Frolov's howl: without the intermediation of the mind, directly with their bodies. That is why the rogue vampire's howl is unbearable for humans: a vampire is their *alter ego*, their own carnality that went rogue. The narrative also claims that the body has its own mind, soul, and abilities. However, the claim is weakened by the assertion that the body's mind needs to control the body. Otherwise, even the body will be in despair. In the end, the body of Frolov needs to be slayed. In the process of Frolov's exorcism, Father Hilarion separates the rogue monstrous body of Frolov from his essence.

The narrative also gives quite a narrow definition of what a mind is. Emotions are not considered a part of it. The definition of who can be viewed as a person or even a subject is evident in that matter. When confronted with the un-dead, major-angel Ershov states that the body, the feelings, and the affections are not enough: beings with all the above can still be freely killed, and it won't be the actual killing. There needs to be consciousness, which results from the experience perceived and memorised in one's mind. Everyone who is just "the materialisation of emotions" is a non-human object, not only possibly killed but even necessarily killed as dangerous.³⁰⁰

In Polynskaya's *Тайные стражи*, even the sun cannot kill a vampire. The vampire still exists, even burnt to the ashes, as the consciousness is not destroyed. That implies two things: first, according to the narrative, the actual life resides in the consciousness. Second, consciousness is independent of the body and is more important. In fact, Feliks the vampire constantly fights with his body: he yearns to see the sun and finally achieves his goal, evidencing his status as the Solar Hero. To achieve this, he needs to go through the struggles of therapy and ascesis.

299 Aleksander Slepakov, *Повесть о советском вампире* (Moscow: Эксмо, 2014), loc. 1271, Kindle.

300 *Ibid.*, loc. 2665–4685.

The body is despised. The narrative symbolically denies carnality: Feliks is told to be cool³⁰¹ and does not even have footprints. Feliks seems to be disgusted by human bodies: he frequently feels dirty after touching people and needs to throw out his clothes after using them outside. Any sexual relationship is shown as something ultimately unclean, and Feliks abstains from them. While vampires are sexual beings, even sadomasochist ones, with wild fantasies that human beings cannot satisfy,³⁰² Feliks combats his sexual drives. He rudely and almost cruelly pushes away Daana's feelings. He flees the advances of interviewed Svetlana. He fled Sofiya, his Greek lover, just before they could get any closer. His restraint is also metaphorically coded by his restraint in blood consumption: he is physically unable to enjoy it. He always consumes just enough, changing blood for coconut water as soon as possible. He is deeply ashamed of his excesses when he feels the urge for blood.

When overwhelmed by such an urge, he simulates the attack on the wax figure of the god-shaped man,³⁰³ Damian, his creator and former friend, as we get to know in volume seven.³⁰⁴ He penetrates its neck with his fangs, shivers, and sweats; he does it so strongly that he almost bites through the figure. He then drinks blood from the packet and repeats biting the figure until he gets satisfaction.³⁰⁵ It is described in terms of a sexual attack. Yet any homosexuality is repressed. Feliks strongly reacts to the proposal of having a cure injection done by any of the shapeshifter brothers: he is the only one who can distribute himself a phallic penetrating shot.

This shot restrains Feliks' already mentally restrained vampire nature on the biological level. It is a self-disciplined gesture, and the narrative frequently underlines the necessity of self-control.³⁰⁶ Focusing on self-control makes Feliks very egotistic, strictly concentrating on monitoring himself, yet the narrative highly appreciates such an attitude.

Repressing his (homo)sexual drives makes violence the preferred form of body-to-body interaction. The violence is explicitly targeted towards the women. Feliks erotically puts his fingers around the villain Marina's neck when forcing her to give away the gun.³⁰⁷ Enraged by the meeting with the two shapeshifters, he almost threatens Daana while caressing her chin, whispering and nearly touching her face with his lips.³⁰⁸ He breaks into a woman's home through the window. She

301 Galina Polynskaya, *Эликсир для вампира* (Moscow: Эксмо, 2018), loc. 629, Kindle.

302 Galina Polynskaya, *Час ночи* (Moscow: Эксмо, 2020), loc. 817–21, Kindle.

303 Ibid., loc. 763.

304 Galina Polynskaya, *Театр Эль Вагант* (Moscow: Эксмо, 2021), loc. 451, Kindle.

305 Galina Polynskaya, *Эликсир для вампира*, loc. 763–70, Kindle.

306 Ibid., loc. 2907–10.

307 Galina Polynskaya, *Золото Аида* (Moscow: Эксмо, 2018), loc. 5597–6000, Kindle.

308 Galina Polynskaya, *Эликсир для вампира*, loc. 1207–10, Kindle.

is lying on the bed and trying to fight while he holds her and pours a liquid into her mouth.³⁰⁹ This is shown as an act of heroism: he saves her life as she tries to commit suicide. Ultimately, she is grateful and immediately attached to him, begging him not to leave. When Feliks sleeps with a woman (Gabriela or Daana), he does it brutally. He recounts he always stayed quite cool for women who adored him with all their hearts and lives, supposedly for their own good.³¹⁰

Among the male Western and Eastern European Vampire Heroes, Flores' Heroine stands as an exception. But the narrative affirms the same values as the previous ones. It is obsessed with control: the goal of the main heroes is to emancipate from someone else's (mother/father figure) control³¹¹ and take control, first and foremost, of oneself—"The greatest skill we can learn is self-control".³¹² Ava's ambition is to remain human and to control her vampire nature: "I'll have control over my cravings";³¹³ "I let [my fangs] (...) rise, but this time, I'm in control".³¹⁴ In fact, for her, humanity and self-control are synonymous: "there was no control. No humanity", she says.³¹⁵ Finally, what she offers to the vampire community is the repression of the vampire's nature (body).

* * *

Even Gabriel Delmas' BD *Vampyr Draco Maleficus Imperator* (2004), apparently a transgressive work, asserts the primacy of the mind over the body in the end. At first, the narrator-protagonist openly affirms the vampire condition. Vampires are humans embracing their animality, carnality and materiality. Jesus and Satan represent the dual sides of humanity (mind and body). Jesus wanted men to fight animality inside them, while Satan wanted them to embrace this animality. Evil and good are yet again associated with spirit and materiality, but the narrative opts for the latter and openly affirms evil.

On the other hand, a vampire infects through something as immaterial as a word. Vampire poetry transforms people into vampires.³¹⁶ But in the intentionally blasphemous re-playing of St John's Gospel (the statement that the Word is God, and the Word became flesh), the Word is a disease and a parasite, a worm,³¹⁷ and it becomes the vampire's body. A worm is a quintessence of animality,

309 Galina Polynskaya, *Перстень отравителя* (Moscow: Эксмо, 2018), loc. 3095–97, Kindle.

310 Galina Polynskaya, *Час ночи*, loc. 496–98, Kindle.

311 Francesca Flores, *The Witch and the Vampire*, loc. 4473–74, Kindle.

312 Ibid., loc. 1351.

313 Ibid., loc. 896.

314 Ibid., loc. 3881.

315 Ibid., loc. 1954.

316 Gabriel Delmas, *Vampyr Draco Maleficus Imperator* (Paris: Éditions Carabas, 2004), 104–6.

317 The French text plays here on the multiple meanings of the word "vers". It signifies both poetry (the verses) and "worms".

praised by vampire poetry and represented by a vampire.³¹⁸ Therefore, the immaterial word is very much bodily.

The narrative contains an actual manifesto of revolution:³¹⁹ it proclaims rebellion against all political, social, and religious forms of oppression and the establishment of a new culture, a new knowledge, and a new liberation of the body.³²⁰ It is a manifestation of sexual, bodily, and carnal liberty, the animal side of the human, a freedom to and from pain and excess, a freedom from all moral, customary, social, political, aesthetic, and medical norms.

However, the narrator is also conscious that the body is a limitation: it enslaves one to one's desires. This consciousness is emancipation; therefore, the body does not have primacy over freedom. Ultimately, the bodily condition is a human defeat:³²¹ it makes humans equal to all the other beings. Affirming human carnality, animality, egoism, and lust, weaponises this defeat.³²² However, the whole process is run by the spirit. Therefore, once again, the narrative performs the old division into form and materiality, spirit and carnality, putting the former higher than the latter and attributing spirit to the male (narrator Neron-Draco) and carnality to the female (Mélusine).

The narrative is just like Kotowski's novel, a Promethean-Nietzschean hymn to the freedom of the super-human, who is above all the norms and can realise all his desires because he has a super-consciousness. The following subchapter discusses other ways the narrative can fake appreciation of the body.

IV.2 The Fake Body Appreciation

If a vampire was supposed to be a profoundly bodily monster, then making the vampire good should mean prioritising the body. Yet, as demonstrated in the previous subsection, it is rarely so. However, those narratives do contain highly attractive, even glamorised bodies. The corporeality of actors, particularly the Heroes, expressed through their sexuality, is undeniable. But is this exposure necessarily an affirmation? Who is exposing? Who is exposed? And to whom?

The glamorisation of Good Vampires as figures of carnality is an example of hypersexuality, as described by Mikhail Epstein.³²³ The vampire's body is glam-

318 Gabriel Delmas, *Vampyr Draco*, 112.

319 *Ibid.*, 35.

320 *Ibid.*, 53.

321 *Ibid.*, 70.

322 *Ibid.*, 70.

323 Mikhail Epstein, "The Dialectics of Hyper: From Modernism to Postmodernism," in *Russian Postmodernism: New Perspectives on Post-Soviet Culture*, ed. Mikhail Epstein, Alexander

orised as super-attractive: super-beautiful, flawless and finally, even shining like diamonds in *Twilight*. The vampire figure has always represented carnality, but now it has become its symbol and, consequently, its simulacrum. The idealised carnality overshadows the real bodies and the real sexuality.

The narratives such as *The Vampire Diaries* or *The Originals* show only idealised bodies and the carnality they promote is constructed, speculative, and ultimately fake. It lacks materiality, being mostly the product of mind, imagination and rational calculation. Even *True Blood*, which first tried to include diverse types of bodies, finally concentrates on beautiful ones, conforming to the 21st-century canons of beauty. This also happens in less popular narratives, in Eastern European, as much as in Western ones, in heterosexual ones as much as in homosexual ones.

For example, in Agata Suchocka's ongoing book cycle *Daję ci wieczność* (2018–), vampirism means sexual transgression and affirmation of bodily desires. "Since I can remember, I have let my body lead me, and I have satisfied its desires"³²⁴, says Lothar, one of the series' protagonists. "Our species, however, since the beginnings of times let the body and its desires lead them"³²⁵ says vampire Huntington. Vampirism is affirmed, and through it, the primacy of the body over the spirit. However, just like in the other narratives, in the end, the body must be controlled: sexuality is a way to control the bloodlust that could result in madness or even death.³²⁶ And, perhaps even more importantly, the carnality here is yet again a hyper-sexualised simulacrum.

The body is appreciated in Kosh's saga: vampires are masters of Art, a recognised form of magic. They create Art from the insides of their bodies. However, Art still seems inferior to more spiritual Craft. And the actual worthy Art can only be achieved by the vampires' super-bodies.

The idealised carnality is highly racialised: most of the perfect vampire bodies are white, sometimes even diamond-shining white, or at least while having coloured skin, the bodies still need to fall into white-beauty standards. Brianna Burke brilliantly examines the different approaches to the non-white exoticised bodies.³²⁷ The differences are typically colonial in the sense of Bhabian mimicry. The bodies must have white features to the point that a non-Native actor played the main Native character of *Twilight*. Yet non-white bodies will always be exposed differently than the white bodies.

Genis, and Slobodanka Vladiv-Glover, trans. Slobodanka Vladiv-Glover (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2016), 54–7.

324 Agata Suchocka, *Daję ci wieczność, Akt I: Woła mnie ciemność* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Initium, 2018), 83.

325 *Ibid.*, 277.

326 *Ibid.*, 278.

327 Brianna Burke, "The Great American Love Affair," 263–79.

Hyperbolised sexuality also implies hyperbolised objectification and even commodification. Bodies become objects of desire, like clothes, cars or electronic devices.³²⁸ Moreover, those ideal bodies are usually products and objects of self-loathing: self-discipline, self-control, and asceticism.

Finally, sexuality implies the primacy of the male gaze. If the romances seemingly contain a female gaze, to which the male body is subversively exposed, the subversiveness is immediately undermined. It is the man who exposes himself. Edward tells Bella to look at him (to admire him) when he takes off his shirt to show her his body. He demonstrates his vampire nature through this gesture. The agency and even the woman's subjectivity are reduced or even taken away: Bella becomes a prolongation of Edward's narcissistic gaze, his mirror.

The inequality of the female-male gaze becomes evident when we compare the scene of Edward's conscious and voluntary self-exposition of his powerful body to the scene of the unconscious and non-consensual exposition of Bella's mutilated body. Her vampire perpetrator tortures her, registers this spectacle as a video, and then Edward feels it is his duty (!) to watch it without informing Bella. This sort of torture porn video was made by one man (the torturing vampire) for another: it was addressed to Edward, whom the oppressor wanted to provoke and challenge. It creates a sort of male community bonded by the male gaze over and on the female body.

There is also a difference between the scenes of Edward's exposure and Edythe's, his female counterpart, exposure in the gender-switched retelling of *Twilight*. Both are exposing their glittering skin to their beloved. Both are anxious, but in fact, only Edythe is an object, while Edward remains a subject. Being female, Edythe cannot escape the vulnerability: her entrance to the meadow "reminded me of stage fright".³²⁹ The male gaze has the power of evaluation: it can disempower the strongest woman. That is why "she'd chosen her clothes with care, that she'd been determined to show me this, but the way she held herself now, shoulders tight, legs braced, made me wonder if she wasn't second-guessing the decision now".³³⁰ Edythe almost cries, standing in front of Beau, something that does not happen to Edward, but also Edward does not feel shy or ashamed in front of Bella—because the female gaze does not hold the power to deprive men of their value. It is because men are more than bodies.

Therefore, the seeming appreciation of the body is fake for many reasons. First, it envelopes the primacy of the mind, just as it envelopes patriarchal, racial, and class hierarchies. It can even contain self-loathing. Second, it objectifies and commodifies the body. Third, it erases the bodies, offering the constructed

328 Susan Chaplin, *The Postmillennial Vampire*, loc. 1199–201, Kindle.

329 Stephenie Meyer, *Life and Death*, loc. 3766, Kindle.

330 *Ibid.*, loc. 3784.

simulacra instead. Does the body never get appreciated as it is? The next subchapter analyses the narratives in which the body is or seems to be, indeed, appreciated.

IV.3 The Body (Almost) Gets Affirmed

The short story “Vampire Hours” by Elaine Viets (2009) is consciously body-affirming and, at the same time, countering the glamorised body. The protagonist surrenders to a vampire by a conscious choice. She is not a young, innocent girl but a mature woman who chooses the world of vampires because, in her eyes, it is still better than the world she is living in. In this civilised world, great dirt is covered with beautiful packages and piles of money. The symbol of this world is plastic surgery, which she never wanted to submit herself to—and that is why her husband, a plastic surgeon, left her for a lover.³³¹ In this world, the body is seemingly a subject of cult. Still, it is subjected to constant civilisational repression, and nothing is further from nature than this sumptuous, beautiful society. Becoming a vampire is a rebellion: a choice of nature and the body as it is. After the transformation, the protagonist doesn’t get younger—but the beauty that her body already had is exposed.

This last subchapter examines two narratives that seem to follow the path of Elaine Viets’ story and affirm the real body: Charlotte Bousquet’s French novel *Lettres aux ténèbres* (2008) and the already mentioned L.A. Banks’ *The Vampire Huntress Legend Series* (2003–2009). Significantly, all of them place the body at the side of the female.

Lettres aux ténèbres shows the struggle to regain the materiality of being taken away by the civilising actions done upon two subalterns. They both like to evoke their bodily animality³³² because it is real, while the rest are *simulacra*, as the narrative calls them, referring to Baudrillard’s term.³³³ The first subaltern is a female. Ambre was a lover of the great artist (the narrative points at Marcel Proust, without naming him, though). He had a vampiric nature; he dried people of images, impressions, and emotions and was stealing their lives,³³⁴ bending people to his will, making them the reflections of his mind and will only. He

331 For the analogy between plastic surgery and vampirism, see Maria Antónia Lima, “Forever Young, Though Forever Changing: Evolution of the Vampire,” in *Dracula and the Gothic in Literature, Pop Culture and the Arts*, ed. Isabel Ermida (Leiden and Boston: Brill Rodopi, 2016), 257–70.

332 Charlotte Bousquet, *Lettres aux ténèbres. Suivi de Ballade du temps retrouvé. Tango pour Esther* (2012), loc. 1176, Kindle.

333 *Ibid.*, loc. 273.

334 *Ibid.*, loc. 261.

represented the civilisational male gaze from which Ambre wanted to emancipate. She took the opportunity to become a vampire, which another female offered her.

The second subaltern, Lozzo, is an Eastern European “Gypsy” man. Alive, he was a victim of civilised hunters who murdered his family and became a vampire to avenge them. But when he came to Paris, he was still treated as a subaltern, a savage, a circus animal,³³⁵ an exotic curiosity,³³⁶ a Western vampires’ trophy. In a gesture of resistance, he murdered one of them. To repent, he needs to serve as an executor for Seigneur Esculape, the ruler of vampires. He seeks and kills the vampires who broke the law. He serves the civilisation and tries to assimilate. This means engaging in the civilisational masquerade, the play of *simulacra*, and becoming estranged from reality.³³⁷

Vampires are actors and directors simultaneously, and “our beloved change into essence-less effigies, simple toys that we are delighting in as we are becoming the shadows without souls”.³³⁸ This play deprives both sides of their subjectivity. In this sense, Lozzo, by assimilating into civilisation, tries to forget about his existence.³³⁹ Ambre, on the contrary, is different from the rest of the vampires; she embraced vampirism as a revolt against being someone else’s mirror, and now she rejects both producing reflections and turning others into her mirrors. “There is no archetype in her, however: no woman-child, no girl-flower, she is the pure strangeness”.³⁴⁰

She and Lozzo are two opposites, “Twin souls. Mirror souls.”³⁴¹ They fall in love: thanks to her, he restores his body and reality, and she restores her social functions. She ultimately kills the enemy of the vampire community, and she re-enters into the domain of someone’s gaze. Lozzo’s gaze is not like Proust’s: scrutinising, examining, penetrating; Lozzo’s gaze is hypnotising, absorbing.³⁴² The gaze of another subaltern, the male Eastern European Other, emancipates, while the Western male gaze submits.

And yet, the woman still needs the male gaze (just another, more “liberal” one) to be free. Her own gaze, neither penetrating nor absorbing, just emanating the light,³⁴³ the female gaze of emancipation, is ultimately not enough. It ends up contained within her portrait by Lozzo—a more liberal form of artistic sub-

335 Ibid., loc. 657.

336 Ibid., loc. 1059.

337 Ibid., loc. 1052.

338 Ibid., loc. 1053.

339 Ibid., loc. 994.

340 Ibid., loc. 768.

341 Ibid., loc. 1043.

342 Ibid., loc. 1243.

343 Ibid., loc. 1252.

mission than the literary reflections of her made by Proust. Ultimately, she also does Esculape's, the Western male ruler, bidding: he manipulates both her and Lozzo so that she kills his enemy and avenges his sister. She—her body—needs male civilisational control, and the male body needs self-control. Lozzo is “terrorised by the thought of not being able to control himself—or to control her”.³⁴⁴

In L.A. Banks' *The Vampire Huntress Legend Series*, the body, and specifically the body of colour, is strongly affirmed. Damali, the main Heroine, flaunts her body: it is a source of joy and power, but also of sexual tensions or everyday experiences (like heavy breasts or uncomfortable high heels) and of puberty struggles (as a Neteru, Damali's sexuality and her powers wake up before her 21st birthday; they both give her similar sensations of fever, warmth, and physical oversensitivity). The body is deeply entangled in the experience of Black femininity:

And I'm trying to get cool with this position that ain't changed since Eve shook things up, girlfriend was ahead of her time and said oh well—my choice. But then, that fucked things up, for real, for real, and sistah went down hard. Been paying ever since (...). I want to feel freedom (...). I don't want to have to listen brothers call me baby, then in next breath bitch—when I make my choice and it's not in their favor, and I want the old dolls to back up and give me space to breathe, to figure the complex shit out on my own—respect, notwithstanding. (...) and I like my new power to turn heads, and make men shiver without touching them, I'm just playing—just seeing how strong my vibe is, but that don't give them the right to violate it. (...) Don't give the old dolls the right to judge what's on my mind, neither, just 'cause my body's talking to me loud and clear—³⁴⁵

Damali affirms her hyper-feminine sexuality but also gives herself the right to be the sexual subject and to evaluate men as sexual objects.³⁴⁶ But her hyper-femininity is also hyper heteronormative. It is accompanied by the hyper-masculinity of the men, whose heterosexual potency seems infinite: the lack thereof is proper for the ridiculed villains.

There is a clear border between the still accepted sexuality and the non-acceptable ones: hardcore sadomasochism and, above all, homosexuality and transgender identity, proper for the forces of Evil. The female essence of Lilith, queen of Hell, makes Carlos (a man) somehow pregnant³⁴⁷ with a potential Antichrist. The foetus—Carlos' alter ego—(self)rapes Carlos. Bisexual vampire Nuit “had almost feminine quality about him, but at the same time his vibe was cold business and very male”.³⁴⁸ Nuit is also paedophilic: in the ninth part of the cycle, he attacks a small child. Another male Council member “whispered Car-

344 Ibid., loc. 1830.

345 L.A. Banks, *Minion*, loc. 3433–58, Kindle.

346 L.A. Banks, *Hunted*, 31, Kindle.

347 L.A. Banks, *The Damned*, 307, Kindle.

348 L.A. Banks, *Minion*, loc. 2926, Kindle.

los's name like a lover and briefly closed its eyes. (...) He [Carlos] could feel it touching him, groping him, stroking his skin with an icy palm... licking him as though tasting the salt from his skin".³⁴⁹ Obviously, the Solar Hero resists such temptations and asserts his heterosexuality: "This brother was almost swaying him (...). The fact that something almost erotic was drawing him to a man gave him the creeps".³⁵⁰ Finally, even the man-woman anal act is shown as an act of sodomy, abject and proper to demons only.³⁵¹ Lesbianism, represented by Lilith's rape of another woman, is equally demoniac. Finally, polygamy is hellish: Dracula, Satan and Lilith are the doers.

The narrative's attitude towards the female body and female sexuality is also complicated and, in the end, patriarchal. At first, it seems that only the Hell is patriarchal. Damali is a "human vessel"³⁵² for the forces of Evil. Male vampire masters hold female harems. Their females are interchangeable goods that they hand to each other as feeding sources or sexual objects. Even Lilith is submitted to her husband, Satan, who tortures her after his son's death: "What is a son worth, do you know?".³⁵³ After being tortured, she begs him for sex, telling him that she exists only for his pleasure.³⁵⁴ Satan handles her to the next vampire Chairman, his grandson Cain. Even when Lilith finally becomes the Chairwoman, she is still a man's "conquest" for the male vampires,³⁵⁵ and she does not treat female vampires as equal to the male ones. Her biggest ambition is to give her husband an heir.³⁵⁶

This machist Hell is contrasted with the forces of Good. Damali is an active agent who fights for her independence. She is Neteru, the Vampire Huntress; she is strong and has superpowers. She turns out to be a descendant of the Sixth Circle angels. She wields a sword called Madame Isis. It's named after the female goddess, made up of the elements of many cultures that join in this ultra-feminine weapon in the hands of the Black girl. Damali does not want to be protected: "...brother, I'm your damned equal",³⁵⁷ she tells her partner, "you'd better cut the alpha male crap—now. I am not the one!" Unlike Lilith, she does not think a woman bears a child for the man.³⁵⁸ In the fifth book of the cycle, Damali gets full body power: Neteru Queens say it is a woman's right to decide on her body³⁵⁹, and

349 Ibid., loc. 3766.

350 Ibid., loc. 2964.

351 L.A. Banks, *The Damned*, 255, Kindle.

352 L.A. Banks, *Minion*, loc. 3996, Kindle.

353 L.A. Banks, *The Forsaken* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2006), 5, Kindle.

354 Ibid., 8.

355 L.A. Banks, *The Cursed* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2007), 134, Kindle.

356 Ibid., 358.

357 L.A. Banks, *Hunted*, 464, Kindle.

358 Ibid., 41.

359 L.A. Banks, *The Forbidden* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2004), 113, Kindle.

they show Damali how to decide when she gets pregnant. In that way, the female body is emancipated from any male control: from the Vatican fanatics who tried to sterilise her, from her own man who once impregnated her against her will, and from the vampires who want to impregnate her with their daywalker.

In the fifth book, Damali is definitely stronger than her partner Carlos. She avenges him and positions him as the Victim: “They’d raped his mind and stolen his dignity. And for that unforgivable offense, she’d blow the Vampire Council...”³⁶⁰ Carlos takes it as castration, but Damali refuses to manage his male ego or pretend she is weaker or sillier.³⁶¹ In the sixth book, she moves away from her family and lover: “It’s my house (...). My thoughts. And it’s my crazy-ass dreams”.³⁶² She pushes away the role of the housewife and affirms her right to be interested in more than one man, her right to her sexuality, her body, and her sovereignty. She revolts against the traditional feminine role of support, self-effacement, and sacrifice: “Up till now she’d been a love-to-the-bone, give-it-up-to-the-bone, max-it-out kinda sister. (...) So, today, (...) she wasn’t sharing her living quarters. At least she could demand to keep her body to herself for a little while”.³⁶³ And her assertion of her bodily sovereignty proves salvatory: it definitely reduces the consequences of Carlos’ possession by a demon.

Throughout the seventh book, Damali refuses to forgive Carlos for all the line-crossings he has committed while possessed. She justly remarks that this possession was provoked by his lack of acceptance of her strength. She revolts against the fact that since Eve’s time, women have to stay faithful but be understanding of male unfaithfulness.³⁶⁴ A woman’s unfaithfulness is only forgiven when she is seduced by a monster and rescued by a man who slays this monster.³⁶⁵ Damali refuses to be such an objectified stake in the conflict between two men (Carlos and Cain) and claims a right to the recognised choice. Tara, another woman, supports her and advises her only to choose once she sees the true devotion of one of the men. She advises Damali to behave like a man, focus on her mission and work, and stop worrying about men’s feelings.³⁶⁶ Damali also refuses to give up her music career, and, subversively, she takes a male Muse. Carlos takes his lesson: Yonnie, his friend, tells him to support, appreciate and recognise Damali as his equal and even forgive her if she cheats on him.³⁶⁷ And Carlos humbly promises to wait for Damali to come back home, no matter how long it takes.³⁶⁸

360 Ibid., 2.

361 L.A. Banks, *The Damned*, 16, Kindle.

362 Ibid., 23.

363 Ibid., 87–8.

364 L.A. Banks, *The Forsaken*, 43, Kindle.

365 Ibid., 44–5.

366 Ibid., 285–92.

367 Ibid., 250–55.

And yet, overall, Damali remains the Victim: protected by guardian brothers and Carlos, the male Neteru, desired by evil vampires and Satan himself. She also remains faithful to Carlos, upon her adoptive mother's advice not to cross some lines when dealing with the male ego.³⁶⁹ Damali accepts double standards³⁷⁰. It is this feminine-submissive attitude that will be rewarded with the angel wings. Equality is just pretended: Ausar Neteru King advises Carlos to treat Damali as an equal only to remain the true leader of his household. Both angels and Neteru Kings say a man is to lead,³⁷¹ and while a woman does not obey, she nonetheless follows his lead because she trusts him.³⁷² As a counterpart, the female Neteru Council admits that they negotiate with their male partners and push their ideas only by making men think they invented them.³⁷³ Men admit that they lure their women into bed negotiations: they pretend to be unconvinced so that their wives persuade them in a pleasurable way. The female body is again objectified and used.

Gender norms become ontological and even metaphysical: male is the element of aggression and destruction (just anger of God), and female is the element of healing and creation (God's love).³⁷⁴ Significantly, one element is active, and another one is passive. The narrative uses all-culture elements to support this essentialisation: it evokes the Indian theory of doshas, proving that women are composed of the elements of water, earth, and air, while men are of fire. In Tibet, Damali and Carlos are compared to the soft water and the sharp ice.³⁷⁵

Indeed, the Hell presents only the monstrous, hyperbolised version of the order established in Good's domain. Both sides position the women and recognise them as bodies above all. Damali is mostly the womb. Every seven years since her 21st birthday, a female Neteru can be super-naturally impregnated. She can give birth to either a Neteru Hunter, a guardian, or a daywalker fertile vampire if she falls for the forces of Evil. Heaven entrusted her with the mission to bear and nurture five Neterus during her lifetime. Those, along with the Sixth warrior of the light and the Son, will compose the seven-members Crew to fight during the Armageddon.

Therefore, the pureness of her body is crucial: "We're guarding her honor on her first time out, so to speak",³⁷⁶ announce her guardian brothers. Damali's

368 Ibid., 353.

369 Ibid., 306.

370 Ibid., 397.

371 L.A. Banks, *The Damned*, 169, Kindle; L.A. Banks, *The Forsaken*, 372, Kindle.

372 L.A. Banks, *The Forsaken*, 372, Kindle.

373 Ibid., 347.

374 L.A. Banks, *The Darkness* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2008), 194, Kindle.

375 L.A. Banks, *The Damned*, 462–64, Kindle.

376 L.A. Banks, *The Awakening* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2004), loc. 2719, Kindle.

infringements endanger the entire world. While Carlos can be the Dark Guardian, the Crew of Light panics when Damali gets vampirised. Even Carlos cannot accept her like that. They all decide the means to fix her: they negotiate the female body as an object of the male spiritual interests without the participation of the female subjectivity in the process.³⁷⁷ They all consider killing her and finally decide to submit her body to the brutal process of purification that peels her body to the bones. Even though both Carlos and Damali are guilty of her vampirisation, only the woman bears the consequences. She also internalises the guilt, saying that she seduced Carlos to do things that accidentally vampirised her.³⁷⁸ Later, when Damali shares her blood with Cain, she grants him influence over Carlos and all those who hold some of Carlos' blood. Like in Stoker's *Dracula*, the female body is an instrument of the unwanted connection between the men. When Carlos brutally bites her during sexual intercourse, influenced by Cain, it also turns out to be her fault: she is guilty of the violence inflicted on her, and she apologises.

On another hand, Damali lets her body be violated when it is desirable by her man. The third book of the cycle has a disturbing scene resembling the one from *True Blood*: to turn man's attention away from the temptation and to catalyse his aggression, Damali offers her body for brutal sexual intercourse. She turns her back to him, knowing this time there will be no foreplay, he will finish quickly, he will be violent, and it will hurt. The intercourse looks like rape, and it is normalised: the woman agrees for the man to use her body and even finds pleasure in it.³⁷⁹ Carlos admits that he was excited mainly by her fear and her blood and took the greatest pleasure in dominating and controlling her.³⁸⁰ When in the sixth book, Carlos and Damali's sexual intercourses get more equalised, the narrative makes up for that by introducing Carlos' dark alter ego, who forces her to have brutal intercourse. This non-consensual sex is again finished with her orgasm, once more normalising rape. On the contrary, female sadist domination is only the domain of Evil: that is what Lilith does to a small faun who cannot stop his erection while being ripped apart.³⁸¹

Damali constantly worries about keeping her man satisfied and, therefore, faithful.³⁸² But she also cannot be too lusty. In the ninth book, Lilith puts an evil spell on her: she desires Carlos so much that she tries to turn his attention away from his mission to save the world. A woman's lust is a dark element that makes her think only of her needs, whereas she should, first and foremost, be the help

377 L.A. Banks, *Bitten* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2005), 31, Kindle.

378 *Ibid.*, 93.

379 L.A. Banks, *Hunted*, 234–35, Kindle.

380 *Ibid.*, 241–42.

381 L.A. Banks, *The Cursed*, 122, Kindle.

382 L.A. Banks, *Hunted*, 233, Kindle.

and comfort to her man.³⁸³ Indeed, when the curse is overcome, Damali, being constantly attacked by Evil forces and in an endangered pregnancy, still concentrates on healing her husband,³⁸⁴ relaxing him,³⁸⁵ supporting him but in a way so that he does not lose his face and can still seem tough. She needs to console him but pretend that he is consoling her.³⁸⁶ A woman's body—and the body in general—needs to be contained and subordinate to higher things.

Just like in *Twilight*, motherhood turns out to be submitted to the patriarchal system. It seems empowering: Neteru can only be impregnated if the sex is consensual, and Damali gets the power to decide when she is impregnated. Even on the side of Evil, motherhood empowers: Lilith can face and oppose Lucifer-Satan when she becomes a mother to the Antichrist. Yet the moment of becoming a mother is when the woman disappears. Lilith only gets power through someone else (the son). Carlos calls Damali his vessel (!), which he has to treat delicately.³⁸⁷ Therefore, he denies the sexual contact, all her needs and desires notwithstanding. In motherhood, the woman loses agency over her body. She is alienated from it, and the man appropriates her body: he wants to keep her pure and protected, in fact, controlled and isolated from the outside world and even from all the information. She is denied access to information because it could upset her, and this is shown as proof of love.³⁸⁸ Carlos slowly embraces the leadership in the Crew of Light, and Damali agrees to fulfil the supportive role as “his woman”.³⁸⁹ Spirituality as a whole relies on him, while she is reduced to the bodily function of carrying children.

Bad femininity is personified by Lilith. She revolted against Adam's (the first man) domination and sided with the Evil. Lilith also revolts against her second husband, Satan: she holds a grudge because he did nothing when angels were killing their demoniac children, and she feels humiliated that he wants to engender the Antichrist with another woman. The good Neteru Queens loathe her: they recognise her fight for emancipation and equality but condemn the means; therefore, they save Damali's womb and fertility and make Damali destroy Lilith's womb. The piercing of Lilith's impure womb is the gesture of slaying bad femininity by the good one. The Neteru Council may be seen as a porte-parole of normative feminism, but in the light of their subordination to the male Council, they rather are the agents of patriarchy.

383 L.A. Banks, *The Cursed*, 102, 109, Kindle.

384 L.A. Banks, *The Darkness*, 243, Kindle.

385 L.A. Banks, *The Shadows*, loc. 1695, Kindle.

386 *Ibid.*, loc. 4422–24.

387 L.A. Banks, *The Shadows*, loc. 1349, Kindle.

388 *Ibid.*, loc. 1604.

389 *Ibid.*, loc. 1677–78; L.A. Banks, *The Damned*, 355, Kindle.

Finally, just like the *Twilight*, *The Vampire Huntress Legend Series* contains a female gaze, but the male gaze dominates. Carlos fears Damali growing old and sick; he fears the damage to her body, not her death.³⁹⁰ Women internalise this gaze and also look at each other through male lenses.

* * *

In many Western narratives, just like in the Eastern European ones, the external and internal nature (the body) is still associated with the female, sometimes also with the ethnic Other. Many of those narratives still have overt anti-nature significations. Among those that explicitly praise ecological thinking, most only offer a simulacrum of environmentalism and a simulacrum of body appreciation. In fact, they still perform civilisation-over-nature and mind-over-matter paradigms. There is also a disturbing group of narratives that affirm nature, and specifically the connection with animals, to establish the super-human “natural” superiority over other (sub)humans. This and other Animal Issues are discussed in the book’s Second Part.

390 L.A. Banks, *Hunted*, 240, Kindle.

Part Two: Animal Issue(s)

There are many ways in which animals are approached in the Vampire Narrative. First, some actors might be animals in the literal sense: there are pets, domestic animals, and feral and wild ones. The very real ones, those we know from the outside-narrative reality, and the imagined ones. This brings us to the fact that some narratives present vampires as animals, which is the second way the animality is brought into the Vampire Narrative. If not animals themselves, some actors in the Vampire Narrative (not only vampires) can change into animals (third way) or be like animals (fourth way). Finally, the actors can talk about the animals (fifth way): their character, position in the world, and rights.

Animal rights can be, but not necessarily are, the same as ecological problems. Not only because, as I demonstrated above, ecological (or rather “fake” ecological) discourses are so frequently human-centred. That happens to animal rights discourses as well. Specifically, “animal rights” usually imply the division into animals and humans and many more divisions within the animal world. Also, animal well-being can stand in opposition to the well-being of wild ecosystems; for example, the fight for the humane (!) treatment of cattle requires assigning more space for their breeding, which can be done only at the expense of wild nature. That also means that some animals would be put over others, which returns us to the question of the division of the animals: many animal rights discourses unconsciously apply diverse hierarchies of beings, usually human-centred in one way or another. Obviously, resignation from the so-called animal products is a solution that allows us to be both ecological and pro-animal, yet even then, the issue of carnivorous pets remains. The fact that humanity bred some animals who feed on others, also bred by humanity, remains deeply problematic from many points of view.

Some of those issues are studied here through the Vampire Narrative. This Part is organised into three chapters. The first one studies the animalisation of the actors of the Vampire Narrative, mostly of the Vampire, but not only. It explores diverse ways in which actors can be (like) animals. The second section is devoted to animal rights, as they are approached inside the narratives, both explicitly and implicitly—in the ways that actors treat animals. Finally, a chapter devoted to the *topos* of the hunt joins both previous ones and introduces the next Part of the book.

Chapter I: Animalisation of the Vampire (and Not Only)

Animalisation—or, on the contrary, humanisation—of the vampires is one of the pivotal *topoi* in the vampire narratives. The power to wield animals is one of the visual signs that the Vampire represents/embodies nature, which was studied in the previous Part of the book. This chapter studies how the actors of the vampire narratives get animalised by the narrative, by other actors, and by themselves. It studies three *topoi* as three ways to animalise: perceiving a being as an animal, a being changing into an animal, and a being compared to an animal. In the first two subchapters, I study only the vampires: vampires as animals and vampires changing into animals. In the narratives, other figures are considered animals or change into them (werewolves, shapeshifters, witches), but studying them transgresses the premises of this book. The third subchapter studies all the actors, as all of them (Vampire, Hunter, and Victim) can be animalised by metaphor/comparison. Table 1, situated in the third subchapter, sums all three subchapters and even partially the fourth one. The fourth subchapter analyses humans-as-animals *topos*.

It is essential to notice that animalisation is a crucial tool for othering³⁹¹. It usually comes after criminalisation, medicalisation, orientalisation, and every other sort of demonisation and is closely followed by the objectification of a being. But sometimes, it also refutes criminalisation or medicalisation on the argument that non/un/in-human behaviour is normal for a non-human species. For example, Fyodor in Maksimov's *Видеоблог вампира* (2020) refuses to be criminalised or medicalised, quoting that he kills because he is of a different species. The qualification as a different species is the object of conflict in the *V Wars* Netflix series: vampires fight to be recognised as a species different from humans so that they cannot be medicalised (treated as ill) or criminalised. Animalisation can then become a positive feature: it can be a tool for de-othering. It

391 See Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin, *Postcolonial Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, Environment*, London: Routledge, 2010. The book specifically explores how humans were equated with non-humans within the Western colonial project.

can even be a tool for elevating if the metaphor is doubled: a super-human has the right to treat other humans like predators treat prey.

1.1 Vampires as Animals

Vampires are conceived as a separate species in many narratives. This puts the human-vampire difference in biological terms, yet not in medical ones (the *topos* of mutation can blur this). However, it remains difficult to tell where they are defined as animal species and where they are human ones (analogically to *homo erectus* or *homo neanderthalensis*). Some narratives are inconsistent in defining vampires: sometimes as non-human animals and other times as humans. Giving *homo* a name—*homo vampyrus*,³⁹² *homo strigus*,³⁹³ *homo nosferatii*,³⁹⁴ *homo sapiens vampiris*³⁹⁵—or calling a vampire humanoid³⁹⁶ could be a clue, but it is not always. The narratives can leave the generic name inconsequential or use it to define the human species more narrowly. On the other hand, the very existence of other *homo* species is a reminder that humans are animals, thus blurring the meticulously established difference.

Another blurring is the one between animal species and bacteria or viruses. The transition is frequently done by the figures of worms that the narratives seem to treat both as insects and as pathogens. Vampires can be composed of worms, like in *The Strain* franchise or the *Laura Caxton* series, which is a particular way of being animal(s). Those data are included in Table 1 below and Annex 1.

1.2 Vampires Changing into Animals

Vampires can change into animals. This is a form of (self)animalisation known in the Vampire Narrative perhaps since its beginning, with best-known examples being also best-known vampire figures, Carmilla and Dracula. In 21st-century narratives, vampires usually change into bats or wolves, occasionally dogs, and rarely into rats, insects or snakes. However, even in these cases, the actual change into an animal is not easily defined. Notably, it is difficult to tell if some creatures that vampires turn into are merely animal-like (e.g., the bat-like form of Dracula

392 Maks Maksimov, *Видеоблог вампира*, loc. 3065, Kindle.

393 Christian Léourier, “Quelques moments dans la carrière d’un honorable homme d’affaires,” in *Vampires à contre-emploi*, ed. Jeanne-A Debats (Saint-Laurent d’Oingt: Mnémos, 2014), 37–53.

394 Clay and Susan Griffith, *The Vampire Empire, Volumes 1–3* (Pyr, 2010–2012), Kindle.

395 Peter Watts, *Firefall* (London: Head of Zeus, 2014).

396 Grzegorz Uzdański, *Wypiór* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Filtry, 2021), 14.

in Sommers' *Van Helsing*) or the actual animals. Not to mention the more complicated cases of the posthuman extension and the transfer of vampire consciousness into the animal body as in the BD trilogy *Je suis légion* (2004–2007) by Fabien Nury and John Cassaday and its prequel series *Les Chroniques de légion* (2011–2012). I study such cases elsewhere. Table 1 and Annex 1 include instances where vampires transform into animals that can be easily identified.

1.3 Vampires Being *like* Animals

This type of animalisation is perhaps the most clearly defined in the case of textual narratives. The visual ones can be less objectively studied. Notably, it is debatable if one can assert that a vampire moves like a cat in a movie if actors do not explicitly comment upon it. It is also arguable if a vampire is bat-like, shark-like, or rat-like unless explicitly commented upon by actors. Some depictions, however, seem apparent, e. g., the swarming vampires in *The Strain*. Nonetheless, even in the case of narratives with an explicit statement (“vampire is like...”) by a narrative actor, the animalisation of the vampire by the narrative is not certain. The narrative can refute or even condemn this actor’s way of thinking; the meaning depends on the context.

The table presented below is, therefore, imperfect. Nevertheless, it provides some insight into which animals are most commonly used as symbols of animalisation in vampire narratives. The table presents only numbers; to see which narratives use which animal figures and, reversely, what figures are used by which narratives concretely, see Annex 1. The table does not include the cases when actors were called and compared to “creatures”, “monsters”, or “beasts”, as none of those refers exclusively to animals. Notably, all of them can be used in a non-animalistic but metaphysical sense. It also does not include a simple “animal” designation/comparison. It includes “cattle” only when the narrative is positive about it, i. e., only when it asserts this positioning and applies it to certain groups only (not to the whole society). Other cases are analysed in the next subsection.

One must remember that vampires are not the only ones compared to animals within vampire narratives. It is striking how frequently women, vampire or not, are animalised (see Annex 1). Another group are non-white ethnicities (see Annex 1). Not all the subtle ways of animalisation of those groups could be included in Table 1 or Annex 1. Russian writer Sillov does not use any animal epithet, yet his Black Papa Dzhumbo (Jumbo; the name itself is highly offensive), a disloyal and greedy vampire servant, exudes a distinctly animalistic vibe. In the novel *Abraham Lincoln Vampire Hunter* by Seth Grahame-Smith (2010), vampires’ crimes are usually attributed to wild animals or Native Americans, such as in the case of Abe’s grandfather’s death or the crimes of Henry’s creator. That is

indeed a subtle way to link Native Americans and wild animals through the figure of vampires. Obviously, only people who do not know about the vampires' existence can be confused. Yet, the narrative admits the confusion is justifiable, as there are "reports of Shawnee war parties preying (!) on unsuspecting settlers—killing white women and children without shame. Burning homes. Scalping men alive".³⁹⁷ It is noteworthy that those reports, as well as the narrative itself, use women and children as stakes of conflict—objects used as excuses to colonise the enemy rather than subjects of genuine concern. They are described as contested bodies, much like the land referred to as contested³⁹⁸ rather than stolen from Native peoples.

Table 1. (52 narratives)³⁹⁹.

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|--------|----|
| Predators/ predatory animals | | | 11 |
| Felines | | | 16 |
| | Cat | | 6 |
| | She-cats | | 1 |
| | He-cats | | 1 |
| | Lion | | 3 |
| | Panthers | | 3 |
| | Tiger(s) | | 2 |
| | Lynx | | 1 |
| | Kittens | | 2 |
| Canines | | | 20 |
| | Wol(f)ves | | 13 |
| | Dog(s) | | 10 |
| | | Poodle | 1 |
| | Hyena | | 1 |
| Bear | | | 2 |

397 Seth Grahame-Smith, *Abraham Lincoln Vampire Hunter* (New York: Grand Central Publishing, 2010), loc. 568, Kindle.

398 *Ibid.*, loc. 568.

399 It does not follow any typology recognised by the biological sciences. Instead, the animals are grouped following the typologies included in the narratives to create a general typology of the Vampire Narrative. Numbers indicate how many narratives use the trope of a specific animal. The total number of narratives where I could detect a clear, distinct concrete animalisation was 52. The table does not contain the animalisations of Dracula if he is supposed to be just as he was in the original Stoker novel (like in, e.g. Barbara Hambly's *Renfield: Slave of Dracula* (2007), Dacre Stoker and Ian Holt's *Dracula* (2009), or Hippolyte's *Dracula* (2003–2004)). It also does not contain fantastic animal figures such as dragons, nor were-animals, shapeshifters, etc.

| | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|----|
| Monkeys | | 1 |
| Gazelle | | 1 |
| Deer | | 2 |
| Bats | | 9 |
| Rats | | 11 |
| Rabbits | | 2 |
| Hamster | | 1 |
| Cattle | | 4 |
| | Draught animal | 1 |
| Sheep | | 1 |
| Cow(s) | | 2 |
| Bull | | 2 |
| Pig(s) | | 1 |
| Birds | | 8 |
| | Bird of prey | 1 |
| | Owl | 3 |
| | Eagle | 1 |
| | Raven | 1 |
| | Sparrows | 1 |
| | Canary | 1 |
| Reptiles | | 4 |
| | Chameleons | 1 |
| | Gecko(s) | 2 |
| | Lizard | 1 |
| Snakes/Serpents | | 7 |
| | Boas | 1 |
| Crocodiles/Alligators | | 2 |
| Frog(s) | | 1 |
| Sharks | | 2 |
| Fish | | 1 |
| Spiders | | 9 |
| Crab | | 1 |
| Insects | | 14 |
| | Cockroaches | 3 |
| | Mosquitoes | 3 |
| | Bees | 4 |
| | Ants/Termites | 5 |
| | Leech | 1 |

| | | | |
|-----------|---------|--|---|
| | Flies | | 1 |
| | Moth(s) | | 1 |
| | Locusts | | 1 |
| | Ticks | | 1 |
| Worms | | | 7 |
| | Maggots | | 2 |
| Parasites | | | 4 |
| Plants | | | 1 |

One has to remember that not all animalisation forms are intentionally derogatory. Distinguishing between positive and negative animalisation is a complex and nuanced issue. Merely stating that an epithet is used to describe a good actor does not inherently make it positive. Animal epithets can precisely designate this part of the actor's nature that they heroically fight and that the narrative finds condemnable. Some epithets are intentionally ambiguous; for instance, in Flores' narratives, vampires' feline-likeness is seen as both abject and something to be proud of. Delmas' narrative is based on the feeling of abjection raised by some animals and affirms it without re forging abject into the positive. And finally, the seemingly positive epithets, intended as flattery, can be fetishising, condescending and patronising. That happens especially with animal epithets given to women. Those problems are too complex to be clearly presented in the table, yet some conclusions can be drawn.

Notably, predators, felines, bears and canines are generally complimentary or affirmative, though they can also carry ambiguity.. Sometimes, they are used to build the disturbing super-human discourse analysed in the next subchapter.

In contrast, reptiles, insects, and spiders are used almost exclusively in a derogatory way. Keeping those conclusions in mind can be useful when reading the chapter dedicated to animal rights.

1.4 And What If Vampires Treat Humans Like Animals?

From a biological point of view, humans are animals. Yet, the human-animal spectrum is still mostly considered a dichotomy rather than a continuity. At the same time, some humans are animalised: they are compared to animals or treated like animals.

Some of the vampire narratives show humans treated in a way that humans themselves treat non-human animals. A prominent example of such a treatment is when humans are eaten. Hunting (explored in the last chapter of this part of the book) is still somehow conceivable—after all, there are cases of wild animals who

hunted and killed humans, so hunting does not seem to take away the humanity of the prey. However, breeding humans is deeply disturbing and profoundly uncanny. Keeping humans as pets or considering them as lower beings is only a little less disturbing.

This subversion can be used in three ways: first, to put human recipients in the animals' position and evoke empathy or at least provoke questions. The second one is to simply intensify the hatefulness of the villains. Those narratives reinforce the discourse of human superiority by showing how abject it is when anyone or anything treats humans as if they were animals. The third is seemingly similar to the first. Yet it shows the treatment of some humans like animals by some other super-humans as "natural". Its aim is not to raise empathy for the cruelly treated animals but to normalise the dominance of some (super)humans over others. The super-humans are then put in the position of the predators towards the prey or in the position of the actual humans towards the sub-human cattle. The following sections explore those three ways.

1.4.1 Subverting and Not So Much Subverting

As discussed earlier, Michael and Peter Spierig's *Daybreakers* (2009) put humans in the position of animals as food resources. This could raise empathy for the bred animals. However, the narrative does not really adopt the standpoint of the bled humans. Instead, it adopts the standpoint of those who actively oppose the system. The source of food remains objectified.

In Clay and Susan Griffith's *The Vampire Empire* trilogy (2010–2012) vampires treat humans as cattle; some of them are even kept naked and fed from troughs. Humans capture vampires to experiment on them and learn the physical capacities of their enemies. They call vampires murderers, animals, and things. Vampires call humans murderers. Interestingly, in this system, the people of the North, who inhabit the lands dominated by the vampires, are animalised by both sides. They are vampires' cattle but also enslaved animals for the Hunters. They can be easily sacrificed on the battlefields of war. The third book of the trilogy describes the terrible consequences of this attitude. On the territory where they conducted the hecatomb, the Americans discovered evidence that the human inhabitants were just like them. Yet they still claim that the slaughtered humans just imitated humans.⁴⁰⁰

The narrative strongly condemns fanaticism from both sides. Nevertheless, it opposes the animalisation of humans rather than the cruel treatment of animals. Significantly, only the most humanised vampires are spared at the end.

400 Clay and Susan Griffith, *Vampire Empire: The Kingmakers* (Pyr, 2012), loc. 3270, Kindle.

The narratives that, in one way or another, present vampires as a sort of persecuted or exploited humans are even more problematic. As already mentioned, some analysts⁴⁰¹ view the Good Vampire narratives as ecological, pro-vegetarian, pro-animal rights, and anti-species chauvinism. They see such narratives as opposing human supremacism towards non-human animals, objectification, instrumentalisation, exploitation, and consumption of living beings. Below, I look into narratives such as *True Blood*, *The Vampire Diaries*, and *Being Human*. In the end, I analyse an interesting Polish narrative by Jarosław Moździoch, “Chłopiec z aluminiowym kubkiem w dłoni” (2007), that links vampire and slaughterhouse.

The Good Vampire narratives show vampires who are more capable, stronger, more evolved, and better than humans. No matter how many actors in the narrative try to subdue vampires and prove their inferiority, the narrative ultimately proves otherwise. Therefore, the recipient, sympathising with those superior yet misunderstood and persecuted or simply struggling beings, sees the world from their point of view. “[W]e imaginatively ‘try on’ being both the vampire and the prey”, writes Sarah McFarland Taylor.⁴⁰² But the situation becomes even more subversive in narratives like *True Blood*, where explicit parallels between vampires’ craving for human blood and humans’ craving for V (vampire blood) unmask that humans have a vampire-like, extractivist, consumerist nature.⁴⁰³

When persecuted like animals, the Good Vampires elicit empathy. Dale Hudson mentions, for example, that the plot of Damon and Enzo’s captivity in the laboratories in *The Vampire Diaries* could express a protest against experiments on animals.⁴⁰⁴ However, one could argue that Damon and Enzo’s case is disturbing for viewers, not because they represent animals but because they are so human.

Similarly, in the final season of the BBC Three series *Being Human* (2008–2013), the hunters’ state agency controlled and kept the existence of non-human species, such as werewolves or vampires, in secrecy. When it cannot continue its activity due to budget cuts, its head decides to side with the Devil to incite social chaos and force the prime minister to renew the agency. The will to control the vampire and werewolf populations as vermin, or at least as the population of stray animals, leads directly to the Apocalypse. However, the Apocalypse is coming

401 See *True Blood and Philosophy: We Wanna Think Bad Things with You*, ed. William Irwin, George A. Dunn and Rebecca Housel (Hoboken: Wiley, 2010); or *Twilight and Philosophy: Vampires, Vegetarians, and the Pursuit of Immortality*, ed. Rebecca Housel and J. Jeremy Wisniewski (Hoboken: Wiley, 2009)—specifically articles by George A. Dunn, Jean Kazez, and Nicolas Michaud.

402 Sarah McFarland Taylor, “Vegetarian Vampires,” 162.

403 Sarah McFarland Taylor, “Vegetarian Vampires,” 157.

404 Dale M. Hudson, *Vampires, Race*, 209.

because the human creatures are dehumanised. The human, not the animal character of the vampires and werewolves, evokes empathy.

Jarosław Moździoch's Polish short story "Chłopiec z aluminium kubkiem w dłoni" [A boy with an aluminium mug in his hand] (2007) is an interesting case. It shows a sympathetic vampire (there is no clarity as to whether he is an actual vampire or just a boy asking for a cup of blood) in complex relations with the oppressed animals and humans who oppress both him and animals.

Jarosław Moździoch's story uses the slaughterhouse trope as a metaphor for social order: the hidden basis of society is blood, pain and murder, as embodied, represented, performed and legitimised by the institution of the slaughterhouse. The family men who work here sustain the society and ensure its existence: they provide food and maintain peace by keeping all the internal fundamental violence secret. This secret is the very condition of the smooth functioning of society. That is why the windows of the slaughterhouse are obscured. The butchers are Vampire Hunters, a homosocial crew protecting society.

These Vampire Hunters are the true Monsters:

His whole figure—seemingly curved, with a flat and gaunt face, stained with purple pimples, and a long, crooked nose almost touching his chin—(...) under the dense eyebrows, maliciously shifty eyes (...). His arms could give a lot of scare: wiry, too hairy with prominent tufts, and ending with disproportionately large hands, like shovels. (...) He reeked of sweat and something else (...). His gaze (...) was enough for me to feel goosebumps down my neck.⁴⁰⁵

The group of "the little vampire" Slayers is composed of such drunken, cruel men. The vampire is, in fact, a thin, harmless adolescent who craves swine blood and does everything to make them fill his eponymous aluminium mug. They kick his buttocks, telling him to guess who did this, order him to do jumping jacks until he falls from exhaustion, or make him kiss a pig on the mouth. They first slay him by blood regimentation, humiliation and physical abuse, by which they manifest their masculinity. They also enforce social norms on his body: norms that permit eating animals' flesh but prohibit drinking animals' blood.

The boy is pale, thin, covered with lichen, and does not look human: "Despite having two arms and two legs, and despite being able to talk and walk, he seemed more like an animal..."⁴⁰⁶ He is abject not because he poses a repulsive threat but because he is repulsively pathetic, to the point of provoking violence. The narrative indeed does not seem to consider the little vampire as equal to the human boys, yet it emphasises that the treatment the butchers give him is excessively cruel: "he seemed like a suffocated, kicked-around, feral animal"⁴⁰⁷.

405 Ibid., 207–8.

406 Ibid., 212.

407 Ibid., 212.

The butchers apply the same cruelty to the pigs: the narrative depicts a butcher who does not hit the animal properly and then laughs while witnessing the pig's painful death. Their deeds are abject by Julia Kristeva's definition;⁴⁰⁸ they evoke both repulsion and a sadistic-masochistic fascination in the young narrator, who comes to watch them hideously with his friends.⁴⁰⁹ He begins to dream about being a pig. While he is finally completely repelled by the butcher's behaviour, he does not manage to envision himself as the true Solar Hero capable of establishing a better social system.

Social order is executed on the pigs' bodies. The sustenance of society, the secrecy, and the norms (such as the taboo of blood but the acceptance of flesh) are all performed on and through the pigs' bodies. They are the objects of play between a helpless vampire and the almighty Hunters-butchers. The butchers hold power over the pigs (their bodies and blood) and, therefore, over the vampire. They decide who is an animal and who is human, which means they choose, in Giorgio Agamben's terms,⁴¹⁰ whose life is worth living and whose life is excluded from the domain of human life.

When the little vampire is forced to kiss one of the pigs, his bloodthirst seems to infect the animal, and the animal revolts. The pig changes from a helpless, submissive victim into a bloodthirsty beast. The pig attacks the vampire, gnawing at his face, and then the entire herd attacks the boy's body. Therefore, the pigs do not rebel against the actual oppressors. The vampire was a sort of collaborator with the butchers: he drank swine blood and participated in the butchers' cruel games. However, he was not the source or the core of the system of oppression but rather its fellow victim. In the end, all the rebellious pigs are slaughtered, their bodies merge with the body of the vampire, and they all get minced into meat to be consumed by society. All traces of the bloody violence disappear, and society gets the final product, mincemeat that they will not associate with any body or flesh, neither animal nor human (vampire). This occurs also because the peeping boys do nothing. They do not speak up or assume any active role. The anthropocentric male social order of hidden violence is helplessly stable and incontestable.

Moździoch's story criticises the social order but does not equate human boys, including the young narrator, with the non-fully human vampires, let alone the pigs. The narrator becomes vegetarian, but it does not seem to stem from his pity for the animals. That is also a problem in other Good Vampire narratives. Their humanisation conditions the empathy towards the vampires. Thus, what they

408 Julia Kristeva, *Pouvoirs de l'horreur*.

409 Jarosław Moździoch, "Chłopiec z aluminiowym kubkiem," 207.

410 Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

really advocate is the equality of diverse humans, not the equality of humans and non-humans. The next section analyses the narratives that take an anthropocentric stance even more clearly.

1.4.2 On the Abjection of Animalising Humans

In Ashman's *Vampire: The Curse of Sekhmet*, the vampires of ancient Egypt consider themselves gods. They treat humans as cattle, to be fed upon, bred, farmed, and to serve vampires,⁴¹¹ sometimes to be hunted "just for the thrill".⁴¹² In *The Strain* franchise, vampires organise slaughterhouses to kill humans for food and fertility centres to breed humans. Those narratives present humans as being treated like animals, but they do not advocate for animal rights. Instead, they show the abjection resulting from treating humans like humans treat animals. In fact, they legitimise the *status quo*.

Many Eastern European narratives share those tropes. In Mariusz "Orzeł" Wojteczek's short story "Dreszcze" (2016), the supposed vampire hunts and bleeds his female victims as if they were slaughtered animals. In Aleksey Viktorovich Ivanov's *Пищевблок* (2018), vampires call humans "тушка" (carcass),⁴¹³ or animals in the zoo;⁴¹⁴ they treat them like goats, like cattle,⁴¹⁵ and like food. The narrative presents it as outrageous. But vampires can and should be killed simply for not being humans: "Yes, people are stupid, greedy, and cowardly. But those are people".⁴¹⁶

It is worth remembering that many of the narratives entangle the human-animal dichotomy with other political questions. For example, the *Castlevania* Netflix series contains a critique of feminism. Lenor, the co-ruler of Styria, seduces Hector, the necromancer, to use him to create Styria's own demon army. During sexual intercourse, she puts a magic collar on him and makes him her pet. The animalisation of the man by a woman seems particularly disturbing.

As mentioned, Ugo Bellagamba's "Icare" joins the critique of ecological discourses with the general critique of leftist discourses. The main hero, Icare, wants to prove the moral abjection of considering humans as animals.

Christian Léourier's "Quelques moments dans la carrière d'un honorable homme d'affaires" is anti-capitalist. Vampires are a separate species, *homo strigus*. Humans used to be their cattle, but nowadays, the Count is the only

411 K.M. Ashman, *Vampire*, loc. 217–19, 1419, 1422, Kindle.

412 Ibid., loc. 1772.

413 Aleksey Viktorovich Ivanov, *Пищевблок*, 227, Kindle.

414 Ibid., 267.

415 Ibid., 228.

416 Ibid., 186.

vampire left. However, he continues his species practices, which human corporations now embrace. He works for a private company where humans are bred as a stock to produce the antigens needed for anti-ageing cosmetics.⁴¹⁷ The following section examines other political entanglements of the trope of humans being treated as animals.

1.4.3 Everyone Is Cattle for the Super-Humans

As mentioned in a few places, super-human narratives may seem like they were subverting the human-animal *status quo* by siding with animals against humans. But in fact, they are less interested in equalising human and non-human animals than in opposing the proud predators to the prey. They reshape and sharpen the conservative imagery of the human-non-human dichotomy: it is now super-humans versus the rest. Some animals, like Kotowski's lynx, are higher than some humans because they are more similar to the super-human Hero. Yet, all of them cannot match him.

Clegg's *The Vampyricon* (2005–2007) somehow sums up the super-human morality. The Good Vampire Solar Heroes are hunters or even shepherds⁴¹⁸ like Christ the Good Shepherd. They feed on their human cattle because they need to, but they compensate for it by caring for the cattle's well-being. The Evil Vampires are like wolves that attack and murder the cattle, not caring about its well-being, simply willing to destroy it. The good super-human vampires must protect their cattle (humans) and exterminate the wolves (the enemy vampires).⁴¹⁹ The same actions from the side of the Heroes and the Monsters are assigned different intentions and different values. Even the fact that the ancient Heroes (Priests) bred a sub-human species of human rats to feed on them is seen as a moral asset rather than a moral problem.

The super-human trope is significantly popular among Russian narratives: in Dmitriy Sillov's *Кровь Охотника* (2011), Yuliya Gavrish's *Бези* (2022), or even in Plevin's books.

In *Кровь Охотника* (2011), the fact that vampires and werewolves treat humans in just the same way as humans treat non-human animals (as meat⁴²⁰ and workforce⁴²¹) is shown as the ultimate evil. But the most abject are the farmed humans. Like in *The Strain*, there is a close reference to the Nazi plan for "inferior" people, including the Slavs, and Russians, among others: sub-humans are

417 Christian Léourier, "Quelques moments," 46.

418 Douglas Clegg, *The Vampyricon*, Book 3, loc. 3254, Kindle.

419 Ibid., loc. 4425.

420 Dmitriy Sillov, *Кровь Охотника*, loc. 1291, Kindle.

421 Ibid., loc. 765, 4213–20.

bred, kept in illiteracy, and never taught anything but to fulfil the most straightforward commands.⁴²² The human butcheries are called, just like the Nazi camps, the death factories.⁴²³ But this does not make the fate of those bred humans terrifying in the Russian narrative; on the contrary, the narrative treats it as a mitigating fact for the vampires' and werewolves' bloody business. The narrative struggles to recognise bred humans as actual humans. Andrey has no problems sacrificing them while destroying the butchery. While describing the human slaughterhouse, the narrative cannot help but use the word “meat” when referring to the smell.⁴²⁴

The breeding of humans regularly recurs in Russian vampire narratives. In Yuliya Gavriush's *Безу* (2022), humans are said to be treated as animals by vampires: the free ones are like wild animals to be hunted—because they are dangerous to the vampires, and because their blood is a better treat than that of the “cattle”. Unfree people are bred.⁴²⁵ Like in Sillov's novel, this does not cause empathy with the animals, but rather indignation that humans can be treated in an animalised way.

However, the narrative quotes the story of a National Park in the USA (probably Yellowstone) where wolves were reintroduced in the 1970s. The narrative presents their influence on the ecosystem as highly positive and draws a parallel between them and the vampires⁴²⁶ to show that vampire rule strengthened a part of humanity into super-humans. The same gesture excludes the (sub)human enslaved cattle from humanity.

The humans enslaved by the vampires degraded into an animal state. For vampires, they are cattle to be eaten and exploited. For (super)human uprisings, they are also animals: the narrator says she heard that one of their children had already walked on four paws and mooed.⁴²⁷ Unfree people cowardly denied “our faith, culture and dignity”;⁴²⁸ they degenerate with each generation, and the children of those who surrendered to vampires are no longer human; they are called curs/mongrels (*ублюдок*).⁴²⁹

In Viktor Pelevin's vampire dilogy *Empire V* and *Batman Apollo* (2006–2013), humans are also vampires' cattle. They are controlled by superhuman vampires with the aid of sexuality, socioeconomic status (expressed by money), and all the dreams and desires that those two produce in humans. That is the purpose of

422 Ibid., loc. 4320–25.

423 Ibid., loc. 6394.

424 Ibid., loc. 5239.

425 Yuliya Gavriush, *Безу*, loc. 719–20, Kindle.

426 Ibid., loc. 1335.

427 Ibid., loc. 734.

428 Ibid., loc. 725.

429 Ibid., loc. 728.

human culture, whose main elements are glamour (the look) and discourse (the text). They serve to produce bablos, which vampire tongues, their true selves, need. This is normalised and neutralised by the pseudo-Buddhist/Hindu philosophy: the idea that every being is only a thought in the world's mind and a sufferance until they achieve liberation.

* * *

The Vampire Narrative animalises many of its actors. Animalisation serves diverse purposes, depending on the narrative, its context, and the animals it refers to. However, it rarely raises genuine empathy for the actual non-human animals. On the contrary, quite frequently, it serves to exclude additional groups of humans. The next chapter explores these issues in greater depth.

Chapter II: Animal Rights

This chapter is mainly devoted to the animals *sensu stricto* within the 21st-century Vampire Narrative; vampires-as-animals are mentioned here, but only in passing. The chapter focuses on how animals are treated and perceived and the narratives' attitudes towards animal rights. Animal rights are treated here very broadly: I do not define them, as my objective is precisely to examine what those rights are, their scope and their object/subject within the narratives themselves.

The chapter is organised into two subchapters, analysing narratives that treat non-human animals as inferior to humans and those that recognise animals as subjects equal to or superior to humans. The subsections cannot be distinctively differentiated: expressly, the narratives that openly claim animals as inferior and advocate they should have fewer rights than humans rarely affirm direct cruelty against animals. Sometimes, they even advocate affection for certain animals. Conversely, the narratives that explicitly advocate a higher degree of recognition for animals usually advocate this for some animals only. Moreover, the definition of cruelty is also negotiable: one could argue that slaughtering and eating animals, however "humane" humans try to make it, is cruelty in itself. That would mean that any narrative that does not advocate vegetarianism or even veganism does not endorse any animal rights. Therefore, the organisation of this chapter is necessarily arbitrary.

Two things should also be noted. First, some narratives try to bring up the subject of animal rights and the recognition of animals. Yet, they drop it during the narrative, making it impossible actually to study their approach. Such is the case with *Vampire Empire*. The narrative reflects on the right of humans to eat other sentient beings if they do not want to be eaten themselves. Gareth, the vampire, treats animals better than Alice, the human, does. She claims animals cannot feel but changes her mind after spending time with Gareth and his cats. Yet the narrative drops the subject totally in the trilogy's second and third parts.

Second, some narratives lack data. For example, in the already analysed short French story "Bogdana", the narrator suggests that a cow does not deserve any reverence by stating about his animalised uncle: "politesse (...) would have as

much effect as a bow in front of a cow”.⁴³⁰ However, it is unclear whether he meant animals in general, cattle, or cows specifically as non-deserving of being politely treated.

II.1 Animals as Inferior Beings

This subchapter embraces diverse narratives that affirm the unbridgeable dichotomy between animals and humans and the treatment of animals as inferior to humans. It does not always mean that humans should not have some mercy or affection towards at least some animals. However, the narratives refute equalising the rights of human and non-human animals or even recognising animals as subjects of some rights they could share with humans.

In some narratives, the inferior position of the non-human animals is naturalised to the point of not even being explicitly expressed. In Barbara Hambly’s *Renfield: Slave of Dracula* (2007), the lower status of the animals and the animalised vampires is perfectly naturalised in every animal epithet given to the evil vampires. So it is in *Les Compagnons d’HeLa*: the treatment of the Solar Hero like an animal is morally wrong—and at the same time, this treatment of the animals gets perfectly naturalised.⁴³¹ In Kosh’s saga *Ремесло*, druids, vampires, humans, trolls, and dragons are “different biological species”.⁴³² However, only the first three of those species are considered human, and those are conceived as more or less equal to each other.

The most explicit anti-animal rights narratives have already been analysed: *The Strain*, *Abraham Lincoln Vampire Hunter* franchise, *The Vampyricon* trilogy, Ashman’s *Vampire: The Curse of Sekhmet*, *Dracul*, *The Vampire Huntress Legend Series*, “Icare”, or Aleksandr Slepakov’s *Повесть о советском вампире* trilogy (2014–2018); then *Laura Caxton Vampire Series*, André Øvredal’s *The Last Voyage Of The Demeter* (2023), as well as Sillo’s *Кровь Охотника*, TB-3 Channel series *Пятая стража* (2012–2016), and Galina Polynskaya’s book series *Тайные стражи* (2018–2021).

In *The Strain* franchise, dehumanisation means de-subjectification: vampires are things because they are not humans. Objectification occurs through animalisation: vampires return to their former homes instinctively, just like dogs; there is no love in such a return;⁴³³ vampires have animal reactions.⁴³⁴ The narrative considers the agency of things as abject, horrible, and indeed ghoulish.

430 Philippe Jaenada, “Bogdana,” in *Bienvenue en Transylvanie*, ed. Jakuta Alikavazovic et al. (Paris: Points, 2013), loc. 724, Kindle.

431 Manou Chintesco, *Les Compagnons d’HeLa*, 174.

432 Alex Kosh, *Faculty of Fire* (self-published, 2013), loc. 318, Kindle.

433 Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan, *The Strain* (New York: William Morrow, 2009), 294.

While most comparisons are built upon “insectification” (comparison to insects), the comparison to dog shows that no animal gets recognition in the narrative. The robust pseudo-biological discourse does not show humans as animals; on the contrary, it differentiates humans from non-human animals. The dichotomy is present even in basic sensations: “human senses” stand against “animal instincts”.⁴³⁵ The vampire Master calls humans “things” (“young thing”).⁴³⁶ However, this is morally improper, while the same approach to the non-human vampires is only right.

Extermination is the moral solution, and Fet, the city exterminator, is indeed a role model: he kills vampires as he used to kill vermin and parasites,⁴³⁷ all of those to protect society. Therefore, the rightness of an action relies on the identity of the doers, not on the nature of the action. The Heroes are on the right side, even in the scene where a group of grown men maltreat a little girl, as the girl is a vampire. Exclusive humanism goes as far as to exclude human supporters of vampires from the domain of humanity. Fet kills them with no remorse and calls them “inhuman”.⁴³⁸

The Strain is an extreme case in its disdain for all animals. The same radicalism can be found, for example, in *London Under Midnight*, where the multiplication and animalisation of vampires make their killing morally easy; technicality becomes the only problem.⁴³⁹ Also, in *Le Vampire de Benares*, animalisation permits radical objectification (the animalised vampire is called “a thing”, “une chose”⁴⁴⁰) and abjectification. Ivanov’s *Пищеблок* is similarly radical: the animalisation of women and vampires is done there by comparing them to dogs, which excuses the Heroes for treating them with brutality.⁴⁴¹ Vampires go from being some non-human creatures⁴⁴² to mere things (wet sheets).⁴⁴³

Other narratives are only seemingly less harsh. The novel *Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter* starts with a scene in which a young Abraham Lincoln hunts turkeys. The animals are described with the pronoun “it” and are completely depersonalised. The scene anticipates Abe’s later vampire hunting (vampires are also described by “it”⁴⁴⁴) but contrasts it. Young Abraham pities the turkey, as the turkey is a living thing, whereas a vampire is a dead one and, moreover, a harmful

434 Ibid., 299.

435 Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan, *The Fall*, 136.

436 Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan, *The Strain*, 223.

437 Ibid., 273.

438 Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan, *The Night Eternal*, 227.

439 See Stacey Abbott, *Undead Apocalypse*.

440 Georges Bess, *Le Vampire de Benares, Tome 2*, 11.

441 Aleksey Viktorovich Ivanov, *Пищеблок*, 321–22, Kindle.

442 Ibid., 327.

443 Ibid., 262.

444 Seth Grahame-Smith, *Abraham Lincoln*, loc. 818, Kindle.

one. Abraham decides never to hunt animals anymore. However, he does not refrain from eating them. Moreover, the narrative uses this refusal not to promote the animals' subjectivity but to highlight Abraham's great kindness and sensitivity, in contrast with the insensitivity of the hunting vampires. It shows the difference between the good, docile animals who let themselves be murdered (turkeys) and the bad ones (vampires). None of them is accorded any subjectivity, though. Vampires and pigs are killed in the same way, with no remorse: "I like to think that in his final moments, as his body convulsed and blood poured from his nose and mouth—joining that of the animals' below".⁴⁴⁵

In Daniel Espinosa's *Morbis* (2022), the bats are initially the objects of the eponymous hero's research. The experiments are ruthless: he dissects the bats and injects their DNA into laboratory mice, which die before his eyes, yet the narrative does not comment on this. The only moral issue is whether it is ethical to "unnaturally" (i. e., not as a result of evolution) change human DNA. The bats establish a connection with Morbius after he is transformed into a vampire, and they are shown as valuable because they remain submitted: they are used by Morbius in his fight with Milo. The same is true for the bats used by Dracula in Gary Shore's movie. The possible losses to their populations are not even considered within the narratives.

In *The Vampyricon* trilogy, the suffering of animals (such as horses on the battlefield⁴⁴⁶) does not elicit any compassion. Even the monsters are differentiated into those similar to humanoids (they are still not persons, but they are subjects and agents) and simply animals, like the Lemnads, the mounts of the Myrrydanai, whose killing attracts no attention.⁴⁴⁷ The depersonalisation of humanoid monsters is also achieved through animalisation, notably by comparison to wolves.

In Ashman's *Vampire: The Curse of Sekhmet*, comparisons to animals are depicted as derogatory, and implicitly, the narrative assumes that animals should be treated worse than humans. If treating humans as dogs means treating them "as it pleases",⁴⁴⁸ then dogs can conjecturally be approached with cruelty. Despite the factual evidence that the plot provides, animals are seen as inferior and cruel. The ruthless scientists claim that they do not intend to be cruel because they are not animals. They will be brutal only as a last resort to get their money.⁴⁴⁹ It is highly immoral when vampires treat people as nourishment, but the vampires themselves are animalised and then objectified to be roasted, toasted, and fried in

445 Ibid., loc. 3605.

446 Douglas Clegg, *The Vampyricon*, Book 3, loc. 4490, Kindle.

447 Ibid., loc. 4527.

448 K.M. Ashman, *Vampire*, loc. 1422, Kindle.

449 Ibid., loc. 3376.

human laboratories.⁴⁵⁰ Samari is outraged even by the thought that the vampire Nephthys could have eaten a human corpse,⁴⁵¹ far more than when she was eating animals alive.

In Dacre Stoker and J.D. Barker's *Dracul* (2018), animals and insects are convenient objects for experiments. Their ethicality is never questioned; they can only appear disgusting, as in the experiment of Bram's school colleague with flies and larvae.⁴⁵² Humans can kill vampires and other humans (Vambéry killed seven people during his mysterious service; he also caused the death of the good vampire Patrick). Vampires can also kill other vampires. But they cannot kill humans: Ellen's vengeance on Dracula is morally justified, but her vengeance on the abusive husband and careless father is morally condemnable. The human/non-human identity of the killer and the victim determines the moral judgement.

L.A. Banks' *The Vampire Huntress Legend Series* is equally anthropocentric: the Hell creatures are animalised, with the lower-range demons particularly animal-like.⁴⁵³ Humans have feelings and thoughts, but animals have only instincts. The non-human hybrids from the land of Nod are recognised as equal to humans—but only because they have souls,⁴⁵⁴ which, according to the Christian eschatology fundamental to the books, is an anthropocentric criterion. The hybrids have souls because they are partially human. Purely non-human creatures cannot have a soul.

Finally, Ugo Bellagamba's short story "Icare" offers an open refutation of pro-animal-equality movements. Like Banks' series, the narrative references Christian symbols and Christian system of values to promote human uniqueness. In the story, it is the ecological and political system of inter-species equality that is responsible for the oppression of humans.

Such equality also does not improve the treatment of animals. Cruel treatment of animals is condoned, if not somehow incited. Vampires need to consume blood; otherwise, they die. That is why the State provides one rat to each vampire inmate: when the rat dies, the inmate dies. However, some inmates torture their rats, taking out their frustration on the animals until they scream in pain, risking the rat's death—the narrative views this as a consequence of the system. Icare never treats his rat in this manner; he is perversely kind to Bram. He believes Bram tastes better when treated well but also enjoys having a companion. He claims that Bram likes to be bitten, replaying the rhetoric of perpetrators who argue that their victims enjoy it.

450 Ibid., loc. 2954, 2955, 3026.

451 Ibid., loc. 3557.

452 Dacre Stoker and J.D. Barker, *Dracul* (London: Penguin Publishing Group, 2018), loc. 1940, Kindle.

453 L.A. Banks, *Hunted*, 103, Kindle.

454 L.A. Banks, *The Cursed*, 311, Kindle.

Eastern European narratives are no different in their denial of animal rights. In Aleksandr Slepakov's *Повесть о советском вампире* trilogy (2014–2018), non-human beings are treated as things, while there is nothing morally worse than treating humans in that way: one can hate humans, love them, and then change one's mind and hate them again, but not treat them as objects, as food.⁴⁵⁵ Conversely, the suffering of animals only impresses when they do something human-like, such as a cow crying with a human voice.

While the narrative divides animals into good ones (like elephants who help people) and bad ones (like crocodiles who harm people), the division, despite being anthropocentric, is indeed fake. All animals are treated as inferior to humans. That is why Frolov openly claims that animal blood does not have the same taste as human blood because animals don't think, dream, or desire; they only focus on food and can even eat their own children, as Frolov claims about pigs.⁴⁵⁶ The logic is led to its extreme: hanging cats is considered merely a strangeness.⁴⁵⁷

* * *

Some generally anti-animal-rights narratives favour one particular kind of animal, usually dogs. In *Laura Caxton Vampire Series*, vampires are animalised, which permits their objectification. Identity criteria become moral, and when the human Solar Hunters do the same thing as vampires (including sacrificing humans to catch vampires), they are considered right. Like Ivanov's Heroes, the narrative states that a human can be a criminal but will never be absolute evil.⁴⁵⁸ Similarly to Fet in *The Strain*, Laura makes exceptions for humans allying with vampires.⁴⁵⁹ The exclusion of the vampires and their allies is emphasised by the use of weapons forbidden by the Hague Convention against them.

The epitome of the bad animals is, again, insects and worms, like in *The Strain*. Larvae thrive on vampires, feeding on them during the vampires' day sleep, while "better", i.e. human-centred animals such as dogs, despise the vampires. Significantly, Laura breeds the dogs. Yet even dogs are not accorded real subjectivity. They are considered useful things.

In André Øvredal's *The Last Voyage of The Demeter* (2023), there is also an appreciated dog, Huck, but even he is not long mourned when Dracula kills him. All the other animals, following the human-made hierarchy of species, are "livestock". They are kept in small cages to be killed and served to the ship's crew,

455 Aleksander Slepakov, *Повесть о советском вампире*, loc. 1570–71, Kindle.

456 Ibid., loc. 915–17.

457 Ibid., loc. 1190.

458 David Wellington, *13 Bullets*, 86, Kindle.

459 David Wellington, *Vampire Zero* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2008), 272, Kindle.

and Toby, who has to take care of them, wishes that they eat them as soon as possible so that he has fewer chores to do.

There is a brutal act of animal killing in Dmitriy Sillov's *Кровь Охотника* and Oleg Divov's *Night Watcher*, and those acts made Heroes into the men they are. In Sillov's book, the stance towards animals is complicated. As evidenced in Annex 1, animalisation serves to objectify and abjectify vampires, werewolves, and even some humans. Yet, there is some recognition for domestic, therefore anthropocentric, companion animals such as dogs. Andrey feels more reluctant to kill a dog⁴⁶⁰ than a werewolf, vampire, or even some humans, and he respects a dignified enemy in a pit bull.⁴⁶¹ Wild animals also get recognition for their grace.⁴⁶² There is a clear-cut distinction characteristic for super-human narratives: it differentiates between respectful animals (those who fight) and the disrespected ones who wait in stupor to be devoured. Therefore, the rat is both abject (rat-like vampire) and respected: Andrey talks to a rat he meets, and he compares himself to the rat that fights till the end.⁴⁶³

Feliks, the vampire from the Russian ТВ-3 Channel series *Пятая стража* (2012–2016), also cares about a dog (episode 21). On the other hand, the pharmaceutical company that conducts experiments on dogs to create medicine for eternal love is shown as sympathetic (episode 30). No one cares about the unjust killing of a bear wrongly accused of having killed a few humans (episode 70).

The complicated stance towards contemporary pro-animal rights is best expressed in episode 74. Lida sees the corpse of a tortured dog in the park, and she is deeply moved and outraged. Feliks initially forbids his team from investigating this topic, pointing out their goal is to protect people from evil. This means that their concern is humans and that the pain and suffering of animals is not considered evil. Protecting animals is not the task of a serious agency but of environmentalists. Lida's concern reflects her flaw, a side effect of her gift (she can shapeshift): she has transformed into animals so many times that she no longer sees the difference between them and humans. Feliks highlights that this difference exists; it is essential and radical. Ulyana argues with him, saying that a dog is equal to a human friend for every dog lover, but the narrative sides with Feliks, as usual. When Feliks finally agrees to take care of the case, it is because he feels that the magic involved is targeting humans. During the investigation, the detectives meet the group of dog hunters. They hate dogs, because they were attacked and hurt by stray dogs. Even if it does not justify their actions, it does bring some comprehension.

460 Dmitriy Sillov, *Кровь Охотника*, loc. 1846, Kindle.

461 Ibid., loc. 1876.

462 Ibid., loc. 3729.

463 Ibid., loc. 5769–74.

In the end, Feliks gives the bad witch to the stray dogs so they can take their revenge. He admits that dogs always attack evil forces, and he absolves them for attacking the innocent woman when she was possessed, explaining that they were only sensing the evil spirit in her and doing their job. The valorisation of dogs is again done only because they are good for humans. Feliks points out that now, in Russia, the abuse of animals is a punishable act. However, violence against animals is condemned because it leads to violence against humans.

Some subversion of anthropocentrism is achieved through elements of pre-modern thinking, such as referring to animals and plants as having “memories” or “seeing” something (episode 11). In episode 112, a bonsai tree can give alphabetical signs in Japanese concerning those who killed its owner. The difference between animals and plants is performed in how the memories are replayed. The man who enters the plant does not know what he sees until he gets out of it and comes to Feliks, who can play (visualise) the memories from the man’s head like from some video player or projector. When Rita enters an animal, she actually and consciously sees through the animal’s eyes. She immediately knows what the animal has seen without Feliks projecting the memories from inside her head.

Yet the third season backs off from such an attitude. Max, the season’s villain, seems to express an ecological standpoint when he says humans destroy everything they touch. He animalises or even objectifies humans by comparing them to bacteria (episode 127). In episode 135, an environmentalist attitude causes murders.

The episode featuring pigs (131) is particularly interesting because it is simultaneously similar to and very different from “Chłopiec z aluminiowym kubkiem w dłoni”. A vengeful little girl sees her father killing her beloved piglet for a dinner party. The girl then tries to perform some magic—interestingly, she blames and hates only the women who took part in the dinner, not the men. She has no power, and Feliks comments on behaviour as infantile rage for a pet she was attached to. She is as helpless and innocent as the pigs: when the pigs eat the women alive, they do it because they are starved, and only the human who throws women to the pigs is responsible. Therefore, the pigs and the girl are entirely powerless and deprived of any agency. Moreover, in the end, humans eating pigs is judged perfectly normal, while pigs eating humans is seen as a horrific aberration. Turning a human into a piglet is a punishment Feliks inflicts on the criminal.

In the series reboot, Galina Polynskaya’s book series *Тайные стражи* (2018–2021), sentience seems to be accorded to many beings, even plants: they see, conceive, and understand emotions; they want to help humans, and they communicate in the form of images; they are given names. Even phenomena are given

form and agency: Daana is fire,⁴⁶⁴ and the Earth seems to be a living system where all beings leave their mark in the form of information. Feliks is capable of sensing the Earth. But then succulents are described as “storing information” for the longest time,⁴⁶⁵ which again makes them similar to objects, digital discs or archives. Contacting them is, therefore, more about reading them than talking to them. The “informative pole of the planet” ultimately portrays the Earth as nothing more than an eco-systemic Internet,⁴⁶⁶ an object to be used.

Feliks has some animal friends, notably the rat Don Vito and the raven Pablito. He and his friend Daana talk with Pablito and Don Vito. Don Vito claims they will always be friends with Feliks, even when he befriends humans as well: non-human animals are not worse or better than humans; they are just different.⁴⁶⁷ Indeed, Feliks gave the rat life elixir and plans to give the same to the raven—not to any human being.⁴⁶⁸ Daana reminds him that whether Vito and Pablito are humans is unimportant: they are loving and devoted.⁴⁶⁹ Yet, in those words, some anthropocentrism is hidden again: the measure of rats’ good character is that they are dedicated and serve humans. The same ambivalent attitude can be detected in the dialogue with Nikanor: when he accumulates aggression after a long time without turning into a werewolf, he has to transform. Feliks is scared that even in some remote places, dogs would sense him, and Nikanor claims that he can kill dogs:⁴⁷⁰ a statement that is both cruel and yet very pro-nature. Nikanor was earlier told never to harm wolves.⁴⁷¹ While Feliks protests, he is less animal-friendly than human-centred: he favours the animals bred and loved by humans.

Feliks treats his animal friends rather severely. He is rarely tender with them; he often pushes them away. He is rude and even threatening, ungrateful, and despising, clearly marking the difference between an animal brain and a human-like brain.⁴⁷² Feliks used to treat his horses as objects: he tells with no compassion how he bred them to be able to bear a vampire, and the breeding cost the lives of most of them, while only a few survived to become strong.⁴⁷³

Narratives that tend to promote the inferiority of animals sometimes express some sympathy for certain animals. This sympathy does not result in empathy, though; its scope is limited to animals that are useful and friendly to humans,

464 Galina Polynskaya, *Театр Эль Вагант*, loc. 1633, Kindle.

465 Galina Polynskaya, *Перстень отравителя*, loc. 595, Kindle.

466 Galina Polynskaya, *Золото Аида*, loc. 3074, Kindle.

467 Galina Polynskaya, *Эликсир для вампира*, loc. 4653, Kindle.

468 Galina Polynskaya, *Перстень отравителя*, loc. 2073, Kindle.

469 Galina Polynskaya, *Золото Аида*, loc. 2048–50, Kindle.

470 *Ibid.*, loc. 3889–92.

471 *Ibid.*, loc. 1221.

472 Galina Polynskaya, *Эликсир для вампира*, loc. 5573, Kindle.

473 Galina Polynskaya, *Поместье призраков* (Moscow: Эксмо, 2020), loc. 2366–70, Kindle.

notably dogs. What it performs is anthropocentrism yet again. The following subchapter examines attitudes that express support for animal rights.

II.2 How We Love the Animals

The instrumentalisation of animals in narratives that declare themselves animal-friendly is also very common. In *Penny Dreadful*, compassion for animals is used to create a sympathetic image of the American Hero, who renews British civilisation through the breeze of the nature element he brings. In the brutal scene in the house of games in episode 4, well-dressed English gentlemen and ladies revel in the spectacle of a dog killing rats. They scream with excitement, stamp in ecstasy, incite the dog, and place bets on the number of victims, relishing the sight of the bloodshed. When the appalled American leaves, they dismiss him as a boorish simpleton who fails to appreciate the entertainment of the truly cultured.

In Adrien Beau's *Le Vourdalak* (2023), the Frenchman d'Urfé decides to seek refuge and stay in Sdenka's Eastern European house for a while because he sees a dog. The domesticated animal is a deceitful sign of civilisation. Indeed, as soon as Gorsha, the family father, returns as an extremely wild vourdalak, he demands that the dog be killed. In his cruelty, he orders his youngest son, Piotr, to do it, knowing that the animal is his only friend. This gesture underlines the oppressive patriarchy of Eastern European culture: Gorsha has absolute power over his children, and this power takes an especially violent form when exercised over women (his daughter Sdenka and his daughter-in-law, Anja) and non-heteronormative people such as his younger son. Piotr tries to kill the vourdalak, but then Gorsha shoots him dead with his phallic rifle and orders him to be buried next to the dog in an objectifying gesture. In the end, being compared to a dog is degrading.

Another narrative that uses animals as symbols is George DeVein's *Renfield's Journal* (2018). At first, the narrative appears to recognise animals' subjectivity and even personhood: "he was more personable than a person, as cats generally are", writes Renfield about his cat.⁴⁷⁴ Moreover, he treats all animals—from an insect to a cat—similarly, showing no species chauvinism. He befriends and observes them, as he does with humans. However, he eats animals, while eating a human is a perspective that is violently refused. In fact, this perspective causes Renfield to reject Dracula.

The animals that appear in Renfield's life represent his internal states. Ham, the parish cat, reflects Renfield's internal evolution (conversion): from the primary arrogance to being possessed by Dracula to becoming a sweet, docile being.

474 George DeVein, *Renfield's Journal*, loc. 1865, Kindle.

Other animals symbolise the Seven Deadly Sins (see Annex 1), while the novel is organised into chapters discussing Sins and Virtues. Dracula communicates through wild and strangely aggressive animals.

Animalisation is the greatest sin: no human should be an animal to another human. No human should prey on another human or even treat another human as a pet.⁴⁷⁵ Like in Banks' narrative, animals, unlike humans, do not have souls and are thus similar to dead bodies.⁴⁷⁶ The rules of moral behaviour towards humans and animals differ. A human commits a crime whenever they kill another human, and only when they kill animals without a need.⁴⁷⁷ Ham the cat's example shows that the narrative considers good only docile good-for-humans animals.

As already mentioned, the pro-animal stance is also instrumentalised in super-human narratives. Below, I analyse three examples of such narratives (Kotowski, Maksimov, and Gavrish's novels). Then, I analyse the declared pro-animal narratives, examining whether they indeed contain a pro-animal stance.

* * *

In Krzysztof Kotowski's *Trzech gości w łódce plus wampir* (2022), the narrator explicitly condemns hunting and sides with the hunted bear. He also considers poaching a lynx to be murder.⁴⁷⁸ Yet, hunting a boar is perfectly acceptable to him and does not contradict his love for animals.⁴⁷⁹ Indeed, the narrative promotes species chauvinism; only noble and proud real hunters, the predators, are worth empathy: "despite appearances, their life is much more difficult than the life of the herbivores".⁴⁸⁰

Wiktor, the narrator and the Hero, identifies with the murdered lynx so much that he can kill to avenge the feline—something he was unable to do for Agnieszka, his beloved woman.⁴⁸¹ As a super-man, Wiktor can identify with the better—the predatory—animals, and then a fellow predator becomes "one of us", one of the formidable, true males who dominate nature. That is also why he treats his male dog Misiorny as a friend. He recognises and respects Misiorny's will and agency: he wants to protect him, but he respects when the dog wants to follow him into action⁴⁸²—again, respect that his woman never gets.

475 Ibid., loc. 2788–90.

476 Ibid., loc. 2789–90.

477 Ibid., loc. 2792.

478 Krzysztof Kotowski, *Trzech gości w łódce*, 356.

479 Ibid., 345.

480 Ibid., 289.

481 Ibid., 357.

482 Ibid., 384–85.

The super-human narratives add felines to the canines as sympathetic animals (see Annex 1). Significantly, they are all male (it is always a “lion”, never a “lioness”). Yet this is only to make them figures of the super-man domination. In Maks Maksimov’s *Видеоблог вампира* (2020), the narrator treats his belonging to a non-human species as a justification for his killing of humans for food.⁴⁸³ Katya, his fiancée and the Victim-Lover of the narrative shares his viewpoint: she says that the lion also kills for food and finds justification for his lover in the laws of nature.⁴⁸⁴

In Yuliya Gavriš’s *Беги* (2022), the narrator declares pro-animal sympathies. Animals are shown as sensing the vampires’ dead nature and unnaturalness. Therefore, the animals took the humans’ side, despite all the damage humans had done to them, and even though vampires had never harmed them.⁴⁸⁵ Animals are portrayed as allies of super-humans in their war against the vampires,⁴⁸⁶ showing humans safe places and warning of vampires’ approach by their silence.

Such anthropomorphising of non-human animals is another feature of anthropocentric thinking masked as nature-caring. Finally, Gavriš’s story explicitly states that humans are higher beings who carry God inside them.⁴⁸⁷ The narrator declares that she is not terrified by vampires, but she would be of humans who deny humanity to other humans.⁴⁸⁸ Interestingly, she does not seem to notice this is precisely what she is doing towards the sub-human “mongrels”.

* * *

Francesca Flores’ apparently pro-animal narrative shows vampires as animal-like and condemns their—and therefore animals’—objectification. That is what the villain Zenos does to Ava: he calls her a “greedy little thing”⁴⁸⁹. Still, humanity seems to be the highest value. Ava is concerned about not losing it: “I don’t want to lose all of my humanity to become a bloodthirsty predator”.⁴⁹⁰ “I’m doing this for my humanity”, thinks Ava when she is about to kill a squirrel to prevent herself from killing a human.⁴⁹¹

In that sense, killing animals becomes a condition for humanity. Ava continues with this attitude when she becomes vampire queen: she wants her fol-

483 Maks Maksimov, *Видеоблог вампира*, loc. 641–45, Kindle.

484 Ibid., loc. 2247–50.

485 Ibid., loc. 1788.

486 Ibid., loc. 1790–96.

487 Ibid., loc. 3350–55.

488 Yuliya Gavriš, *Беги*, loc. 2894–99, Kindle.

489 Francesca Flores, *The Witch and the Vampire*, loc. 76, Kindle.

490 Ibid., loc. 468.

491 Ibid., loc. 1337.

lowers to preserve their humanity and gain humans' acceptance by making them drink animals's blood.

In Drew Hayden Taylor's *The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel* (2007), the stance towards animals seems more complex and somehow exceptional. When Frenchmen animalise Owl, it is derogatory,⁴⁹² but being animal or animal brother is not. There is a difference between the European way of objectifying the Others and the Indigenous way of being a living object. The loss of Owl's identity, replaced by Pierre's, was tragic, painful and degrading. In that sense, animalisation is opposed to objectification: Owl seems to be the opposite of Pierre; *Pierre* means "rock" or "stone" in French.

* * *

The animal rights included in the Vampire Narrative seem very restricted and, first of all, human-centric. The scope rarely goes as far as to treat animals as equal to humans and seldom encompasses all animals. Mainly, it includes animals considered human-friendly, which means submissive, obedient, self-sacrificing, and useful, or those regarded as beautiful, noble, and intelligent according to human standards. These animals can then be easily instrumentalised as figures of the (super)humans. The *topos* of the hunt, explored in the next section, is where all these issues intersect.

492 Drew Hayden Taylor, *The Night Wanderer*, loc. 1925, Kindle.

Chapter III: Hunt

In a scene from the *Van Helsing* series, two male couples are hunting in the forest.⁴⁹³ The humans: Felix, a Black teenager, and his white caretaker are hunting a deer. An analogous couple, an abject vampire mirror: a Black teenager, Mohamad, and his white caretaker, Sam, are hunting humans. The camera sketches parallels between the two couples: both white men are fatherly figures, even though there is something uncannily erotic in Sam's attachment to Mohamad. Boys are to be formed (colonised) by the white men into their image. The boys are relatively innocent and unable to hunt properly. Felix has problems with killing the deer. Mohamad murders for food only; he does not enjoy the killing as his degenerate caretaker expects him to. In both cases, the white caretaker wants the boy to be something more than an animal-like hunter-for-food. They both want the boys to explore the depth of the act of killing a living being. The human wants to teach Felix how to dominate nature—and the act of killing an animal is to be taken as an act of control, of overcoming fear and of taming the world. The vampire wants to teach Mohamad how to delight in inspiring fear and pain—and the act of killing a human is to be taken as an act of sadistic, brutal domination of human society.

Only the man succeeds in teaching: Felix kills the deer. But he also fails: the boy is turned by Sam, discouraged by Mohamad's incapacity to learn. Felix's ability to emulate the white men takes a degenerated form when he is made into a vampire by a degenerate white man. Those scenes are rich in meaning: the good control of nature versus the destructive domination over humans, the good white civilisation versus the degraded one, and all of this is embodied in the scene of the double entangled hunt, where the complicated significations of the hunt in the Vampire Narrative are encapsulated.

Between all the similarities, vampire hunting and human hunting bear a significant difference that is used to construct the human-animal distinction: the

493 *Van Helsing*, Season 3, Episode 4, "Rusty Cage," directed by Michael Nankin, written by Jackie May, aired October 26, 2018, on Syfy.

tools. As demonstrated in “Chłpiec z aluminiowym kubkiem w dłoni”, human discourse frequently masks the violence that lies at the basis of society. A crucial element of masking the violence is mediating it. Solar Hunters have always used weapons and tools, prostheses for their violence. Vampires kill with their bodies: their claws, fangs, and bare hands.

There is a fascinating logical twist in the condemnation of vampires: an animalistic vampire is in line with nature, in which all carnivorous animals have bodies equipped to kill their prey.⁴⁹⁴ And yet, the vampire is constructed as unnatural. The very thing that should justify vampire violence by showing it as necessary for their survival and as a part of their nature is used as a discursive element of condemnation. At the same time, the mediated violence of humans is affirmed as necessary and reasonable. The codified, legal, moral violence is opposed to the violence coming from necessity, seen as an evil desire.

It is also worth noting that most Good Vampires that have appeared throughout the 21st century no longer kill with their bodies: Vampire Hunters use swords and guns. This is even made into an issue in the case of the gun-wielding vampiress Selene from the *Underworld* movies (2003–2016)⁴⁹⁵ or Greyhound in Clay and Susan Griffith’s *Vampire Empire* trilogy (2010–2012), who mastered the art of swordsmanship, despising his natural bodily predisposition. Using a sword is uncomfortable and far less efficient than using his claws, but he refuses to do so on principle.

The hunt is a relationship between the hunted and the hunter. However, within the Vampire Narrative, the relations are mutual, complex, and blurred. Vampires hunt humans, but then human Vampire Hunters hunt the Vampires. They are both hunted and hunters, and perhaps the real prey is the Victim. There is also another hunting relationship included in the Vampire Narrative. Animal hunting can serve as a figure, an anticipation, or a necessary preparation for the Vampire Hunter.

Furthermore, hunting is linked to food: either one hunts for food or one does not hunt for food—a hunt considered somehow unsubstantial and then conceived as pleasure, sport, play, or unnecessary cruelty, as something more un-

494 This is one of the crucial vegetarian arguments against the consumption of meat: notably, vegetarians do not condemn meat-eating by carnivorous animals, for whom meat is the only possible nutriment. However, they argue that meat-eating is unnecessary for humans, citing the fact that, unlike predators, humans do not have bodies equipped to kill their prey. This lack of equipment is supposed to prove that humans are not carnivorous by nature, and killing for nutrition is an unnecessary cruelty in their case. However, the dominant culture, as expressed in the Vampire Narrative, tends to create a contrary representation: it is the predator who is the cruel monster, while human, mediated violence is entirely justifiable.

495 See Johan Höglund, “Militarizing the Vampire: Underworld and the Desire of the Military Entertainment Complex,” in *Transnational and Postcolonial Vampires: Dark Blood*, ed. Tabish Khair and Johan Höglund (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 173–88.

canny, or conversely, something more noble. Thus, the hunt is linked and opposed to another significant trope, primarily analysed in the previous section: the trope of butchery. There is also a hunt to prevent one from becoming food. This chapter explores the aforementioned paths of vampire hunting, hunting for vampires, and hunting for animals.

III.1 The Vampires' Hunting

The vampires are clearly depicted as hunters in narratives that portray them as predators or predatory monsters: from *30 Days of Night* to *Le Vampire de Be- narnes*, with the Beasts of the Night hunting both humans and animals, commanded by hunting gods. Agata Suchocka's *Daję ci wieczność* series (2018–) uses the term “hunter” (łowca) as a proper name for vampires. In most cases, vampires hunt humans, as humans are a classical source of the vampires' nourishment.

Vampires hunt for food, even though many narratives show this hunt as a sort of cruel pleasure from the vampires' side. Yet, the hunt can sometimes benefit humans: in Peter Watts' *Blindsight* (2006), Sarati restores Siri's humanity by hunting him, thereby exciting the primary human emotion of fear. Similarly, in Gavriš's novel, vampires strengthen the human race in a manner analogous to how wolves have positively impacted the ecosystem of an American National Park. However, by extension, vampires, animals, and nature remain the enemy, the opponent, or the adversary, something that humans need to distinguish themselves from if not combat. The experience of being hunted is portrayed as necessary, but something humans must overcome and leave behind.

Most narratives present a simple vision: vampire hunting humans is depicted as abject. Humans are the “natural” hunters and should not be hunted. In this context, vampires usually represent the animal that becomes a beast, disrupts the “natural” order, and revolts against humans. To transpose Arata's diagnosis of reversed colonisation —it is a reversed hunt. The beast eats the masters. In the *Laura Caxton* narrative, the image of reversal is particularly striking: the story contains an image of a family who went hunting but ended up devoured.⁴⁹⁶

Hunting humans is deemed morally unacceptable in most narratives, with the meaningful exception of some super-human stories such as Suchocka's novels. Humanised vampires are not to be hunted, either. However, when vampires are denied their humanity, they become the quarry, a *topos* analysed in the following subchapter.

496 David Wellington, *13 Bullets*, 71, Kindle.

III.2 The Vampires' Hunted

The evil un-human/in-human/non-human vampires are to be hunted like rogue, rebelled animals. The narratives proliferate with figures of Vampire Hunters. For many Heroes, it is a job; some Heroes become Vampire Hunters when society needs them to. Structurally, all narratives have a Hunter/Slayer (i. e., an opponent) to the Vampire, even if sometimes the opponent is internalised.

The Hunter was traditionally male, white, and heterosexual. Some narratives of the 21st century break this norm: L.A. Banks introduces a Black girl as the Huntress. Others are disturbingly traditional despite their appearances. Laura Caxton, the female protagonist of David Wellington's series, is significantly called a hunter throughout the narrative, which comprises many novels. She is never called a huntress. As mentioned earlier, she is symbolically masculinised.

In some narratives, however, Hunters can hardly be considered positive figures: they are too fanatical, they persecute good vampires unjustly, they hunt them even if they are not animals, they are ruthless, etc. Sometimes, such Hunters turn out to be vampires themselves, as exemplified by Kurt Wimmer's *Ultraviolet* (2006), Neil Jordan's *Byzantium* (2012), *The Originals*, and others. In Nina A. Neumann's *Ziemią wypełnisz jej usta* (2013), the protagonist calls himself Hunter (Łowca): he indeed hunts vampires but also humans. He is a murderer, and that is why vampires fascinate him—or perhaps he is just a mentally sick person who imagined it all. In Francesca Flores' *The Witch and the Vampire: A Novel* (2023), vampires hunt like animals (predators) and are hunted as animals. Some humans hunt them for money that emperors pay, some to protect their homes, and others “cut out vampire fangs and sell them as charms, on necklaces or set into rings”.⁴⁹⁷ There is “the thrill of the hunt”.⁴⁹⁸ This makes an apparent reference to the practices of the animal hunt. However, those practices are wrong mostly because the hunted vampires are human-like.

III.3 The Hunter Hero

A Hero frequently is an animal hunter before becoming the Vampire Hunter. When Oleg Divov's *Night Watcher* (2004) Hero, Andrey Luzgin, was just a boy, he was forced by his father to kill a hawk—an act he hated at the time, but which shaped his patriarchal destiny of a real man and social defender. This act anticipates and enables his further activity as the Solar Hero. Similarly, in another Russian novel, Dmitriy Sillov's *Кровь Охотника* (2011), it is the act of brutal

497 Francesca Flores, *The Witch and the Vampire*, loc. 974–75, Kindle.

498 *Ibid.*, loc. 1397.

animal killing that made Andrey into who he is. The story starts with him fighting in a ring and reminding himself of how he once killed a bear. It seems he did it for no reason other than to prove his superiority, although the narrative calls the animal a man-eater.⁴⁹⁹ A true Solar Hero needs to be the conqueror of nature first.

Casting a vampire as the Solar Hero does not change much of the situation. In the *Twilight* series, the “vegetarian” vampirism of the Cullens is an excellent excuse for hunting: under the pretext of being moral, the men attack predators only. They do not fight other types of animals because “where’s the fun in that?”⁵⁰⁰ The real reason is to prove one’s strength,⁵⁰¹ the super-man vampire superiority. The animal stands no chance in fighting a vampire, and the play the vampires engage in is cruel. Edward is above playing, but anyway, he praises himself for choosing the most dangerous predators. Hunting, a typical act of white men’s conquest, makes the Cullens who they are: it shapes them into perfect Solar Heroes, benevolent protectors of society.

However, there are also narratives with super-man Solar Vampire tropes that condemn hunting, specifically the hunting of predators—in a total reversal of the Cullens’ discourse. In Krzysztof Kotowski’s *Trzech gości w łódce plus wampir* (2022), the Solar Vampire Hero Wiktor opposes hunting: “It is easy to be a predator with a shotgun in your hand. The hunters would rather not rush to stand in an equal fight. They hide in the bushes, behind the trees. A bear fights with what he was given by nature (...). A hunter rarely hunts for food. He does it to feel the strength he cannot get out of himself by the force of his character. In my neck of the woods, we call it cowardice”⁵⁰².

With this statement, the narrator justifies both killing for food and “true” hunting, hunting without artificial weapons. Therefore, human hunting can be condemned, but super-human vampire hunting is not. The statement also contains species chauvinism: only the proud predators should be spared from the human cheated hunt.

However, some narratives include hunting for food in the overall genuinely ecological lifestyle of the actor. That is what happens in *Penny Dreadful*. The series contains many types of hunting: right witch hunting (for the evil witches), evil witch hunting (of the fanatic evil Hunters for the good witch), hunting of the werewolf, hunting for the werewolf, hunting for the vampires, hunting of the vampires, hunting animals in a wrong colonising way, but also hunting in a sustainable, ecological way. Cut-Wife is part of the ecosystem through her hunting activities. She only eats what she hunts, gathers and harvests herself. The

499 Dmitriy Sillov, *Кровь Охотника*, loc. 291, Kindle.

500 Stephenie Meyer, *Twilight, The Tenth Anniversary Edition* (New York and Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 2015), loc. 9890, Kindle.

501 *Ibid.*, loc. 9890.

502 Krzysztof Kotowski, *Trzech gości w łódce*, 78.

narrative presents the ruthlessness of her deeds (such as killing a hare with her bare hands) as profoundly in line with nature.

Drew Hayden Taylor's *The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel* presents hunting in a decolonial framework. In the narrative, hunting is a way to feel one with the universe: "surrounded by nature" and "feeling the rotation of the Earth".⁵⁰³ That is also why Tiffany's, the Solar Heroine, family name is Hunter.

This significant name puts her in the role of Vampire Hunter for a while. But since hunting is highly praised, it also means that hunting humans does not necessarily make Pierre/Owl the vampire irremediably flawed. The narrative is deprived of speciesism, and finally, it is Hunter-Vampire who becomes the Solar Hero of the whole story.

He is the hunting Vampire and the Vampire Hunter; these two roles are not shown as a dichotomy because death is also not a dichotomy of life. For Anishinaabe, God is not a person but a feeling, "a world around you,"⁵⁰⁴ and the world is a unity. Death liberates.⁵⁰⁵ Life is a circle, and "[w]ith every death, there is a birth".⁵⁰⁶ If the vampire needs to commit suicide, it is not because he hunted humans. It is because he lived for too long and needed to pass to the other side. It is also because he needs to decolonise.

* * *

The Vampire Narrative frequently animalises its actors in order to objectify them and, conversely, instrumentalise animal figures. The scope of the rights that the narratives accord to the non-humans is relatively narrow, both in its substantiality and reach. A human-centric hierarchy of beings is promoted: even if some animals are considered valuable, those are the ones who are deemed friendly to humans or beautiful and noble as per human standards. The next part of the book explores these issues further by dealing with the trope of the Diet in the Vampire Narrative.

503 Drew Hayden Taylor, *The Night Wanderer*, loc. 1100–1, Kindle.

504 *Ibid.*, loc. 1453–54.

505 *Ibid.*, loc. 2260.

506 *Ibid.*, loc. 2770.

Part Three: The Diet

This Part explores the trope of the diet in the Vampire Narrative. It is a pivotal element of the Vampire Narrative, as the diet constitutes a vampire. A vampire, specifically a vampire as defined within this book, is a fantastic monster who consumes blood. Traditionally, the blood is human, and that is what makes vampires a threat, an abject, a monster in most of the Primary Narratives.

This diet can be linked with posthumanist identity, memory construction, identity construction, and knowledge absorption, entangled in sex-food metaphors of consumption. Notably, consuming means getting to know on the deep biological level of absorption into oneself. The narratives sometimes explore this path, from Pelevin's statement that vampires know their victims by drinking their blood to the BBC's *Dracula* vision of all his consumed victims living within him. Interestingly, some biological research does seem to confirm those fantasies (notably by discovering sequences of food DNA inside the consumer's system).⁵⁰⁷

As presented in the previous Part, diet is also the core of animal issues. Human diet frequently revolves around the ultimate objectification of animals—they are turned into objects, commodities and food. However, meat production, based on the physical act of disassembling and alienation, also symbolises many other types of objectification. In the capitalist system, work is alienated from the bodies of workers. In a patriarchal system, reproductive functions are alienated from female bodies, and pornography resonates around dismembered representations of female bodies: “breasts, legs, vaginas, buttocks”.⁵⁰⁸

The consumption of animals by humans is an extreme sign of human domination over animals. Within the logic of anthropocentrism, there is an assumption that humans have the right to every other being's body. As the (hu)man

507 Rainer Schubert et al., “Foreign (M13) DNA ingested by mice reaches peripheral leukocytes, spleen, and liver via the intestinal wall mucosa and can be covalently linked to mouse DNA,” *PNAS* 94, no. 3 (February 1997): 961–66, <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.94.3.961>; Sándor Spisák et al., “Complete Genes May Pass from Food to Human Blood,” *PLoS One* 8, no. 7 (July 2013), <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0069805>. See also H. Izumi et al., “Bovine milk contains microRNA and messenger RNA that are stable under degradative conditions,” *Journal of Dairy Science* 95, no. 9 (September 2012): 4831–41, <https://doi.org/10.3168/jds.2012-5489>.

508 Phyllis Chesler, “Men and Pornography: Why They Use It,” in *Take Back the Night: Women on Pornography*, ed. Laura Lederer (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1980), 155.

is conjecturally male, it is an implicit assumption that men have the right to female animalised bodies.⁵⁰⁹ There is a tendency to see male-female romantic relations in terms of hunting and, on the other hand, a tendency to feminise hunted animals. The usual pronoun for animals is “it”; however, hunters and fishermen frequently use the pronoun “she” to describe their prey. As Carol J. Adams points out if animals are accorded “human” pronouns, it is generally by power: “he”—when animals are perceived as powerful and potentially threatening; “she”—when the animal is perceived as prey, regardless of their size (whales, does, fish, many birds, etc.).⁵¹⁰

The (hu)man is also conjecturally Western. Jacques Derrida coined the term “carnophallogocentrism” to describe the Western concept of subjectivity, to which dominating over animals and eating them is central.⁵¹¹ The Western, globally dominant definition of subject embraces individualism, maleness, Westernness, and carnism. Maleness depends on meat eating—and thus, those who do not eat meat are not male enough or not male at all, and consequently, their subjectivity is also doubtful. As noticed by Carol J. Adams, if meat is plentiful, all should eat it; if the meat supply is limited, white men should get it,⁵¹² and in extreme cases—only the manliest males, the soldiers.

In this light, it is worth noticing that Western culture is more inclined to recognise the subjectivity and rights of carnivorous animals than those of vegetarian animals. The same trend is visible in the vampire narratives analysed above. The most popular pets are dogs and cats; many people advocate for their rights while still consuming the flesh of other animals. Culturally, the most admired animals are great predators, such as lions, tigers, or birds like eagles. Yet here again, the gender difference exists. Comparison to a “placid” vegetarian delicate doe, gazelle, or even a sheep can be considered a compliment for a woman—with, then again, all the metaphors of hunting and preying describing male-female relations in the “natural” order of things. On the other hand, predators are seen as male rivals and thus are hunted in a show of power, perceived and represented as a kind of male duel over the land.

Adams also notices that the violence inherent in the meat industry, patriarchy, colonisation, and capitalism needs to be masked, hidden, and made transpar-

509 See Carol J. Adams, “The Rape of Animals, the Butchering of Women,” in *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory, 20th Anniversary Edition* (New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group, 2010), loc. 1136–645, Kindle.

510 Carol J. Adams, “Preface to the Twentieth Anniversary Edition,” in *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory, 20th Anniversary Edition* (New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group, 2010), loc.1825–43, Kindle.

511 Jacques Derrida, “Eating Well or the Calculation of the Subject: An interview with Jacques Derrida,” in *Who Comes after the Subject?*, ed. Eduardo Cadava, Peter Connor and Jean-Luc Nancy (New York and London: Routledge, 1991).

512 Carol J. Adams, “Preface to the Twentieth Anniversary Edition,” loc. 944, Kindle.

ent,⁵¹³ like in Moździuch's story. As previously mentioned, this is another reason vampires are abject. First, vampires savagely feed on humans, transgressing the fundamental borderline between man and animal by doing to humans what is only permitted to be done to animals. The second reason is that vampire makes visible and bloody the violence which "civilised" men keep hidden.

This is precisely why Renfield in Stoker's *Dracula* is qualified as a lunatic zoophage, while the Crew of Light proudly recount their hunting explorations. The difference between the blood-consuming vampire or flesh-consuming Renfield and flesh-consuming men needs to be reasserted so violently precisely because it is indeed so tenuous.

This Part concentrates on cases of diet considered particular within the narratives themselves and on narratives that stress dietary questions. The vampire diet, in general, is unique: few animals drink blood; for humans, blood is barely digestible, and in human society, blood is surrounded by many taboos. Nonetheless, as stated above, consuming human blood is a standard vampire feature: this is what vampires are. Vampire narratives take this feature for granted. Therefore, this section omits the cases of the usual vampire diet and focuses on unusual types of vampire diets and instances where the vampire diet—even if standard—is given some extra in-depth reflection. It should be noted here that by diet, I mean a choice and a routine. Therefore, the narratives in which vampires drink both human and animal blood depending on accessibility or drink animal blood accidentally due to a lack of human blood are not considered to contain any unusual vampire diet.

However, vampires are not the only ones who eat in vampire narratives. This book does not analyse other fantastic figures (werewolves, zombies, witches, etc.), but the human diet, as juxtaposed with the vampire one, is an essential component of the signification construction.

Finally, one must remember that dietary habits create systems: ecosystems, farming systems, production systems, trade systems, social systems, and political systems. That is why the slaughterhouse was the central metaphor in the story "Chłopic z aluminiowym kubkiem w dłoni". Food is nourishment, but food is also a commodity and a brand. In narratives where vampires control and manage human tissues (such as in *Daybreakers*, referencing pharmaceutical corporations) and in those where vampire blood is a commodity (*True Blood*, *The Vampire Diaries*, *The Originals*), the sacrum of blood gets commercialised.⁵¹⁴

Food is entangled in medical, biological, capitalist, and corporate relations of power. In the vampires' case, this fact becomes hyper-visible because the food is blood, not only metaphorically but in the very literal sense. It is, therefore, a

513 Ibid., loc. 544.

514 Stacey Abbott, *Undead Apocalypse*, 50–5.

pharmakon, an abject, a cure, a treatment, a drug, and a nutriment simultaneously: it is everything that food can be, in a hyperbolic version. According to Stacey Abbott, blood-as-nutriment is a space at the intersection of medicine, corporate capitalism, and militarism.

There is one dimension that does not interest me in this analysis: the possibly persuasive aesthetic dimension, or in other words, the possible compelling function of the sole aesthetics of the narrative. Sarah McFarland Taylor writes that “blood-and-guts aesthetics of drained corpses, half-consumed bodies (...) [in *True Blood*] prompted some viewers to (...) rethink their meat consumption”.⁵¹⁵ Yet, what the author forgets is that at the same time, this gore aesthetics is being presented as erotically alluring. It is attractive, first of all, in love sex practices, but even the most cruel ones are still shown as pleasurable for the doer. Therefore, the potential anti-meat-eating visual dimension is quite double-sided. Yet the research on the aesthetics’ possible and factual practical effects on the viewers is outside this book’s scope.

This Part is divided into two unequal groups of chapters. One is devoted to the vampire diet and another to the human one. The first group is very diversified: the so-called vegetarianism, then the conscious drinking of human blood as morally condoned, and finally, the cases when the vampires eat something other than blood/bloody flesh and other than “human” food. The last chapter is devoted to human diets.

515 Sarah McFarland Taylor, “Vegetarian Vampires,” 159.

Chapter I: The Vampire “Vegetarianism”

Good Guy Vampires are frequently “vegetarian”. This term is somehow misleading. Indeed, the “vegetarianism” of vampires often relies on the fact that they abstain from a usual vampire diet, i. e., from consuming humans. This abstention is sometimes very arbitrary: some narratives consider “vegetarian” consensual blood drinking directly from the human body, while others refer to drinking from packet donor blood. More frequently, the vegetarianism of vampires involves killing and drinking animals instead of humans. Some narratives also introduce a motif of artificial blood (the borders between artificially produced and modified blood are again problematic). Finally, some vampires abstain from drinking blood altogether—in those narratives, blood is considered more a drug, an addiction, than an actual nourishment—and some are indeed vegetarian, finding plant substitutes for blood. What immediately strikes me is the problematic aspect of labelling all these diets under one “vegetarian” term. The framework of such labelling is even more disturbing: “vegetarianism” is conceived as an unusual diet, a form of abstention and abnegation. This not only suggests that a vegetarian diet is somehow less attractive, less natural, or even strange, but it is also profoundly Western-centric, as it overlooks cultures where a vegetarian diet is the norm.

The potential subversive, ecological, and animal-friendly character of vampire “vegetarianism” relies first and foremost on its symbolic nature. It provides a model for the recipient: if Bill Compton can live on artificial blood, I can be vegetarian.⁵¹⁶ As Sarah McFarland Taylor puts it: “the problems of global consumption and its effects on the planet frequently get recast in contemporary vampire narratives as the personal moral and ethical struggle for ecopiety by a

516 Ariadne Blayde and George A. Dunn, “Pets, Cattle, and Higher Life Forms on *True Blood*,” in *True Blood and Philosophy: We Wanna Think Bad Things with You*, ed. William Irwin, George A. Dunn and Rebecca Housel (Hoboken: Wiley, 2010), 33–48. *True Blood and Philosophy: We Wanna Think Bad Things with You*, ed. William Irwin, George A. Dunn and Rebecca Housel (Hoboken: Wiley, 2010).

virtuous vampire who strives to temper his or her extractivist nature”.⁵¹⁷ Vegetarianism is understood here more broadly: as abstinence from consumption, with the diet serving as a symbol and one of the practices of ecopiety, as described elsewhere.

It is noteworthy that general abstinence is used to construct a new definition of pleasure, where sexuality and food are entangled. The dietetic self-restraint of vampires allows them to obtain and makes them worthy of keeping their beloved woman. The long-delayed or restricted sexual pleasure proves to have a new quality, both bodily and in a romantic sense. Be it Edward (*Twilight*), who delays sexual satisfaction until marriage, Bill (*True Blood*), who tries to maintain monogamy with Sookie, or any other vampire who needs to be physically delicate with their human, more vulnerable partner, all ultimately find true love and genuine pleasure in sexual intercourse reliant on temperance. Sex is conceived in terms of consumption and consumption in terms of sex, with both contributing to this new philosophy of sustainable enjoyment, as best expressed by the consensual love bite that crowns the intercourse in narratives such as *True Blood*. Vegetarianism also represents a new self-enhancement model, not through taking, but through abstaining from taking.⁵¹⁸

The ethics of abstaining challenge capitalism and contest the macho-patriarchal model. As a symbolic vegetarian, the new Solar Hero represents a new male archetype. He counters the model of the carnivorous conqueror of women and nature. As Carol J. Adams writes,⁵¹⁹ men who did not adhere to a meat-based diet were feminised, including racial, ethnic, and geopolitical Others, who were seen as “placid vegetarians who lack the determination and enterprising spirit of meat-eating Westerners, who had to hunt their food”.⁵²⁰ A vegetarian vampire “implicitly challenges something iconic and embedded in American [and more broadly, Western] culture”.⁵²¹ In this sense, it contests ethnocentrism.

Yet, one could argue that all of this is superficial, just like the purported ecology and environmentalism of these Good “vegetarian” vampires. As mentioned earlier, framing vegetarianism as asceticism and abstinence⁵²² is problematic, as it shows it as a form of lack, even if this lack is intended to be seen as a new excess and this abstinence as a new ecstasy. Indeed, asceticism often makes the Good Vampire weaker. Perhaps this is where the stereotype of the non-

517 Sarah McFarland Taylor, “Vegetarian Vampires,” 126.

518 *Ibid.*, 142.

519 Carol J. Adams, *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory*, 20th Anniversary Edition (New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group, 2010).

520 Masakazu Yamazaki, *Individualism and the Japanese: An Alternative Approach to Cultural Comparison*, trans. Barbara Sugihara (Tokyo: Japan Echo Inc., 2000), 10.

521 Sarah McFarland Taylor, “Vegetarian Vampires,” 128.

522 *Ibid.*, 140.

masculine vegetarian—and the non-masculine non-Westerner—returns. Moreover, one might question whether Edward (*Twilight*), Stefan, or Damon (*The Vampire Diaries*) would be as attractive if they had always been vegetarians and had never been rogue, macho murderers. It seems that vegetarianism can only be considered voluntary self-discipline under such conditions. Finally, as already explained, framing vegetarianism as self-restraint⁵²³ makes it a performance of the strong will and masculinity of the Solar Heroes rather than a result of genuine concern for other beings.

That attitude is deeply Western-centred: self-restraint is a performance of civilisation as defined by Western discourse.⁵²⁴ The traditional male Hero was not only a masculine hunter-meat-eater in opposition to the feminine non-Western “placid vegetarians”. He was also a civilised hunter in opposition to the non-Western savages, whose bestial appetites remained untamed as they lacked self-discipline. Indeed, those savages were frequently seen as cannibals, and the vampire Monster was their best representation. In the Good Vampire narratives, the vampire becomes a Western Hero, and logically, he cannot remain the same uncivilised Monster he used to be. He needs to acquire the features of the Western civilised hunter. This introduces yet another issue related to vampire “vegetarianism”: the problem of assimilation. Perhaps the core of becoming a “vegetarian” vampire lies precisely in a vampire becoming less vampiric.

Practising “vegetarianism” is performing the identity of the Solar Hero. And this identity remains anthropocentric. It is perhaps best shown in *Twilight*, where Bella Swan’s actual vegetarianism is supposed to be a counterpart to Edward Cullen’s vampire “vegetarianism” (hunting animals). If both can be considered analogous, it is because Bella and Edward’s vegetarianisms pivot around the performing subjects, not the subjects of concern. There are no subjects and no concern: in those vegetarianisms, animals are only objects serving to perform one’s lifestyle.

Such an individualist approach borders on narcissism, and indeed, the very conception of self-enhancing through vegetarianism is deeply narcissistic. Moreover, this narcissism is sadomasochistic. It is a self-concentrated mixture of love of self and self-loathing. The enhancement and the pleasure come only through asceticism, which is very close to suffering.

If the Good Vampire “vegetarianism” is more an attitude, a lifestyle, than an ethical concern, it is, as has already been mentioned, necessarily entangled in the capitalist consumption system. A lifestyle is a product to be sold and bought: vegetarianism is like Pilates, Zumba, yoga, and others. It can even become an

523 Ibid., 140.

524 Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: Sociogenetic and Psychogenetic Investigations*, 2nd ed., trans. Edmund Jephcott (Hoboken: Blackwell Publishers, 2000).

advertisement: in *True Blood*, the vegetarianism of the vampires was to be sold in exchange for their social inclusion, and it also advertised vampires as harmless and even worthy citizens. Significantly, one of the arguments for the social inclusion of the vampires was that they were taxpayers. The embrace of the capitalist system seems a condition *sine qua non* of social inclusion in the “vegetarian” Good Vampire narratives. Vampires are good through the proper methods of consumption. Their abstinence is an ideological component of the capitalist politics of pleasure:⁵²⁵ maintain a healthy, moderate lifestyle so that you can enjoy longer and so that you can be a long-term consumer.

The following subchapters explore the above-mentioned particular cases of vampire “vegetarianism”. They are devoted to human-eating “vegetarianism”, animal-eating “vegetarianism”, artificial-blood “vegetarianism”, complete asceticism, and actual vegetarianism, i. e. plant-eating.

1.1 The Vampire Consuming “Canned” Blood

The definition of “vegetarianism” when it comes to feeding directly on the bodies of people is problematic. Some narratives, like *True Blood*, do not consider that a vampire breaks his “vegetarian” lifestyle when he feeds on consensual lovers. Yet, this situation is particularly liminal. First, it blurs the differences between sex and food even more than the Vampire Narrative usually does. Second, the element of consent is highly problematic. What to do with vampires’ power of seduction? In a sense, the supposed consent was always there, and that is why Stoker’s Lucy was implicitly guilty of being attacked. This type of “consent” bear important similarities to sometimes implied consent for rape. It is still very present in the “vegetarian” vampire narratives. Brutal raping-feeding on Sookie by her lover does not transgress the limits of Bill’s “vegetarianism” within *True Blood*, raising questions about the narrative’s approach to the abuse inside the relationship.

But the lovers’ relationship is not necessary to make vampire’s feeding vegetarian. In *Vampire Empire*, Greyfriar/Gareth forbade human killing in his domain; he only consumes small doses of blood from the donors. His grateful subjects willingly donate those. In Grzegorz Uzdanski’s *Wypiór* (2021), the vampire is ethically fine as long as he does not kill the person or make a person sick with anaemia. At times, drinking human blood can even relieve the suffering person, as in the case of some mentally ill individuals haunted by visions and insomnia.

The killing-versus-non-killing border is also not always clear. In most narratives, the fact that a feeding does not kill the feeder can indicate “vegetarian-

525 Susan Chaplin, *The Postmillennial Vampire*, loc. 1256, Kindle.

ism”. However, in the short French story by Christian Vilà, “Les Ravageurs: une histoire d’amour” (2014), consensual killing (euthanasia?) of humans is also considered “vegetarian”.

On the contrary, eating packed blood is a clear *topos*. While not all narratives agree on it, many perceive it as vegetarianism. Perhaps the most interesting are the narratives that consider the packed blood diet specific yet explicitly exclude vegetarianism from their narratives. As already mentioned, the open mockery of the eco-vegetarian lifestyle is especially present in Eastern European, specifically Russian, narratives.

In Yuliya Nabokova’s *VIP значит вампир* book series (2008–2010), good vampires drink packet blood, but if a vampire starts to drink animal blood, they can begin to think they are animals themselves, and even fall in love with an animal. This logic is supported by the fact that the vampire is supposed to have features of his creator, called “donor”, as their blood needs to be consumed by the human to change the human into a vampire. The two things form the logic of “I am what I eat”, which Carol Adams defines as a characteristic of the carnist worldview.

“Vegetarian” associations are explicitly denied by the Hero of the TB-3 Channel series *Пятая стража* (2012–2016). Feliks does not drink “fresh blood” (i. e., warm blood directly from humans) but cold donor blood (kept in the fridge) from blood points, sometimes mockingly called tinned (canned) blood, консервы (episode 37). He pours it from packets into glasses.

Max, Feliks’ older brother and adversary, obviously drinks “living blood”/ “fresh blood”, and he uses his medical practice to drink blood from unconscious patients lying on the operating table. He also mocks Feliks for his humanitarianism, highlighting his own much younger appearance due to his less human way of feeding. Yet Max’s method of feeding is one of the reasons for his uncontrolled behaviour: in fact, such blood is like a drug, and over time, Max becomes increasingly similar to a person with an addiction. Max’s intake of “fresh blood” increases, and he becomes more psychically unstable, even monstrous: his eyes turn a shining green, and his voice becomes lower and more animalistic, resembling a growl.

Feliks’ sacrifice is comparable to those made by Western heroes in *The Vampire Diaries*, *True Blood*, or *Twilight*, but it is not conceived as “vegetarianism”; on the contrary, Feliks specifically distances himself from any form of vegetarian diet, be it the fake vegetarianism depicted in narratives such as *Twilight*, or the actual one.

* * *

Packed blood is not always a free choice for the vampires. In Emilis Velyvis’ *Guardians of the Night* (2016), the vampires are coerced to drink only blood from blood banks. The narrative claims that the good vampires do it voluntarily because they do not want to harm humans. Still, it is difficult to find it credible, knowing that humans dominate and only stopped hunting vampires on the condition that vampires do not “bother” them. Some vampires do not agree with this state of affairs—but Jankul’s rebellion, shown as a brutal act of terrorism, is ruthlessly repressed.

* * *

In some narratives, by contrast, the practice of drinking donors’ blood is considered worse. Interestingly, this practice is then connected with a vegetarian dairy diet rather than with meat production. In *Daybreakers* and even in the unfinished series *Age of the Living Dead* (2018), humans are milked, and their blood is distributed to the vampires. According to Sarah McFarland Taylor, vampires “trap humans (like animals) to be factory farmed (...). Humans are heavily sedated and warehoused in cramped factory conditions—the vampire equivalent of veal—where they are machine ‘milked’ for their blood”.⁵²⁶

An important element of consent is involved: notably, humans do not consent to being donors. In *Daybreakers*, milked humans are kept unconscious. In *Age of the Living Dead*, humans and vampires signed a pact, but this pact can hardly be considered consensual. Humans are obliged to donate their blood every week. In exchange, vampires do not attack humans. Therefore, instead of the symbiosis and cooperation implied in the images of blood exchange in Greyfriar’s case in *Vampire Empire*, the narrative conveys significations of abuse, latent war, and perpetual conflict.

Paradoxically, one can also define the problem in terms of awareness rather than consent. The narratives that depict packet blood consumption as “vegetarian” often involve the consumption of blood from unaware donors. Notably, vampires buy, steal or otherwise obtain blood from donors’ points, hospitals, and other places without the donors or others knowing. In *The Vampire Diaries*, good vampires drink packet blood, especially since Stefan’s animal “vegetarian” diet proved ineffective. In *Hemlock Grove*, Annie and other upirs from her community live without hunting, milking humans, or using other morally dubious medical solutions. Kotowski’s narrator also argues that drinking packet blood is perfectly ethical. In *Being Human* (Canadian/American), vampires’ needs cannot

526 Sarah McFarland Taylor, “Vegetarian Vampires,” 161.

be fully satisfied with this type of blood, but the good vampires attempt to live on it anyway.

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Finally, some narratives do not hide that drinking donors’ blood is primarily motivated by egoism. Jim Jarmusch’s *Only Lovers Left Alive* (2012) suggests that vampires’ moderate consumption of packet blood is linked with ecological concern for the world. The metaphors of ecological catastrophe and shrinking resources are clear. However, vampires’ regimentation and temperance are also very self-centred. In a decaying world, it is challenging to obtain uncontaminated blood.

Similarly, in Galina Polynskaya’s book series *Тайные стражи* (2018–2021), Feliks’ motives are self-serving. Until he obtains a cure, he drinks human blood, which he buys from blood points. He does it because the blood of random people is nowadays so mixed with chemicals, drugs, and medicines that it is poisonous to him. Additionally, there is a lot of sick blood that could harm him. Feliks’ general restraint in drinking blood is also due to biological necessity rather than willpower: blood makes him nauseated. His “vegetarianism” is for his own benefit, not for ethical reasons such as the immorality of killing. His complaint about human blood mirrors discourses about the declining quality of meat, where everything is considered chemical and tastes the same.⁵²⁷ This both subverts (parodies) such food discourses and legitimises them. Just like in most of the narratives, “canned blood” *topos* legitimises carnism rather than vegetarianism. The next section explores an even more paradoxical *topos*.

1.2 The Animal-Eating “Vegetarian”

Perhaps all the criticism of vampire “vegetarianism” outlined at the beginning of this chapter best applies to the “absurd”⁵²⁸ vegetarianism of animal-eating vampires. This attitude presents several severe problems.

First and foremost, it is obviously neither vegetarian, ecological, nor animal-friendly. It is purely anthropocentric, valuing human life above all else. Of course, as was already mentioned, one could argue that through the vampire’s self-restraint, the narratives promote human self-restraint towards non-human beings and even non-beings. This is suggested by Bella’s vegetarianism pairing with Edward’s “vegetarianism”. However, this pairing subverts the idea of vegetari-

527 Galina Polynskaya, *Эликсир для вампира*, loc. 312–15, Kindle.

528 Michael J. Goebel, “‘Embraced’ by Consumption,” 222.

anism. “In the process, non-human animals are rendered figurative tofu [Edward explicitly speaks this in the *Twilight* movie] and their value as living, breathing, feeling creatures largely denied”.⁵²⁹

Interestingly, some narratives perform a division between edible and non-edible animals, with variations in approach. In “Icare”, rats (a rather despised animal in Western tradition) are deemed acceptable for feeding. In *Twilight*, predators are considered the appropriate objects of conquest. Other narratives reflect the traditional Western division between meat and companion animals. For example, in Derek Lee and Clif Prowse’s *Afflicted* (2013), Derek initially tries to feed on animals—a practice he later finds impossible. He attempts to catch a dog, arguing that humans consume cows all the time, but his friend Clif protests, asserting that this is not the same. Clif’s argument is purely anthropocentric, noting that dogs belong to people, have names, sleep with them, and are parts of their families. Derek might have considered feeding on a stray dog, but unable to find one, he is forced to seek another animal.

The fact that, in most narratives, human blood is portrayed as the natural nourishment for vampires, while “vegetarianism” is not, is, in a sense, anti-vegetarian as well. Moreover, “vegetarianism” is typically depicted as weakening. Interestingly, this same idea is present in narratives about evil, human-eating vampires, such as in Ashman’s *Vampire: The Curse of Sekhmet*. The portrayal of human blood as more nourishing perpetuates the hierarchy of beings: the human “is still interpreted as the highest form of evolved creature, the one who will provide the greatest life force and the one who bestows the greatest strength onto the vampire. (...) The issue of evolution and hierarchy is indeed an important one, one that is strictly connected to the vampire’s blood needs”.⁵³⁰

Moreover, as I have already discussed, the portrayal of vampire animal-eating “vegetarianism” as insufficient is Western-centric. It overlooks vegetarian cultures where a plant-based diet is the norm. Indeed, the animal-hunting vampire closely resembles the archetype of the proud Western conqueror. This is perhaps best exemplified by Edward Cullen’s hunting philosophy, which I have already analysed.

And finally, this form of vegetarianism is deeply entangled in capitalist power relations. As Micheal J. Goebel observes,⁵³¹ it is not only absurd, but vampires’ “choices” are also reflective of modern, class-driven food consumption trends. Wealthier individuals can afford healthier and more exclusive diets, such as organic or vegetarian lifestyles, which are substantially more expensive than

529 Sarah McFarland Taylor, “Vegetarian Vampires,” 144.

530 Lorna Piatti-Farnell, *The Vampire in Contemporary Popular Literature* (New York and London: Routledge, 2014), 28.

531 Michael J. Goebel, “‘Embraced’ by Consumption,” 222.

mass-produced food. This mirrors the self-centred nature of the packet-blood choice seen in Feliks or the eponymous lovers in Jarmusch’s film. The most prominent example of a wealthy “vegetarian” vampire family is the Cullens from *Twilight*, though other narratives exhibit similar themes. In the MTV mini-series *Valemont* (2009), the vampire community—excluding those living outside the law—follows a “vegetarian” diet. This allows them to coexist safely with humans, live longer, and maintain better health. In contrast, vampires who consume human blood gain transformative abilities, elongated fangs, and an allergy to sunlight but become addicted and have shorter lifespans compared to their vegetarian counterparts.

Paul Kupperberg’s short story “Man Bites Dog” provides perhaps the most brutal illustration that animal-blood “vegetarianism” is not truly about animals at all. In the narrative, animals are portrayed as morally acceptable food for both humans and vampires. This *status quo* is unchallenged. Good vampires either drink packet blood from donors or consume animal blood. However, one young and inexperienced vampire accidentally transforms animals into vampires by feeding on them. The food becomes the predator; it starts to hunt and evolves into a monstrous threat. This reversal is vividly represented in the physical appearance of the vampirised animals: they look cute and sweet, akin to Disney cartoons,⁵³² but reveal themselves as bloodthirsty vampires. They become uncontrollable and must perish.

* * *

Some Good Vampires narratives try to problematise animal-eating vegetarianism. Stefan from *The Vampire Diaries* is similar to Edward Cullen. His humanitarian “vegetarianism” stems from his obsession with control: he wants to control everyone and everything, including himself, his own body, and his hunger.⁵³³ Stefan’s attitude is mocked by his brother Damon, who criticises it for its pseudo-morality (killing animals in comparison with drinking packet blood, which does not kill anyone), and ultimate ineffectiveness in stopping Stefan’s terrible bloodthirst that erupts violently from time to time. A very similar mocking stance can be found in Polish author Andrzej Pilipiuk’s *Cykl z wam-*

532 Paul Kupperberg, “Man Bites Dog,” in *Vampires: Dracula and the Undead Legions*, ed. Dave Ulanski and Garrett Anderson (Calumet City: Moonstone, 2009), loc. 2135, Kindle.

533 Heidi R. Kling, “Case Notes: Salvatore, Stefan and Salvatore, Damon,” in *A Visitor’s Guide to Mystic Falls: Your Favorite Authors on The Vampire Diaries*, ed. Red, Heather Vee and Leah Wilson (Dallas: BenBella Books, 2010), loc.1589, Kindle.

pirem (2011–2018). However, both narratives introduce another problematic form of Good Vampires’ abstinence, as discussed in this chapter.

* * *

It may seem that female and feminist Vampire Heroines would be more authentically ecological. Yet, this is not the case. The vampire Heroine of Priscilla Llorca’s *Vampire Solitaire* ongoing series (2017–) is a female version of the Good Guy Vampire “vegetarian”. After getting her soul back, Anna drinks only animal blood. This makes her weaker but prevents her from becoming the bloodthirsty vampire again. In Xan Cassavetes’ *Kiss of the Damned* (2012), the central axis of the story is traced between animal-eating Djuna, the good vampiress, and her depraved human-eating sister Mimi. “Vegetarianism” is again about the overall lifestyle and humans being the most valuable creatures.

The diet expresses the narrative’s final anthropocentrism in Francesca Flores’ *The Witch and the Vampire: A Novel* (2023). Ava, the vampire, embraces animal killing: “The thought of killing an innocent creature makes my stomach roil, but at least it will stop me from attacking a human”.⁵³⁴ “It’s still killing, but at least it’s not a human (...); if I kill this squirrel now, that will spare a human from my thirst”.⁵³⁵

When Ava becomes the vampire queen, she plans to teach all her followers to feed on animals. This change is pivotal. If vampires were a result of the harm made upon nature by humans and the expression of nature’s revolt, she wants them to shift their aim: revenge is taken away. It is a turn from being the sword of nature against humanity, which harmed it, into harming the non-human beings who have always been a part of nature. It is, indeed, leaving the side of nature and siding with society against it.

Another interesting insight into Ava’s diet is that the narrative claims she kills any being only when she does it with her own hands. There is no mention of Ava being vegetarian in her human life, yet when she kills a squirrel, she claims it is the first animal she has ever killed. The logic of killing being killing only if done with one’s own hands is also visible in her statements about her diet in her mother’s home. While imprisoned by her mother, she drank the human blood Eugenia gave her, but she claims she has never killed a human.⁵³⁶ In an ultimate rejection of vegetarian logic, the narrative seems to consider violence inexistent when it is masked and mediated. The next section analyses the third most common “vegetarian” vampire diet.

534 Francesca Flores, *The Witch and the Vampire*, loc. 892, Kindle.

535 *Ibid.*, loc. 1330–37.

536 *Ibid.*, loc. 469.

1.3 The Artificial Blood

The vampire “vegetarianism” can also rely on artificial blood.⁵³⁷ Synthetic blood is as debatable in terms of vegetarianism as artificial meat, but that is not the only issue. First, artificial blood is a result of scientific innovation. It is a purely civilisational product. It is deeply entangled in social and political relations of power, domination, and inequality through science, medicine, and technology. Second, the artificial-blood vegetarianism is no less an attitude of self-restraint and lifestyle choice than the animal-blood one. As mentioned, Bill’s recycling and diet in *True Blood* have only himself in common.

This lifestyle is a commodity. Individual ethos of vegetarianism is deeply capitalist: “[G]reen consumer marketing is quick to offer a template”⁵³⁸ for what one should do: global capitalism and market ideology convince individuals that it “requires the performance of a correlative ‘consumopiety,’ or acts of ‘virtuous consumption’”.⁵³⁹ Being vegetarian in *True Blood* requires purchasing a global corporation’s product: bottled artificial blood. This is a condition of being eco-pious and a requirement for social inclusion.

Finally, blood becomes both a commodity and a brand. As Susan Chaplin puts it, the brand is a signifier that replaces the signified, pointing to a lack and inciting a desire that can never be satisfied, as the capitalist system relies on the striving towards unavailable pleasure (*jouissance*).⁵⁴⁰ One continually needs more. This striving replaces religion and the Law. And a vampire is the perfect—eternal—consumer: vampires live forever and thus forever need the product. This section closely analyses four narratives (*True Blood*, *Morbius*, *Tajne Akta Vespera*, and *Видеоблог вампира*) that exemplify those three problematic aspects of the artificial blood *topos*. It ends with the analysis of the narratives that see artificial blood as a threat to humanity.

* * *

True Blood introduces the tension between different types of diet, such as human-blood and artificial-blood drinkers, with occasional modifications, like vampire-blood drinkers. Tru Blood, the artificial blood, is a powerful tool of social control wielded by capitalist corporations, the media, and elites. Bruce McClelland writes that Tru Blood, as a trope of control through consumption,

537 The associations between artificial blood and vegetarianism are sometimes very evident, as in the humorous novel *Suck It Up* by Brian Meehl (2008): artificial blood is produced from soya.

538 Sarah McFarland Taylor, “Introduction,” 5.

539 *Ibid.*, 4.

540 Susan Chaplin, *The Postmillennial Vampire*, loc. 975, 1169, Kindle.

alludes to the shift in American anti-terrorist strategy during the second half of the first decade of the 21st century. The post-Bush era moved from a fanatic crusade to assimilation into the system via consumption. Former enemies are now courted to be defanged and absorbed by the system.⁵⁴¹

Yet the resistance to the “vegetarian” diet is also profoundly entangled in power relations: the desire of the old elites to regain control and return to the “good old times” is mirrored by the dream of conservative humans who view vampires as unacceptable, bloodthirsty monsters. After the Sanguinista *coup d’etat*, the new vampire authorities seek to force vampires back to the old diet. They destroy Tru Blood factories and blame human terrorists for the destruction, escalating hostilities between humans and vampires and convincing vampires that humans have “asked for” being hunted. Then, the human fanatic governor, Truman Burrell, strips vampires of their civil rights, incites hatred and produces poisoned Tru Blood to infect vampires with a deadly virus.

The new dietary product, New Blood, marks the final triumph of the Good Vampires. This drink was developed based on Sarah Newlin’s blood. After discovering the cure for the virus in her blood, Yakanomo Corporation, the Japanese company producing Tru Blood, proposed that vampires Eric and Pam cooperate in distributing New Blood, the healing and feeding liquid—the medical food.

Yakanomo managed to synthesise an exact copy of Sarah’s blood. However, producing a one-time complete cure would not be profitable. New Blood is strong enough to help the sick but insufficient to cure them completely. Therefore, vampires will always buy it—and as they are eternal, they will buy it forever. The CEO of Yakanomo Corporation compares this to the everlasting Gillette razor: they could produce a complete cure, but they won’t, as it would not be profitable.⁵⁴²

In the end, Eric kills everyone from Yakanomo Corporation when they try to outsmart him, takes over the production and enters the stock exchange. The Good Vampire is yet another white man who dominates the capitalist social system. In the underground of his bar, he still keeps Sarah Newlin. Vampires can drink directly from her for a special price of one hundred thousand dollars for 60 seconds of drinking. She is both a milking cow and a piece of meat (she is hanging from the ceiling like an animal carcass), as well as a prostituted woman. The money is paid to her “owner” per time limit; Pam, who was a brothel-keeper in her human life, collects it. Sarah’s body is staged in a sadistic ritual: she is dressed in white, and vampires drink from her neck and thighs.

541 Bruce A. McClelland, “Un-True Blood: The Politics of Artificiality,” in *True Blood and Philosophy: We Wanna Think Bad Things with You*, ed. William Irwin, George A. Dunn and Rebecca Housel (Hoboken: Wiley, 2010), 79–91.

542 *True Blood*, Season 7, Episode 8, “Almost Home,” directed by Jesse Warn, written by Kate Barnow, aired August 10, 2014, on HBO.

The narrative portrays Sarah as the villainous conservative activist and the vampires as figures of transgression, but the final image is strikingly conservative. Eric, the white, wealthy man, is a model dominator. Sarah, a female and animal figure, is the model victim of the capitalist system, specifically of food production and medical corporations.

* * *

True Blood is not the only narrative constructed around artificial blood. The artificial-versus-actual-blood division plays a crucial role in Daniel Espinosa's *Morbius* (2022). Morbius was both a sick person and a doctor. He created artificial blood and then cured himself of a fatal blood disease by transforming into a vampire. Just as he was able to overcome his illness thanks to his Solar medical power, he can control his vampiric side with the same means.

On the contrary, Milo, the villain, who was also sick and cured by Morbius' vampire serum, does not control himself, nor does he want to. He hunts and kills humans and drinks their blood. The difference between the Doctor Hero and the Sick Monster is demonstrated through their diet contrasts.

* * *

The Polish narrative, Magdalena Kozak's *Tajne Akta Vespera* cycle (2006–2017), is an equally interesting case. A vampire can eat "human" food to disguise himself, but he doesn't like it, nor does it sustain him. Vampires need blood, and it cannot be animal blood. The Nighters drink artificially produced blood, purified of all human biological markers such as hormones. It is obviously packet blood. Renegades drink "true" blood. It is also usually in packets, but it is human blood as it is, full of all biological substances, and it comes from killing. However, when they finally sign a truce with the Nighters, their blood supply system is established: the supply of packet "true" blood from donors is ensured.

Therefore, the crucial difference between "true" and "purified" blood lies not in their sourcing but in their components, which influence the consumer's organism. True blood is like drugs, while purified blood is like wine. For Renegades, true blood symbolises total freedom and the life of the "true predator";⁵⁴³ for Nighters, true blood implies addiction and animalisation. Purified blood denotes civilisation. Thus, the diet is once more about lifestyle, the male consumer, and his identity performance rather than about anything or anyone consumed.

Renegades' existence itself is the result of the dietary split. There were five Vampire Clans, each with a different specialisation. One was the Warrior Clan,

543 Magdalena Kozak, *Nocarz*, 113.

created to protect vampires from humans. When purified blood was invented, Ultor lobbied for all vampires to drink it exclusively and signed the Alliance with the humans. The Warriors became the Nighters and joined the ranks of the human police to protect both humans and vampires. In Poland, they joined the ABW. Ultor convinced all the Vampire Clans and the Hidden (the vampires’ creator) himself. However, not all vampires managed to drink purified blood. Some, like Atrox, the former Lord Warrior, and many other Warriors, did not. They became Renegades, and Ultor started a war with them. For the Renegades, the Nighters are traitors: they consider hunting humans for food more justifiable than killing their vampire brothers over lifestyle differences.

What is most significant about this conflict is that it’s centred on the vampires. That is why the Renegades’ point of view can be presented as valid. Vampires are super-humans, and the conflict may indeed be seen as the conflict between vegetarianism and carnism and the right of supposedly superior beings to kill inferior ones. Yet, as demonstrated before, it is less about the subjects or objects of care and consumption than about the masculine identity of the consumer. The core of it is whether the Hero should be a self-disciplined, self-controlling soldier or a wilful, free partisan. The solution to the conflict is the creation of the new Clan of Innanits to keep the balance between the Nighters and the Renegades. They can drink both purified and true blood without getting addicted to the latter. They are, therefore, given true freedom, once again expressed through their diet.⁵⁴⁴

The final dietary image is ultimately false regarding vegetarianism: it shows the Innanits as sometimes vegetarian, sometimes not, and as we know, being sometimes or partially vegetarian means not being vegetarian at all. The narrative also shows that “vegetarian” vampires (Nighters) are somehow fanatic about their lifestyle and intolerant towards other lifestyles. Finally, the ultimate vision of reconciliation implies that “vegetarianism” and non-vegetarianism are only lifestyles, not an actual expression of care or lack thereof. The relative taming of the Renegades’ diet is more about social control than about real change in their diet. Even the fact that human killing is ultimately forbidden loses its ground-breaking importance in this context.

* * *

Maks Maksimov’s *Видеоблог вампира* (2020) presents a complicated path that the eponymous Hero goes through, from hunting humans to consuming artificial blood. From the beginning of his life as a vampire, Fyodor tried to be somewhat “vegetarian”. He first attempted to live on animal blood but could not survive on

544 Magdalena Kozak, *Nikt* (Lublin: Fabryka Słów, 2008), 332.

it. Then he tried to hunt only sick people who had significantly less life to live, but they were not easy to recognise, so he chose to hunt older people. He still tries to practise a sort of abnegation; he follows a zero-waste lifestyle. He tries to kill humans without making them suffer, does not waste the blood, and kills only for sustenance (he drinks half a litre of blood per day, so he kills once every ten days). Finally, in the future world, he consumes 3D-printed blood.

The narrative is ecologically double-edged. It de-monstrualises non-human beings and removes humans from the centre of the world and the top of the hierarchy of beings: there is a predator who feeds on them. Particularly striking is the treatment of human bodies: as food from which the “rests”⁵⁴⁵ can stay. Yet it remains disputable if the attitude of eating-but-not-wasting can be called animal-friendly. The narrative promotes a zero-waste lifestyle but also shows that vampires cannot survive on animal blood, and by that, it implicitly suggests that, in the same way, humans cannot survive without meat. Moreover, the narrative is less sympathetic towards animals than generally antipathetic towards humans.

* * *

The narratives that criticise artificial blood “vegetarianism” are, however, no less anti-vegetarian. They introduce the perspective of the artificial blood vampire diet as threatening to humans. In *Age of the Living Dead*, the invention of synthetic blood catalyses the conflict, radicalises humans and vampires, and accelerates the outbreak of open war. Humans are convinced that since vampires won’t need them anymore, they will exterminate them.

Similarly, in Dmitriy Sillov’s *Кровь Охотника* (2011), it is suggested that if humans stop being necessary for vampires and werewolves, humanity will cease to exist. It will be because vampires and werewolves will be freed from the urge to drink blood by the intake of hybrid blood. Andrey argues that vegetarians who do not drink milk (the more fitting word “vegan” is not used) do not need cows.

Such statements cite carnist discourse that presents a meat-based diet as beneficial for cattle: cattle exist only because humans eat them, so it is the act of eating and killing them that brings them into existence in the first place. As the previous sections explored the different *topoi* of “vegetarian” vampire diets that turn out not to be vegetarian at all, the next sections explore more radical diets based on a total non-consumption of blood.

545 Maks Maksimov, *Видеоблог вампира*, loc. 78, Kindle.

I.4 No Blood at All

Another way for a vampire to remain “vegetarian” is not to drink or eat blood at all. In the British *Being Human* series, Mitchell and Hal choose to fast. In the DK Entertainment series *Карамора* (2022), the ascetic renouncement from blood drinking can cure vampirism. That is what Tolstoy managed to do.

However, the narrative mocks the ecologism and vegetarianism of the Tolstoyan movement anyway. Tolstoy feels repressed by his followers, fanatics of the nature-rhythm and vege lifestyle. When he manages to escape from them, he immediately eats steak in a restaurant. He is happy that he does not consume humans anymore, but he thinks abstention from eating meat is a step too far. The ascesis is as much human-centric as animal-blood “vegetarianism” was.

I.5 The Actual Vegetarianism

Interestingly, I found only one case of actual vegetarianism among the whole corpus (I need to reiterate that humorous and non-adult works are essentially excluded from it⁵⁴⁶). This was Galina Polynskaya’s book series *Тайные стражи* (2018–2021). After getting a cure for vampire solar allergy and bloodthirst, Feliks drinks only coconuts.

However, it is not his choice but a necessity: he cannot eat anything else as a side effect of the cure. He should be able to start a more diversified diet gradually, but it proves impossible until the agency “Gnosis” finally manages to create food similar to what he remembers from his youth. At the end of the narrative, Feliks is completely cured and eats a “human dinner” that helps him regain his mirror reflection. This dinner consists of chicken, bread, and potatoes, all of which are said to be grown in the laboratory in a special microclimate.⁵⁴⁷ The chicken is treated as an object, with no reference to the animal that died in the process of getting the meat. This is particularly striking, considering that Feliks has two animal friends. Yet he also feeds them meat, performing the crucial difference characteristic for carnism: the division into food and companion animals. It is also worth mentioning that Feliks does not really condemn other vampires drinking human blood unless they attack one of his friends.

The inability to eat contemporary food is consistent with Feliks’ previous inability to drink contemporary humans’ contaminated blood. Both enter into

546 I also do not include Susan Hubbard’s *Ethical Vampire Series* (2007–), firstly because it was not finished, and secondly because the vampires’ “pescetarianism” can hardly be counted as vegetarianism.

547 Galina Polynskaya, *Театр Эль Вагант*, loc. 5216, Kindle.

the discourse of complaining about how the quality of meat is degrading, how everything is chemical and tastes the same.⁵⁴⁸ Feliks is incredibly picky and sophisticated rather than animal-friendly.

Feliks is very rich, and his diet reflects the already mentioned class-driven trends in food consumption, where the wealthier get healthier and fully organic food.⁵⁴⁹ It is noteworthy that the vampires who did not receive the cure still need to drink blood: low-class vampires drink animal blood, while the aristocracy drink human blood. The social hierarchy is reflected in the type of diet, and the hierarchy of beings is reflected in the hierarchy of food.

Feliks' vegetarianism is as entangled in gender power relations as carnism. Feliks hates his female friend Daana, believing he saw her consuming his sisters on the Inquisition stake. Indeed, Daana is the desert demon, shapeshifter, and fire incarnate; it is unclear whether she objectively exists or whether she embodies Feliks' fear of fire and, by extension, the sun. This fear stops him from completely adjusting to sunlight even after taking the cure.

In any case, Daana is treated instrumentally by both the narrative and the protagonist. He takes his revenge: sucks out her life energy or simply tortures her psychically. In the end, Daana disappears as if she never existed, just after their physical intercourse. However, she is shown as not only wanting it but genuinely enjoying it, begging Feliks to make her feel how it is when he kills someone. Sex with Daana, impregnated with sadism, is more like a confrontation, the overcoming, the conquest—and possibly the destruction—of his fear and even of its source.

That becomes clear when Daana's blood turns out to be coconut milk. Vegetarian Feliks drinks it from her body during sex. The very next day, Daana disappears while he manages to eat human food, meat included, regains his mirror reflection, and becomes utterly immune to sunlight.

* * *

The “vegetarianisms” of vampires in the 21st century is a recurring and popular *topos*. There is a whole range of them, from the indeed absurd to actual vegetarianism or even absolute asceticism. Surprisingly, they seem primarily human-centred and are profoundly entangled in capitalism and Western-centrism. The next chapter examines the trope of vampires who stick to the traditional vampire diet and make an effort to find moral justification for it.

548 Galina Polynskaya, *Эликсир для вампира*, loc. 312–15, Kindle.

549 Michael J. Goebel, “‘Embraced’ by Consumption,” 222.

Chapter II: The Man-Eating Vampire

It can be argued that “non-vegetarian” vampires are some of the most animal-friendly figures in the Vampire Narrative. According to Lorna Piatti-Farnell, vampire narratives reverse and pervert the human hierarchy of beings, which in Western culture was based on “killing and eating other animals’ flesh as an ultimate proof and authentication of human superiority”. Humans lose their status.⁵⁵⁰

Vampires like Dracula fed on humans, not animals. They embodied the fear of the revenge of eaten animals who come to eat humans. By doing so, they also represented the vengeance of the discriminated, hungry human Others who return to exploit the white men as white men exploited them, a concept Arata refers to as reversed colonisation.

Meat is a space where the white men’s domination over the land, animals, and the Others intersect. Animals were exploited because they were made into meat, but the consumption of meat by some (specifically, the white men in the global West/North) also frequently meant—and still means—that others must go hungry. The production of meat consumes so much of energy, land, and plants to feed animals that meat consumption by some means that others have reduced possibilities to grow even plants for themselves. The human-hunting vampire is the avenger of both ethnic Others and the animals. The animal-eating vampire is a figure that sanctions the well-established order of exploitation.

Some of the 21st century vampire narratives do not view man-eating vampires as abominations that need to be eradicated or as elements of nature that need and can be subdued. On the contrary, they cast man-eating vampires as positive actors.

However, the overall human-constructed hierarchy of superiority based on who eats whom frequently remains in these narratives. It (re)establishes old hierarchies of species and new hierarchies of super-humanity. This chapter analyses narratives where vampires drink blood and reflect on it, considering

550 Lorna Piatti-Farnell, *The Vampire in Contemporary Popular Literature*, 28.

how and why they have the right to do so. While promoting non-animal-eating vampires, most of these narratives are more super-human than animal-centred. Some are openly anti-nature or perfectly indifferent to questions of animal consumption. I begin the analysis with samples from the already examined *The Vampyricon* and Agata Suchocka's ongoing Polish book series *Daję ci wieczność* series (2018–). I then proceed with the seemingly animal-friendly works: Krzysztof Kotowski's *Trzech gości w łódce plus wampir* and Vilà's short story "Les Ravageurs: une histoire d'amour".

* * *

In *The Vampyricon*, some equalisation of human and non-human animals can be observed.⁵⁵¹ Yet what the narrative indeed does is partially equate random humans and animals while positioning super-human vampires above them all. The good vampire loves his victims and has a great deal of sympathy and empathy for them, yet he kills them nonetheless. It is precisely his love for them that justifies the killing. First, death is portrayed as a gift. Second, vampires kill humans with respect and affection that humans rarely extend to the animals they slaughter. Vampires respect their victims as sacrifices necessary for their own survival: "The drinking of blood from mankind is sacred, and not to be abused..."⁵⁵² Third, vampires kill without the hypocrisy that is often present when humans kill each other.

The narratives make some appeals to "humane" slaughtering. Therefore, by this very gesture, it sustains the carnist system. Indeed, the discourse of killing and eating while maintaining affection is generally typical of "humane" carnism. Similarly, the idea that cattle would not exist without humans is prevalent.

As already mentioned, the narrative promotes of super-human hunting. The hunters kill some individuals but protect and take care of the overall population. Good vampires are such hunters, or even shepherds, towards the humans: they feed on their flock but also love them.⁵⁵³ They are humans' guardians and priests.⁵⁵⁴ They keep Medhya outside the world of the living. In fulfilling their noble mission, they are justified in killing and drinking human blood.

The same motif appears in other narratives, such as Sillov's novel: as already mentioned, the super-human protagonist fears that humans will cease to exist if vampires do not consume them—similar to how cattle exist because they are eaten. While the narrative depicts vampires and their human-blood diet as evil, it

551 See specifically Douglas Clegg, *The Vampyricon, Book 1*, loc. 2623, Kindle.

552 Douglas Clegg, *The Vampyricon, Book 1*, loc. 4404, Kindle.

553 Douglas Clegg, *The Vampyricon, Book 3*, loc. 3254, Kindle.

554 Douglas Clegg, *The Vampyricon, Book 1*, loc. 4417, Kindle.

also suggests that some forms of human killing are more acceptable than others. Specifically, humans bred by vampires are deemed more acceptable to be slaughtered. This notion evokes the human right to kill what they have bred and implies that farm animals are less worthy than others. They are regarded as barely sentient beings.

In Agata Suchocka's *Daję ci wieczność* series (2018–), vampires are instructed to kill without causing unnecessary suffering: "You can derive pleasure from absorbing life, but not from witnessing human suffering! (...) Fighting for one's own life is not the same as inflicting unnecessary death!"⁵⁵⁵ Like Maksimov's narrative, this series advocates that vampires should target those near the end of their lives or those who deserve death.⁵⁵⁶ The narrative ascribes to its super-human Heroes what Agamben terms as a sovereign power—the authority to decide whose life is worth living. Additionally, the series reiterates carnism arguments about the necessity of killing (meat consumption).

* * *

Conversely, Krzysztof Kotowski's *Trzech gości w łódce plus wampir* (2022) appears quite animal-friendly. Vampires in this narrative avoid drinking animal blood. They claim that animals should be protected. Wysocki identifies as a vegetarian and explicitly rejects humanist ideas.⁵⁵⁷

The Hero-narrator's views on the proper diet evolve throughout the narrative. Initially, he consumes donor packet blood and justifies this by citing mosquitoes and bats as examples of natural blood consumption. He also quotes humans eating blood-based dishes (Polish *czernina* or *kaszanka*). Therefore, while seemingly sympathetic to animals, he treats them instrumentally to explain his existence and prove it natural. Moreover, he does not see the difference between humans killing animals to get *czernina* or *kaszanka* and bats or mosquitoes only taking some of the human's blood and leaving humans in otherwise good health.

During his training, Wiktor, the narrator, encounters Jack, who explains to him that when "a farmer kills a pig or a cow to feed his family, he (...) does not commit a sin". Similarly, a vampire does not sin when killing a human, provided it is done out of hunger rather than jealousy, greed, lust, or villainy.⁵⁵⁸ While this statement suggests an equality between human and non-human beings—implying that both can be killed to satisfy hunger—it ultimately reinforces a hierarchy. In this hierarchy, beings deemed superior have the right to kill those

555 Agata Suchocka, *Daję ci wieczność, Akt I*, 321–22.

556 *Ibid.*, 339.

557 Krzysztof Kotowski, *Trzech gości w łódce*, 35–6.

558 *Ibid.*, 237–38.

considered inferior. The same logic is contained within the narrator's apology for hunting and predators.

Jack also compares blood to milk, framing the relationship between humans and vampires in terms of cattle rather than prey. He points out that animal blood does not sufficiently nourish vampires, a comparison that might echo the idea of the "incompleteness" of a vegetarian diet. Jack elaborates that just as humans do not digest animal milk well, vampires do not digest animal blood effectively. Humans are optimally nourished by human milk, while vampires are similarly sustained only by human blood.⁵⁵⁹ This comparison underscores that vampires are super-humans for whom human blood functions like human milk for ordinary humans. Under the cover of the animal-friendly attitude, the narrative, just like *The Vampirycon*, performs super-human superiority over other humans.

* * *

Christian Vilà's short story "Les Ravageurs: une histoire d'amour" (2014) seems to be a rare exception among the narratives that thematise the *topos* of the vampire diet. In the narrative, vampires cannot consume non-human animal products at all. Their bodies cannot tolerate them, and the vampires are fine with it. This restriction aligns them closely with actual vegetarianism or even veganism. For the vampires in "Les Ravageurs: une histoire d'amour", human and vampire blood and sexual fluids serve as their primary sustenance. While they can drink water to quench their thirst, they prefer saliva.

Vampires' blood preferences are intricately linked to their sexual preferences. Vampires usually start with sexual intercourse before they drink people's blood. Anyway, being sucked and sucking is equally pleasurable as sex. Vampirism spreads through the act of drinking: when a vampire drinks from a person, the person gets it. This proves again how deeply sexual vampires in this story are: their basic survival necessity is, at the same time, their act of reproduction.

The drinking is usually consensual, and vampires do not kill unless in defence of themselves and others or unless asked to by those whom they drink from (then they drink a person dry). Indeed, vampires' diet is based on the ethics of care for humans and animals.

* * *

Most of the narratives featuring Good Vampires tend to be problematic when it comes to the ecological representation. Irrespective of whether the Vampire is "vegetarian" in any way or follows the human-blood diet traditionally ascribed to

559 Ibid., 238.

this figure within the Vampire Narrative, the Good Vampire hardly ever represents actual vegetarianism, care for animals, or environmentalism. The next chapter briefly explores the narratives with diametrically different ideas about sustaining vampires' lives and studies their ecological potential.

Chapter III: And If We Do It Differently?

This chapter may seem surprising, given that the definition of a vampire in this book is based on their blood consumption. However, the intake of blood can occur in different ways. For example, in Kurt Wimmer's *Ultraviolet* (2006), blood is taken through transfusions. Vampires who drink blood might also try to find substitutes to blood. That is what Feliks' does in Polynskaya's narrative analysed above. In *London Under Midnight*, salty seawater can temporarily substitute for blood because humans originate from the sea and are composed primarily of water and electrolytes, making their blood similar to seawater.⁵⁶⁰ This method can preserve one's humanity after the transformation, at least for a while.

However, perhaps the most exciting tropes are in Viktor Pelevin's *Empire V* and *Batman Apollo* (2006–2013) and Georges Bess' *Le Vampire de Benares* BD trilogy (2011–2012). In Pelevin's novels, vampires can drink blood, but they rarely do so because it is an inefficient way of feeding. The dissident Tolstoyans⁵⁶¹ are an exception to this rule. Actual blood is drunk by vampires only in small amounts when they want to know a human. Typically, most vampires drink bablos, a substance their tongues, their true selves, really need for nourishment. The word "bablos" is a play on contemporary Russian slang, where *бабло* / *башло* means money.

"The ideology of anonymous dictatorship is Glamour. (...) The Glamour of anonymous dictatorship is its Discourse".⁵⁶² These elements create tension in the human brain, fostering feelings of inadequacy, poverty, and ugliness compared to the idealised models presented through glamour and discourse. This suffering emits a radiation called aggregate M5, which vampire Big Mice intercept and distil into bablos.

560 Simon Clark, *London Under Midnight*, loc. 2207, Kindle.

561 As already mentioned, Tolstoyans, as a very specific sect of close-to-nature former vampire(s), is also present in the DK Entertainment series *Карамора* (2022), another Russian vampire narrative.

562 Victor Pelevin, *Empire V: The Prince of Hamlet*, trans. Anthony Phillips (London: Orion Publishing Co, 2016), 56.

Both glamour and discourse are signs; their reality is virtual, not material, making them empty signifiers without any objectively existing significance or fixed meaning. In late capitalism, the traditional chain of commodity-money-commodity was replaced by the chain of advertisement-money-advertisement.⁵⁶³ Pelevin builds a dystopian vision of contemporary Russia and the contemporary techno-capitalist/consumerist world in general: it is a world in line with Huxley's tradition—but contrary to Huxley, it is also deeply (auto)ironic and shows no possibility of rebellion for every rebellion is absorbed, or even planned, by the mainstream. Pelevin, like Moździoch in "Chłopiec z aluminiowym kubkiem", constructs the metaphor of society through the trope of food supply.

Very similar conceptions are present in Georges Bess' *Le Vampire de Benares* BD trilogy. Significantly, Bess also refers to Hindu conceptions. In contrast to Pelevin's narrative, however, the vampires are decidedly evil.

In the narrative, only the lower vampires directly drink blood. The vampire mentors, the true brains of the vampire hive,⁵⁶⁴ invent miseries such as wars, epidemics (AIDS), and religions. Mentors introduced shri⁵⁶⁵ into humans' brains (through water, for example), acting as blockades to the human intellect and allowing easy manipulations of humans. Mentors produce prana⁵⁶⁶ energy from human suffering, feeding all the vampires. Vampires are virtual rather than material beings, so energy is their best nourishment. Prana is also called Nectar, Rasa, Amrita (the Hindu name for the divine drink), or Dhol-arr (a reference to the word *dhana* (money) and the US currency).⁵⁶⁷

In both Pelevin's and Bess' narratives, the alternative feedings are even more brutal for the human victims than the actual blood drinking. In both narratives, prana/bablos refers to money and social hegemony. Rasa is a concept in Indian aesthetic theory, while glamour was a pillar of vampire rule in Pelevin's book and a means of acquiring bablos. Dhol-arr refers to both the money and to the *dhhol*, a type of drum used in Indian music, alluding to the themes of emptiness and void presented in both narratives as the essence of the world, aligning with certain Hindu conceptions.

Both diets do not include care for non-human beings. Bess' BD shows that there is nothing worse than harming humans. Bess' evil vampires are linked with nature, and the civilised Hero defeats these monsters. Notably, he comes from Britain, while the monsters in the narrative nest in Asia and bear names from

563 Tatyana Kazarina, "Виктор Пелевин: Слово и Тело," in *Mixtura Verborum: Тело и Слово*, ed. S.A. Lishaev (Samara: Samara Humanitarian Academy, 2010), 172.

564 Georges Bess, *Le Vampire de Benares, Tome 2*, 42.

565 *Shri* is a sacred sound in Hinduism, symbolising cosmic auspiciousness and abundance.

566 *Prana* refers to the universal life force in Hindu thought.

567 Georges Bess, *Le Vampire de Benares, Tome 3: Le Coeur des Ténèbres*, (Grenoble: Éditions Glénat, 2012), 32.

traditionally vegetarian Hindu and Buddhist repertoires. Conversely, Pelevin's vampires are not portrayed as evil, even though they harm humans. However, the philosophy of inescapable suffering makes it hard to imagine care and compassion for any being. As adverted in the Introduction to this Part of the book, the next chapter confronts the vampire diet with the human one. This confrontation allows for the study of the production of social norms.

Chapter IV: What the Humans Eat

One could argue that it is precisely the diet that differentiates humans as normal and vampires as abnormal in the first place. It is best evidenced by Moździuch's "Chłopiec z aluminiowym kubkiem w dłoni", where the only thing that defines the boy as a vampire is his habit of drinking swine blood.

This chapter is devoted to examining human diets within the Vampire Narrative. Firstly, it explores how the human diet is positioned and juxtaposed with the vampire diet. Secondly, it investigates the positioning of diverse human diets, analysing the differentiation between the "normal" and the "abnormal" as enacted through diet. Thirdly, this chapter mentions cases of humans drinking vampire blood.

IV.1 Human Diet versus Vampire Diet

The elemental diets of humans within the Vampire Narrative are carnist and vegetarian/vegan. These diets juxtapose with vampire diet(s): they either align with them, oppose them, or are analogous. Primary vege—non-vege division organises this subchapter.

IV.1.1 Vegetarians

Humans are rarely depicted as vegetarians within vampire narratives. For example, Bella attempts to align with Edward's "vegetarianism" in *Twilight*, but neither Elena from *The Vampire Diaries* nor Sookie from *True Blood* adopts this lifestyle. More frequently, vegetarianism is matched with vampirism and vampires' bloody diet on the basis that they are both unusual/abnormal. That is what happens in the narratives such as *True Blood*, *Пятая стража*, and *Ремесло*, analysed below.

True Blood associates vegetarianism with being or loving vampires. The Fellowship of the Sun, a fanatic Christian anti-vampire organisation, conducts indoctrination sessions that include religious teachings, military training, and performances of true Americanness, such as football, social gatherings, gadgets, and barbecues, all prominently featuring American flags. During barbecues, Sarah Newlin, the leader's wife, grills hefty steaks and declares that she has renounced vegetarianism to cook ribs.⁵⁶⁸ In that sense, vampires and vegetarianism are matched in their abnormality on the obvious ground that both vegetarians and vampires do not eat animal meat.

The message emitted by the Fellowship of the Sun is that those who are pro-animal are anti-human. That is the message conveyed by the whole TB-3 Channel series *Пятая стража* (2012–2016). In the narrative, Ulyana decides to adopt a vegetarian diet temporarily after encountering a cannibal (episode 103). However, vegetarianism is generally portrayed with reluctance. In episode 30, a vegetarian wife forbids her husband from eating meat while his daughter smuggles it for him. The wife is later revealed to be a murderer attempting to poison her stepdaughter by tainting the meat.

In Alex Kosh's *Ремесло* saga (2005–2013), the diet is one of the core differentiating elements between the diverse human species, or, in other words, both the vegetarian diet of the druids and the blood diet of vampires differentiates them from the actual humans. In the same way, druid-vampire hybrid Alice is almost an actual human, and that is expressed in her mastery of Craft and her diet: she eats “human” food, both plants and meat.

Normally, vampires drink blood. It can be animal blood, but High vampires frequently drink human blood—which does not necessarily involve killing humans. Eating meat can hasten human transformation into a vampire, so the narrative makes the link between meat-eating and blood-drinking but leaves it inconsequential—if not to make vampires more sympathetic.

Carnism is highly promoted: it can reduce Craftsmen's magical powers, but the actors find the vegetarianism imposed by the Emperor on everyone in his country somewhat silly. Finally, the narrative finds it natural and relatively acceptable for both vampires and humans to eat what they are “naturally” meant to eat.

* * *

568 *True Blood*, Season 2, Episode 4, “Shake and Fingerpop,” directed by Michael Lehmann, written by Alan Ball, aired July 12, 2009, on HBO.

However, some narratives confront human vegetarians with vampires' blood-thirsty diet. The diet becomes an expression of resistance towards vampires or other monsters. In Yuliya Gavrish's *Безу* (2022), human uprisings are vegetarian.

Yet those rare women who become Mothers during their pregnancy and the early stages of the baby's life are "wild animals".⁵⁶⁹ They hunt and eat the raw meat of animals. Creating the new superhuman generation seems to require meat as if it were crucial for constituting an upper human being. Vegetarianism is, therefore, undermined within the narrative itself.

In Jarosław Moździoch's "Chłopiec z aluminiowym kubkiem w dłoni" (2007), the decision to become vegetarian is an act of escaping the system, but not of resisting it. Vegetarianism means being different from both human butchers and vampires. The narrator denies legitimising the *status quo*, but his decision is individual and does not bring any social change. Similarly, Vesper from Magdalena Kozak's cycle dreamt of becoming human again and adopting a vegetarian diet when he had temporarily had enough of the Nighters-Renegades blood conflicts. A vegetarian diet symbolised being outside the system.

IV.1.2 Carnists

Human carnism is juxtaposed either with vampire "vegetarianism" or with vampire-specific carnism, i. e., their human blood diet. The latter juxtaposition serves either to show the abjection of the vampire diet (they dare to treat humans as humans treat animals—like food) or to justify both diets, as seen in Kosh's narrative and the previously analysed Kotowski's novel. Below, I first focus on the latter case and then on the first one.

* * *

The narratives that justify both vampire's blood diet and human carnism usually evoke analogies to nature and inter-animal relationships. Sometimes, they imply analogies along the lines of animal-human-vampire. Galina Polynskaya's *Тайные стражи* series (2018–2021) specifically focuses on animal carnist figures to show the naturalness of eating meat: Pablito, the domesticated raven eats sausages just as humans do. On the metatextual level, what is justified and promoted is the carnist diet for humans.

In Magdalena Kozak's *Tajne Akta Vespera* cycle (2006–2017), Renegade vampires also invoke the fact that predators hunt, kill, and eat. They also refer-

569 Yuliya Gavrish, *Безу*, loc. 1259, Kindle.

ence human meat-eating practices, which are portrayed as really cruel: “everyday massacre that takes place in the slaughterhouses”:⁵⁷⁰

Horses sold for meat production (...) have their legs broken (...) and their eyes poked out because then they are considered carcasses, not animals, and one does not need to transport them under the conditions regulated by law. But they live, and thanks to that, they arrive “fresh” at their destination. (...) You don’t care; you go to the supermarket and buy an elegantly packed piece of meat (...). You tell yourself: that is not my problem; I have to eat, anyway. That is how this world is,⁵⁷¹ Vesper tells his friend Okruszek.

Vesper refutes all of Okruszek’s arguments about the essential differences between humans and animals on which social order is built and invokes the order of nature instead (predator-prey). He finds human morality arbitrary. Vampires and humans are the same, as they all base their survival on the death of other beings.

Yet, just as in Kotowski’s novel, this does not promote a change in human dietary habits. It only supports the idea that a superior being has the right to kill an inferior being. Moreover, redundantly, the superiority of a being is performed by the act of killing and eating a being that it considers inferior. If a superior being abstains from this, it is purely out of their greatness and generosity.

* * *

Other narratives underline that human carnism and vampire carnism are fundamentally different. Visual narratives, such as movies, have graphic means to juxtapose vampire and human food and to expose their analogous yet different character. In Jessica M. Thompson’s *The Invitation* (2022), the pre-wedding dinner scene depicts the human guests sitting and eating juicy meats and pomegranate fruits. At the same time, in front of everyone, the vampire murders a female servant and drinks her blood from a bowl into which it spills. This scene underscores the awfulness of treating humans as food.

There is a similar scene in André Øvredal’s *The Last Voyage of the Demeter* (2023). The sign on the coffin where Dracula lies visually converges with the following scene, which starts with a zoom on a dinner plate. The plate contains meat served for dinner to the human crew. The analogy between the vampire eating humans and humans eating meat is used once again to highlight the vampire’s abjection.

Ashman’s *Vampire: The Curse of Sekhmet* goes even further. The sick little Sekhmet was sacrificed as a child by her village. She was given to hyenas in order

570 Magdalena Kozak, *Renegat*, (Lublin: Fabryka Słów, 2007), 245.

571 *Ibid.*, 246.

to to appease the gods and stop the sleeping sickness. The narrative presents this act as less abject than the fact that the girl actually survived. The latter is indeed disturbing and unnatural. Feeding a hyena with a child is somehow justified, but when the child kills and eats another girl, she is chased and hunted.

Indeed, the norms highly depend on the identity of the doer. Even an animal-eating diet can get a different judgment in the case of vampires. In Ashman's novel, animals killed by vampires are deemed "poor"⁵⁷² despite humans also killing and consuming the same animals. Vampires' killing could even be considered merciful, as "tearing open the throat is (...) the quickest way of making a kill"⁵⁷³.

In *The Last Voyage of the Demeter*, the ship carries livestock that is supposed to be gradually slaughtered during the voyage. Animals are supposed to panic when they sense the vampire around, but they never panic when they sense humans, even though human intentions towards them are exactly the same as those of the vampire. When Dracula kills them, it is considered a "heinous act". Indeed, Dracula is bad because he kills animals that belong to humans. This contrast highlights that the Heroes and the Monster share the same goals (subordination, domination, consumption), with the Vampire being deemed evil simply because he is a vampire. The next subchapter further explores questions of dietary normalcy.

IV.2 What Do Normal Humans Eat?

In "Chłopiec z aluminiowym kubkiem w dłoni", the only proof that the eponymous boy is a vampire is that he drinks swine blood. He obtains it from the slaughterhouse, where the butchers process pigs' flesh into meat. Eating the flesh of slaughtered animals is considered normal and human; drinking the blood of the same animal is deemed abnormal and vampiric. Similarly, in Dacre Stoker and J.D. Barker's *Dracul* (2018), drinking hens' blood is awful, but eating the very same flesh prepared and served during the Sunday family dinner is acceptable.

Within the Vampire Narrative, the norms seem to be cultural rather than moral. In Dmitriy Sillov's *Кровь Охотника* (2011), Andrey's meal differs from Lada's (the werewolf) only in the rawness of their steaks. In Simon Clark's *London Under Midnight* (2006), wanting animal blood is already vampiric, but wanting a bloody rare—practically raw—steak is very much human and natural.⁵⁷⁴ The violence is unmasked when the bloody animal corpse is consumed—it

572 K.M. Ashman, *Vampire*, loc. 983, Kindle.

573 *Ibid.*, loc. 1781.

574 Simon Clark, *London Under Midnight*, loc. 1440–43, Kindle.

is hidden in the civilised meat dish. The difference seems to rely precisely on the framing: animal versus meat consumption.

In Adrien Beau's *Le Vourdalak* (2023), it is not the food itself but the preparation that breaks the familiar framing. Eastern Europeans prepare their meat themselves, which the film depicts in bloody scenes of carcass dismemberment—scenes that, in some way, foreshadow the family's infection with vampirism. Indeed, meat loses its status—it reverts to being a dead body. The violence that is hidden in the West is visible in the East.

It is noteworthy that in Clark's novel, it is not only blood consumption that makes vampires abject. Vampirism begins with eating food considered abject and unnatural: the filth, the mud, the garbage, the dirty water. Similarly in Beau's *Le Vourdalak*. As mentioned, the narrative contains many references to classical tales; in a scene evoking Snow White's story, Sdenka eats an apple. The fruit has a worm in it, a symbol of the element of evil hiding in Eastern Europe and nesting in nature. Yet Sdenka eats the apple anyway, which anticipates her future infection with the curse of vampirism.

The categories of culture, the identity of the doer, and masked vs. unmasked violence not only define the boundaries between humans and vampires but also determine the normalcy of human actors. The character of Renfield best illustrates this. In Bram Stoker's original *Dracula*, Renfield is defined as a lunatic and is kept in a psychiatric facility. The narrative also presents him as Dracula's ally and servant. His Otherness essentially relies on his feeding disorders. Notably, he was diagnosed with zoophagia. He was eating living creatures and feeding one creature to another before consuming them himself, as he believed that he could gain more power by consuming lives, especially those that had previously consumed other lives. He followed the vampire's logic without being one.

Renfield's diagnosis is deeply problematic because, as has already been noticed in this book, upon closer examination, his zoophagia—consisting of eating animals—was not much different from what the carnist *Dracula's* Crew of Light were doing. All of them were eating meat, and some of them hunted animals. Indeed, one could argue that the difference between zoophagia and carnism lies in eating animals alive, but some seafood consumption hardly falls into the definition of eating dead animals. Another difference between Renfield's and the Crew of Light's diet, between the patient and his doctor, was that Renfield was eating animals considered inedible within Western culture: flies, spiders, and birds that Western society usually does not consume.

Dracula's spin-off, George DeVein's *Renfield's Journal* (2018), openly questions what is normal. Social subversion, a new version of order promoted by Renfield, starts with his performance of the new dietary norms. Renfield discovers that the only nourishment his organism absorbs is living insects. He defends his diet by pointing to the arbitrariness of social and cultural food norms:

he argues that in Africa, people eat insects.⁵⁷⁵ He also claims that since everyone eats meat, there is no reason why eating flies would be less ethical. It is considered repulsive, but repulsiveness is a social category. Dietary norms are as oppressive as medical ones.⁵⁷⁶ All of them are socially constructed.

The last subchapter explores the negotiations of the power relations in society through diet even further.

IV.3 Human Bites Vampire

Sometimes, the roles get reversed, and humans drink vampires' blood. That is not a new motif; it was known in folklore and included in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. In many narratives, it is necessary to drink a vampire's blood to change into a vampire; in some narratives (from *The Vampire Diaries* to *Dracul*), vampire blood cures or enhances human capacities.

Perhaps the most innovative is the concept included in *True Blood*, where vampire blood is sold as V, a cure, but also a powerful drug inducing hallucinations and increasing libido. Some people actually hunt vampires to get their blood to which they are addicted.

However, the interplay of power and domination is not simply reversed to favour humans only. Some vampires addict people to their blood for commercial or romantic reasons. Eric cunningly makes Sookie drink his blood, and she has erotic dreams about him. Lafayette also dreams about Eric after Eric cured him with his blood. Sam Merlotte dreams about Bill after being healed by him. Moreover, a vampire is always able to locate the human who drank their blood and can feel the human's emotions.

* * *

Diet is one of the most interesting *topoi* in the 21st-century Vampire Narrative: the diversity of vampires' and humans' diets, their juxtaposition, and intra-narrative reflections on the diet(s) offer a broad range of meanings. Diet is entangled with, embodies, symbolises, and is a metaphor for many social issues, including the social order and norms in general. This is true in both Western and non-Western narratives.

However, what the diet *topos* rarely implies and advocates, even if the diet of actors is explicitly or symbolically vegetarian, is the actual vegetarian diet and lifestyle and the equal treatment of non-human beings. The next and final Part of

575 George DeVein, *Renfield's Journal*, loc. 1115, Kindle.

576 *Ibid.*, loc. 957.

this book examines the vampire narratives from the posthuman point of view and explores the existing and non-existing posthuman tropes.

Part Four: PostHumanism

For the premises of this Part of the book, I consider posthumanism *topoi* to be different from the animal/animalisation *topoi* analysed previously. The posthumanist *topoi* are Haraway's holobiont tropes or, indeed, Haraway's vampire tropes. Donna Haraway further developed her famous cyborg conception in *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium*, aligning vampires with cyborgs. According to her, a vampire "effects category transformations by illegitimate passages of substance".⁵⁷⁷ Vampire-cyborg mythology embodies "the kinship exchange system in which gender, race, and species—animal and machine—are all at stake".⁵⁷⁸ The vampire has the power to destroy, disturb, and deconstruct boundaries of identity, using the aesthetics of excess: "In those zones, uninvited associations and dissociations are sure to undo one's sense of the self same".⁵⁷⁹

My definition of posthuman(ism) stands in contrast to the most common use of the term in vampire analysis. Most researchers tend to use "posthuman" as a broad term for anything "beyond" the human.⁵⁸⁰ I find the simple transcendence

577 Donna Haraway, *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium. FemaleMan_Meets_OncoMouse: Feminism and Technoscience* (New York and London: Routledge, 1997), 214.

578 Ibid., 217.

579 Ibid., 215.

580 See, e.g., Simon Bacon, "The Post-human Vampire," in *The Palgrave Handbook of Contemporary Gothic*, ed. Clive Bloom (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 555–67; Lars Schmeink, "Of Posthuman Vampires: Science, Blood and Becoming-With," in *Posthuman Gothic*, ed. Anya Heise-von der Lippe (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2017), 54–73; Chris Koenig-Woodyard, "Lovie—is the vampire so bad?: Posthuman Rhetoric in Richard Matheson's *I am Legend*," in *Posthuman Gothic*, ed. Anya Heise-von der Lippe (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2017), 77–92; Hadas Elber-Aviram, "Constitutional Amnesia and Future Memory: Science Fiction's Posthuman Vampire," in *Undead Memory: Vampires and Human Memory in Popular Culture*, ed. Simon Bacon and Katarzyna Bronk (Bern: Peter Lang, 2014); Avipsa Mondal, "Representation of Posthuman Desire in Stephenie Meyer's *The Twilight Saga*," *Ashvamegh*, no. 14 (March 2016); M. Inbaraj and Abdul Mohammed Ali Jinnah, "Posthuman Vampire: A Biomedical War Weapon in Justin Cronin's *The Passage*," *JARDCS* 12, no. 7 (2020): 95–8, <http://doi.org/10.5373/JARDCS/V12I7/20201988>. Stoker's *Dracula* has received some posthumanist analysis: Zümre Gizem Yılmaz Karahan, "A Posthuman Vampire: Rational Science and Racial Views in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*," *Social Sciences Research Journal (SSRJ)* 9, no. 1 (March 2020): 73–80; Ronja Tripp-Bodola, "The Vampire as Posthumanist Pharmakon: Towards a Critical Medical Humanities," in *Posthuman Pathogenesis: Contagion in Literature, Arts, and Media*, ed. Başak Ağın and Şafak Horzum (New York and London: Routledge, 2023), 207–26.

of the human self (literally: trans-human) insufficient, and, following Cary Wolfe, I define the posthuman as something that comes “after humanism”, i. e., something that goes beyond the “exceptional ontological value for humans”.⁵⁸¹ While I differ with Francesca Ferrando regarding detailed definitions, I agree with the essential differentiation between trans-humanism as a form of humanism that redefines a human being and posthumanism as the decentralised view that breaks with the humanistic perspective in favour of a post-exceptionalist attitude.⁵⁸²

Whether represented as a negative monster or a positive hero, the vampire figure carries strong potential for posthumanist readings. The vampire is constructed as a liminal creature, similar to humans, yet not human. It is not only a non-human being but also an un-human and in-human being.

In modern times, with its scientific view, every creature, even a fictional one, needs a classification. As a non-human being, the vampire is “naturally” a sort of animal: as explored in the Second Part of this book, vampires are animal-like, change into animals, and communicate with animals. However, vampires are animals that usurp human rights, reverse roles, and turn humans into food.

Vampires blur the disparity between animals and things as well. Dracula changes into a wolf, but he also changes into the mist. In Stoker’s novel, he is frequently called “the Thing”. The vampire threatens social and “natural” order because it is an animated (animal) object that refuses to be passive and claims its agency. Finally, vampires are individuals but also unsubstantial phenomena: diseases and epidemics. And they are dead yet moving bodies.

Vampires are treated exclusively as bodies, carriers of bare life upon which anything can be inflicted.⁵⁸³ Based on Lacanian theories, Slavoj Žižek⁵⁸⁴ points to the Vampire figure as a figure of the perfect Thing, free from any constraint to create its identity, subjectivity and identification. For Žižek, such objectivity is the highest form of free subjectivity. Outside the philosopher’s divagations, however, the radical objectivity of the vampire becomes object.⁵⁸⁵

This also concerns other cultural analyses, such as Colleen McQuillen and Julia Vaingurt, eds., *The Human Reimagined: Posthumanism in Russia* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2018).

581 Greg Pollock, review of *What is Posthumanism?*, by Cary Wolfe, *Journal for Critical Animal Studies* 9, no. 1–2 (2011): 235, <https://www.criticalanimalstudies.org/volume-ix-issue-iii-2011/>.

582 Francesca Ferrando, “Posthumanism, Transhumanism, Antihumanism, Metahumanism, and New Materialisms: Differences and Relations,” *Existenz. An International Journal in Philosophy, Religion, Politics, and the Arts* 8, no. 2 (Fall 2013): 26–32.

583 Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer*.

584 Slavoj Žižek, *For They Know Not What They Do: Enjoyment as a Political Factor* (London and New York: Verso, 1991).

585 Julia Kristeva, *Pouvoirs de l’horreur*.

Then, the Reversed Vampire Narrative emerges. Logically, a positive vampire should be an apology for contamination, transgression, and fluidity—a figure of the posthuman affirmation of the blurring of borders. It would reflect new conceptions of the world linked with changes in knowledge systems, specifically in the biomedical sciences: the latest understanding of symbiotic organisms, the reconceptualisation of foreign elements from parasites or disease pathogens to symbionts, and the awareness that nature acts against the rules of purity, and even, as Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari wrote, against itself.⁵⁸⁶

The New Primary Narrative also has this posthuman(ist) potential: the Hunter loses his purity:⁵⁸⁷ ideological, symbolical, racial, and gender. He is a man with mental troubles, addictions, and problems; they are persons of colour, they are women. On the purely fantastic level, Hunters are now dhampirs, werewolves, hybrids, and cyborgs.

However, as this Part demonstrates, despite some important changes, the essential elements of Western-centrism and individualism are not transgressed. Therefore, even the most serious subversions observed in the Vampire Narrative are more about the beings primarily judged as in-human becoming the norm of new humanity than about the emancipation of the non-human. More about widening the domain of the human than about including the un-human. In other words, I argue that the observed subversion is trans-human(ist) rather than posthuman(ist).

This Part is structurally divided into narratives featuring a posthuman Monster, those that supposedly have a posthuman Hero, and finally, the Ambivalent Vampire Narratives with a posthuman Hero-Monster. The narratives analysed in this section are predominantly Western. This is because posthumanist tropes are rare in Eastern European vampire narratives. Monstrosity, including vampirism and vampires, can almost always be interpreted as posthuman or in a posthumanist way. However, I intend not to analyse every vampire through the posthumanist lens but to research the narratives with specifically posthumanist tropes. In that sense, Eastern European vampire narratives proliferate in clearly trans-human figures but rather lack posthuman ones—even monstrous ones.

It is worth mentioning that in the Russian context, posthumanist or ecologist studies do not seem very popular (with scholars such as Oxana Timofeeva being important exceptions). Olga Lebedushkina analyses many 21st-century Russian

586 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. and foreword by Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), pp. 241–42.

587 Stacey Abbott, *Undead Apocalypse*, 124–26.

creations⁵⁸⁸ that could be read as trans-humanistic, non-humanistic, or posthumanistic. However, she does not use a non-anthropocentric stance, often reading non-human agents as somehow humanised (even the insects in Aleksey Lukyanov’s *Жесткокрылый насекомый* (2008)), or as didactic for humans (like the cat in Ilya Boyashov’s *Путь Мури* (2007)). Sofya Khagi straightforwardly states that while there is:

a strongly pronounced (though not unanimous) welcoming of posthumanism in the West, in the Russian context the latter tends to be conceptualised mainly in negative terms, as dehumanisation (*degumanizatsiia*) of humankind. Contemporary Russian authors, in a variety of fictional and non-fictional genres, express acute concerns with the processes of dehumanisation in the global community.⁵⁸⁹

The presence of posthumanism in the Western cultural sphere can serve the Russian political discourse of Western degeneration, positioning Russia as the last carrier of true Western civilisational values such as humanism or humanitarianism.

Perhaps the most well-known Russian scholar interested in the vampire topic is Dina Khapaeva, the author of the article “Вампир—герой нашего времени”⁵⁹⁰ and the book *The Celebration of Death in Contemporary Culture*,⁵⁹¹ which further develops the ideas sketched in the article.

In her analysis of some vampire narratives (including Western ones), Khapaeva considers posthumanist and ecological issues—in order to oppose them. Her sarcastic and mocking tone reflects a deep outrage at any attempt to deprive humans of their exceptional status. Khapaeva links “extreme right” and “extreme left” ideologies, including ecologists, posthumanists, and animal rights activists. She devotes a separate chapter to animal rights,⁵⁹² where she connects the leftist fight for animal rights to Nazi legal reforms in this area and the vegetarianism of some Nazi leaders. For Khapaeva, posthuman or non-anthropocentric perspec-

588 Olga Lebedushkina, “Наша новая готика: О чудесах и ужасах в современной прозе,” *Дружба Народов*, no. 11 (2008).

589 Sofya Khagi, “Humans, Animals, Machines,” 71. Curiously, the article is a chapter in the book entitled *The Human Reimagined: Posthumanism in Russia*. However, even the editors admit in the introduction that posthumanism “as such” is not a very Russian phenomenon. The book primarily focuses (with a few artistic exceptions) on the posthumanist interpretations of Russian culture’s otherwise non-posthumanist tropes and phenomena.

590 Dina Khapaeva, “Вампир—герой нашего времени,” *НЛО*, no. 3 (2011).

591 Dina Khapaeva, *The Celebration of Death in Contemporary Culture* (Michigan University Press, 2017). The book has its Russian edition: Dina Khapaeva, *Занимательная смерть: Развлечения эпохи постгуманизма* (Moscow: Новое литературное обозрение, 2020). Citations come from the Russian edition (on Kindle), which is my own translation.

592 Dina Khapaeva, “Права животных после ‘Смерти человека,’” in *Занимательная смерть: Развлечения эпохи постгуманизма* (Moscow: Новое литературное обозрение, 2020), loc. 1222–382, Kindle.

tives are automatically deemed “anti-human”, “anti-individualistic”, and “anti-democratic”.⁵⁹³

593 Dina Kharaeva, *Занимательная смерть*, loc. 10–17, Kindle.

Chapter I: The Posthuman Monsters

The posthuman Monsters in vampire narratives are constructed using a few basic tropes, which intertwine bodies and minds/consciousnesses in complex relations of uncanny embodiments and embedments, disintegrations, and collectivisations. In contrast, the very definitions of body and consciousness are constantly renegotiated.

The first trope is the creation of the herd or even the hive. A single posthuman consciousness is embodied and embedded in multiple bodies. However, the essence of the hive undermines the differences between these bodies to the point where they are perhaps not separate bodies but rather one posthuman multi-body.

The second trope starts with the individual. Then, either the narrative multiplies the consciousness embedded in one body or the consciousness transgresses a single body. This is, however, almost inseparable from body transformations: its disintegration, cyborgisation, and hybridisation. It is impossible to determine whether consciousness first transgresses the individual body or if the body buds, symbioses, and hybridises with other bodies. The final effect blurs the distinctions between hive consciousness/multi-body and the hybridised body of the posthuman post-individual being.

The term “body” is understood very broadly: landscapes, objects, and machines are also bodies with which, or rather with whom, one hybridises. This is where the narratives, especially the visual ones, transgress their internal structure to become meta-objects. The images-as-objects become the elements of which a hybridised posthuman body is composed; for example, a BD becomes a vampire. This is the third way in which a body can be posthuman.

Finally, a seemingly individual body can be composed of multiple bodies. It can constitute a micro-hive. Therefore, any classification of posthuman monstrosity is impossible. Moreover, identities are fluid and flowing, with monsters simultaneously embodying a few types of posthuman existence enumerated above. Yet, for the sake of clarity of the chapter, I analyse posthuman(ist) monstrosities in the above-mentioned order.

1.1 The Hive

Vampires' herding, or even hiving, is quite a recurrent *topos* in 21st-century vampire narratives. In *Priest*, vampires live in hives. In the *Van Helsing* series, vampire Sisters exhibit herd attitudes. In David Wellington's *Laura Caxton Vampire* series (2006–2012), vampires are a depersonalised, de-individualised mass of identical individuals,⁵⁹⁴ faithful to their creator. Lars Schmeink points out that vampires in Francis Lawrence's *I Am Legend* (2007) form a sort of hive of posthuman creatures of technoscience.

The film presents their existence not as a glorious posthuman becoming-with affirmed by posthumanist theories, but as an abject devolution towards the inhuman.⁵⁹⁵ That is also the case of other vampire narratives featuring posthuman monsters, such as *The Strain*, *Ремесло* saga, *Le Vampire de Benares*, "Les Miroirs de l'Éternité," and *Firefall*, analysed below.

In *The Strain* franchise, vampires are a hive collective, both internally and externally. They are carriers of parasitic worms that transmit vampirism; they are viruses that form the collective disease ravaging society. All the vampires are controlled by their creator. They hear his voice inside their heads. They can serve as communicators. They possess a single consciousness spread across bodies, but the Master has also absorbed all the individual consciousnesses previously embedded in those bodies to integrate them into his own posthuman multi-consciousness.

Vampires emerged from the spiritual, energetic union between the angels and God that degenerated through embodiment. They rose from the body of Ozryel, an archangel who fell to bodily temptation: the mystic Godly oneness of the individual consciousnesses connected by one energy changed into an abject collective of de-individualised bodies connected by their materiality-as-consciousness, the very biological collective Self of the hive.

The repulsiveness of the zombie-like vampires is pushed to the extreme in the narrative. They are horrifying monsters that feed through toothed tentacle-like "stingers", and their organs are composed of disgusting worms. They are defeated by the Crew of Light, who somehow consists of a copy of the godly energetic union on Earth: individuals connected by solidarity, able to sacrifice their bodies for the greater good of humanity.

The same dichotomy between the hive consciousness and the solidarity of individuals is present in Alex Kosh's *Ремесло* saga. The vampire-like Creature (Тварь; a reference to Frankenstein's Creature) is a biological entity created by a group of the revolted Craftsmen to invade the Tabernacle. It spreads parasites

594 David Wellington, *Vampire Zero*, 314, Kindle.

595 Lars Schmeink. "Of Posthuman Vampires," 54–73.

and transforms people and animals into creatures (твари). These creatures form one collective mind called “Big Brother” (Большой Брат) and one extended, collective multi-body. They are not alive; they are dead, walking bodies that should be destroyed without any remorse, and that is what the individualist Crew of Light does.

In Georges Bess’ *Le Vampire de Benares* BD trilogy (2011–2012), the vampires form a literal hive (ant’s hive or termite mound, similar to Stewart’s *Priest*), and their true forms are usually insect-like or spider-like. The ones who forcefully incorporate the Hero, Mircé, live in the Deva⁵⁹⁶ hive (Hell) in India, and, as already stated, the narrative refers to Hindu conceptions of Self. The Self is collective, embodied in the hive’s wholeness. The hive body is virtual; it is both the body and consciousness simultaneously. Vampires are virtual beings; they do not have stomachs or other material organs. Hell itself is the product of the mind,⁵⁹⁷ as is every reality.⁵⁹⁸ Prana,⁵⁹⁹ vampires’ nourishment, is also a product of the mind.

The change into a vampire is executed by the suckers that pierce Mircé’s body and forcefully feed him with prana. The narrative repeats this image in consecutive frames, using diverse techniques and colours. During his transformation, Mircé achieves nirvana, the connection with the Being. He recalls disappearing into Everything (le tout), beyond things, forms, and time: “I was melting in the Being (l’être), my consciousness was limited to a/one point. A/One point, it’s everything (c’est tout). I had joined the unspeakable, the unlimited, the pure energy”.⁶⁰⁰ Visually, the process is represented by explosions around his body, and his body contours become fuzzy and blurry. His body is then depicted as composed of yellow flames on a black background, then as a blur, a circle, finally a black point on a red background,⁶⁰¹ and at the end, by multiple images of the hive.⁶⁰² The monstration⁶⁰³ replaces the image of Mircé’s body with that of the

596 *Deva* refers to the Vedic conception of the deity and a dynasty ruling one of India’s ancient realms.

597 Georges Bess, *Le Vampire de Benares, Tome 3*, 50.

598 Georges Bess, *Le Vampire de Benares, Tome 1: Les Bêtes de la Nuit* (Grenoble: Éditions Glénat, 2011), 50.

599 As already mentioned in another footnote, *prana* is another Hindu conception: the conception of the universal life force.

600 Georges Bess, *Le Vampire de Benares, Tome 3*, 23.

601 *Ibid.*, 23.

602 *Ibid.*, 21, 24, 25, 27, 29.

603 According to Thierry Groensteen, there are two modes of narration in comic art: what is “told” and what is “shown.” He calls the latter one monstration. (Thierry Groensteen, *Comics and Narration*, trans. Ann Miller (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2013)).

hive to demonstrate that Mircé is fully incorporated into the collective.. The hive is a giant golden irregular block, a polyhedron with multiple golden stripes.⁶⁰⁴

After the transformation, Mircé himself becomes a virtual being. His basic form is spider-like, and the experience is indeed abject: fascinating and terrifying.⁶⁰⁵ Yet he can transform. The narrative gives a lot of attention to the vampires' metamorphosis: those of Mircé⁶⁰⁶ and, previously, those of Ravan,⁶⁰⁷ the vampire guide whom Mircé and his companion met at the beginning of their journey into Hell.

The ruler of the hive/Hell, Prince Brahma,⁶⁰⁸ also has a posthuman, self-constructed body with large ram's horns on his monstrous head. He explains once more that all the vampires are one and have a shared, collective consciousness, the hive spirit, and one intelligence commanding all the members.⁶⁰⁹ Brahma invokes the words of the Biblical demon: "I am Legion."

However, despite the transformation and the incorporation into the collective virtual body-consciousness of the hive, the individual ego of Mircé survives.⁶¹⁰ That is what being a Solar Hero consists of: individuality, individualism, individual consciousness, and identity. His ego survives because of his love for Anja. Individuality is, therefore, a condition *sine qua non* of love. Mircé protects Anja and manages to destroy the hive.

* * *

In Simon Bréan's French short story "Les Miroirs de l'Éternité" (2014), vampires are a hierarchised community ruled by the posthuman collective of the Ancients, and along with the whole Earth, they are invaded by even more posthuman Aliens called Stryges. Ancients are powerful and cruel and have led their political game for centuries. Their solidarity makes them share their blood. This bodily exchange also means the exchange of consciousnesses, as while drinking one's blood, the vampire gains the person's memories and thoughts.

Aliens plan to suck the Earth out of life but take the Ancients to their giant spaceship, Eternity. The Ancients are given a drop of silver substance that is supposed to be true immortality. It gives them ecstasy: Eternity is indeed a

604 Georges Bess, *Le Vampire de Benares, Tome 2*, 41, 44, 46; Georges Bess, *Le Vampire de Benares, Tome 3*, 21, 24, 25, 27, 29.

605 Georges Bess, *Le Vampire de Benares, Tome 3*, 26.

606 *Ibid.*, 26–7.

607 Ravan is a Hindu demon/deity.

608 Brahma is a central deity in Hindu religion.

609 Georges Bess, *Le Vampire de Benares, Tome 2*, 39.

610 Georges Bess, *Le Vampire de Benares, Tome 3*, 24.

parody of the Christian Heaven, just like Bess' vampire world was a parody of the Hindu nirvana turned into Christian Hell.

Stryges, the old creatures, travel through space, take the aristocracy of all the worlds, and destroy the worlds themselves. The aristocracy joins Eternity: they share a common memory and consciousness to a degree unknown previously by the Ancients. They become one being. And yet they are used by the Stryges: they are a sort of cattle, and their blood, joined with the radiation sucked from the planets, permits them to produce the quintessence, the silver liquid that is the basis of this enormous collective consciousness. That enables the self-sustenance of the posthuman entity.

This posthuman form of life is considered un-ecological—Stryges destroy life on Earth—and repulsive within the narrative. Alice, the protagonist, claims that no one is really living in the Eternity. It is not life when someone does not experience things and events for themselves. Therefore, Alice, the Solar Heroine, represents an individualist paradigm against the communist and posthuman one. The narrative thus claims that only individual agency, individual sensations, and individual consciousness are the actual ones.

In Peter Watts' *Firefall* series (2006–2014), the posthuman beings also come from space: the Scramblers (the Aliens) are the main threat to humanity, along with posthuman humans and trans-human vampires. In *Blindsight* (2006), a human space expedition finds the Scramblers. They discover Rorschach, a giant, concealed object in the vicinity, which they take for a sort of vessel, but which, in fact, is the posthuman entity composed of Scramblers: just like the hive in *Le Vampire de Benares* was a collective posthuman object-being. The crew manages to capture a few Scramblers, and they manage to state that they are biological beings (thus not robots) and that they are not animals but a highly developed species with intelligence far greater than that of *Homo sapiens sapiens*.

Yet they continue to experiment on Scramblers and torture them brutally. This is condoned because the crew—and the narrative—finally define Scramblers as nothing more than bio-machines. Scramblers lack individual consciousness; they only have the collective one and the hive identity. Therefore, human scientists state that they are not subjects, and even more, they are not sentient beings; they cannot feel pain, and if they run away from the painful stimulus, it is simply a reflexive built-in process. Thus, any moral dilemmas regarding the Scramblers are irrelevant. In that way, the narrative defines individual consciousness as the only actual consciousness and individuality as the condition *sine qua non* of sentience itself.

Moreover, the Scramblers must be—and are—hostile to humans. Humans threaten Aliens by simply being conscious. Human language is unnecessarily recurrent. Many communications do not contain logical information, and the work invested in decoding is wasted. Therefore, such communication and human

language, in general, are perceived as virtual viruses meant to weaken the Alien recipient.

Human consciousness is, in fact, something unique in the Universe; humans are the Others for everyone. The narrative presents humans as resistance warriors on the brink of extinction. The extinction is more tragic because individual consciousness is everything worth living for. The narrative uses the subversive structure—sympathetic resisting Other against a much more powerful enemy—to promote a very conservative version of humanism, including the radical superiority of humans over any other beings and the human right to brutally assert it.

Humans are a fortress surrounded by enemies: the posthuman creatures without consciousness (Scramblers), the trans-human creatures with reduced (half)consciousness (vampires), and the humans that stopped being humans or even mammals (Bicamerals). The latter are broadly described in the second book, *Echopraxia* (2014). They are one collective consciousness embedded in many bodies—or in the abject multi-body—a perfect reversal of the prescriptive ideal of one individual consciousness in one individual body. They get to know the world through ecstasy, based on the rules included in Dharmic religions. That again makes Watts' posthuman beings close to the ones described in Bess' *Le Vampire de Benares*: both narratives link posthumanity and the East.

The body in Western culture has a double position: it is both despised and discriminated against when the primacy of mind is asserted, but it also “has a privileged place in Western notions of individuality”.⁶¹¹ Bicamerals lost their individuality. Being a multi-body collective makes Bicamerals' individual bodies unimportant: no individual consciousness is embedded in any of them. Moreover, they are also unimportant for the collective they form: the collective consciousness survives even if individual bodies of Bicamerals perish.

Ultimately, all those beings (Aliens, vampires, and Bicamerals) are similar, all on the spectrum of posthumanism, and all an abject threat to humanity defined by its classic-humanist individuality and seen as unique and exceptional. In that light, many consciousnesses in one body are equally threatening. This *topos* is explored in the next subchapter.

611 Marilyn Strathern, “Afterword: Taking Relationality to Extremes,” in *Suicide and Agency: Anthropological Perspectives on Self-destruction, Personhood, and Power*, ed. Ludek Broz and Daniel Münster (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 208.

1.2 Multiple Minds

The trope of many minds within one body is similarly recurrent in the 21st century. In Watts' novels, Susan James sliced her mind, as the narrative calls it, to split her self and get a few identities (consciousnesses) inside her body. She became The Gang James. James' multiplied identity causes the space mission to fail. *Echopraxia* introduces one more posthuman Alien, Portia, a blurred entity: emanation-plant-animal-cancer-mechanism, named after the spider species that shows incredible intelligence despite a tiny brain. This is because the spider managed to fragmentise its mind processes.

This subchapter focuses on the monsters that contain multiple consciousnesses in one body, analysing *Dracula* BBC mini-series, *Ремесло* saga, "The Witch and the Wicked," *Les Compagnons d'HeLa*, and *Dracul*. In the BBC mini-series *Dracula* (2020), the eponymous villain, like the Master in *The Strain*, absorbed the identities of all the humans he sucked: not only their "memories but languages, personality traits, and even speech impediments".⁶¹² He likes to paraphrase the Bible and repeats that blood contains lives (in the Bible, it is "life" in the singular⁶¹³). *Dracula's* body is one, but it is inhabited by multiple consciousnesses, or perhaps by one multi-consciousness. The identity—and the consciousness—are carried through the material biological medium: blood.

Alex Kosh's *Ремесло* saga contains a trope of parasitic identity. In the enemy Caliphate, they create a spying artificial incomplete identity that is then implanted in Stil. Importantly, this identity's name is Dharm—*dharma* is a crucial concept in Hindu and Buddhist, and more broadly in Indian, spirituality. Dharm is a sort of program; he develops consciousness and identity over time, and eventually, he wants to be a person.⁶¹⁴ Based on the Western paradigm of individuality, the right to personhood is accorded to him. The Heroes decide to let Dharm and Stil coexist in Stil's body until they can find him his own body. Two consciousnesses permanently coexisting in one body is unacceptable for everyone.

In the short story "The Witch and the Wicked" by Jeanne C. Stein (2007), a witch adds vampire ashes to her beauty cream. The identity/consciousness turns out to be embodied in the materiality of the ashes, just like in BBC's *Dracula*, where it was embodied in blood. When the witch rubs the cream in, she absorbs

612 Simon Bacon, *Contagion and the Vampire: The Vampiric Body as Locus of Disease and Global Epidemics in 21st Century* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2023), 55.

613 Leviticus 17:11 (King James Version), accessed September 22, 2023, King James Bible Online, <https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Leviticus-17-11/>.

614 Alex Kosh, *Огненный Легион* (Moscow: Издательство Альфа-Книга, 2013), loc. 9435, Kindle.

the vampire into her body. Now, her body is inhabited by two consciousnesses: a female one and a male one, the one of the vampire.

The vampire is an object of fascination and fear for the witch. He changes her body and gives her new sexual abilities that both excite and scare her. He also somehow alienates her from her/their body, as the body becomes for her an object of sexual fascination. The vampire slowly seduces her: she agrees to his propositions, thinking that she will be able to attenuate them, and without noticing, she agrees to whatever he wants. Just like her body, her consciousness gets colonised and transformed.

Manou Chintesco's *Les Compagnons d'HeLa* (2004) also contains a transgender vampire figure. Lorenza-Lucio is a man-and-a-woman in one female-male body. They are sometimes Lorenza, sometimes Lucio, and sometimes both at once. The body remains genetically female (has female chromosomes) all the time, but physically, it is male (Lucio) or female (Lorenza),⁶¹⁵ while the consciousness is fluid: male-female-male-and-female. Roman, the Hero, does not know what pronouns he should use.⁶¹⁶ Lorenza-Lucio enters into very intense relations with him: she was his wife and still remains, but as Lorenza-Lucio, they become his *alter ego*.⁶¹⁷

Yet the narrative remains heteronormative: there is never direct sexual intercourse between Lorenza-as-Lucio and Roman. Every time they are Lucio, the bodily relation between them and Roman needs to be mediated by someone else's body, the body of the human they prey upon. Only when Lorenza is indeed female does physical intercourse take place.

For Lorenza-Lucio, fluidity means the transgression of oppressive social norms.⁶¹⁸ For the Hero, their vampirism needs to be overcome, cured, and fixed. It means taking away their ability to switch forms and fixing their gender into the primary, genetic, assigned-at-birth female. Fixing gender goes even further; femininity is literally impregnated into Lorenza's body: her husband makes her a mother to his child, returning her to a classical, normative female role.

In the narrative, vampires can also transform into things such as mist. However, those transformations are performed mainly by the villain vampire Saint-Germain, who represents a posthumanist vision of the (hu)man. To this vision, the narrative prefers a trans-human(ist) super-human vision as represented by the Hero, Roman Balsamo, formerly Joseph (Giuseppe) Balsamo, called Cagliostro. Balsamo almost achieved immortality in another scientific way when Saint-Germain forcefully changed him into a vampire.

615 Manou Chintesco, *Les Compagnons d'HeLa*, 175.

616 *Ibid.*, 119, 170.

617 *Ibid.*, 180.

618 *Ibid.*, 108.

Dacre Stoker and J.D. Barker's *Dracul* (2018) presents an unusual way in which one body can gain many consciousnesses. Deaglon's body was first deprived of blood and heart and became a simple zombie-like composition of organs, steered by Dracula. It became a thing, a prosthesis, a prolongation of Dracula's body, his tool⁶¹⁹—a part of posthuman Dracula. Then, Deaglon becomes a creature that transgresses gender and even human-animal divisions. Due to Dracula's cruelty, his body parts are spread, and the borders of individuality are also crossed. This fragmented body can speak with the voices of different persons. It is both deprived of identity and provided with multiple ones. Deaglon's body becomes dead objects, but those objects gain a sort of abject life on their own. Deaglon gets cured thanks to the determination of the loving woman, who replays Osiris' myth and reassembles the parts of the body of her beloved. The next subchapter continues with the exploration of posthuman compositions.

1.3 Posthuman Composition

The posthuman monster does not need to be composed of the same species' representatives or pieces of the same kind. In the Polish story "Dreszcze" (2016) by Mariusz "Orzeł" Wojteczek, the eponymous fevers seem to have a sort of posthuman existence. They live in human beings and transform them into vampires, but they are also very independent and can move from one carrier to another. They form a new love-hate entangled evil entity that can be called a vampire. In other narratives, the entity is composed of biological and mechanical bodies, as in "Femme Fatale", analysed below. Finally, as discussed at the end of this subchapter, the graphic-literal media have their way of becoming posthuman entities through the very materiality of the narrative.

In the short French story "Femme Fatale" by Marianne Leconte (2014), the eponymous monstrous entity comprises a woman and a motorbike. It is not clear whether it is a trans-human or a posthuman being. She forms one with her motor, but it is not perspicuous what or whom the motor is. Gender identifications are also blurred. The motor can be a part or an extension of Ira's body, her *vagina dentata*, or, on the contrary, a phallic prosthesis. But if the motor is a phallic item, it can also be seen not as a broadening of Ira's person but as her substitute, something separating her from her victim-partner more than connecting with her.

The encounter between Ira and her victim starts erotically with a gentle caress. The Victim gets on the bike, sits behind Ira, and feels the buttocks of the driver against her belly. At the same time, she feels the vibrating waves of the motor as if

619 Dacre Stoker and J.D. Barker, *Dracul*, loc. 1071, Kindle.

the driver and the motor were one moving body, which is petting her. The seat is leather, silky, warm, wet, and lubricious. It is, rather than simply representing sex of Ira. And the Victim's vaginal lips react to it.

However, at the same time, the Victim gets scared. The motor—the body—hastens its movements against her will, and what started as a consensual embrace becomes an abuse. The pace gets fast, and the Victim is driven on the road between slippery walls (again, a sexual metaphor), unable to stop her driver. The motor starts to fly like a bullet.⁶²⁰ The gentle caress of two vaginas becomes a phallic rape. The Victim pinches, cries, and tries to stop the driver, but Ira is only aroused by her fear. At the final moment, Ira releases the handlebar, and the bike rides itself. Ira starts to caress and kiss the hands and arms of the victim, perversely being tender after and before the moment of cruelty. The bike urges her onward with its rattle. Ira moves her pelvis closer to the Victim and follows her movements—the Victim moans. Then, the Victim feels a hard metallic item approaching her vagina, slowly opening her labia. It is the motor's piston that vibrates and lubricates her, like a sort of dildo. She reaches an intense orgasm, simultaneously with her death. Her blood pours onto all the "members" of the machine⁶²¹ and rises to the seat (Ira's vagina) to be absorbed through the seat's "pores" into Ira's body.⁶²²

Bike and woman remain in symbiosis, to the point of being conjoined twins: one entity, one machine invented for and by the war.⁶²³ The machine is equally, if not more, important than a human in this holobiont. Yet, at times, the motorbike seems a separate entity that steers the whole.

The machine seems male, even though the motorcycle in French (*une moto*) has a feminine grammatical gender. The phallic piston satisfaction appears to control all the activities of the entity, and it/they can only be satisfied with a typically heterosexual act of dominating penetration of a female vagina. The piston is the first to get the bloody fluids from the pierced victim, and only then does it share them with the rest of the holobiont: Ira's vagina-like seat and Ira herself. It may be that even in the transgressive body of the posthuman monster, the male needs to dominate.

* * *

The composed textual-visual medium, such as BD, offers even more ways to create posthuman composed vampire beings. In Georges Bess' BD *Dracula*

620 Marianne Leconte, "Femme Fatale," in *Vampires à contre-emploi*, ed. Jeanne-A Debats (Saint-Laurent d'Oingt: Mnemos, 2014), 85.

621 *Ibid.*, 88.

622 *Ibid.*

623 *Ibid.*

(2019), the eponymous villain transforms into animals or even a mist (ectoplasm, as Van Helsing calls it) with a plant-like shape.⁶²⁴ Vampirised Lucy also transforms into a mist, and then the mist takes the animal form of a dragon,⁶²⁵ evoking Dracula as the son of a dragon. However, the graphic dimension goes even further. Dracula's face or body is frequently visually superimposed over the frames representing the natural landscapes of his country. He stands for his country: the non-Western space of hostile nature can be represented only by a vampire. But there is more to it: he embodies his country and is embodied by it. His body is virtually composed of the landscapes, plants, and animals of his native Transylvania. Visually, it is made of images of trees, castles, rocks, snow, mist, etc. The board-size frame on page 77 shows Dracula's face on the top of his castle, surrounded by fog, snowy forests, naked curved trees, and dangerous rocks beneath as if all those formed the vampire's body, crowned by the fanged head.

In the BDs, the vampire body goes beyond the intra-narrative level. The image itself becomes the vampire. The same effect is achieved in Pascal Croci and Françoise-Sylvie Pauly's *Dracula* (2005–2007). The BD itself is a posthuman item, and the vampire is a posthuman being constructed from the inside- and outside-narrative reality. On the recitation level, the BD is written as a sort of posthuman memory composed of many human memories. The hybrid effect is underlined by the split between the monstration and the recitation, especially in the second volume. The story begins with disturbing images of a strange woman walking in a dark cemetery, but on the literary level, the recipient "hears" (reads) Harker and Stoker drinking tea and chatting at the tea table.

When it comes to Dracula, the monstration is characterised by absence. Dracula is not represented directly: the reader can see his shadow and statues that represent him, but never Dracula himself. He is the monster that always escapes, turns immaterial, and vanishes.⁶²⁶ By this lack of vampire representation, Croci blurs the borders between the narrative and the meta-narrative level: the lack of Dracula's representation in his BD reflects the intra-narrative characteristic of a vampire—his lack of mirror reflection. The fact that Dracula is seen in his statues is a cognitive metaphor for a vampire's un-dead (neither alive nor dead) status. The fact that we do not see Dracula's figure in the story about Dracula points to the fact that Dracula is everything that we see. The vampire Dracula is a posthuman being composed of all the landscapes, buildings, and statues that the monstration shows.

624 Bram Stoker and George Bess, *Dracula*, 143.

625 *Ibid.*, 122.

626 Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, "Monster Culture (Seven Theses)," 43–54.

Those items, the buildings, and generally the places of action share one more feature with the vampire monster. They are rather sketched than clearly defined. They can change from one frame/panel to another in the middle of the action. One object can turn into another: a person's clothes can transform into a fragment of the snowy castle.⁶²⁷ The last short subchapter returns to the conception of the hive.

1.4 Multi-Body—Micro-Hive

Indeed, vampires can be represented as composed bodies. This means that vampire bodies can also be formed from other micro-bodies and constitute a micro-hive.

In the already analysed *The Strain* franchise, vampires are macro- and micro-hive collectivity(-ies): they are composed of organs that are composed of the worms that carry the virus. A similar image is offered in David Wellington's *Laura Caxton Vampire* series (2006–2012): a vampire is a swarming mass of maggots joined into one digestive system.

* * *

The analysis showed that Monsters in the vampire narratives are deeply posthuman creatures. They are collective multi-bodies, multiplied minds, hybrid patchwork creatures, macro- and micro-hives, transgressing all the dichotomies and divisions through blurred, entangled embodiments and embeddings.

Yet the core of the question resides precisely in this: they are Monsters, abominations, abjects, something that needs to be defeated, fixed, or, ideally, completely annihilated. In the many vampire narratives, the posthuman condition is presented only to be rejected. The next chapter studies whether the narratives presenting Vampires as Heroes subvert this valuation.

627 Pascal Croci and Françoise-Sylvie Pauly, *Dracula: Intégrale* (Paris: Paquet, 2015), 157.

Chapter II: The Posthuman Solar Heroes?

This chapter examines whether a posthuman Monster can become a posthuman Hero without losing their posthuman character. Notably, it examines a few of the most popular vampire narratives in which researchers have indicated the presence of some posthumanism (I refer to those researchers in the following analysis). These include *Twilight*, *The Vampire Diaries*, *The Originals*, *True Blood*, and *Being Human*. It also examines potentially posthuman hybrid figures of the Solar Heroes in L.A. Banks' *Vampire Huntress Legend* saga (2003–2009), where the vampires are conceived as profoundly evil, yet the hybrids are humanity's saviours.

Avipsa Mondal⁶²⁸ claims that Bella's desire for the vampire in *Twilight* is a posthuman one. Bella wants Edward, and she wants to become a vampire herself. For Mondal, it is a posthuman desire linked to the body's materiality. However, Mondal struggles to prove her point, referring primarily to vampires as "humanlike, individual and beautiful". Therefore, the author proves that Bella seeks super-humanity in the most Enlightenment-like sense.

The Vampire Diaries treats its human and its vampire characters equally: killing a human and killing a vampire is equally bad. They are both considered persons. And while characters, even the Heroes, kill frequently, they do not do it out of a sense of mission. Mary Borsellino⁶²⁹ writes about Damon Salvatore, noting that he breaks all the conventions of the genre. He is both a Vampire and a Vampire Hunter, but not because he hates what he is, not because he finds vampirism or vampires particularly evil, not because he sides with humans. He hunts other vampires for personal reasons. He also builds his personal social network of vampires, humans, werewolves, and hybrids.

628 Avipsa Mondal "Representation of Posthuman Desire in Stephenie Meyer's *The Twilight Saga*," *Ashvamegh*, no. 14 (March 2016).

629 Mary Borsellino, "Damon Salvatore: Vampire Hunter," in *A Visitor's Guide to Mystic Falls: Your Favorite Authors on The Vampire Diaries*, ed. Red, Heather Vee and Leah Wilson (Dallas: BenBella Books, 2010), loc. 1699–1866, Kindle.

In the narrative, no one is condemned because of their identity; characters are only judged by their actions: “it is not necessarily the category of human or vampire/ monster that is intrinsically good or evil, but rather the persistence of a system that promotes a particular set of values”.⁶³⁰ This system of values is indeed reconstructed: even the worst deeds are condoned if they are done out of love for family, friends, or lovers. The characters make their networks independent of race, gender and “species” identities, which frequently change without altering loyalties. They form the basis of the new social contract, which is even better evidenced in *The Originals*, *The Vampire Diaries* spin-off.

For Maria Marino-Faza, it is enough to perceive the narrative as posthumanist: “This coexistence of different beings—humans, vampires, immortals, werewolves and witches, among others—marks ‘the collapse of species borders’ and promotes a posthumanist view of the world”.⁶³¹

But there is more: during the narrative, characters change (sometimes a few times), expand, and hybridise their identities. Humans become vampires or turn out to be werewolves; werewolves become hybrids, and vampires become human again. The change of “species” belonging is sometimes a (re)discovery/(re)construction of one’s identity, and the new one turns out to be definitely better: Caroline Forbes is a much better person as a vampire than she was as a human, according to herself and others. Moreover, characters frequently exchange bodies and consciousnesses: a person leaves their own body and takes someone else’s. Interestingly, changing from a white body to a Black one can bring empowerment and new capacities/possibilities. In *The Originals*, Rebekah takes the body of the Afro-American witch Eva Sinclair, and this body gives her a chance to have children. Finn takes the body of the Afro-American male witch Vincent Griffith to gain magical powers.

Hybrid figures hold tremendous potential to be posthuman. In *The Originals*, these are, first and foremost, Klaus and Marcus. They are both highly opposed to the patriarchal order of purity. Klaus is persecuted by his father, Mikael, for being half-vampire, half-werewolf, half-white, half-Native, and a fruit of his wife’s unfaithfulness. Klaus’ siblings take his side, and they form a hybrid family. Klaus engenders a tribrid, vampire-werewolf-witch girl named Hope. He also transformed Marcus, an enslaved Black man and a persecuted bastard like himself, into a vampire. Marcus also becomes a super-hybrid and finally joins the Mikaelson family as Rebekah’s, Klaus’ sister, partner.

630 Maria Marino-Faza, “More than Human: Reading the Doppelgänger and Female Monstrosity in Television Vampires,” in *Posthuman Gothic*, ed. Anya Heise-von der Lippe (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2017), 136.

631 *Ibid.*, 138.

Maria Marino-Faza sees a posthuman figure in doppelgängers, primarily in good human Elena and the evil vampire Katherine couple.⁶³² She claims that Elena finally becoming a vampire blurs the established borders and makes her a hybrid person. The further appearance of more doppelgängers means that “both Katherine and Elena must deal with the fact that they are only ‘alternative versions of the self’. The concept of exceptionalism is debunked”.⁶³³

Yet even Marino-Faza has to finally admit that Elena can only remain good after becoming a vampire at the cost of repression and assimilation. Her hybridity is superficial.

Characters such as Stefan Salvatore, his friend Lexi Branson, Caroline Forbes, and, later, Elena (once she becomes a vampire) are portrayed as more human than humans themselves, and this is made possible by ‘denying the illegitimate animal within itself, by seeking an expulsion of the animal inside’. As Victoria Nelson explains, although these humanized supernatural characters ‘retain their generic identity (demon, vampire, werewolf) along with the innate dark desires connected with that identity (killing humans) [they] are able to rise above their instincts by an act of will that must be tested again and again’⁶³⁴.

Indeed, the non-human vampires are humanised to the extreme. They need to keep, guard and show their humanity, with *The Vampire Diaries* explicitly marking evil vampires as those who have “switched off” their humanity and good ones as those who still have it. The spin-off series (*The Originals* (2013–2018)) waves off the actors’ more posthuman features (shifting between species, associating with the dead, hybridity), but ultimately it “creates a supernatural mirror-world of contemporary human experiences”.⁶³⁵

The hybridisation is racial and perhaps queer, but it is nonetheless human-centred. Hybrids are more trans-human super-humans than posthumans. They absorb successive powers to enhance their super-human selves. Body-switching is also more an act of extending the self. In fact, it resembles an expansion of one’s consciousness into someone else’s body, an aggressive colonisation/appropriation.

True Blood is similar. Jennifer Culver summarises human-vampire coexistence in the narrative: “successful mainstreaming for vampires depends on how

632 Ibid., 125–142.

633 Ibid., 138.

634 Ibid., 135.

635 Verena Bernardi, “Subtropical Gothic: New Orleans and Posthuman Supernaturals in *The Originals*,” *eTropic: Electronic Journal of Studies in the Tropics* 18, no. 1 (May 2019): 105, <https://doi.org/10.25120/etropic.18.1.019.3689>.

well they can play the game of being human".⁶³⁶ Erica McCrystal⁶³⁷ argues against this position, claiming that *True Blood* postulates a posthuman Gothic utopia, where all hierarchies are dissolved, and a mutualistic relationship between different human and non-human beings is achieved. However, McCrystal ignores the costs of attaining the final idyllic picture: the picnic table where human and non-human protagonists gather. To achieve this, vampires must submit to human structures (such as monogamous marriage), and Sookie must kill her vampire love and embrace the lifestyle of the average human wife. McCrystal herself quotes Levinas' definition of hospitality as one that permits reciprocity based on the responsibility incited by the look at the human face⁶³⁸ [my underline].

Strangely, for McCrystal, a posthuman utopia is achieved through hospitality conditioned by private possession, a fundamental aspect of liberal capitalism. This assumption is problematic at its core but becomes even more complicated when it finds its embodiments. McCrystal lists the possession of the house to which humans can invite vampires, the co-ownership of the house, and the vampire's claim to possession of their lovers' bodies. All of these problematised within the narrative itself. Vampire Bill cannot leave his house as an inheritance to his vampire child, Jessica, as only humans can inherit the estate. However, McCrystal regards it as a positive fact because it permits Andy, a human far descendant of Bill and his legal heir, to show hospitality by allowing Jessica to live in Bill's house, paying \$1 rent or forgetting to pay at all. Systemic discrimination is to be repaired by the uncertain individual act of benevolence.

When Sookie vanishes into another world for a year, she returns home to discover that her family house has been bought by vampire Eric, who can now enter without her invitation. She feels insecure and threatened, as Eric had many times expressed the will to have her, and now he has gained access to the only safe place she had. However, McCrystal again sees it in a positive light as an occasion for the practice of reciprocity in the co-ownership forced by the rich white male upon the impoverished woman.

It is difficult to imagine how these tropes can support the argument of a posthuman utopia. The coexistence of the species is hardly utopian. It is also hardly posthumanist, rather forcefully re-humanising and specifically re-in-

636 Jennifer Culver, "Dressing Up and Playing Human: Vampire Assimilation in the Human Playground," in *True Blood and Philosophy: We Wanna Think Bad Things with You*, ed. William Irwin, George A. Dunn and Rebecca Housel (Hoboken: Wiley, 2010), 25.

637 Erica McCrystal, "Coexistence and Hospitality: The Gothic Utopian Vision of *True Blood*," in *Posthuman Gothic*, ed. Anya Heise-von der Lippe (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2017), 93–108.

638 *Ibid.*, 100.

scribing actors into the well-known relations of power and domination based on race, gender, and class.

It is also worth noting that in all four narratives (*Twilight*, *True Blood*, *The Vampire Diaries*, and *The Originals*), the werewolves or shapeshifters occupy a lower position than the vampires. Hannah Priest notices that werewolves frequently denote non-white ethnicities and their “tribal identity”, while vampires denote white power and culture.⁶³⁹ Natalie Wilson points out that the encounter remains colonial, even if the narratives seemingly promote agonism instead of antagonism or even prescribe hybridisation.⁶⁴⁰

The not-really posthuman hybrids are also protagonists of L.A. Banks’ *Vampire Huntress Legend* saga (2003–2009). In the books, vampires and werewolves are generally portrayed as evil, Hellish creatures. However, the Crew of Light consists entirely of hybrids. On a fantastical level, they are hybrids of humans, vampires, angels, and Neteru. On a realistic level, they are of mixed races. The most beautiful characters, the eponymous Damali and Carlos and the first people, biblical Adam and Eve, are either mixtures of many races or all races’ mixed protoplasts. Their racial impurity, perceived as incredible diversity, is affirmed. The transformations of their bodies are described with fascination and are conceived as miraculous. But they are, in fact, trans-human super-human transformations. As mentioned elsewhere, only hybrids with souls—indeed, humans—are valued.

* * *

Perhaps the series *Being Human* comes closest to posthumanist signification. Zofia Kolbuszewska⁶⁴¹ reads the whole house that three monsters live in as an allegory of a single human/posthuman being. Indeed, such a reading, for both versions of the series, can be justified by the fact that the house constantly needs to maintain a werewolf-vampire-ghost composition even when the specific werewolves, ghosts, and vampires change (pass away, leave, disappear, die).

Such a house as an entity both confirms and undermines humanism. On the one hand, the monsters compose the household, which is an allegory of a tra-

639 Hannah Priest, “Pack versus Coven: Guardianship of Tribal Memory in Vampire versus Werewolf Narratives,” in *Undead Memory: Vampires and Human Memory in Popular Culture*, ed. Simon Bacon and Katarzyna Bronk (Bern: Peter Lang, 2014), 214, 213–35.

640 Natalie Wilson, “Civilized Vampires Versus Savage Werewolves: Race and Ethnicity in the *Twilight* Series,” in *Bitten by Twilight: Youth Culture, Media, and the Vampire Franchise*, ed. Melissa A. Click, Jennifer Stevens Aubrey and Elizabeth Behm-Morawitz (New York: Peter Lang, 2010), 55.

641 Zofia Kolbuszewska, “The Ultimate Post-humanist Nostalgia in the TV Show *Being Human* US: Monstrous Home as an Allegory of the Human,” *Roczniki Humanistyczne* 66, no. 11 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.18290/rh.2018.66.11s-9>.

ditionally understood human being. This is highlighted by their explicitly expressed longing for their past human life, the traditional middle-class nuclear family they try to imitate, and their eponymous desire to be human. I would also add that it is enacted by rejecting monsters deemed too monstrous. Therefore, even if some monstrosity finds a place in the so-assembled household-as-allegory-of-human, most of it does not. Moreover, according to Kolbuszewska, the allegorical house-human is divided into the body (werewolf), intelligence and desires (vampire) and mind and spirit (ghost) in the Cartesian manner. To this, I would add that the fact that three monsters are needed in order to create one allegorical human implies that non-humans are actually considered less than humans.

And yet, on the other hand, the idea of an assembled human being bursts the humanistic idea, as Kolbuszewska notices. I would add that while vampires, ghosts, and werewolves represent some aspects of traditional human beings, they are also entities in their own right. Some of their features are needed to construct the allegorical human being, but neither vampires, werewolves, nor ghosts comprehend themselves solely through these features. The surplus is created, and the allegory transcends its humanism; in other words, the figurative human being surpasses its boundaries.

However, in the end, Kolbuszewska must admit:

The manifold alienation of the characters inhabiting the house follows from their repudiation of the horrific post-humanist dystopia in favour of an ambiguous utopian vision in which the future model what it means to be the human is in part, at least, based on the nostalgic reconstruction of the model of the human put forward by the classical humanism.⁶⁴²

“Thus, the middle-class home created by them embodies a nostalgic utopia—a utopian dream of purity, stability, unity—embedded in a post-humanist dystopia”⁶⁴³.

One must also remember that in the American series, the house needs to be burned, as it turns out to be haunted by a Devil-devoted girl. Aidan manages to do it, but he dies in the flames. Thanks to his sacrifice, Josh and Nora can leave the house, live elsewhere, have children, and create a traditional nuclear family. A posthuman being needs to disintegrate and be replaced by a human one. The British *Being Human* ends with the vampire-werewolf-ghost trio returning home—but they may be trapped there by the Devil.

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642 Ibid., 120.

643 Ibid., 123.

The analysis shows that Vampire Heroes do not retain the posthuman character that Vampire Monsters have. Heroicisation comes at the cost of humanisation. The final chapter examines whether the Ambivalent Narrative, with its ambivalent Monsters-and-Heroes, actually manages to affirm posthuman beings or becoming-with.

Chapter III: Ambivalent Narrative: Affirming (Posthuman?) Monstrosity

Ambivalent narratives heroicise and victimise the Monster, monstrify and victimise the Hero, and monstrify and heroicise the Victim. In a sense, they are deeply posthuman in their very structure, blurring the differences between the protagonists, complexifying the actors into multi-actors, shifting their roles, and juggling their relations. Yet the posthuman dimension also depends on a very concrete embodiment: notably, what monstrosity is actually affirmed. This chapter explores the narratives that contain a seemingly posthuman Monster who is not perceived as a complete villain: Thierry Murat's French BD *Ne reste que l'aube* (2021), *Je suis légion* (2004–2007) and *Les Chroniques de légion* (2011–2012) by Fabien Nury and his collaborators, Gabriel Delmas' *Vampyr Draco Maleficus Imperator* (2004), Carolyn Haines' short story "The Wish" (2009), and the Netflix *Hemlock Grove* series. Notably, three of these narratives are multi-medium BDs.

Ne reste que l'aube opposes posthumanism to trans-humanism. The action takes place in a cybernetic, technocratic, capitalist society of the future. The protagonist vampire figure hides his true identity. He is a posthuman being: not only is he human and non-human, but he is partially organic and mineral regarding his body's biological composition. To live in human society, he needs to favour his mineral part. He changed his metabolism so that he did not need blood, but in doing so, he also (quite literally) petrified himself.⁶⁴⁴ Like Hayden Taylor's decolonial Vampire Hero, significantly named Pierre (rock), he paid the costs of living within Western civilisation by losing much of himself. Yet he is still more human than the humans⁶⁴⁵ who live in this trans-human-in-human world. He finally embraces his animal part and escapes into the northern wild, where he becomes one with nature, the "geomagnetic song" (chant géomagnétique).⁶⁴⁶

644 Thierry Murat, *Ne reste que l'aube* (Paris: Futuropolis, 2021), 112.

645 Ibid., 100.

646 Ibid., 156.

The posthuman ideal represented by the Vampire is opposed to the trans-human model represented by the Hunters, who pursue him from helicopters in their “punitive pantheonisation” (panthéonade punitive).⁶⁴⁷ Therefore, the protagonist decides to expose himself to the sun rather than allow the hunters to capture him. In the narrative, the sun is not the civilisational weapon of the Solar Heroes. It is a way to preserve the vampire’s agency and dignity. It also seems to be a means to achieve the goal he sought from the beginning: he dissolves into nature, quite similarly to the Hero in Taylor’s *The Night Wanderer*. However, the narrative ultimately replays the dichotomy of the organic versus the non-organic, and, through the rebellion against the world defined as in-human, it seems to perform the ideal of humanity.

Even greater final undermining can be found in *Je suis légion* (2004–2007) and *Les Chroniques de légion* (2011–2012). The narrative tells the story of Vlad (Dracula) and his younger brother Radu. Their vampirism manifests in two forms. The first form involves vampires wandering from one body to another through blood infusion. It is diachronic: Vlad and Radu move through time, changing successive incarnations while retaining all their memories. They become gender- and species-fluid. In *Je suis légion*, Radu is Ana, a ten-year-old Romanian girl, and Vlad becomes Maria, a young Romanian woman, even beginning to call Radu “little sister”.⁶⁴⁸ In *Les Chroniques de légion*, Vlad is a Spanish-American *conquistadora*, and Radu incarnated into animals. The consciousness is deeply embodied; with every incarnation, it is transformed, extended, and enriched by the consciousness residing inside the new body—or perhaps by the consciousness *of* the body. The vampire does not colonise the body; instead, the vampire becomes-with a new person.

The second form of vampirism is synchronic. It involves taking control over animal or human bodies—often multiple bodies simultaneously—again through blood. One might be tempted to say that bodies taken by vampires are prostheses of the primary body, its trans-human extensions. However, vampires highlight the fact that they *are* many; they are legion: they are all those men, women, adults, children, and animals simultaneously. A vampire’s extended (multi)body acquires a collective⁶⁴⁹ posthuman consciousness. The narrative’s titles include the name of legion (*légion*), referring to the biblical demon, much like Bess in *Le Vampire de Benares*, but without giving the vampires a demoniacal hint.

647 Ibid., 162. The word ironically refers to the French Panthéon and the act of commemorating the great people of the nation.

648 Fabien Nury, John Cassaday and Laura Martin, *Je suis légion, Tome 3: Les Trois Singes* (Paris: Les Humanoïdes Associés, 2007), 64.

649 Fabien Nury, John Cassaday and Laura Dupuy, *Je suis légion, Tome 1: Le Faune Dansant* (Paris: Les Humanoïdes Associés, 2004), 54.

It is sometimes impossible to distinguish the “own” (main?) body of either Vlad or Radu. They were born human in 15th-century Transylvania, but since then, they have been an American *conquistadora*, a Napoleonic captain, a British gentleman, a British special service agent (Vlad), rats, an Aztec king, a Gypsy wanderer, wolves, and a Romanian girl in Nazi service (Radu). They were those, and more, consecutively and simultaneously.

Vampires use and have human and animal bodies with the same ease and treat non-human bodies and consciousnesses as equal to human ones. Therefore, they are indeed posthuman beings. The bodies that form a vampire in all its diachronic and synchronic dimensions are things to be taken, manipulated, and controlled. Yet these things are agents: they form, re-form, and transform the consciousness of the vampire entity. Ultimately, the agency is collective, transcending the division between subject and object agency. The protagonists are Haraway’s vampires who effect “category transformations by illegitimate passages of substance”,⁶⁵⁰ who embody “the kinship exchange system”,⁶⁵¹ and whose surplus erases individual Enlightenment identifications. The frames, boards, and panels’ visual de-bordering contributes to the excess in the posthuman identity construction.

Yet, at some point, the story revokes itself: in *Les Chroniques de légion*—a prequel written a few years after the original trilogy—Vlad is cast as a Solar Hero who needs to stop his too-transgressive brother to save the world. Radu’s collective consciousness is too expanded.

Radu’s kingdom in pre-Columbian America is depicted as gloomy and dark, drawn in expressionist style with blackish colours. His body is made of bones, and he resides in too many (thousands⁶⁵²) bodies that form his hive. The controlled bodies do not feel pain or deprivation, and losing one body does not matter. This vision is close to Watts’s descriptions of Bicamerals or even *The Strain*’s visions of vampires. Radu’s hive is perceived as an abject expansion (“répand”) of his self (“moi”). His posthuman way of being/becoming is shown as a cruel slavery.

Radu continues to dream of expansion throughout the centuries. At the beginning of the 19th century, Radu engenders a child who could transform the whole world into one collective consciousness/organism. That perspective is presented as dystopian, horrible, and totalitarian: such unification would be the annihilation of the world and the creation of a being that would be desperately

650 Donna Haraway, *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium*, 214.

651 *Ibid.*, 217.

652 Fabien Nury, Eric Henninot, Mario Alberti, Zhang Xiaoyu, Tirso Cons, Javier Martin and Roberto Ricci, *Les Chroniques de Légion, Livre IV* (Grenoble: Éditions Glénat, 2012), 7.

lonely,⁶⁵³ says Vlad. That is why he kills the woman who is pregnant with Radu's child and prevents the child from being born.

The posthuman condition is ultimately presented not as a diversity and symbiosis but as a terrifying unification. Individual identity is strongly affirmed, as in Watts' dilogy or *Le Vampire de Benares*. Like in the latter, individuality is a condition *sine qua non* of love. Vlad, as Gabriella, the *conquistadora*, falls in love with Martin. When Martin dies, Vlad/Gabriella refuses to take over his body. She wants him to remain himself, not a part of her. She cannot "violate" his soul.⁶⁵⁴ Love is conceived as a separateness, distinctiveness, and individuation.

Gabriel Delmas' *Vampyr Draco Maleficus Imperator* (2004) seemingly goes the furthest in self-constructing posthuman Otherness. All the actors are monstrous, but everything is an actor, an agent, and a subject. Frames are crowded with humans, human bodies, parts of bodies, animals, animal-like monsters, monstrous plants, landscapes, and machines. Frame to frame, fluid forms flow, transform, juxtapose, converge, and entangle, blurring the differences between human—monster—animal—plant—detached body part—landscape—machine.

As mentioned elsewhere, the narrative also includes a textual manifesto advocating revolution against all political, social, and religious forms of oppression⁶⁵⁵ and against all moral, medical, and aesthetic norms and classifications. It calls for the liberation of the body,⁶⁵⁶ solidarity beyond racial, national, class, religious, and all other divisions, the redistribution of wealth, gender equality, environmentalism,⁶⁵⁷ and species equality. The narrator asserts that his life is worth no more than a worm's.⁶⁵⁸ The narrative affirms deformity, mutation, ugliness, horror, evil, and even pain and suffering as transgressions of the norms of pleasure.⁶⁵⁹

The protagonist, the eponymous Vampyr Neron, is a druggist, a sado-masochist, a murderer-suicide, and a trans/bi(multi?)-gender person. In his relationship with Mélusine, they shift roles and genders; they are male and female consecutively and simultaneously, and both are queen-whores. It remains unclear who turns whom and whether this is a reason to be grateful or to lament. They are both Victims, Slayers, and Monsters to one another, yet the other turns

653 Fabien Nury, Eric Henninot, Mario Alberti, Zhang Xiaoyu, Tirso Cons, Javier Martin and Roberto Ricci, *Les Chroniques de Légion, Livre IV*, 18.

654 Fabien Nury, Eric Henninot, Mario Alberti, Zhang Xiaoyu, Tirso Cons, Javier Martin and Roberto Ricci, *Les Chroniques de Légion, Livre IV*, 14.

655 *Ibid.*, 35.

656 *Ibid.*, 53.

657 *Ibid.*, 35.

658 *Ibid.*, 112.

659 *Ibid.*, 42.

out to be the self. Neron pierces himself with a phallic knife: the frame shows his naked thighs and stomach, and the knife casts a shadow in the shape of a penis. He slays himself, but the knife draws Mélusine's initials on his body.⁶⁶⁰

Mélusine and Neron both want to be together and to free themselves from one another, and this complicated relationship constitutes the story's plot, which is otherwise more lyrical than epic. They suffer and inflict suffering, but the suffering is pleasure. They love and loathe; they mix desire and death, sexual expressions and gender identities, and erotic roles to the point that the dominator becomes submissive, and the domination becomes enslavement.⁶⁶¹

This relationship culminates in a scene of death-torment analogous to that of Christ. In the frenzy of hate-love desire, Neron mutilates and kills Mélusine, once again a Vampire and a Slayer desperately wanting to control the female body. But any control is impossible, as the body he is mutilating is not a passive Victim's body. She is somehow in control ("J'aime qu'il me déchire..."⁶⁶²). Finally, they are both tearing apart their own and each other's bodies, being murdered and murderers, being corpses and survivors. They both transform themselves and each other into mere flesh, meat, objects, excrement, and waste ("chose aimée", "[objet dans la] collection de déchets", "deux bouts de chair"⁶⁶³), and that is what gives them absolute freedom. This represents the absolute transgression of being a Thing as conceived by Žižek: free from the limits of identity.

Identity and individuality are destroyed: the effect is a posthuman body being both Neron and Mélusine, a Mélusine who expresses herself in terms of femininity but uses masculine pronouns, and a male/female Neron who gives birth to their son, or perhaps gives re-birth to himself ("Qu'il a tué. Qu'il. Qu'il l'a tué. Suicide vingt fois"⁶⁶⁴).

The posthuman son is a reborn Neron and is a worm, a material being, a perfect animal, and he/they/it is also a virtual poetry engendered in the mind of his mother-father.⁶⁶⁵ The posthuman person is not an individual, but, like in *Je suis légion* and *Le Vampire de Benares*, a legion, a multitude, a multi-consciousness in a post(multi?)body ("Je suis la légion. Nous sommes plusieurs, mais je n'ai plus de noms"⁶⁶⁶).

The son is not only a worm but also a wall on which the worms are marching. He is not a living being; he is an object, yet he is living. Finally, like Jesus, he resurrects—as two persons, a woman and a man, who can freely switch their

660 Ibid., 100.

661 Ibid., 80.

662 Ibid., 107–8.

663 Ibid., 107–8.

664 Ibid., 111.

665 The narrative plays on the double sense of the French "vers".

666 Gabriel Delmas, *Vampyr Draco*, 111.

genders. The gospel ends with Jesus' reversed message: "Die in me" ("Meurs en moi"⁶⁶⁷) and the series of frames where no objects are distinct.⁶⁶⁸

The narrative seems radically posthuman, yet, as I demonstrated in earlier parts of the book, it affirms the primacy of consciousness over the body. Therefore, it is more about Promethean-Nietzschean metempsychosis than about posthuman embodiments. Indeed, the narrator asserts his vampire's superhuman superiority. Neron openly states that humans are to vampires what plants are to humans.

* * *

At first glance, "The Wish" and the *Hemlock Grove* series seem much less posthuman than any of the BDs mentioned above. However, a closer look reveals a different reality. They both refute the nature-civilisation dichotomy and go beyond it. Specifically, *Hemlock Grove* may be the most posthuman narrative in the corpus analysed in this book, alongside perhaps the previously discussed novel by Hayden Taylor, where the dissolution of the individual into nature is a postulated act of decolonising emancipation.

In "The Wish", the heroine loses two children. After their deaths, she is unable to move on with her life, something her husband eventually does. She attempts suicide many times but never manages to die. Death never arrives when she desperately yearns for it, but it eventually comes unexpectedly—and then the heroine decides to refuse it and become a vampire.

Her decision is an act of ultimate revolt against the order of nature. But she does not align with civilisation. She had refused to live in society even before she refused death: she declined to lead any social life after her children's deaths. In the narrative, the vampire is neither a Hero nor a Monster; it is a figure of contest against the human condition.

"The Wish" stops at contestation, but *Hemlock Grove* goes further: it constructs a positive posthumanist alternative. Notably, both Heroes, the werewolf and the vampire, are ambivalent. They start as Solar figures and end as villains in their fight with one another, which represents the civilisation-nature impasse. They both fail. And that is where Shelley, a posthuman figure, appears, breaking and annihilating boundaries, constructing an alternative to both civilisation and pure nature and offering a new bricolage⁶⁶⁹ solution. Her boyfriend compares her to the heroines of James Cameron's movies, who, in his view, are strong and not

667 Ibid., 118.

668 Ibid., 120–21.

669 Claude Lévi-Strauss, *La pensée sauvage* (Paris: Plon, 1962).

obviously beautiful.⁶⁷⁰ Shelley is the true Solar Hero of the story and the only protagonist with a happy ending. She grows up to leave her home and all the techno-medical power of her family, and she manages to leave Hemlock Grove.

As a Frankenstein Creature, Shelley is a waste: she was created by the doctors (civilisation) from body parts (nature) that were biomedical garbage. She is literally a posthuman construction. When she runs away from her mother and refuses to live with her brother, she decides to live in an abandoned foundry (a space of waste) in a community of the homeless—the social waste.

The abandoned foundry has a posthuman identity: on the wastage of human activity, nature re-grows in symbiosis with humans and non-humans. Natural and civilisational environments mix, entangle, and converge to create a space for a posthuman society that embraces everyone. The bricolage-style horizontal community offers a counter-programme to the society of the Virocene:

Survival requires that social and ecological justice simultaneously drive not only resistance against capitalism and racism but also the creativity, imagination, and political power to organize a socially and ecologically wellbeing-centered world order. Emancipation from the Virocene epoch requires radical articulations of an ethical paradigm of multispecies rights, justice, and power.⁶⁷¹

The collectivity has its agency: it empowers Shelley to stop worrying about her monstrous appearance. She accepts her body as it is. She gets autonomy, strength, and self-awareness. She can resist the influence of her mother, her brother, and even her protective friends, uncle Norman and Dr. Pryce. She maintains her independence in her newly found romantic relationship.

670 *Hemlock Grove*, Season 3, Episode 5, “Boy in the Box,” directed by David Straiton, written by Charles H. Eglee, aired October 23, 2015, <https://www.netflix.com/title/70242310>.

671 Jude L. Fernando, “The Virocene Epoch,” 640, Table 1.

Conclusions

As shown in this book, ecological and posthuman(ist) *topoi* proliferate in the 21st-century Vampire Narratives. Some narratives are eco-friendly and affirm posthuman(ist) conceptions, while others are definitely critical, if not hostile. There are also narratives that oppose environmentalism to posthumanism. Polish and, even more frequently, Russian narratives seem to counter ecological and posthumanist issues, reject them, or use some *topoi*—particularly ecological ones—instrumentally to promote nationalist, elitist, supremacist, imperialist and other agendas. However, the same can be said about many Western narratives. Ecologism and environmentalism may be more frequently expressed in Western narratives, yet most of them are superficial, much like the “vegetarianism” of the Solar Heroes. Almost all the narratives seem to value the spirit more than the body—understood as nature on the micro-scale of the human person.

Animalisation is a common trope in both Western and Eastern European vampire narratives. It often leads to the monstrification and objectification of the animalised actor. Many narratives do not grant equal or even any rights to non-human beings. The narratives that do often maintain a human-centred hierarchy of beings.

Like other ecological tropes, favourable evaluation of some non-human beings can be used instrumentally to promote a super-human agenda. This agenda advocates the superiority of exceptional (super)humans over everyone else rather than promoting the actual equality of human and non-human beings.

While the *topos* of diet frequently serves to explore a broad range of social and political issues in both Western and non-Western narratives, it rarely promotes ecological or pro-animal attitudes. On the contrary, it very often promotes anthropocentrism, specifically through the trope of “vegetarian” vampires. This trope also reinforces patriarchy through the performance of the male virtue of self-discipline. It supports capitalism through the commodification of “vegetarianism” as a lifestyle. Furthermore, other types of diet do not carry subversive

meanings either. Instead, the *topos* of diet is often used to differentiate between the “normal” and the “abnormal” and legitimise the *status quo*.

* * *

The comparison of diverse figures through the same *topoi* allowed me to state that, in most cases, an act’s moral evaluation depends on the doer’s identity rather than the essence of the act itself. Similar actions receive different judgments depending on who is performing them. It is not the bad deeds that make the monster; it is the monster that makes the deeds bad.

The analysis also demonstrated that, in most cases, the inclusion of non-human vampires involves humanisation. The more beings resemble humans, the more they can be recognised as subjects and persons. Vampires must maintain, guard, and display their humanity. Only such humanised non-human vampires are indeed considered subjects.

Therefore, with few exceptions, anthropocentrism and carnophallogocentrism are rarely countered in 21st-century vampire narratives. They are rather legitimised in new ways. It is paired with valuing the mind over matter, consciousness over body, and individuality over collectivity.

This not only reflects modern paradigms of Enlightenment such as civilisation, progress, and humanism but also implicitly upholds Western culture, constructed upon these paradigms, over all others. Interestingly, these paradigms also exist in non-Western narratives, expressing their self-colonised position.⁶⁷² Sometimes, due to this specific status, they are performed even more fervently.

To end on a more optimistic note, a few narratives, as analysed in this book, hold significant ecological, environmental, pro-animal, or posthumanist meanings. Interestingly, short forms and less popular narratives are at the forefront. However, the popular Netflix series *Hemlock Grove* and Neil Jordan’s film *Byzantium* can also be counted among these works. As narratives express and construct social attitudes, the presence of such works may provide a glimmer of hope.

672 Kiossev, “Notes on the Self-colonising Cultures,” p. 3.

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673 The analysed sources are listed separately in the Annex. The names of the Russian authors are transcribed into the Latin alphabet as they appear in the book’s text.

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Predator/predatory animal:

1. Dagmara Adwentowska, “Niezwykła kobieta”, 2016 [Polish]
2. Agata Suchocka, *Daję ci wieczność* series, 2018– [Polish]
3. Grzegorz Uzdański, *Wypiór*, 2021 [Polish]
4. Krzysztof Kotowski, *Trzech gości w łódce plus wampir*, 2022 [Polish]
5. Aleksey Viktorovich Ivanov, *Пищевлок*, 2018 [Russian]
6. Galina Polynskaya, *Тайные стражи* series, 2018–2021 [Russian]
7. Maks Maksimov, *Видеоблог вампира*, 2020 [Russian]
8. David Wellington, *Laura Caxton Vampire Series*, 2006–2012 [English]
9. Drew Hayden Taylor, *The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel*, 2007 [English]
10. Ian R. MacLeod, *Red Snow*, 2017 [English]
11. Francesca Flores, *The Witch and the Vampire: A Novel*, 2023 [English]

Felines:

1. Agata Suchocka, *Daję ci wieczność* series, 2018– [Polish]
2. Grzegorz Uzdański, *Wypiór*, 2021 [Polish]
3. Krzysztof Kotowski, *Trzech gości w łódce plus wampir*, 2022 [Polish]
4. Dmitriy Sillov, *Кровь Охотника*, 2011 [Russian]
5. Aleksey Viktorovich Ivanov, *Пищевлок*, 2018 [Russian]
6. Galina Polynskaya, *Тайные стражи* series, 2018–2021 [Russian]

674 The order of the works enumerated in every section is consciously inconsequent: at times, I start with Polish, at times with Russian, and at times with English or French-language narratives. Within one language group, however, they are organised chronologically (again – the narratives issued in the same year are ordered inconsequentially throughout the Annex). That is to avoid any possible assumption of the qualitative ordering of the narrative. The Annex start with the lists that are complementary to Table 1. Then, it proceeds with some extended legends of the narratives from the list. They are ordered according to the alphabetical order of the Latin alphabet (Russian surnames are Latinised). For TV series, I use the series title (again in transcription in the Russian case). I finish with Peter Watts’ *Firefall* series (2006–2014) as an additional case.

7. Maks Maksimov, *Видеоблог вампира*, 2020 [Russian]
8. Stephenie Meyer, *Twilight saga*, 2005–2020 [English]
9. Simon Clark, *London Under Midnight*, 2006 [English]
10. Martin Powel, “The Evil of Dracula. A Prequel to Bram Stoker’s Novel”, 2009 [English]
11. Drew Hayden Taylor, *The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel*, 2007 [English]
12. Ian R. MacLeod, *Red Snow*, 2017 [English]
13. George DeVein, *Renfield’s Journal: Dracula’s Protege*, 2018 [English]
14. Dacre Stoker and J.D. Barker, *Dracul*, 2018 [English]
15. Francesca Flores, *The Witch and the Vampire: A Novel*, 2023 [English]
16. Christian Léourier, “Quelques moments dans la carrière d’un honorable homme d’affaires”, 2014 [French]
 - Cats:
 - I. Drew Hayden Taylor, *The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel*, 2007 [English]
 - II. Ian R. MacLeod, *Red Snow*, 2017 [English]
 - III. George DeVein, *Renfield’s Journal: Dracula’s Protege*, 2018 [English]
 - IV. Dacre Stoker and J.D. Barker, *Dracul*, 2018 [English]
 - V. Galina Polynskaya, *Тайные страхи* series, 2018–2021 [Russian]
 - VI. Grzegorz Uzdański, *Wypiór*, 2021 [Polish]
 - She-cats:
 - I. Agata Suchocka, *Daję ci wieczność* series, 2018– [Polish]
 - He-cats:
 - I. Agata Suchocka, *Daję ci wieczność* series, 2018– [Polish]
 - Lion:
 - I. Maks Maksimov, *Видеоблог вампира*, 2020 [Russian]
 - II. Stephenie Meyer, *Twilight saga*, 2005–2020 [English]
 - III. Francesca Flores, *The Witch and the Vampire: A Novel*, 2023 [English]
 - Panther:
 - I. Agata Suchocka, *Daję ci wieczność* series, 2018– [Polish]
 - II. Simon Clark, *London Under Midnight*, 2006 [English]
 - III. Martin Powel, “The Evil of Dracula. A Prequel to Bram Stoker’s Novel”, 2009 [English]
 - Tiger:
 - I. Agata Suchocka, *Daję ci wieczność* series, 2018– [Polish]
 - II. Christian Léourier, “Quelques moments dans la carrière d’un honorable homme d’affaires”, 2014 [French]
 - Lynx:
 - I. Krzysztof Kotowski, *Trzech gości w łódce plus wampir*, 2022 [Polish]

– Kitten:

- I. Dmitriy Sillov, *Кровь Охотника*, 2011 [Russian]
- II. Aleksey Viktorovich Ivanov, *Пиццоблок*, 2018 [Russian]

Canines:

1. Krzysztof Haczyński, *Grabarz*, 2013 [Polish]
2. Krzysztof Kotowski, *Trzech gości w łódce plus wampir*, 2022 [Polish]
3. Dmitriy Sillov, *Кровь Охотника*, 2011 [Russian]
4. Aleksandr Slepakov, *Повесть о советском вампире* trilogy, 2014–2018 [Russian]
5. Aleksey Viktorovich Ivanov, *Пиццоблок*, 2018 [Russian]
6. Maks Maksimov, *Видеоблог вампира*, 2020 [Russian]
7. Yuliya Gavrish, *Беги*, 2022 [Russian]
8. Manou Chintesco, *Les Compagnons d'HeLa*, 2004 [French]
9. Georges Bess, *Dracula*, 2019 [French]
10. Douglas Clegg, *The Vampyricon* trilogy, 2005–2007 [English]
11. Simon Clark, *London Under Midnight*, 2006 [English]
12. Martin Powel, “The Evil of Dracula. A Prequel to Bram Stoker’s Novel”, 2009 [English]
13. Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan, *The Strain* (book) series, 2009–2011 [English]
14. K.M. Ashman, *Vampire: The Curse of Sekhmet*, 2013 [English]
15. *The Strain* FX Network series, 2014–2017 [English]
16. *Van Helsing* Syfy series, 2016–2021 [English]
17. *Castlevania* Netflix animated series, 2017–2021 [English]
18. Dacre Stoker and J.D. Barker, *Dracul*, 2018 [English]
19. *Dracula* BBC miniseries, 2020 [English]
20. Francesca Flores, *The Witch and the Vampire: A Novel*, 2023 [English]

– Wol(f)ves:

- I. Krzysztof Haczyński, *Grabarz*, 2013 [Polish]
- II. Dmitriy Sillov, *Кровь Охотника*, 2011 [Russian]
- III. Aleksandr Slepakov, *Повесть о советском вампире* trilogy, 2014–2018 [Russian]
- IV. Yuliya Gavrish, *Беги*, 2022 [Russian]
- V. Georges Bess, *Dracula*, 2019 [French]
- VI. Douglas Clegg, *The Vampyricon* trilogy, 2005–2007 [English]
- VII. Simon Clark, *London Under Midnight*, 2006 [English]
- VIII. Martin Powel, “The Evil of Dracula. A Prequel to Bram Stoker’s Novel”, 2009 [English]
- IX. *Castlevania* Netflix animated series, 2017–2021 [English]
- X. Dacre Stoker and J.D. Barker, *Dracul*, 2018 [English]

- XI. Francesca Flores, *The Witch and the Vampire: A Novel*, 2023 [English]
- Dog(s):
- I. Krzysztof Kotowski, *Trzech gości w łódce plus wampir*, 2022 [Polish]
 - II. Dmitriy Sillov, *Кровь Охотника*, 2011 [Russian]
 - III. Aleksey Viktorovich Ivanov, *Пиццеблок*, 2018 [Russian]
 - IV. Maks Maksimov, *Видеоблог вампира*, 2020 [Russian]
 - V. Manou Chintesco, *Les Compagnons d'HeLa*, 2004 [French]
 - VI. Georges Bess, *Dracula*, 2019 [French]
 - VII. Simon Clark, *London Under Midnight*, 2006 [English]
 - VIII. Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan, *The Strain* (book) series, 2009–2011 [English]
 - IX. K.M. Ashman, *Vampire: The Curse of Sekhmet*, 2013 [English]
 - X. *The Strain* FX Network series, 2014–2017 [English]
 - XI. *Van Helsing* Syfy series, 2016–2021 [English]
 - XII. *Dracula* BBC mini-series, 2020 [English]
1. Poodle:
- XIII. Manou Chintesco, *Les Compagnons d'HeLa*, 2004 [French]
- Hyena:
- I. K.M. Ashman, *Vampire: The Curse of Sekhmet*, 2013 [English]

Bear:

1. Stephenie Meyer, *Twilight* saga, 2005–2020 [English]
2. Krzysztof Kotowski, *Trzech gości w łódce plus wampir*, 2022 [Polish]

Monkeys:

1. Francesca Flores, *The Witch and the Vampire: A Novel*, 2023 [English]

Gazelle:

1. Stephenie Meyer, *Twilight* saga, 2005–2020 [English]

Deer:

1. Drew Hayden Taylor, *The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel*, 2007 [English]
2. Francesca Flores, *The Witch and the Vampire: A Novel*, 2023 [English]

Bats:

1. Krzysztof Kotowski, *Trzech gości w łódce plus wampir*, 2022 [Polish]
2. Viktor Pelevin, *Ампир В. Повесть о настоящем сверхчеловеке* and *Бэтман Аполю*, 2006, 2013 [Russian]
3. Galina Polynskaya, *Тайные стражи* series, 2018–2021 [Russian]

4. Douglas Clegg, *The Vampyricon* trilogy, 2005–2007 [English]
5. Drew Hayden Taylor, *The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel*, 2007 [English]
6. Gary Shore, *Dracula Untold*, 2014 [English]
7. Frank D'Angelo, *Sicilian Vampire*, 2015 [English]
8. Daniel Espinosa, *Morbius*, 2022 [English]
9. Georges Bess, *Dracula*, 2019 [French]

Rats:

1. Alex Kosh, *Ремесло* saga, 2005–2013, [Russian]
2. Dmitriy Sillov, *Кровь Охотника*, 2011 [Russian]
3. Krzysztof Haczyński, *Grabarz*, 2013 [Polish]
4. Douglas Clegg, *The Vampyricon* trilogy, 2005–2007 [English]
5. Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan, *The Strain* (book) series, 2009–2011 [English]
6. *The Strain* FX Network series, 2014–2017 [English]
7. Jessica M. Thompson, *The Invitation*, 2022 [English]
8. Francesca Flores, *The Witch and the Vampire: A Novel*, 2023 [English]
9. André Øvredal, *The Last Voyage of the Demeter*, 2023 [English]
10. Olivier Peru, Stefano Martino, and Digikore Studios, *Nosferatu* dilogy, 2011–2012 [French]
11. Georges Bess, *Dracula*, 2019 [French]

Rabbits:

1. Manou Chintesco, *Les Compagnons d'HeLa*, 2004 [French]
2. Dmitriy Sillov, *Кровь Охотника*, 2011 [Russian]

Hamsters:

1. Manou Chintesco, *Les Compagnons d'HeLa*, 2004 [French]

Cattle:

1. Yuliya Gavrish, *Беги*, 2022 [Russian]
2. Viktor Pelevin, *Амтур В. Повесть о настоящем сверхчеловеке* and *Бэтман Аполло*, 2006, 2013 [Russian]
3. Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan, *The Strain* (book) series, 2009–2011 [English]
4. K.M. Ashman, *Vampire: The Curse of Sekhmet*, 2013 [English]

Sheep:

1. Douglas Clegg, *The Vampyricon* trilogy, 2005–2007 [English]

Cow(s):

1. Phillippe Jaenada, “Bogdana”, 2013 [French]
2. Yuliya Gavrish, *Безу*, 2022 [Russian]

Bull:

1. Manou Chintesco, *Les Compagnons d’HeLa*, 2004 [French]
2. Seth Grahame-Smith, *Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter*, 2010 [English]

Pig(s):

1. Jarosław Moździoch, “Chłopiec z aluminiowym kubkiem w dłoni”, 2007 [Polish]

Birds:

1. Manou Chintesco, *Les Compagnons d’HeLa*, 2004 [French]
2. Christian Léourier, “Quelques moments dans la carrière d’un honorable homme d’affaires”, 2014 [French]
3. Georges Bess, *Dracula*, 2019 [French]
4. David Wellington, *Laura Caxton Vampire Series*, 2006–2012 [English]
5. Drew Hayden Taylor, *The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel*, 2007 [English]
6. *The Strain* FX Network series, 2014–2017 [English]
7. George DeVein, *Renfield’s Journal: Dracula’s Protege*, 2018 [English]
 - Bird of prey:
 - I. Georges Bess, *Dracula*, 2019 [French]
 - Owl:
 - I. Georges Bess, *Dracula*, 2019 [French]
 - II. Drew Hayden Taylor, *The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel*, 2007 [English]
 - Eagle:
 - I. Christian Léourier, “Quelques moments dans la carrière d’un honorable homme d’affaires”, 2014 [French]
 - Raven:
 - I. Georges Bess, *Dracula*, 2019 [French]
 - Sparrows:
 - I. George DeVein, *Renfield’s Journal: Dracula’s Protege*, 2018 [English]
 - Canary:
 - I. Manou Chintesco, *Les Compagnons d’HeLa*, 2004 [French]

Reptiles:

1. Dmitriy Sillov, *Кровь Охотника*, 2011 [Russian]
2. Galina Polynskaya, *Тайные стражи* series, 2018–2021 [Russian]

3. Georges Bess, *Le Vampire de Benares* trilogy, 2011–2012 [French]
4. Georges Bess, *Dracula*, 2019 [French]
 - Chameleons:
 - I. Dmitriy Sillov, *Кровь Охотника*, 2011 [Russian]
 - Gecko(s):
 - I. Georges Bess *Le Vampire de Benares* trilogy, 2011–2012 [French]
 - II. Georges Bess, *Dracula*, 2019 [French]
 - Lizard:
 - I. Galina Polynskaya, *Тайные стражи* series, 2018–2021 [Russian]

Snakes/Serpents:

1. Dmitriy Sillov, *Кровь Охотника*, 2011 [Russian]
2. Manou Chintesco, *Les Compagnons d'HeLa*, 2004 [French]
3. Douglas Clegg, *The Vampyricon* trilogy, 2005–2007 [English]
4. Jasper Kent, *The Danilov Quintet* saga, 2008–2014 [English]
5. *Hemlock Grove* Netflix series, 2013–2015 [English]
6. *From Dusk till Dawn: The Series*, El Rey Network series, 2014–2016 [English]
7. Dacre Stoker and J.D. Barker, *Dracul*, 2018 [English]
 - Boas:
 - I. Dmitriy Sillov, *Кровь Охотника*, 2011 [Russian]

Crocodiles/alligators:

1. Simon Clark, *London Under Midnight*, 2006 [English]
2. Aleksandr Slepakov, *Повесть о советском вампире* trilogy, 2014–2018 [Russian]

Frogs:

1. Dacre Stoker and J.D. Barker, *Dracul*, 2018 [English]

Sharks:

1. Simon Clark, *London Under Midnight*, 2006 [English]
2. David Wellington, *Laura Caxton Vampire Series*, 2006–2012 [English]

Fish:

1. Yuliya Gavrish, *Бегу*, 2022 [Russian]

Spiders:

1. Aleksey Viktorovich Ivanov, *Лицеблок*, 2018 [Russian]
2. Douglas Clegg, *The Vampyricon* trilogy, 2005–2007 [English]
3. *Penny Dreadful* Showtime series, 2014–2016 [English]
4. *The Strain* FX Network series, 2014–2017 [English]

5. George DeVein, *Renfield's Journal: Dracula's Protege*, 2018 [English]
6. Dacre Stoker and J.D. Barker, *Dracul*, 2018 [English]
7. Jessica M. Thompson, *The Invitation*, 2022 [English]
8. Georges Bess *Le Vampire de Benares* trilogy, 2011–2012 [French]
9. Georges Bess, *Dracula*, 2019 [French]

Crab:

1. Drew Hayden Taylor, *The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel*, 2007 [English]

Insects:

1. Aleksey Viktorovich Ivanov, *Пищевлок*, 2018 [Russian]
2. KinoPoisk, *Пищевлок*, 2021 [Russian]
3. *Karamora [Karamora]* DK Entertainment series, 2022 [Russian]
4. Krzysztof Kotowski, *Trzech gości w łódce plus wampir*, 2022 [Polish]
5. Simon Clark, *London Under Midnight*, 2006 [English]
6. Francis Lawrence, *I Am Legend*, 2007 [English]
7. Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan, *The Strain* (book) series, 2009–2011 [English]
8. Scott Stewart, *Priest*, 2011 [English]
9. Mary Harron, *The Moth Diaries*, 2011 [English]
10. *The Strain* FX Network series, 2014–2017 [English]
11. Dacre Stoker and J.D. Barker, *Dracul*, 2018 [English]
12. George DeVein, *Renfield's Journal: Dracula's Protege*, 2018 [English]
13. Francesca Flores, *The Witch and the Vampire: A Novel*, 2023 [English]
14. Georges Bess *Le Vampire de Benares* trilogy, 2011–2012 [French]
 - Cockroaches:
 - I. Aleksey Viktorovich Ivanov, *Пищевлок*, 2018 [Russian]
 - Mosquitoes:
 - I. *Пищевлок [Pishcheblok]* KinoPoisk series, 2021 [Russian]
 - II. *Karamora [Karamora]* DK Entertainment series, 2022 [Russian]
 - III. Krzysztof Kotowski, *Trzech gości w łódce plus wampir*, 2022 [Polish]
 - Bees:
 - I. Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan, *The Strain* (book) series, 2009–2011 [English]
 - II. Scott Stewart, *Priest*, 2011 [English]
 - III. *The Strain* FX Network series, 2014–2017 [English]
 - IV. Dacre Stoker and J.D. Barker, *Dracul*, 2018 [English]
 - V. Georges Bess *Le Vampire de Benares* trilogy, 2011–2012 [French]
 - Ants/Termites:
 - I. Scott Stewart, *Priest*, 2011 [English]

- II. Francesca Flores, *The Witch and the Vampire: A Novel*, 2023 [English]
- III. George DeVein, *Renfield's Journal: Dracula's Protege*, 2018 [English]
- IV. Georges Bess *Le Vampire de Benares* trilogy, 2011–2012 [French]
- Leech:
 - I. Francesca Flores, *The Witch and the Vampire: A Novel*, 2023 [English]
- Flies:
 - I. George DeVein, *Renfield's Journal: Dracula's Protege*, 2018 [English]
- Moth(s):
 - I. Mary Harron, *The Moth Diaries*, 2011 [English]
- Locusts:
 - I. *The Strain* FX Network series, 2014–2017 [English]
- Ticks:
 - I. Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan, *The Strain* (book) series, 2009–2011 [English]

Worms:

1. Dmitriy Sillov, *Кровь Охотника*, 2011 [Russian]
2. Aleksey Viktorovich Ivanov, *Пищевлок*, 2018 [Russian]
3. David Wellington, *Laura Caxton Vampire Series*, 2006–2012 [English]
4. Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan, *The Strain* (book) series, 2009–2011 [English]
5. *The Strain* FX Network series, 2014–2017 [English]
6. André Øvredal, *The Last Voyage of the Demeter*, 2023 [English]
7. Gabriel Delmas, *Vampyr Draco Maleficus Imperator*, 2004 [French]
- Maggots:
 - I. Dmitriy Sillov, *Кровь Охотника*, 2011 [Russian]
 - II. David Wellington, *Laura Caxton Vampire Series*, 2006–2012 [English]

Parasites:

1. Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan, *The Strain* (book) series, 2009–2011 [English]
2. *The Strain* FX Network series, 2014–2017 [English]
3. Dmitriy Sillov, *Кровь Охотника*, 2011 [Russian]
4. Yuliya Gavrish, *Беги*, 2022 [Russian]

Plants:

1. Agata Suchocka, *Daję ci wieczność* series, 2018– [Polish]

1. Dagmara Adwentowska, “Niezwykła kobieta”, 2016 [Polish]

Predatory animal/predator: Helge, the evil female vampire coming from the Germanic tribes to the Slavic world, was like a predatory animal.⁶⁷⁵

Birds: She could turn into an owl.

2. K.M. Ashman, *Vampire: The Curse of Sekhmet*, 2013 [English]

If animalising humans by vampires is immoral, then vampires are seen as “hardly human at all”⁶⁷⁶ and, finally, simply as animals. It is highly immoral when vampires treat people as nourishment, but the vampires themselves are animalised and then objectified. Vampires resemble other animals that are able to hibernate (loc. 3266). Sekhmet and then Nephtys are treated like animals: hunted, then imprisoned, and, if they do not comply, forcefully “milked of her blood” (loc. 3374).

It is noteworthy that 21st-century scientists who keep Nephtys hostage use food preparation terms to describe the violent ways in which they control her thanks to sun and UV radiation: “roast her” (loc. 2954), “toast time” (loc. 2955), and “fry button” (loc. 3026). From being like an animal, she becomes an object: the pharmaceutical company first chips her like an animal and then considers her a “valuable commodity” (loc. 4200–4201).

Canines: Sekhmet, the first vampire, was bitten by a hyena. It made her infected with the dogs’ disease (rabies, loc. 1708), which, combined with another disease she was already carrying, changed her into a vampire. Nephtys is “chipped (...) like a dog” by the pharmaceutical company (loc. 4200–4201).

Cattle: Nephtys is to be “milked of her blood” (loc. 3374). And while the narrative does not really condone using vampires, it does so because it does not condone any links with the vampires, not because it condemns the animalisation of the vampires.

675 Dagmara Adwentowska, “Niezwykła kobieta,” in *Krew zapomnianych bogów*, ed. Maciej Szymczak (Wydawnictwo Horror Masakra, 2016), loc. 135, Kindle.

676 K.M. Ashman, *Vampire: The Curse of Sekhmet* (Silverback Books, 2013), loc. 3375, Kindle. For the rest of the citations, I put the location number in the brackets.

3. Georges Bess, *Dracula*, 2019 [French]

The evil Dracula is a strongly animalised vampire. All the animals he transforms into are shown as furious, horrible and threatening, even devilish.⁶⁷⁷

Canines: The evil Dracula talks to the wolves, resembles a wolf, and transforms into a wolf and a dog.

Bats: Dracula transforms into bats.

Rats: Dracula transforms into rats.

Birds: Dracula resembles a bird of prey (p. 40); he transforms into an owl and a raven.

Reptiles: Dracula walks like a gecko (p. 52).

Spider: Dracula transforms into a spider.

4. Georges Bess *Le Vampire de Benares* trilogy, 2011–2012 [French]

The Beasts of the Night, the vampires of the narrative, are animalised and animal-like creatures. They hunt humans and animals. The Solar Heroes' guide to the vampire world is "a thing";⁶⁷⁸ therefore, the animalisation leads to objectification.

Reptiles: The Beasts of the Night that crawl out of the temple resemble giant geckos.⁶⁷⁹

Spiders: The vampires from Deva are spider-like creatures.

Insects: Vampires whom the Solar Hero first meets live in the Deva beehive (referring to Hindu beliefs). Deva is also compared to termite mounds (as well as to ant nests).⁶⁸⁰

5. *Castlevania* Netflix animated series, 2017–2021 [English]

Canines: Alucard changes into a white wolf.

677 Bram Stoker and Georges Bess, *Dracula* (Grenoble: Editions Glénat, 2019), 134. For the rest of the citations, I put the page number in the brackets.

678 Georges Bess, *Le Vampire de Benares, Tome 2: L'Origine du Mal* (Grenoble: Editions Glénat, 2011), 11.

679 Bess, *Vampire de Benares, Tome 1*, 37.

680 Bess, *Vampire de Benares, Tome 2*, 16.

6. Manou Chintesco, *Les Compagnons d'HeLa*, 2004 [French]

The evil vampire Saint-Germain changed the Solar Hero into a vampire. The Solar Hero is a discoverer, but even Saint-Germain tries to get the secrets of science. The evil scientists side with him, and they apply their science to the wrong goal. They use the right ways but on the wrong objects – notably, they treat Solar Hero like they should treat the Monster Vampire only. They encage and animalise him, and finally, they treat him like a virus whose mutations they want to observe.⁶⁸¹

Simultaneously, the narrative animalises the evil vampire Saint-Germain, showing him as unstable and violent, finally as an animal being and an un-living creature at the same time, and a thing. He is the true virus (p. 150). Significantly, he also comes (despite the name) from Eastern Europe.

Canines: They keep the Solar Hero encaged like a poodle, waiting in a zoo shop for the buyer (p. 174).

Rabbits: They keep the Solar Hero encaged like a rabbit, waiting in a zoo shop for the buyer (p. 174).

Hamsters: They keep the Solar Hero encaged like a hamster, waiting in a zoo shop for the buyer (p. 174).

Bull: The evil Saint-Germain is compared to a bull (p. 154).

Birds: The evil scientists keep the Solar Hero encaged like a canary, waiting in a zoo shop for the buyer (p. 177).

Snakes/serpents: They keep the Solar Hero encaged like a snake, waiting in a zoo shop for the buyer (p. 177).

7. Simon Clark, *London Under Midnight*, 2006 [English]

The external marks of the abject repulsive Otherness of the vampires are their teeth, dark rings around their eyes, grey skin, sticky hair, dirt, and obviously, their bloodthirst. The vampires resemble zombies, as they not only drink blood but also rip off the body parts of the victims to suck off the blood directly from the flesh. The narrative calls them dead,⁶⁸² but, in fact, the primary means of the othering is their animalisation: they are “beast-like” (loc. 618), shark-like, feline, wolf-like, and finally, insect-like. Animalisation permits the narrative to objectify vampires (they are “things” (loc. 2332, 2353); their pronoun is “it” (loc. 3662)). Thanks to this, they become “so alien (...) she didn’t know whether her mind

681 Manou Chintesco, *Les Compagnons d'HeLa* (Aix-en-Provence: Nestiveqnen Éditions, 2004), 174. For the rest of the citations, I put the page number in the brackets.

682 Simon Clark, *London Under Midnight* (Surrey: Severn House Publishers, 2006), loc. 108, Kindle. For the rest of the citations, I put the location number in the brackets.

could handle it” (loc. 805). They are masses completely lacking any individuality, and within the narrative, it makes it morally easy to kill them.

Felines: Vampires are “feline” (loc. 100) and “panther-like” (loc. 110).

Canines: Vampires are like “wolf down food” (loc. 561); they form a “pack” (loc. 619). In one of the scenes, April, a female vampire is treated like a dog, and a muzzle is put on her.

Crocodiles/alligators: Vampires are like alligators (loc. 1725).

Sharks: Vampires are called sharks as they move swimming in the Thames water.

Insects: The vampires “swarm” (loc. 3299).

8. Douglas Clegg, *THE VampYrIcon Trilogy*, 2005–2007 [English]

In the narrative, the forces of evil are compared to the animals. Animals are used to fight the good vampires, the Solar Hero included. In this narrative, the bloodthirsty Christian confession sides with evil goddess Medhya and enjoys the games in which the Hero and his friends are to be devoured by the wild animals, killed by shapeshifting nuns-witches, tortured by the machines and massacred by Christian “gladiators”. They become martyrs, and the narrative even references Christ’s martyrdom.

Canines: Evil vampires are like wolves, and other monsters, as well as the humans who serve them, are compared to the wolves. The last book of the trilogy bears the name *Queen of Wolves*, referring to the evil queen who serves Medhya. On the contrary, the identity of the good (super-human) vampires is the identity of the hunters or even shepherds⁶⁸³ (this again refers to Jesus the Good Shepherd figure). They feed on their sheep because they have to, but they take care of their stock. This imagery serves to legitimise the social order relying on the super-human domination of the Heroes over the society. Their domination is total and includes the privilege of life and death, but it is perfectly justified by their care. The enemies of the order are wild wolves who want to destroy both the society and its protectors completely; therefore, they need to be exterminated.⁶⁸⁴

Bats: The abject, repulsive Mother Goddess Ixtar is the Bat Goddess. It is a figure of demoniac femininity in general and exotic femininity in particular. She is an “abomination” and a “mistake of gods”.⁶⁸⁵

683 Douglas Clegg, *The Vampyricon, Book 3: The Queen of Wolves* (New York: Alkemara Press, 2007), loc. 3254.

684 *Ibid.*, loc. 4425.

685 Douglas Clegg, *Vampyricon Trylogy, Book 2: The Lady of Serpents* (New York: Alkemara Press, 2006), loc. 4791–4842.

Rats: There is a sub-human race bred by the Priests to feed on them. This does not raise a lot of objection from the side of the Hero, as Priests were meant to be super-human guardians of the humans, so they are allowed more.

Sheep: Humans are like sheep to be protected by the good vampires.

Snakes/serpents: The Great Serpent is a father God whose mission is embraced by the Hero, yet he is also a little abject in his relationship with the female goddess Ixtar. The title of the second book is *The Lady of Serpents* (2006).

Spiders: Ixtar is also a “spider in its trapdoor, (..) a web that stretched across the Earth’s surface”.⁶⁸⁶

9. Frank D’Angelo, *Sicilian Vampire*, 2015 [English]

Bats: The protagonist changes into a vampire after being bitten by a bat.

10. Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan, *The Strain* (book) series, 2009–2011 [English]

11. *The Strain* FX Network series, 2014–2017 [English]

Vampires are a complete and repulsive evil. They are both medicalised and animalised. They are frequently compared to the animals and called with a very particular yet biologically non-specific term of “vermin”. Then, they are compared to parasites, germs, and viruses. Vampirism is a virus carried by the parasites (worms) that rose from the fallen angel’s blood. But the vampires themselves are viruses, the organisms whose status (dead or alive) is unclear, the undead beings, only existing to feed and replicate.

Vampires are animalised with very much matter-of-fact, seemingly objective and scientific statements. Through animalisation—they are objectified, and the agency of things is horrifying. Therefore, killing vampires is like killing the vermin: an honourable deed.

Canines: Vampires instinctively return to their former homes, much like dogs. Neither dogs nor vampires act out of love but purely out of biological reflexes.⁶⁸⁷

In the series, Zach treats the vampire “spider-girl” he was given as a dog. It is an abject version of a pet.

Rats: Vampires are stupid or numb, and they are steered by the collective intelligence of the rats by their “king”. One of the Crew of Light, Fet, is actually a

686 Ibid., loc. 4791–4842.

687 Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan, *The Strain* (New York: William Morrow, 2009), 294.

former city exterminator. In the series, the villain vampire Eichorst is killed with rat poison, which Setrakian underlines with satisfaction.

Cattle, drought animal: The best qualities of Fet, appreciated by Setrakian and the narrative overall for his reliability and responsibility, are described by the reference to a drought animal, slow but relentless and, again, reliable.⁶⁸⁸ Yet those are precisely the reasons why Fet cannot be humanity's saviour and the primary Solar Hero. Those are also orientalising qualities given to good second-generation immigrants from Eastern Europe.

Birds: The series pinpoints that vampires are built like birds; their urinary and defecatory systems merged into one.

Spiders: Vampires changed a group of kids who were born blind into vampires. They are called Feelers or spider-kids, and they are perfect trackers. Due to the sensory compensation, they have a great sense of smell.

Insects: In both the series and the books, vampires form a hive controlled by collective intelligence;⁶⁸⁹ as individuals, vampires are numb and stupid like insects. They eat and excrete simultaneously, like ticks.⁶⁹⁰ When Master sends them to look for a bomb and kill every human on their way, they look like hordes of locusts ravaging the city of New York, blasphemously referring to the Egyptian plague sent by God to ravage Egypt and also not to spare anyone.⁶⁹¹

Worms: Vampirism is carried by worm parasites. They do the same thing on the micro-scale of the human organism as vampires do on the social macro-scale of body politics.

Parasites: The worms carrying vampirism are parasites.

12. Gabriel Delmas, *Vampyr Draco Maleficus Imperator*, 2004 [French]

The vampire-narrator is a posthuman being, blurring divisions between human-animal-plant-machine-inanimate object and giving birth to their posthuman son.

Worms: He, his poetry, and his son are worms, considered a perfect form of animality.⁶⁹²

688 Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan, *The Night Eternal* (New York: William Morrow, 2011), 31.

689 del Toro and Hogan, *The Strain*, 285.

690 *Ibid.*, 285.

691 *The Strain*, Season 4, Episode 10, "The Last Stand," directed by J. Miles Dale, written by Guillermo del Toro, Chuck Hogan, and Carlton Cuse, aired September 17, 2017, on FX.

692 Gabriel Delmas, *Vampyr Draco Maleficus Imperator* (Paris: Éditions Carabas, 2004), 112.

13. George DeVein, *Renfield's Journal: Dracula's Protege*, 2018 [English]

Renfield, or rather his states of mind, are represented by the animals (and once even by the storm, i. e., the whole of nature). Then Ham, his cat, symbolises his feelings, evolution, and thoughts.

The importance of the non-human actors is both remarkable and anthropocentric: they are figures of the Hero's psychological state. Their task is to understand him, not his—to understand them. The animals, above all, represent some of the Hero's features, notably his flaws—the Seven Deadly Sins.

The narrative also uses animal metaphors to describe the social order. This time, the dominators are “as the beasts...”⁶⁹³ They prey on other people, they are soulless, and therefore “as dead” (loc. 2790), and their power is pure violence: “For the soulless, the only power is to kill”; “Their only existence is to kill” (loc. 2789).

Feline: Ham, a cat from his parish, symbolises and expresses Renfield's feelings and thoughts: “I must try when his communication changed from my understanding his needs and feelings to his understanding mine” (loc. 1885). Specifically, he represents pride and then brutal lust. He anticipates the coming of the vampire. But he also represents Renfield's evolution, or rather repentance: he is full of pride and passion, then possessed by Dracula, but finally, he becomes a sweet kitten.

Birds: The sparrows symbolise the Sins of greed and gluttony.

Spiders: Spiders symbolise the Sins of laziness and greed.

Insects: Ants and flies symbolise the Sin of envy as they envy each other's share of food.

14. *Dracula* BBC mini-series, 2020 [English]

Canines: Dracula changes into a wolf.

15. Daniel Espinosa, *Morbius*, 2022 [English]

Bats: The main Hero was changed into a vampire by a bat's bite, and bats obey him.

693 George DeVein, *Renfield's Journal: Dracula's Protege* (Scotts Valley: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2018), loc. 2788, Kindle. For the rest of the citations, I put the location number in the brackets.

16. Francesca Flores, *The Witch and the Vampire: A Novel*, 2023 [English]

In the narrative, the animalisation is a complex issue. Despite the apparent valorisation of nature, animalisation is still used for the villains and for situations of disempowerment. That is why Ava doesn't want to call her mother "a creature".⁶⁹⁴

In the eyes of Kaye, a vampire hunter, at first, vampires are like "feral animals" (loc. 725), which permits her to kill them. Also, Zenos,⁶⁹⁵ Ava's evil stepfather, uses animalisation as an excuse for the torture and objectification of his vampire stepdaughter. He calls her a "greedy little thing" (loc. 76). However, this objectification is judged illegitimate.

Yet, the animalisation of the vampires can be affirmed as graceful, freeing, and empowering when one moves "as swiftly as a wild animal through the trees, (...) pass[es] through the wood with quick speed and sharper senses" (loc. 4044–4045).

Predatory animal/predator: Vampires are like predators (loc. 4030).

Felines: Watching Ava's depraved mother is like watching "a lion stalk a herd of deer and trying to guess when it will pounce" (loc. 129), but the comparison to the lion can also serve (self)affirmation: vampires are "graceful" by being "lionlike" (loc. 2251).

Canines: Fanatic hunters are "like a pack of wolves following their alpha" (loc. 310).

Monkeys: Ava describes vampires' march through the forest as "freeing". "Some vampires leap from branch to branch" (loc. 4044–4045).

Deer: When Ava compares her mother to a lion who stalks "a herd of deer" (loc. 129), by the same metaphor, she compares herself to a deer, which in this context is disempowering. It is contrasted with the end when she empowers herself and compares herself to the strong animals.

Rats: Ava's evil stepfather, Zenos, is "ratlike". He has "salt-and-pepper hair and rail-thin body" (loc. 72–74).

Insects: The villain stepfather Zenos calls Ava "an insect, caught in amber" (loc. 474). Ava's depraved mother's touch feels like "ants crawling on my skin" (loc. 112); she continues to "leach my powers" (loc. 213).

694 Francesca Flores, *The Witch and the Vampire: A Novel* (New York: Wednesday Books, 2023), loc. 2728. For the rest of the citations, I put the location number in the brackets.

695 The name refers to the Greek *xenos*, which has diverse meanings, including "enemy".

17. *From Dusk till Dawn* El Rey Network series 2014–2016 [English]

Snakes/Serpents: Vampires come from the bloodthirsty gods of the Ancient Native Americans, mainly from Quetzalcoatl, a feathered serpent. They call themselves “culebras”, which means “snakes” in Spanish. Their origin is reflected in their external appearance: they look like humans until they want to attack, then their bodies get covered with scales, their skin takes the protective colours of reptiles, their eyes shine like snakes’, and their fangs come out of their palates (which is a snakes’ feature). Those fangs have three functions: to pierce the victim, to serve as a sort of straw to suck the blood (vampires do not need to use their mouth for drinking blood), and finally, to inject the venom to change the victim into a culebra-vampire.

18. Yuliya Gavrish, *Безу*, 2022 [Russian]

In the world that the vampires took over, the humans are divided into the sub-human vampires’ cattle and the super-human rebels. But even among those, some women get animalised. Mothers are “wild animals”,⁶⁹⁶ more aggressive and more “dumb” (loc. 1286) with each day of their pregnancy up till some time after the birth. They hunt and eat raw animal meat; their senses are highly sensible. They do not let anyone approach the baby; they become monsters (loc. 1293) in order to protect the child. They cannot speak, and after some time, when the child is older, they gradually regain their humanity and do not remember what they were doing.

Female vampires are also far more animalised than male ones. The evil vampire Rita is similar to an animal (loc. 417) and, by that, is defined as both cute and dangerous. She is finally objectified: she is defined as an abject haematology analyser (loc. 632–633).

Canines: The narrative quotes the story of a National Park in the USA (probably Yellowstone) where the wolves were reintroduced in the 1970s. The narrative presents their influence on the ecosystem as highly positive. It drives a parallel between them and the vampires (loc. 1335) while still presenting vampires as villains. But the vampire rule strengthened humanity into super-humans, just like the wolves’ presence had a positive influence on the overall ecosystem of the park. The narrative does not drive any further parallel to question the

696 Yuliya Gavrish, *Безу* (Moscow: Проект Livres, 2022), loc. 1259, Kindle. For the rest of the citations, I put the location number in the brackets.

rightness of humans ruling the world; on the contrary, once the human race is strengthened, it should regain its due position in the world.

Cattle: Vampires keep humans as cattle, and that is why those humans degraded into a sub-human state that actually is cattle-like, both in vampires' and in rebel (super)humans' eyes.

Cows: Subhuman children already walk on four paws and moo (loc. 734).

Fish: Women, by virtue of gender, are (self)animalised. The female narrator describes the fearful yet fascinating feeling of helplessness in front of the male vampires. In this confrontation, the woman is compared to a fish that cannot control the fisherman (loc. 157–159).

Parasites: Vampires are parasites (loc. 214).

19. Seth Grahame-Smith, *Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter*, 2010 [English]

Despite promoting abolition, the narrative actually despises the Black people for their unmanly submissiveness and their animality: Abraham feels “pity and revulsion” when he observes a man being sold on the market.⁶⁹⁷

Bull: The Black man sold on the market is compared to a bull (loc. 1407).

20. Krzysztof Haczyński, *Grabarz*, 2013 [Polish]

Canines: The evil vampire wields the wolves.

Rats: The evil vampire has power over the rats.

21. Mary Harron, *The Moth Diaries*, 2011 [English]

Insects: The main heroine, Rebecca, writes a diary whose main heroine is her adversary, Ernessa. Ernessa has also written a diary for half a century, and Rebecca discovers this diary at the end of the movie. Both are the eponymous moth flying for what is dangerous for them. The narrative stresses their similarities, which a few actors within the narrative also notice. Ernessa, the vampire, transforms into a swarm of moths. A moth is presented in the intro, and Rebecca's best memories of her father are linked to a moth.

697 Seth Grahame-Smith, *Abraham Lincoln Vampire Hunter* (New York: Hachette, 2010), loc. 1407, Kindle. For the rest of the citations, I put the location number in the brackets.

22. *Hemlock Grove* Netflix series, 2013–2015 [English]

Snakes/Serpents: Ouroboros, the snake who eats its own tail, is an essential figure in the narrative, linked with many actors in the narrative in complex ways. It is a disturbing symbol of the problematic medical programs led by the vampires and other protagonists.

23. *Aleksey Viktorovich Ivanov, Пиццблoк, 2018* [Russian]

Predatory animal/predator: Vampires are the evil creatures to be fought (tracked down and then killed) by the Solar Hunters. They have the eyes of the predators.⁶⁹⁸

Felines: Anastasiyka, love-interest of one of the Solar Heroes, Valerka, and a Victim saved by him, is compared to a kitten: while Valerka resigns from her to protect her and is devastated, he is sure that she just like a kitten, will soon find a new master (p. 338).

Canines: When Igor, another of the Solar Heroes, pities little vampires, he compares them to the dogs happy to follow their master (p. 296). Just like Valerka's sweetheart is compared to a kitten, Igor's vampirised girlfriend is compared to a dog. There is a profoundly problematic scene when Veronika bites Igor. Actually, he lets her do that and finds it pleasurable: he gives her his elbow to bite, just as a trainer presents an elbow to a dog (p. 321). Female penetrating gesture loses all its potential of empowerment: it is a man who gives a phallic item to a woman and gets pleasure, a man who controls and trains an animal. In fact, the woman does not really want to bite. She just cannot stop her reflex. And she is punished for daring to bite nonetheless, just like a trained dog. She is pulled into the holy river when Igor swims away from the boat. She barely manages to escape and screams in pain (p. 322).

Spiders: Vampires are compared to the spiders (pp. 232, 327).

Insects: Vampires are like cockroaches (p. 262).

Worms: Vampires have mouths like the crawling worms (p. 327).

698 Aleksey Viktorovich Ivanov, *Пиццблoк* (Moscow: Издательство АСТ, 2018), 223, Kindle. For the rest of the citations, I put the page number in the brackets.

24. Philippe Jaenada, “Bogdana”, 2013 [French]

The possibly vampirised narrator’s uncle is animalised, which, in the narrative, is also linked with the orientalised of this Eastern European incomer. He is characterised by the unstoppable animal appetite,⁶⁹⁹ brutality, and uncontrolled aggression, whose first victim is his Western European wife.

Cow(s): The uncle is finally closed in the psychiatric hospital, and when his nephew visits him, he does not even try to be simply polite, as “politesses (...) would have as much effect as a bow in front of a cow” (loc. 724). By comparing the uncle to a cow, the narrative also feminises him, another gesture from the orientalisating repertoire.

25. *Карамора* [*Karamora*] Start series, 2022 [Russian]

Insects: The eponymous hero’s pseudonym is a Russian name for a species of mosquitoes. It refers to the hero of Maxim Gorky’s story. It is also supposed to refer to the sharpness of the anarchist fighter.

26. Jasper Kent, *The Danilov Quintet* saga, 2008–2014 [English]

Snakes/Serpents: The main villain vampire’s name, the King of Vampires, is supposedly Vlad Tepes, who was changed by the dragon’s blood. But his name within the narrative, Zmyeevich, refers to the Russian *змея/змея*, which means “viper”.

27. Alex Kosh, *Ремесло* saga, 2005–2013, [Russian]

Rats: In the second book of the saga, the repulsive Creature (Тварь) is a collective posthuman being mostly made of rats. Simultaneously, lower vampires are compared to the rats – a derogative comparison that needs to change and changes with time.

699 Philippe Jaenada, “Bogdana,” in *Bienvenue en Transylvanie*, ed. Jakuta Alikavazovic et al. (Paris: Points, 2013), loc. 650, Kindle. For the rest of the citations, I put the location number in the brackets.

28. Krzysztof Kotowski, *Trzech Gości w łódce plus wampir*, 2022 [Polish]

Predatory animal/predator: The narrator—Vampire Solar Hero—calls himself a predator to assert his super-human rights. A “true” predator is a model: it is a being meant to dominate, for a true predator has “natural” tools of violence and relies on what he has, not on “artificial” weapons.⁷⁰⁰ The narrative also calls the villain by the term predator (p. 422), but only to show that he is a far worse predator than the Heroes and, thus, has no right to dominate.

Felines: The narrator feels a strong connection with the lynx: he kills humans to avenge the lynx’s death, something he was unable to do for his beloved woman.

Canines: The narrator has a great connection and friendship with his dog. He recognises his autonomy more than that of his female partner.

Bear: He also identifies with a bear that humans hunt with artificial weapons.

Bats: When the narrator refers to the “natural” order to justify a vampire’s existence, he quotes the blood-drinking bats (p. 24).

Insects: When the narrator refers to the “natural” order to justify a vampire’s existence, he quotes the blood-drinking mosquitoes (p. 24).

29. Francis Lawrence, *I Am Legend*, 2007 [English]

Transgression of the human condition is a degradation into an animal one.

Insects: The vampires are swarming like insects.⁷⁰¹

30. Christian Léourier, “Quelques moments dans la carrière d’un honorable homme d’affaires”, 2014 [French]

Felines: The vampire is disturbing and definitely not a good figure, but he is also fascinating: like a tiger, strong and dangerous.⁷⁰²

Birds, eagle: The vampire has an aquiline nose.

700 Krzysztof Kotowski, *Trzech gości w łódce plus wampir* (Poznań: 5WhyPromotion, 2022), 78, 217, 290, 357, 486. For the rest of the citations, I put the page number in the brackets.

701 See Lars Schmeink, “Of Posthuman Vampires: Science, Blood and Becoming-With,” in *Posthuman Gothic*, ed. Anya Heise von der Lippe (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2017), 54–73.

702 Christian Léourier, “Quelques moments dans la carrière d’un honorable homme d’affaires,” in *Vampires à contre-emploi*, ed. Jeanne-A Debats (Saint-Laurent d’Oingt: Mnémos, 2014), 40.

31. Ian R. MacLeod, *Red Snow*, 2017 [English]

Predatory animal/predator: The vampire is like a predator.

Felines: Throughout the narrative, it is repeated that the vampire is like a cat.

32. Maks Maksimov, *Видеоблог вампира*, 2020 [Russian]

The narrator—Vampire Solar Hero—sees himself as a different animal species, but it seems that he rather means he is a superhuman and should be above human law. He claims the right to hunt whom he chooses and claims humane behaviour, as he chooses the old people. On the contrary, Hunters seem to see him as a human species, in order to inscribe him into human law and punish him for his crimes.

Predatory animal/predator: He calls himself a predator.

Felines: He and his fiancée, Katya, compare him to the lion⁷⁰³ to assert his right to kill as natural.

Canines: He feels “animal” empathy with a dog (loc. 410).

33. Stephenie Meyer, *Twilight* saga, 2005–2020 [English]

In the narrative, good vampires are compared to the animals that traditionally symbolise some positive features: strength, pride, charisma, grace, and speed. Evil vampires are compared to beasts, and their animalisation is not merely symbolic. They are not entirely clothed; they are nomadic.

Feline: Vampires can be malicious, and then feline,⁷⁰⁴ but the Vampire Solar Hero Edward Cullen is compared to the lion.

Bear: Emmett Cullen is usually compared to a bear.

Gazelle: Alice Cullen is like a gazelle.

703 Maks Maksimov, *Видеоблог вампира* (Moscow: Эксмо, 2020), loc. 2247–2250, Kindle. For the rest of the citations, I put the location number in the brackets.

704 Stephenie Meyer, *Twilight, The Tenth Anniversary Edition* (New York and Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 2015), loc. 11923, Kindle.

34. Jarosław Moździoch, “Chłopiec z aluminiowym kubkiem w dłoni”, 2007 [Polish]

Pigs: There is a complex relationship between the supposed vampire and the pigs. They are both victimised and co-operators in the system of oppression established by the male dominators, the brutal butchers. Under this system, they victimise and violate each other, and they end up in the same role as meat.

35. André Øvredal, *The Last Voyage Of The Demeter*, 2023 [English]

Dracula, the evil vampire, is highly animalised, not even to mention that he changes into an animal-like beast. But he is not the only one to be animalised.

Rats: Joseph, an Asian-origin member of the ship’s crew (the cook), mentions fleeing rats and then flees like he is one.

Worms: Dracula is accompanied by awful worms.

36. Viktor Pelevin, *Амнир В. Повесть о настоящем сверхчеловеке and Бэтман Аполло*, 2006–2013 [Russian]

Bats: Vampires’ tongues come from the Big Mice, giant bats, who created dinosaurs, and when dinosaurs disappeared, they divided into tongues, which entered into symbiosis with new animals. Then vampires bred or took control over humans. Every nation (culture) has, or rather, was created around, its own Big Mouse. Vampires’ kinship with bats is also visible in the fact that when they need to fly, they must do so in the bat form. They also frequently hang their heads down in their “hamlets” (places of existential meditation).

Cattle: Humans are vampires’ cattle. They are controlled by vampires through sexuality, socioeconomic status expressed by money, and all the dreams and desires that those two produce in humans. They serve to produce bablos, which vampires need.

37. *Penny Dreadful* Showtime series, 2014–2016 [English]

Spiders: Vampires are associated with spiders. They move like spiders.

**38. Olivier Peru, SteFano Martino, and Digikore Studios’
Nosferatu dllogy, 2011–2012 [French]**

Rats: the villain Nosferatu is found surrounded by the rats; he wields them.

39. *Пищевлок [Pishcheblok]* KinoPoisk series, 2021 [Russian]

Insects: In the series, mosquitoes anticipate vampires.

**40. Galina Polynskaya, *Тайные стражи* series, 2018–2021
[Russian]**

Feliks, the Vampire Solar Hero, is frequently animalised: he has animal features and behaviours. But the moments of animality are valued negatively, like the moment when Feliks got bestial (озверел).⁷⁰⁵ Alevtina consoles him by saying that all the people are programmed to survive, just like vampires. However, everyone has a choice, and they can remain animals or become human; therefore, humanity is valorised as the highest moral state of being and as something opposed to being an animal.⁷⁰⁶

Predatory animal/predator: At moments, Feliks’ eyes turn red and have the narrow pupils of a night predator. He is actually compared to one.⁷⁰⁷

Felines: Feliks’ pupils get cat-like narrow.

Bats: Feliks presents himself as an animal when buying packet blood, pretending it is for his rare breed bats.

Reptiles: Feliks walks the walls like a lizard (a reference to Stoker’s novel).⁷⁰⁸

705 Galina Polynskaya, *Золото Аида* (Moscow: Эксмо, 2018), loc. 393, Kindle.

706 Galina Polynskaya, *Поместье призраков* (Moscow: Эксмо, 2020), loc. 421–422, Kindle.

707 Galina Polynskaya, *Перстень отравителя* (Moscow: Эксмо, 2018), loc. 5300–5303, Kindle.

708 Galina Polynskaya, *Эликсир для вампира* (Moscow: Эксмо, 2018), loc. 780, Kindle.

41. Martin Powel, “The Evil of Dracula: A Prequel to Bram Stoker’s Novel”, 2009 [English]

Dracula, who finally turns out to be a villain of the story despite the primary premises, is defined as a demon⁷⁰⁹ and called a “creature” (loc. 56). Yet he is also animalised: he has an “animal smile” (loc. 254). Mixing animalisation with orientalisation (he comes from the “wilds of Transylvania”; loc. 227) permits the objectification of the vampire as “wild and vicious, like a thing from the jungle” (loc. 188).

Felines: Dracula is compared to a panther (loc. 239).

Canines: Dracula is “wolfish” (loc. 230).

42. Gary Shore, *Dracula Untold*, 2014 [English]

Bats: Dracula wields the bats as a massive weapon, the virtual amplified version of his body. He uses them in the battle for his land against the Ottoman invasion.

43. Dmitriy Sillov, *Кровь Охотника*, 2011 [Russian]

In the narrative, vampires are evil and biologically not humans. They are wild beasts.⁷¹⁰ Animalisation leads to objectification. Monsters are linked to physical elements: fire (werewolves) and ice (vampires), and that is the effect felt by the one who drinks their blood (loc. 2715). To Andrey, the Solar Hunter, dead non-humans look like piles of fertiliser (loc. 1349).

Felines: Those who get paralysed with fear at the sight of a vampire are treated with despise and compared to kittens (loc. 4491).

Canines: Vampires are like wolves (loc. 1300). However, the Hero expresses some solidarity with the pit bull whom he kills in the fight. He treats him as a fellow, even if enemy, warrior (loc. 1876).

Rats: Vampires are like rats (loc. 4841, 4938), especially Nosferatu, the vampire fighters. They are rat-like-faced monsters, resembling the vampire from the cult Friedrich Murnau movie (1922). But a rat is also a positive model with which the Hero identifies: Andrey talks to a rat he meets, and he compares himself to the rat

709 Martin Powel, “The Evil of Dracula: A Prequel to Bram Stoker’s Novel,” in *Vampires: Dracula and the Undead Legions*, ed. Dave Ulanski and Garrett Anderson (Calumet City: Moonstone, 2009), loc. 57, Kindle. For the rest of the citations, I put the location number in the brackets.

710 Dmitriy Sillov, *Кровь Охотника* (Moscow: Издательство АСТ, 2011), loc. 1387, 2660, Kindle. For the rest of the citations, I put the location number in the brackets.

who fights until the end (loc. 5769–5774). The rat is, therefore, both abject (rat-like vampires) and respected.

Rabbits: Those who get paralysed with fear at the sight of a vampire are treated with despise and compared to rabbits (loc. 4491).

Reptiles: When fully transformed, vampires have chameleon tongues to pull their victims (loc. 4428).

Snakes/serpents: Vampires are like boas (loc. 4491).

Worms: Vampires' thoughts are like maggots crawling in their skulls (loc. 1401). Despised sub-humans are also compared to worms: the cowardly men at the butchery are similar to maggots that try to hide in the hole (loc. 5365).

Parasites: When fully transformed, vampires have suckers on their wings: they are parasites (loc. 4446–4451).

44. Aleksandr Slepakov, *Повесть о советском вампире* trilogy, 2014–2018 [Russian]

Canines: The villain, general Snigiryov, has wolf eyes, and general wolf appearance.

Crocodiles/Alligators: In the narrative, a Crocodile (also called the Reptile/Lizard/Dragon) is an incarnation of dangerous nature. The villain, General Snigiryov, is anticipated to appear inside the plot by the vision of the crocodile with whom he is tied by blood.

45. Scott Stewart, *Priest*, 2011 [English]

Insects: Vampires are like bees with their Queen, or again ants or termites; living spaces resemble termite mounds. They live in a hive community.

46. Dacre Stoker and J.D. Barker, *Dracul*, 2018 [English]

Vampires are evil. They are objectified through animalisation (savage beast,⁷¹¹ animal (loc. 4377)). This is linked with the orientalised of Eastern Europe, from where the most evil vampire, Dracula, comes.

Felines: Vampires are like cats watching a mouse (loc. 3279).

Canines: Vampires are compared to/associated with the wolves.

711 Dacre Stoker and J.D. Barker, *Dracul* (London: Penguin Publishing Group, 2018), loc. 3022, Kindle. For the rest of the citations, I put the location number in the brackets.

Snakes/serpents: Vampires are compared to the snakes (loc. 3029).

Frogs: Vampires are compared to the frogs (loc. 1342).

Spiders: Vampires are compared to the spiders (loc. 1318).

Insects: Vampires are compared to insects, specifically the bees (loc. 4280).

47. **Agata Suchocka, *Daję Ci wieczność* series, 2018– [Polish]**

The narrative animalises its actors, vampires, first of all. However, there is a crucial difference in the animalisation of women and men. Notably, women are Others in the narrative. When they are animalised (“peculiar forest animals”,⁷¹² “wonderful, beautiful wild beasts”⁷¹³ in their mating dance⁷¹⁴), it makes them disturbing, somehow abject beings. Suchocka also animalises men⁷¹⁵. However, contrary to women, male animality raises far more fascination than repulsion.

Predatory animal/predator: The vampires call themselves predators.⁷¹⁶

Felines: Women are “forest she-cats”;⁷¹⁷ Józefina is specifically a panther. Male vampires are full of grace, big (he-)cats and tigers.⁷¹⁸

Plants: Women are not even animals, but plants, exotic toxic climbers, and “the toxic ivy from whom he was never to liberate”.⁷¹⁹

48. **Drew Hayden Taylor, *The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel*, 2007 [English]**

In the narrative, animalisation has an ambivalent status. Owl/Pierre is the most animalised actor and is primarily positive as the Native son of his land. But a part of him is also a colonised abject vampire Other. Like most animals, he needs camouflage or environmental invisibility to survive.⁷²⁰

712 Agata Suchocka, *Daję ci wieczność, Akt IV: Bezdroża mroku* (Chorzów: Wydawnictwa Videograf, 2021), 79.

713 Ibid., 83.

714 Ibid., 98.

715 Agata Suchocka, *Daję ci wieczność, Akt I: Woła mnie ciemność* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Initium, 2018), 41.

716 Ibid., 269.

717 Suchocka, *Daję ci wieczność, Akt IV*, 78.

718 Suchocka, *Daję ci wieczność, Akt I*, 30.

719 Suchocka, *Daję ci wieczność, Akt IV*, 169.

720 Drew Hayden Taylor, *The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel* (Toronto, New York, Vancouver: Annick Press, 2007), loc. 1008, Kindle. For the rest of the citations, I put the location number in the brackets.

Owl is a positive part of the Hero's identity. When Frenchmen animalise Owl, it is derogative (loc. 1925), but being animal, or animal brother in itself, is not. When Owl lost his identity and got it replaced by Pierre's, that was a tragic, painful and degrading act of colonisation. In that sense, animalisation is also opposed to objectification: Owl seems to be the opposite of Pierre—*pierre* meaning “rock” or “stone” in French.

But Owl/Pierre is not the only one to be animalised. There are other definitely positive actors, such as Tiffany, the main heroine, and her father. Yet, for them, animalisation is a disempowering trope.

Predatory animal/predator: The vampire, Owl/Pierre, is like a hunting animal (loc. 489), a predator (loc. 793).

Felines: Even the car Owl/Pierre drives is like “a cat creeping along the ground toward prey, ready to pounce” (loc. 594).

Deer: Feeling surprised and helpless, Tiffany's father, Keith, behaved “like a deer with an eighteen-wheeler barreling down on him” (loc. 1217).

Bats: Owl/Pierre is compared to a bat (loc. 1085–1087).

Birds: Owl (!)/Pierre is like “the owl to a mouse” (loc. 805).

Crab: Tiffany, the Heroine, is “crawling like a demented crab” (loc. 960) in a moment of surprise and helplessness.

49. Jessica M. Thompson, *The Invitation*, 2022

Rats: The evil vampires are associated with the rats.

Spiders: The evil vampires are associated with the spiders.

50. Grzegorz Uzdanski, *Wypiór*, 2021 [Polish]

Predatory animal/predator: A vampire is like a predator.⁷²¹

Feline: A vampire jumps like a cat (p. 170). Cats are usual companions of the vampires: a female vampire who changes Mickiewicz has a cat. Marta and Łukasz, Mickiewicz's flatmates, also have a cat who seems to like the vampire.

721 Grzegorz Uzdanski, *Wypiór* (Wydawnictwo Filtry: Warszawa, 2021), 31. For the rest of the citations, I put the page number in the brackets.

51. *Van Helsing Syfy series, 2016–2021 [English]*

Canines: The relationship between Sister Ivory and Scab is extremely abject. Scab behaves like a fawning dog. His mistress pets and tortures him interchangeably, and he likes this sadist treatment to the point of wilful literal castration. In the cruelly erotic scene, Ivory sits on Scab astride and cuts off his penis. Floods of blood (symbolic semen) flow from his body as he moans and asks her to continue. He achieves the trans-gender status of the Sister, but his queer erotic slavery to Ivory remains. Starting with Scab, every other daywalker male vampire is castrated by Sisters on their way to Denver.

52. *David Wellington, Laura Caxton Vampire Series, 2006–2012 [English]*

The vampires are animalised (expressions such as “extinct in the wild”⁷²² and “those weren’t human”⁷²³) and, through that, objectified (“that thing”⁷²⁴). Vampires have their own specific culture and solidarity. They worship their ancestors to the point of self-sacrifice: young, strong vampires gather blood inside their bodies to transmit it to their creators, who are weaker yet need much more blood than the young ones. Some vampires regret their humanity. Vampires have their emotional and intellectual lives, and even some ethos and rules of behaviour. Yet all of this is considered irrelevant, non-existent, and meaningless due to their stated animality.⁷²⁵

Vampires are brutal, animal-like creatures. Their teeth consist of fangs only, they have pointed ears, they are hairless, and they are perfectly white – not of the white race but rather of “albino” colour;⁷²⁶ their former race disappears when they stop being humans and turn into vampires.

Predatory animal/predator: Vampires are definite Monsters, judged as animals, yet still unnatural. They adopt the optics of naturalness and try to explain themselves as natural predators.⁷²⁷ Yet, the narrative only partially adopts this standpoint and does not justify human killing at all.

Birds: Vampires are like birds.⁷²⁸

722 David Wellington, *13 Bullets* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2006), 39, Kindle.

723 Ibid., 9.

724 Ibid., 23.

725 Ibid., 79, 146.

726 Ibid., 149.

727 David Wellington, *Vampire Zero* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2008), 298, Kindle.

728 Wellington, *13 Bullets*, 27.

Sharks: Instead of a pair of fangs, their teeth consist solely of fangs, the set reminding the teeth-set of the sharks. They generally resemble the sharks.⁷²⁹

Worms: After dusk, vampires change into what they really are: the maggots preying on the dead bodies, connected by one collective digestive system. In the second book, it is put a little differently: vampires liquify after dusk, and the maggots simply prey on their liquified bodies. The maggots like vampires, contrary to other better species of animals, such as dogs. Dogs instinctively hate vampires.

53. Peter Watts, *Firefall series*, 2006–2014 [English]

While this narrative is not included in Table 1, it is perhaps worth noting here. It does not refer to specific animals, yet it provides some sort of specification: it tells that the Bicamerals are not even a sub-species of mammals, as they produced a collective consciousness.

729 Ibid., 6.

Annex 2: Analytic corpus

Polish

| Narrative number | Type | Sample number | Author | Series | Existing translation | Own translation | Book/story/film | Existing translation | Own translation | Year |
|------------------|-------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------------|------|
| 1. | Short story | 1. | Dagmara Adwentowska | | | | “Niezwykła kobieta” | | Extraordinary Woman | 2016 |
| 2. | Novel | 2. | Stefan Darda | | | | <i>Jedna krew</i> | | One Blood | 2020 |
| 3. | Novel | 3. | Krzysztof Haczyński | | | | <i>Grabarz</i> | | The Gravedigger | 2013 |
| 4. | Novel | 4. | Krzysztof Kotowski | | | | <i>Trzech gości w łódce plus wampir</i> | | Three Guys in a Boat Plus a Vampire | 2022 |
| 5. | Novels | 5. | Magdalena Kozak | <i>Tajne Akta Vespera</i> | | | <i>Nocarz</i> | | The Nighter | 2006 |
| | | 6. | | | | | <i>Renegat</i> | | The Renegade | 2007 |
| | | 7. | | | | | <i>Nikt</i> | | No One | 2008 |
| | | 8. | | | | | <i>Młody</i> | | The Young One | 2017 |
| 6. | Short story | 9. | Jarosław Moździoch | | | | “Chłopiec z aluminiowym kubkiem w dłoni” | | A Boy with an Aluminium Mug in His Hand | 2007 |

Polish (Continued)

| Narrative number | Type | Sample number | Author | Series | Existing translation | Own translation | Book/story/film | Existing translation | Own translation | Year |
|------------------|--------|---------------|------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------|
| 7. | Novel | 10. | Nina Neumann | | | | <i>Ziemią wy-pelnisz jej usta</i> | | You Will Fill Her Mouth with Soil | 2013 |
| 8. | Novels | 11. | Andrzej Pilipiuk | <i>Cykl z wampirem</i> | | Series with the Vampire | <i>Wampir z M-3</i> | | The Vampire from M-3 | 2013 |
| | | 12. | | | | | <i>Wampir z MO</i> | | The Vampire from MO | 2013 |
| | | 13. | | | | | <i>Wampir z KC</i> | | The Vampire from KC | 2018 |
| 9. | Novels | 14. | Agata Suchocka | <i>Daję ci wieczność</i> | I Give You Eternity | | <i>Akt I: Wołamie ciemność</i> | <i>Part I: And Then the Darkness Came</i> | | 2018 |
| | | 15. | | | | | <i>Akt II: Twarz w twarz</i> | <i>Part II: Face to Face</i> | | 2019 |
| | | 16. | | | | | <i>Akt III: Pieśń słowika</i> | <i>Part III: Song of the Nightingale</i> | | 2021 |

Polish (Continued)

| Narrative number | Type | Sample number | Author | Series | Existing translation | Own translation | Book/story/film | Existing translation | Own translation | Year |
|------------------|-------------|---------------|---------------------------|--------|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|------|
| | | 17. | | | | | <i>Akt IV: Bezdroża mroku</i> | <i>Part IV: The Patron</i> | | 2021 |
| | | 18. | | | | | <i>Akt V: Piętno nocy</i> | | Part V: Stigma of the Night | 2023 |
| 10. | Novel | 19. | Grzegorz Uzdarski | | | | <i>Wypiór</i> | | | 2021 |
| 11. | Short story | 20. | Mariusz "Orzeł" Wojteczek | | | | "Dreszcze" | | Fevers | 2016 |

Russian

| Narrative number | Type | Sample number | Author | Series | Transliteration | Existing translation | Own translation | Book/story/film | Transliteration | Existing translation | Own translation | Year |
|------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------|
| 1. | Novel | 1. | Oleg Dnov | | | | | <i>Ночной смотрящий</i> | Nochnoy smotr-yashchuy | <i>Night Watcher</i> (of the title only) | | 2004 |
| 2. | Novel | 2. | Yuliya Gavriish | | | | | <i>Безы</i> | Begi | | Runs | 2022 |
| 3. | Film | 3. | Sergey Ginzburg | | | | | <i>Вурдалаки</i> | Vurdalaki | <i>Vamps aka Ghoulis</i> | | 2017 |
| 4. | Novel | 4. | Aleksey Viktorovich Ivanov | | | | | <i>Пищеблок</i> | Pishcheblok | | Kitchenblock | 2018 |
| 5. | TV series | 5–20. | KinoPoisk | <i>Пищеблок</i> (16 episodes) | Pishcheblok | <i>Pishcheblok aka Kitchen-block</i> | | | | | | 2022–2023 |
| 6. | Novels | 21. | Alex Kosh | <i>Ремесло</i> | Remeslo | | The Craft | <i>Огненный Факультет</i> | Ognennyy Fakultet | <i>Faculty of Fire</i> | | 2005 |
| | | 22. | | | | | | <i>Огненный Патруль</i> | Ognennyy Patrol | | Patrol of Fire | 2006 |
| | | 23. | | | | | | <i>Огненный Ордэн</i> | Ognennyy Orden | | Order of Fire | 2011 |
| | | 24. | | | | | | <i>Огненный Легион</i> | Ognennyy Legion | | Legion of Fire | 2013 |
| 7. | Novel | 25. | Maks Maksimov | | | | | <i>Видеоблог вампира</i> | Videoblog vampira | | Vampire's Video Blog | 2020 |
| 8. | Novels | 26. | Yuliya Nabokova | <i>VIP значим вампир</i> | VIP znachit vampir | | VIP Means Vampire | <i>VIP значим вампир</i> | VIP znachit vampir | | VIP Means Vampire | 2008 |
| | | 27. | | | | | | <i>Шерше ля вамп</i> | Sherse lya vamp | | Flow for Vamp | 2009 |
| | | 28. | | | | | | <i>Вампир высшего класса</i> | Vampir vysshego klassa | | Higher-Class Vampire | 2010 |

Russian (Continued)

| Narrative number | Type | Sample number | Author | Series | Transliteration | Existing translation | Own translation | Book/story/film | Transliteration | Existing translation | Own translation | Year |
|------------------|--------|---------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 9. | Novels | 29. | Viktor Pelevin | Vampire diary | | | | <i>Амур В. Повесть о настоящих сверхчеловеке</i> | Ampir V. Povest' o nastoyashchem sverkhchloveke | <i>Empire V: The Prince of Hamlet</i> | | 2006 |
| | | 30. | | | | | | <i>Бэтман Аполло</i> | Betman Apollo | <i>Batman Apollo</i> | | 2013 |
| 10. | Novels | 31. | Galina Polynskaya | <i>Тайные стражи</i> | Taynye strazhi | | Secret Guards | <i>Эликсир для вампира</i> | Eliksir dlya vampira | | Elksir for the Vampire | 2018 |
| | | 32. | | | | | | <i>Перстень отравителя</i> | Persten' otravitel'ya | | The Poisoner's Ring | 2018 |
| | | 33. | | | | | | <i>Золото Аида</i> | Zoloto Aida | | Gold of Hades | 2018 |
| | | 34. | | | | | | <i>Кинжал милосердия</i> | Kinzhalt miloserdiya | | Dagger of Mercy | 2020 |
| | | 35. | | | | | | <i>Поместье призрак</i> | Pomest'e prizrakov | | Manor of Ghosts | 2020 |
| | | 36. | | | | | | <i>Час ночи</i> | Chas nochi | | One at Night | 2020 |
| | | 37. | | | | | | <i>Театр Эль Вагант</i> | Teatr El Vagant | | El Vagant Theatre | 2021 |
| 11. | Novel | 38. | Dmitriy Silov | | | | | <i>Кровь Охотника</i> | Krov' Okhotnika | | Hunter's Blood | 2011 |
| 12. | Novels | 39. | Aleksandr Slepakov | <i>Вся история Фролова, советского вампира/ Повесть о советском вампире</i> | Vsya istoriya Frolova, sovet'skogo vampira/ Povest' o sovet'skom vampire | | The Whole Story of Frolov, the Soviet Vampire/The Tale of the Soviet Vampire | <i>Повесть о советском вампире, Книга 1: Любовь на природе</i> | Povest' o sovet'skom vampire, Kinga 1: Lyubov na prirode | | Tale of the Soviet Vampire, Volume 1: Love in Nature | 2014 |

Russian (Continued)

| Narrative number | Type | Sample number | Author | Series | Transliteration | Existing translation | Own translation | Book/story/film | Transliteration | Existing translation | Own translation | Year |
|------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| | | 40. | | | | | | <i>Повесть о советском вампире, Книга 2: Большая рептилия</i> | Povest' o sovetskom vam-pire, Kinga 2: Bolshaya reptiliya | | Tale of the Soviet Vampire, Volume 2: The Great Reptile | 2018 |
| | | 41. | | | | | | <i>Повесть о советском вампире, Книга 3: Вампирский спецназ</i> | Povest' o sovetskom vam-pire, Kinga 3: Vampirskiy spetsnaz | | Tale of the Soviet Vampire, Volume 3: Vampire Spetsnaz | 2018 |
| 13. | TV Series | 42-49. | Start | <i>Каравона</i> (8 episodes) | Karamora | | | | | | | 2022 |
| 14. | TV series | 50-230. | TB-3 Channel | <i>Пятая стража</i> (181 episodes) | Pyataya strazha | | The Fifth Guard | | | | | 2012-2016 |
| 15. | Film | 231. | Emilis Velyvis | | | | | <i>Ночные стражи</i> | Nochnye strazhi | <i>Guardians of the Night</i> | | 2016 |

Francophone

| Narrative number | Type | Sample number | Author | Series | Existing translation | Own translation | Book/story/film | Existing translation | Own translation | Year |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|------|
| 1. | Film | 1. | Adrien Beau | | | | <i>Le Yourdalak</i> | <i>The Yourdalak</i> | | 2023 |
| 2. | Short story | 2. | Ugo Bellagamba | | | | “Icare” | | Icarus | 2014 |
| 3. | BDs | 3. | Georges Bess | <i>Le Vampire de Benares</i> | | The Vampirepire of Varanasi | <i>Tome 1: Les Bêtes de la Nuit</i> | | Volume 1: Beasts of the Night | 2011 |
| 4. | | 4. | | | | | <i>Tome 2: L'Origine du Mal</i> | | Volume 2: The Origin of Evil | 2011 |
| 5. | | 5. | | | | | <i>Tome 3: Le Coeur des Ténèbres</i> | | Volume 3: The Heart of Darkness | 2012 |
| 4. | Novel | 6. | Charlotte Bousquet | | | | <i>Lettres aux ténèbres</i> | | Letters to the Darkness | 2008 |
| 5. | Short stories | 7. | Charlotte Bousquet | Sur Villon (informal series) | | | “Ballade du temps retrouvé” | | Ballad of the Recovered Time | 2008 |
| 6. | Short story | 8. | Simon Bréan | | | | “Tango pour Esther” | | Tango for Esther | 2008 |
| | | 9. | | | | | “Les Miroirs de l'Éternité” | | Mirrors of Eternity | 2014 |

Francophone (Continued)

| Narrative number | Type | Sample number | Author | Series | Existing translation | Own translation | Book/story/film | Existing translation | Own translation | Year |
|------------------|-------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------------|------|
| 7. | Novel | 10. | Manou Chintesco | | | | <i>Les Compagnons d'HeLa</i> | | The Companions of HeLa | 2004 |
| 8. | BD | 11. | Pascal Croci | | | | <i>Carmilla (d'après Sheridan Le Fanu)</i> | | Carmilla (according to Sheridan Le Fanu) | 2016 |
| 9. | BDs | 12. | Pascal Croci and Françoise Sylvie Pauly | <i>Dracula</i> | | | <i>Livre I: Le prince valaque Vlad Tepes</i> | | Book I: The Wallachian Prince Vlad Tepes | 2005 |
| | | 13. | | | | | <i>Livre II: Le mythe raconté par Bram Stoker</i> | | Book II: The Myth as Told by Bram Stoker | 2007 |
| 10. | Short story | 14. | Philippe Curval | | | | "Pire que le vent" | | Worse than the Wind | 2014 |
| 11. | BD | 15. | Gabriel Delmas | | | | <i>Vampyr Draco Maleficus Imperator</i> | | | 2004 |

Francophone (Continued)

| Narrative number | Type | Sample number | Author | Series | Existing translation | Own translation | Book/story/film | Existing translation | Own translation | Year |
|------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------|
| 12. | BD | 16. | Hippolyte | | | | <i>Dracula (d'après l'oeuvre de Bram Stoker)</i> | <i>Dracula (based on the novel by Bram Stoker)</i> | | 2003–2004 |
| 13. | Short story | 17. | Philippe Jaenada | | | | “Bogdana” | | | 2013 |
| 14. | Short story | 18. | Marianne Leconte | | | | “Femme Fatale” | | | 2014 |
| 15. | Short story | 19. | Christian Léourier | | | | “Quelques moments dans la carrière d'un honorable homme d'affaires” | | | 2014 |
| 16. | Novels | 20. | Priscilla Llorca | <i>Vampire Solitaire</i> | | Lonely Vampire | <i>Tome 1: Âme retrouvée</i> | | Volume 1: Soul Found | 2017 |
| | | 21. | | | | | <i>Tome 2: Ensorcelée</i> | | Volume 2: Bewitched | 2019 |
| | | 22. | | | | | <i>Tome 3: Guerrière</i> | | Volume 3: Warrior | 2021 |
| | | 23. | | | | | <i>Tome 4: Renaissance</i> | | Volume 4: Rebirth | 2022 |

Francophone (Continued)

| Narrative number | Type | Sample number | Author | Series | Existing translation | Own translation | Book/story/film | Existing translation | Own translation | Year |
|------------------|------|---------------|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|------|
| 17. | BD | 24. | Thierry Murat | | | | <i>Ne reste que l'aube</i> | | Only Dawn Remains | 2021 |
| 18. | BDs | 25. | Fabien Nury, John Cassaday, and Laura DePuy/Martin | <i>Je suis légion</i> | <i>I Am Legion</i> | | <i>Tome 1: Le Faune Dansant</i> | <i>Book 1: The Dancing Faun</i> | | 2004 |
| | | 26. | | | | | <i>Tome 2: Vlad</i> | <i>Book 2: Vlad</i> | | 2006 |
| | | 27. | | | | | <i>Tome 3: Les Trois Singes</i> | <i>Book 3: The Three Monkeys</i> | | 2007 |

Francophone (Continued)

| Narrative number | Type | Sample number | Author | Series | Existing translation | Own translation | Book/story/film | Existing translation | Own translation | Year |
|------------------|------|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------|------|
| | BDS | 28. | Fabien Nury, Mario Alberti, Zhang Xiaoyu, Tirso and Javier Martin, or Roberto Ricci; Matthieu Laufthieu (only Book 1), and Eric Heninot (only Book 4) | <i>Les Chroniques de légion</i> | <i>The Chronicles of Legion</i> | | Livre 1 | <i>Volume 1: Rise of the Vampires</i> | | 2011 |
| | | 29. | | | | | Livre 2 | <i>Volume 2: The Spawn of Dracula</i> | | 2011 |
| | | 30. | | | | | Livre 3 | <i>Volume 3: The Blood Brothers</i> | | 2012 |
| | | 31. | | | | | Livre 4 | <i>Volume 4: The Three Faces of Evil</i> | | 2012 |

Francophone (Continued)

| Narrative number | Type | Sample number | Author | Series | Existing translation | Own translation | Book/story/film | Existing translation | Own translation | Year |
|------------------|-------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------|
| 19. | BDS | 32. | Olivier Peru, Stefano Martino, and Digikore Studios | <i>Nosferatu</i> | | | <i>Tome I: Si vis pacem</i> | <i>Volume 1: Si Vis Pacem</i> | | 2011 |
| 20. | BD | 33. | Bram Stoker and Georges Bess | | | | <i>Tome II: Para Bellum Dracula</i> | <i>Volume 2: Para Bellum</i> | | 2012 2019 |
| 21. | Short story | 35. | Christian Vila | | | | “Les Ravageurs: une histoire d’amour” | | The Destroyers: A Love Story | 2014 |

Anglophone

| Narrative number | Type | Sample number | Author | Series | Book/story/film | Year |
|------------------|-----------|---------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. | Novel | 1. | K.M. Ashman | | <i>Vampire: The Curse of Sekhmet</i> | 2013 |
| 2. | TV series | 2. | AXN | <i>Age of the Living Dead</i> (unfinished) | | 2018 |
| 3. | Novels | 3. | L.A. Banks | <i>Vampire Huntress Legend Series</i> | <i>Minion</i> | 2003 |
| | | 4. | | | <i>The Awakening</i> | 2004 |
| | | 5. | | | <i>The Hunted</i> | 2004 |
| | | 6. | | | <i>The Bitten</i> | 2005 |
| | | 7. | | | <i>The Forbidden</i> | 2005 |
| | | 8. | | | <i>The Damned</i> | 2006 |
| | | 9. | | | <i>The Forsaken</i> | 2006 |
| | | 10. | | | <i>The Wicked</i> | 2007 |
| | | 11. | | | <i>The Cursed</i> | 2007 |
| | | 12. | | | <i>The Darkness</i> | 2008 |
| | | 13. | | | <i>The Shadows</i> | 2008 |
| | | 14. | | | <i>The Thirteenth</i> | 2009 |
| 4. | TV series | 15.-17. | BBC | <i>Dracula</i> (3 episodes) | | 2020 |
| 5. | TV series | 18.-54. | BBC Three | <i>Being Human</i> (37 episodes) | | 2008-2013 |
| 6. | Film | 55. | Timur Bekmambetov | | <i>Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter</i> | 2012 |

Anglophone (Continued)

| Narrative number | Type | Sample number | Author | Series | Book/story/film | Year |
|------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 7. | Film | 56. | Xan Cassavetes | | <i>Kiss of the Damned</i> | 2013 |
| 8. | Novel | 57. | Simon Clark | | <i>London Under Midnight</i> | 2006 |
| 9. | Novels | 58. | Douglas Clegg | <i>The Vampyricon</i> trilogy | <i>The Priest of Blood</i> | 2005 |
| | | 59. | | | <i>The Lady of Serpents</i> | 2006 |
| | | 60. | | | <i>The Queen of Wolves</i> | 2007 |
| 10. | Film | 61. | Frank D'Angelo | | <i>Sicilian Vampire</i> | 2015 |
| 11. | Franchise (Novels + TV series) | | Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan, FX | <i>The Strain</i> (franchise) | | |
| | Novels | 62. | | <i>The Strain</i> Trilogy | <i>The Strain</i> | 2009 |
| | | 63. | | | <i>The Fall</i> | 2010 |
| | | 64. | | | <i>The Night Eternal</i> | 2011 |
| | TV series | 65–110. | | <i>The Strain</i> (46 episodes) | | 2014–2017 |
| 12. | Novel | 111. | George DeVein | | <i>Renfield's Journal: Dracula's Protege</i> | 2018 |
| 13. | TV series | 112–141. | El Rey Network | <i>From Dusk till Dawn: The Series</i> (30 episodes) | | 2014–2016 |
| 13. | Film | 142. | Daniel Espinosa | | <i>Morbius</i> | 2022 |

Anglophone (Continued)

| Narrative number | Type | Sample number | Author | Series | Book/story/film | Year |
|------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 14. | Novel | 143. | Francesca Flores | | <i>The Witch and the Vampire: A Novel</i> | 2023 |
| 15. | Novel | 144. | Seth Grahame-Smith | | <i>Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter</i> | 2010 |
| 16. | Novels | 145. | Clay and Susan Griffith | <i>Vampire Empire</i> | <i>The Greyfriar</i> | 2010 |
| | | 146. | | | <i>The Rift Walker</i> | 2011 |
| | | 147. | | | <i>The Kingmakers</i> | 2012 |
| 17. | Short story | 148. | Carolyn Haines | | "The Wish" | 2009 |
| 18. | Novel | 149. | Barbara Hambly | | <i>Renfield: Slave of Dracula</i> | 2007 |
| 19. | Film | 150. | Mary Harron | | <i>The Moth Diaries</i> | 2011 |
| 20. | TV series | 151–230. | HBO | <i>True Blood</i> (80 episodes) | | 2008–2014 |
| 21. | Short story | 231. | C.J. Henderson | | "Dracula: Long Live the King" | 2009 |
| 22. | Film | 232. | Jim Jarmusch | | <i>Only Lovers Left Alive</i> | 2013 |
| 23. | Film | 233. | Neil Jordan | | <i>Byzantium</i> | 2012 |
| 24. | Novels | 234. | Jasper Kent | <i>The Danilov Quintet</i> | <i>Twelve</i> | 2008 |
| | | 235. | | | <i>Thirteen Years Later</i> | 2010 |
| | | 236. | | | <i>The Third Section</i> | 2011 |
| | | 237. | | | <i>The People's Will</i> | 2013 |

Anglophone (Continued)

| Narrative number | Type | Sample number | Author | Series | Book/story/film | Year |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------|
| | | 238. | | | <i>The Last Rite</i> | 2014 |
| 25. | Short story | 239. | Paul Kupperberg | | "Man Bites Dog" | 2009 |
| 26. | Film | 240. | Francis Lawrence | | <i>I Am Legend</i> | 2007 |
| 27. | Film | 241. | Derek Lee and Clif Prowse | | <i>Afflicted</i> | 2013 |
| 28. | TV series | 242–263. | Lifetime | <i>Blood Ties</i> (22 episodes) | | 2007 |
| 29. | Novel | 264. | Ian R. MacLeod | | <i>Red Snow</i> | 2017 |
| 30. | Franchise (Novel + TV series) | | Brian McGreevy, Netflix | <i>Hemlock Grove</i> (franchise) | | |
| | Novel | 265. | Brian McGreevy | | <i>Hemlock Grove</i> | 2012 |
| | TV series | 266–298. | Netflix | <i>Hemlock Grove</i> (33 episodes) | | 2013–2015 |
| 31. | Franchise (Novels + Films) | | Stephenie Meyer, Catherine Hardwicke, Chris Weitz, David Slade, Bill Condon | <i>Twilight</i> (franchise) | | |
| | Novels | 299. | Stephenie Meyer | <i>Twilight Saga</i> | <i>Twilight</i> | 2005 |
| | | 300. | | | <i>New Moon</i> | 2006 |
| | | 301. | | | <i>Eclipse</i> | 2007 |
| | | 302. | | | <i>Breaking Dawn</i> | 2008 |

Anglophone (Continued)

| Narrative number | Type | Sample number | Author | Series | Book/film/story/film | Year |
|------------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| | | 303. | | | <i>Life and Death: Twilight Reimagined</i> | 2015 |
| | | 304. | | | <i>Midnight Sun</i> | 2020 |
| | Films | | | <i>The Twilight Saga</i> | | 2008–2012 |
| | | 307. | Catherine Hardwicke | | <i>Twilight</i> | 2008 |
| | | 308. | Chris Weitz | | <i>The Twilight Saga: New Moon</i> | 2009 |
| | | 309. | David Slade | | <i>The Twilight Saga: Eclipse</i> | 2010 |
| | | 310. | Bill Condon | | <i>The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 1</i> | 2011 |
| | | 311. | Bill Condon | | <i>The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2</i> | 2012 |
| 32. | TV miniseries | 312. | MTV | <i>Valemont</i> (miniseries) | | 2009 |
| 33. | TV animated series | 313–344. | Netflix | <i>Castlevania</i> (32 episodes) | | 2017–2021 |
| 34. | TV series | 345. | Netflix | <i>V Wars</i> (unfinished) | | 2019 |
| 35. | Film | 346. | André Øvredal | | <i>The Last Voyage of the Demeter</i> | 2023 |
| 36. | Short story | 347. | Martin Powell | | “The Evil of Dracula: A Prequel to Bram Stoker’s Novel” | 2009 |

Anglophone (Continued)

| Narrative number | Type | Sample number | Author | Series | Book/story/film | Year |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| 37. | Film | 348. | Gary Shore | | <i>Dracula Untold</i> | 2014 |
| 38. | TV series | 349–375. | Showtime | <i>Penny Dreadful</i> (27 episodes) | | 2014–2016 |
| 39. | Franchise (Film + TV mini-series) | | David Slade, Fearnert | <i>30 Days of Night</i> (franchise) | | |
| | Film | 376. | David Slade | | <i>30 Days of Night</i> | 2007 |
| | TV miniseries | 377. | Fearnert | | <i>30 Days of Night: Blood Trials</i> | 2007 |
| | TV miniseries | 378. | Fearnert | | <i>30 Days of Night: Dust to Dust</i> | 2008 |
| 40. | Film | 379. | Stephen Sommers | | <i>Van Helsing</i> | 2004 |
| 41. | Film | 380. | Michael Spierig and Peter Spierig | | <i>Daybreakers</i> | 2009 |
| 42. | Short story | 381. | Jeanne C. Stein | | “The Witch and the Wicked” | 2007 |
| 43. | Film | 382. | Scott Stewart | | <i>Priest</i> | 2011 |
| 44. | Novel | 383. | Dacre Stoker and J.D. Barker | | <i>Dracul</i> | 2018 |
| 45. | Film | 384. | Glenn Standring | | <i>Perfect Creature</i> | 2006 |
| 46. | TV series | 385–436. | Syfy | <i>Being Human</i> (52 episodes) | | 2011–2014 |

Anglophone (Continued)

| Narrative number | Type | Sample number | Author | Series | Book/story/film | Year |
|------------------|-----------|---------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 47. | TV series | 437–501. | Syfy | <i>Van Helsing</i> (65 episodes) | | 2016–2021 |
| 48. | Novel | 502. | Drew Hayden Taylor | | <i>The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel</i> | 2007 |
| 49. | TV series | 503–594. | The CW | <i>The Originals</i> (92 episodes) | | 2013–2018 |
| 50. | TV series | 595–765. | The CW | <i>The Vampire Diaries</i> (171 episodes) | | 2009–2017 |
| 51. | Film | 766. | Jessica M. Thompson | | <i>The Invitation</i> | 2022 |
| 52. | Novels | 767. | Peter Watts | <i>Firefall</i> | <i>Blindsight</i> | 2006 |
| | | 768. | | | <i>Echopraxia</i> | 2014 |
| 53. | Novels | 769. | David Wellington | <i>Laura Caxton Vampire Series</i> | <i>13 Bullets: A Vampire Tale</i> | 2006 |
| | | 770. | | | <i>99 Coffins: A Historical Vampire Tale</i> | 2007 |
| | | 771. | | | <i>Vampire Zero: A Gruesome Vampire Tale</i> | 2008 |
| | | 772. | | | <i>23 Hours: A Vengeful Vampire Tale</i> | 2009 |
| | | 773. | | | <i>32 Fangs: A Final Vampire Tale</i> | 2012 |
| 54. | Film | 774. | Kurt Wimmer | <i>Ultraviolet</i> | | 2006 |

Anglophone (Continued)

| Narrative number | Type | Sample number | Author | Series | Book/story/film | Year |
|------------------|-------|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| 55. | Films | | Len Wiseman, Patrick Tatopoulos, Måns Mårilind and Björn Stein, Anna Foerster | <i>Underworld</i> | | 2003–2016 |
| | | 775. | Len Wiseman | | <i>Underworld</i> | 2003 |
| | | 776. | Len Wiseman | | <i>Underworld: Evolution</i> | 2006 |
| | | 777. | Patrick Tatopoulos | | <i>Underworld: Rise of the Lycans</i> | 2009 |
| | | 778. | Måns Mårilind and Björn Stein | | <i>Underworld: Awakening</i> | 2012 |
| | | 779. | Anna Foerster | | <i>Underworld: Blood Wars</i> | 2016 |

