

UNIVERZITA PALACKÉHO V OLOMOUCI

PEDAGOGICKÁ FAKULTA

Ústav cizích jazyků

Katedra anglického jazyka

Bakalářská práce

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The depiction of the monster in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* in
comparison with Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*

Olomouc 2021

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Hereby I state that I have worked on this bachelor thesis on my own and that all the sources of informations I have used are listed in the bibliography.

Olomouc 22nd April 2021

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Acknowledgement

I am indebted to Mgr. Ivan Čipkár, Ph.D., for the professional guidance of the bachelor thesis, valuable advice, and the provision of materials for the thesis.

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1. Introduction

The word *monster* has not only the meaning of monster but also the meaning of severe developmental defects.¹ The concept of a human monster then means a human monster, a creature, often cruel and incapable of compassion and regret, without feeling its own guilt.²

Today we are surrounded by products of highly developed technologies, often with elements of the so-called artificial intelligence. They mostly help us but their exploitation is relatively easy and so they could become “human monsters”. Particularly, the creator’s responsibility for his product is dealt with in the book *Frankenstein*, which, despite being written more than 200 years ago, is still highly topical.

The main character of the book *Dracula* is both a vampire and a monster within the meaning of the above-mentioned definition because he is the personification of violence and evil. Violence and evil must be fought, even if it is a fight that has an uncertain outcome, is difficult and requires sacrifices. That is the main and still valid idea of this work.

In my work, I will not only mention the authors of both books and describe their content and main ideas, but I will also deal with representation of the monster in both books, their common and different characteristics.

Although we can consider the existence of vampires to be scientifically excluded, the vampire phenomenon and its inferred vampirism remains a fashionable topic. In my work, I will explain the basic concepts of vampirism, its content, history, reflection in art and on the platform of Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*. I will also mention the historical figure of Prince Vlad III., who became the template of the main character in *Dracula*.

Although these two works are generally well-known, there are mostly viewed somewhat simplistically as representatives of an undemanding or artistically inferior genre of horror. However, they certainly do not deserve such an assessment because they are not only very valuable literary works, but also contain a number of very fundamental, moral, and philosophical ideas and messages that I will draw an attention to in my work. Similarly, I will try to refute the majority of clichés about vampires and vampirism, distorted by trashy literature or declining filmography. In my work, I will explain that this is a legendary and mythical phenomenon that has accompanied the human race

almost all over the world since the very beginning of its existence and has left traces in various spheres of human activity. So, this is no fashionable or even declining theme, and therefore deserves our attention and edification.

2. Autoři a historický kontext

Mary Shelley is a writer of the romantic period, an artistic movement from the late 18th century to the first half of the 19th century. The name of this artistic movement is derived from the word “novel“ which became a popular literary form that time. Romanticism was a response to the French Revolution and its humanist ideals, embodied in the revolutionary’s” well-known motto “liberty, equality, fraternity” which failed to materialize. The main characteristic of romanticism is therefore the rebellion against the real world and the depiction of the conflict between the inner (ideal) world and the outer (bad) world. Individualism, subjectivity, irrationality, and emotion are therefore emphasized. Romantic works also often escape into history (a particularly favorite choice was the Middle Ages), into the world of fantasy, mystery, and horror, they are fond of myths and exotic lands. The main character is usually a romantic hero, rebelling against social conventions, unwilling to adapt to the outer hypocritical world and turning to his inner self, dream ideal or love. The birthplace of literary romanticism is England, and to its main representatives belong the Scottish poet and one of the founders of the historical novel Walter Scott, the poet Lord George Gordon Byron, the lyricist Percy Bysshe Shelley and his wife Mary Shelley. ³

The Irish writer Bram Stoker belongs to the period of late romanticism or neo-romanticism. His best-known work *Dracula* is actually an adaptation of a vampire legend and is one of the classic works of literary vampirism and the genre of horror. It heralded the fashionable vampire wave in the period of decadence in the early 20th century.

2.1 Mary Shelley and her work

This English writer was born in 1797 in London where she also in 1851 died. She has written several novels (Valperga, or, The Life and Adventures of Castruccio, Prince Luca = historical novel about a Tuscan military commander; The Last Man = most likely the first post-apocalyptic science fiction; The Fortunes of Perkin Warbeck = historical novel about the heir to the throne of England; Lodore = a novel about a patriarchal British family; Falkner = a novel about an orphaned girl, her tyrannical stepfather, and her first love; Rambles in Germany and Italy = books of travels; Mathilda). However, the best-known is her horror novel Frankenstein published in 1818. She was inspired by the invitation of the renowned poet Lord Byron to write a terrifying story during a summer stay in Geneva in 1816, where the author, her then husband-to-be – the great English romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley and John Polidori were staying. ⁴ Lord Byron then only wrote an outline of a story, on the basis of which his friend and alleged lover John Polidori wrote “The Vampyre“ which about 80 years later became one of the literary inspirational sources for Bram Stoker’s Dracula. ⁵

Given the analogy with the creator of the human race, according to Greek mythology, the author gave her work Frankenstein the subtitle “Modern Prometheus”. The world significance of the novel, even for today, is evidenced by the fact its title “Frankenstein” has become synonymous with the term “monster”; in this context, it must be pointed out that the creator (= Viktor Frankenstein) is sometimes incorrectly confused with a monster which does not have a name in the novel. In order to better understand the historical context of the work, it is important to realize that the book was written at the time of the Industrial Revolution and therefore the creation of the monster was already imaginable at that time. The manifestation of the contemporary romanticism of the work is undoubtedly the fact that the author views the monster as a creature that is quick to learn and intellectually capable, but also full of typically human emotions and qualities, whether positive (especially the desire for friendship and love) or negative (especially revenge and crime).

The novel Frankenstein has been filmed several times. Perhaps the best-known film adaptation is Kenneth Branagh’s 1994 American film, in which the director also plays the role of Viktor Frankenstein, while Robert De Niro plays the monster.

2.2 Bram Stoker and his work

The Irish writer Bram Stoker was born in Dublin in 1847 and died in London in 1912, where he had lived since his wedding in 1878. His wife used to date the renowned Irish playwright Oscar Wilde. Although he has written more novels (The Primrose Path, The Snake's Pass, The Watter's Mou', The Shoulder of Shasta, Miss Betty, The Mystery of the Sea, The Jewel of Seven Stars, The Man, Lady Athlyne, Snowbound: The Record of a Theatrical Touring Party, The Lady of the Shroud, Lair of the White Worm), stories and their collections (e.g. Duties of Clerc of Pett Sessions in Ireland, The Crystal Cup, Under the Sunset), best known is his novel Dracula which was first published in 1897. ⁶

The book was subject of many film adaptations, perhaps the most famous of which is the 1992 American film directed by Francis Ford Coppola with a star-studded cast (among others Gary Oldman, Winona Ryder, Anthony Hopkins, Keanu Reeves, or Monica Bellucci), although the most iconic portrayal of Dracula is the film with Bela Lugosi from 1931. Lovers of the Czech musical will also remember the phenomenon of the same name from 1996 by legendary composer Karel Svoboda.

3. Depiction of the monster in Frankenstein

3.1 Summary of Frankenstein

Robert Walton wants to discover the path to the North Pole. At first, he meets a sled run by a giant on the way, and then a man (Victor Frankenstein of Geneva) who is telling him his story. While studying at the University of Ingolstadt, he discovered the secret to the emergence of life from inanimate matter. He wanted to create a human-like creature (see „... symmetrical limbs and beautiful features...”) but for excessive complexity, he resigned to it and created an unsightly creature of mighty build, about three meters tall, which he breathed life into. However, immediately afterwards, he was horrified by his work and the monster fled the house.

Frankenstein received a letter from his father saying his brother William had been murdered. Before Geneva, he had seen the monster he had created in the night. But it ran

away from him into the mountains. Frankenstein became convinced that his brother's killer was a monster. But their maid, Justina Moritz, was sentenced to death for the murder.

Frankenstein found the monster in the mountains and it told him its story. At first the monster knew and understood nothing but learned quickly. People it met were afraid of him, so it avoided them and felt lonely and unhappy. It found a dwelling at the house of a blind old man and a young man with a young girl. It grew fond of them and began to help them. It learned human speech and emotions, history, family relationships and differences between people. Perceiving his physical difference from humans and the absence of family, it began to hate the day it was made. It longed in vain for the love of people, so he sought revenge against humanity, especially his creator. It met a boy on the way to meet him, it threatened him, and the monster killed him. It was about Frankenstein's brother, for whose murder Justina Moritz was eventually punished.

Afterwards, the monster asked Frankenstein to create a woman for him to love and be as happy as the humans. It promised to go with her to the wilderness without people, and its dark passions would leave it with love. Frankenstein promised him that.

Frankenstein went with his friend Clerval to England, where he wanted to make a woman for the monster. But in the end he was afraid of what she would be like, what would happen if she did not want to be with the monster or to go to wilderness, what would their children be like, what if they actually created a threat to humanity? He decided not to make the monster a woman. The monster found out and punished for breaking his promise – it murdered Frankenstein's friend Clerval and the suspect in the murder was Frankenstein, but the court cleared him, and he returned to Geneva.

On the day of his wedding, the monster murdered his wife Elizabeth and escaped. Frankenstein began to chase the monster all the way to northern Russia, where he met Robert Walton's ship and told him his story, and in conclusion asked him to kill the monster if he found it. Then Frankenstein died. After Frankenstein's death, Walton saw a monster bent over his corpse in the cabin. It told Walton that that its life, too, was coming to an end and begged Frankenstein's forgiveness. It described the rest of its story to Walton and introduced him to its thoughts and feelings.

After Clerval's death, the monster returned to Switzerland. It pitied Frankenstein but decided to complete its evil revenge. Once its heart was full of virtue and love and it longed for the friendship of people, but because it was still only spurned by them, crime finally took over it. The monster was aware that it had led his creator to ruin and it hated him, but the monster itself felt horrors even greater. But now it only wants its death so that it will not commit any more crimes. So, it abandons ship and kills and burns itself at the northernmost point of the Earth, so that none of its remains can create a similar being. Its ashes will be scattered by the wind and swallowed by the sea. Then it said goodbye to Walton, jumped up on the ice floe and got lost in the darkness. ⁷

3.2 Conception of monster in Frankenstein

Frankenstein's monster is an artificial human, a product of human skill, namely his creator Victor Frankenstein. Today we could also call him a robot (the word "robot" was first used by the Czech writer Karel Čapek in his 1920 science-fiction drama R.U.R.). Despite the fact that he was physically not quite human-like (he was about 3 meters tall, unsightly, equipped with great physical strength), he moved like a human and was equipped with intelligence and the ability to learn. Today's terminology suggests that it was a humanoid robot of some kind. Unlike him, however, Frankenstein's monster was equipped with human emotions. This fundamentally distinguishes the monster from all products of so-called human intelligence and counts it among the level of human, thus above the level of animals. These also have the ability to convey and accept emotions and even learn some simple tasks, but they do not reach the same intelligence as humans do. (The main distinction between humans and animal is that humans possess the faculty of language).

The mental and emotional development of Frankenstein's monster can be compared to the development of a child, although at a much-accelerated time. At first, he can practically do nothing and knows nothing, but he learns very quickly and acquires everything he needs. At first, it learns how to meet their basic needs (food, drink, heat, etc.), then expands its knowledge and develops mentally and emotionally. It learns to understand human speech, he can read, he can educate himself, and he will gain the ability of critical thinking. From books and observation of people he also recognizes the family and social rules of the functioning of human society, as well as human characteristics (good and bad), feelings and emotions. Therefore, just as humans the

monster wants to be social being and desire and longs for interaction with other "equal" beings, for their friendship and love and offers them the same. But his unsightliness makes people react dismissive of him, even though Frankenstein's monster helps them (for example, he brings wood, saves a drowning girl). Repeatedly and in vain, he tries to establish a relationship with people. The monster considers people's behavior unfair to him, compares himself to them all the time, and realizes that, unlike them, it is actually unjustly condemned to a life without reciprocated friendship and love. This awakens the monster's negative emotions and bad qualities, especially violence and revenge. Logically, this evil is directed first of all at the only person the monster has known, and who is responsible for its creation and for being lonely and unhappy, namely his creator, Victor Frankenstein. He seizes the opportunity of accidental meeting with Frankenstein's younger brother who again strongly disapproves of his attempt to form a friendship, strangling him in a disproportionate reaction, and then arranging the murder so that an innocent girl (Justina Moritz) is eventually convicted. He still tries to hold his creator responsible for his work, and asks him to create a life partner to satisfy his desire for love so that he can be happy; he even promises to go with her into the wilderness so that they will not meet people. Despite the original promise, Victor Frankenstein would not live up to it after all. This awakens the monster's dark passions again, and he takes revenge on his creator's loved ones when he murders both Clerval and Frankenstein's wife, Elizabeth. Yet after Frankenstein dies, weary and exhausted after the final pursuit, the monster on his deathbed regrets the death of his creator and his sins. He accepts his own lonely fate and chooses to leave the world voluntarily.

At the beginning, the Frankenstein's monster – just as a newborn child – is an "innocent" creature. Viewed philosophically, psychologically and pedagogically, it is an actual representation of the term "tabula rasa" (blank board) by the English empirical philosopher John Locke who stated: "A child's mind is just a kind of blank board (tabula rasa) or blank slate, onto which practical knowledge, experience, feelings, emotions or moral principles are inscribed over time."²⁵ Without arguing against this theory in general and offering other possible views on the issue (i.e. the so-called theory of innate/a priori ideas of the German philosopher Immanuel Kant, or the influence of genetic predispositions), I have to agree with Locke's theory in this matter, because in the case of the creation of the Frankenstein's monster as an artificial and original being, the influence of any a priori ideas and genetic dispositions can be virtually excluded. The

fact that Frankenstein's monster acted badly and took revenge on its creator in the end is the result of how recklessly, badly and selfishly it was treated not only by its creator, but also by the people who met it and actually generated its criminal behavior through their negative attitudes. It cannot be overlooked that the monster's initial motives, emotions and feelings were positive, he only wanted to befriend people and find the positive feelings in them that he offered them and even proved with his actions (using people - for example, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, one of the great philosophers, opened his work *The Social Contract* with famous words "Man is born free, but is everywhere in chains" that refer to freedom. The connection between freedom of choice and morality is central to Rousseau's argument against despotic government. The renunciation of freedom is contrary to human nature and that to renounce freedom in favour of another person's authority is to "deprive one's actions of all morality." ²⁶

Though its creator and the people who met him had treated him badly, and it itself had done evil deeds, he finally found in himself forgiveness for his creator and these people, and humbly and bravely accepted responsibility for its actions, and therefore chose his voluntary ending. This is not to say that all the bad things his creator and people have done to him washes away the monster's guilt for his crimes, of course – the monster, through its knowledge and findings, knew from the very beginning that it was committing evil.

Legally speaking, the monster is guilty of his crimes, but even on this legal level, there are significant mitigating circumstances in his favor. But humanly (and not legally) despite what the monster has done, we certainly understand it, and we have some understanding and forgiveness for his actions – it committed criminal offence for the first time and under independent circumstances, in severe agitation or lack of life experience, under pressure of dependence or submission and under the influence of difficult personal or family circumstances, which were not self-inflicted. ⁸

Victor Frankenstein undoubtedly could not bear the responsibility for his creation. His initial error was already in embarking on such a project alone and in secret. There was no one who could correct any unconsidered flaws in his project, but mainly there was no one who would give his creation, except for Frankenstein, something more than a technical dimension – social, moral, and spiritual dimensions in particular.

Frankenstein's second failure was in overestimating his abilities. He set about creating something as complex as a human being, though he could and should have started with something simpler. Moreover, he had not fulfilled his purpose by creating a monster instead of a human-like creature. Unfortunately, negative reactions of people to his creation, which he was completely unaware of, even if he could and should have been, were also derived from this. Victor Frankenstein's third failure was that, as soon as he created his work, he did not bear the consequences of it, let his monster escape, said nothing to anyone, and had in fact resigned to any further influence on the development of his monster. Another mistake, to say the least, was the ill-considered and then withdrawn promise to create his monster a partner, which was in fact the catalyst for the monster's anger and revenge. Moreover, in this case, as before, Victor Frankenstein did not confide in anyone about his promise or its withdrawal, and thus did not subject himself to the possibility of opposing criticism. In the novel, the change in this promise of his is somewhat abbreviated only to an internal decision. Frankenstein is conscious of his responsibility for the future fate of the human race, without further specification and analysis of the possible risks. Although we may feel pity for Victor Frankenstein for what happened to him, this is actually the result of all of his bad decisions – Aristotle already dealt with '*hamartia*' which is the name for the mistake that the hero of the tragedy makes, throwing himself, or even those close to him, into misfortune. The mistake is not based on the hero's wickedness, but rather an act of ignorance, that is, by mistake.⁹ which perfectly describes Frankenstein's situation. Even though Victor Frankenstein appears to be more of a victim compared to his monster, he is morally more to blame for all that has happened than his monster. He was selfish in putting his scientific ego first and completely unaware of the consequences of his scientific experiment.

Results of scientific development can still be exploited today, despite the fact that humanity has become more experienced by some two centuries since the novel Frankenstein was written. Although today the results of scientific development are in fact, without any exceptions, a work that is purely collective and subjected not only to an internal scientific critical opponent, but also to an examination of all its social, philosophical, and legal implications, human failure cannot be ruled out; unlike Frankenstein, however, this possibility is very limited. On the other hand, however, the political and religious divisions of the contemporary world continue to exist, and,

unfortunately, the threat of misuse of scientific progress for political or religious purposes remains associated with these divisions. We have no other choice than to hope that humanity will recognize its global responsibility for its destiny.

In the end, I will mention the analogy between Frankenstein and Prometheus, to which the book's subtitle refers. I believe that this analogy is somewhat "lame". As is well known, Prometheus, according to Greek mythology, is the creator of the human race. But it is not true literally, because his lifeless statues of clay and water were breathed life into by the goddess Pallas Athena. Thus, responsibility for the creation of humans cannot be attributed solely to either Prometheus, or the deity herself. Other differences are the incentives that led Prometheus to create man/humans. These in fact – unlike Victor Frankenstein's selfish scientific ambitions – were purely altruistic – it was simply that Prometheus was not only lonely in the world, but he also wanted companions in the world to make the world thrive. Another crucial difference is that Prometheus taught his people everything they needed to live. Last but not least, the responsible to protective behavior of Prometheus towards his creation, namely the human race, is different. It was actually Prometheus, who preferred his creation (the human race) over the deity, when he determined that people would sacrifice only fat and bones to the gods while keeping the flesh. And it was him again who brought fire to the human race so that it could keep warm and cook its food, after the Lord of the Gods, Zeus, had taken fire from the people.

4. Depiction of the monster in Dracula

4.1 Summary of Dracula

The novel is written chronologically in the form of entries from the diaries of the main characters, letters between them, and newspaper articles.

The first four chapters are diary entries by Jonathan Harker, a young paralegal from a London law firm, from his trip to Transylvania, Romania, to see a client who wants to buy property in England – Count Dracula. Local people discouraged him from his journey, hearing words like "satan" from them, "hell", "vampire" and "werewolf". In the castle he met Count Dracula, and old man dressed all in black, with a pale face and large canines. There were many oddities in the castle – no servants, no mirrors, Harker always

ate alone (without Count Dracula), could not even get out of the castle after a time, or saw Dracula climb out of his room window after midnight and climb down the outside wall. In the castle chapel he saw the dead Count Dracula lying in a box of dirt, and later, he saw him lying there again, but much younger and his lips covered with blood. Later, the gypsies removed the crates.

From Chapter 5, the story moves to England. Mina Murray, Harker's fiancée, was with her friend, Lucy Westenra in Whitby (a port town in the northeast of England). Lucy tells Mina about her upcoming wedding to Arthur Holmwood, who is known to both Dr. Seward and Quincy Morris. Mina is sad not only because she has not heard from Harker in a month, but also because of Lucy, who suffers from somnambulism (= sleepwalking; sleep disorder associated with waking up and night and walking).

One night they both watched the strange behavior of one toward the harbor of an approaching ship. Except for the dead captain, strapped with a cross at the helm of the ship, there was no one else on board. The log showed that it was a ship sailing from Varna to Whitby, carrying crates of dirt. The logbook described the mysterious loss of the crew, as well as the discovery of a tall black man dwelling in crates.

One night Mina saw Lucy and a long, black figure with a pale face and red glowing eyes, bent over her outside. She later saw that figure again. She also noticed small bloody wounds on Lucy's neck.

Mina received word from Harker that he had been ill and was in a hospital in Budapest. Attached to the letter was a letter from a nun telling her that Harker was being treated for severe meningitis and must have suffered a very severe concussion because he was raving about terrible things – wolves, blood, demons, and ghosts. Mina came to see him, refused his offer to read his diary from Transylvania; then they had a wedding in Budapest.

Dr. Seward describes a special case of his patient Renfield eating flies, spiders, and birds. One evening he fled to the adjoining chapel, where he watched the great bat intently; the escape to the chapel was repeated. His seizures came at noon and sunset.

Lucy told Mina that she was better, no longer suffering from somnambulism, and would be marrying Arthur Holmwood. Later, though, her nightmares returned. At Dr. Seward's request, Professor Van Helsing of Amsterdam examined it. He had not found

any disease, or anemia, though Lucy had evidently lost some blood. Despite Lucy's repeated transfusions, and at Van Helsing's behest, all of her wounds and room were covered with garlic and a wreath of garlic flowers, Lucy eventually died.

Harker once saw a tall, thin man with an eagle nose, black beard, and large white pointed teeth while walking with Mina in London. It was Dracula, but as if he became younger. Mina told Van Helsing of the encounter and gave him the diary of her husband in Transylvania. Van Helsing told her that what had happened to her husband was not a dream, but a reality.

Van Helsing told Dr. Seward that Lucy had been a vampire, and that he would prove it to him. They went to the cemetery and night, opened Lucy's coffin, it was empty. By the next afternoon, though, Lucy laid in it, more beautiful than ever, rosy cheeks, red lips – as if alive. Van Helsing explained to Dr. Seward that it was a double life, that when she was unconscious, she was bitten by a vampire, and because she died unconscious, she is undead. He would have to kill her in her sleep for her own good, cut off her head, fill her mouth with garlic, and put a stake through her body. Drawing on the experience of generations, he knows that the undead cannot die, but must for centuries increase their numbers and increase the horrors of this World. Anyone who perishes as they prey of the undead becomes the undead himself, and so the circle keeps expanding.

He asked Arthur Holmwood and Quincy Morris for help. They drove a stake into Lucy's heart, and her spectre began to writhe, eventually becoming still and the Lucy they really knew. Then they cut off her head, clogged her mouth with garlic, closed and sealed the coffin, locked the tomb, and left. Van Helsing told them that they had a much tougher task ahead of them – finding the source of all this evil.

Van Helsing told other friends that the existence of vampires was real. A vampire can have the strength of up to 20 men, all the dead listen to it, it can command some animals, like rats, bats or wolves, it can grow and shrink, disappear or come according to its needs, transform itself into a wolf or bat or into a fog. Destroying who they want is very hard, based on tradition and superstition. A vampire is everywhere there is a human. He lives as long as he has blood, therefore he does not eat if he has enough blood, and he may even become younger. He sees in the dark, lives only until dawn, weakest from noon to sunset. He loses his power in the presence of garlic or crosses.

The Harkers discovered that the house purchased by Dracula was adjacent to Dr. Seward's. In the chapel of this neighbouring house, the men found 29 crates.

When the men went to the house next door, Mina heard a mixture of strange sounds coming from Renfield's room. Then she fell asleep, but she had a weird dream. She was surrounded by a mist that thickened, entered the room through the clutches of a door, formed a column of smoke with a red eye at the top. Two red eyes looked at her from the mist. She must have fainted, but not before she could see the white-faced rage that bent over her from the mist. She felt weak and languid.

Harker found out that the removal company had taken several crates to an abandoned house in Piccadilly; an old man, thin, white-bearded yet impossibly strong, helped load and unload them – Dracula, for sure.

In the night before the men went to the house in Piccadilly, they saw Mina kneeling by the bed, Dracula beside her and Mina drinking blood from a wound on his chest. Dracula came in, they all faced him with the Hosts in their hands, and he ran away. They went back to Mina, who told them under hypnosis that Dracula was on a sailboat. So, they assumed that he had left London by boat with the one missing crate. They found out which boat he had taken and set off for his mansion faster by land. Van Helsing found a tombstone marked "Dracula" in the castle chapel, inserted a Host to banish the undead from him forever. Returning to Mina, he saw a band of horseman – gypsies – approaching with a large crate being chased by two groups of riders of two – the other men of their group. There was a fight with the gypsies, Harker jumped on their wagon and threw the crate to the ground. Dracula laid in it, deathly pale, with a hateful look. Harker and Morris' knives pierced his heart, his body crumbled to dust and vanished. However, Morris died in the fight.

After 7 years, Mina and Harker are pleased that their son's birthday is the same day that Morris, after whom he is named Quincy, died. This year they all went to Transylvania, all traces of their struggle at the time have disappeared, only the castle is still standing there.¹¹

4.2 Historical template of Count Dracula's character

The template of the main character for Stoker, who reportedly had never been to Romania, was the real historical figure of Vlad III. (1431 to about 1476 or 1477). Despite

being born in Sighisoara in today's Rumanian part of the historic region of Transylvania, he was a prince of a neighboring region of Wallachia. The nickname "Dracul", which he had after his father, means not only "dragon" but also "devil". The nickname "Tepes" (Romanian for "The Impaler") was allegedly acquired after his death according to his favorite method of execution by hitting a stake. During his lifetime he fought several wars with Turks and reportedly died fighting them. ¹²

Stoker was inspired by literary, folklore and mythological sources. The literary ones were undoubtedly John Polidori's 1819 book *The Vampyre* and the Sheridan LeFanu 1872's novella *Carmilla*. The latter ones were numerous publications on the vampire theme, mainly based on Balkan, Slavic or Greek folklore and legends. All this Stoker combined into a fashionable figure of Gothic and truly existing medieval nobleman from (somewhat exotic to Western Europe) Transylvania – Vlad III. – to whom Stoker attributed the role of vampire. He thus established the immortality of Prince Vlad III., though different than vampire's. Count Dracula is until now a truly "immortal" legend and the castle associated with this legend in the village of Bran (about 30 kilometers south of Braşov) is therefore visited by many tourists. This is despite the fact that Bran Castle does not only answer to the place where Bram Stoker put it into his novel, but it was not the actual residence of Prince Vlad III. That was the Poenari Castle, located several tens of kilometers away, but it is today a difficult ruin to reach and therefore uninteresting for tourists.

4.3 Conception of monster in *Dracula*

Count Dracula is described in the story as a sort of bipolar person – as a person (by day) and for another as a vampire (by night); later on, he appears essentially as a vampire. As a human, he has an attractive appearance (tall, slim build, pale face, eagle profile) as well as attractive qualities and abilities (he is rich, educated, intelligent). As a vampire, however, he is a true monster and the embodiment of evil that goes cruelly and ruthlessly towards its purpose. In order to preserve his vampire existence, he has to keep looking for new and new people to suck blood of and thus create new vampires. These human victims are then mentally controlled by him, he imposes his will on them, and they depend on him. It is a form of psychological manipulation or even psychological violence. Although in the novel *Dracula* (unlike some other vampire works), Count Dracula's vampire character is not directly linked to sexuality, certain elements or

indications of his “sexual predation” can still be found (see Lucy’s night trip to the Abbey in Whitby and her encounter on a bench with a mysterious figure with a pale face and red-glowing eyes, or the scene where Dracula is hugging Mina, who is sucking blood from his chest). Count Dracula puts all the aforementioned positives of his human personality at the service of his second (vampire), worse self. He uses his wealth to spread his territory (see the purchase of real estate in England), He also puts his intellect fully at the service of evil, using it (or rather abusing it) not only for the deliberate and planned expansion of his vampire empire, but also to make it harder or more difficult for his potential enemies and pursuers to do their work, or to harm them (see the transfer from Transylvania to England, the division of the crates of soil he badly needs into several parts, or his choice of Lucy and Mina from among his pursuers as his victims, the control of Dr. Seward’s patient Mr. Renfield etc.).

As a result, despite Dracula’s seemingly attractive human form (by day), he is in fact just a real evil monster for whom we can feel no sympathy or mercy. It thus fully meets the definition of a monster – it is a “human” monster, a creature evil, cruel, egoistically pursuing only the fulfilment of its goal. The only option is to fight and destroy it. Thanks to its supernatural properties and abilities (it is gifted with the power of about 20 people, can see at night, is able to control some animals or turn into them, can also reincarnate in fog etc.), limited possibilities to defend against it and how to destroy it (only the cross, garlic, the Host, piercing of the heart and decapitation etc.), but also wealth and intellect, the fight against this monster is very difficult and requires considerable knowledge, courage, commitment and perseverance, as well as (unfortunately) sacrifice. In this fight, therefore, only people who are endowed with such qualities and resolve can and will win, which a group of friends led by Professor Van Helsing undoubtedly is.

5. Comparison of monster depictions in both works

Comparing monsters in both works can be done from multiple perspectives. Most of the differences or, on the contrary, common features, arise from the concept of each of the monsters described above. Nevertheless, in this chapter, I will emphasize the essential ones.

From the point of view of creation, Frankenstein's monster is a man-made monster, whereas Dracula is a naturally created monster, so a "human", albeit in a specific vampire mutation.

From the point of view of their comparison to human, it is obvious that Frankenstein's monster is merely a failed copy of him and bears little resemblance to human. In the case of Dracula, on the other hand, in its human (daily) form, the difference from human is not very noticeable. Some of its so-called vampire differences, such as pallor or larger canines, are not very significant from this perspective. In its vampire (nocturnal) form, the difference from human is much more visible (e.g. red-flaming eyes, significantly enlarged canines, etc.). Of course, visible, and typically supernatural abilities such as being transformed into some animals or fog are not considered in this context.

The failed human form of Frankenstein's monster is the main reason why he is rejected not only by his creator but also by other people, even though the monster himself is very interested in social contact with them, their friendship and love, and offers them the same. It is this rejection on the part of its creator and others that will put Frankenstein's monster on a path of revenge and crime. Dracula, on the other hand, is not in need of social contact with people because of his ordinary human appearance, but does not want love or friendship of people – on the contrary, he merely wants to use them, or rather take advantage of them, for his selfish purpose of controlling them; in order to obtain their blood and thus to maintain his vampire existence; throwing his victims into misfortune at the same time.

Frankenstein's monster was created as an innocent creation, whereas Dracula, in his vampire form, was a criminal from the very beginning. Whereas in the case of Frankenstein's monster we can say that his criminal behavior is only a consequence of how badly his creator and other people he has met treated him, in the case of Dracula it is different: he was a criminal (the time and cause of Dracula's creation as a vampire is not mentioned in the novel), so there are no mitigating circumstances on Dracula's side – unlike Frankenstein's monster – to be found.

Even when it comes to the end of both monsters, the distribution of sympathy is unambiguous. Whereas Dracula fights doggedly to the last moment of his existence and leaves this world without any humility or repentance for his sins, Frankenstein's monster

decides to leave voluntarily without being forced to do so by anyone, but in fact repents for his crimes and forgives even those who are guilty of having mistreated him .

I conclude that although Frankenstein's monster is an artificial creature and not a human one, it is (paradoxically) far more human, moral, and full of positive human emotions than the seemingly human Dracula.

6. The conceptions of vampirism in the work Dracula

6.1 Explanation of terms

To define the concept of vampirism, we must first explain the concept of vampire. Of the many different characteristics or definitions of a vampire, the most apt one seems to me to be this: *“A vampire is a parasitic force or creature, malicious and self-serving by nature, whose ultimate desire is to absorb the life force or to accept the life fluid of a living organism in order to feed its perverted hunger and preserve its supernatural existence forever.”*¹³

A vampire (also undead) is thus a legendary being, a human, who, even when he has died, returns to the world of the living to do them harm, and keeps himself alive by drinking their blood. The vampire is based mainly on the popular beliefs of Balkan and Eastern European countries, where it takes the form of a swollen being with red or dark skin. The idea of the vampire as a thin and pale being is the result of modern 19th century Western European literature, especially the 1816 work of the English writer John Polidori entitled “The Vampyre”. The origin of the word “vampire” is probably Slavic, as evidenced not only by the Czech (and Slovak) term “vampire” but also by the same or very similar terms in other Slavic languages (Serbian, Polish, Russian, etc.)¹⁴

Vampire is used more often in non-Slavic languages (English, French, German).¹⁴ In Romania, the vampire is called strigoj or strigolaca (male or female); in Italy it is strego. In German it is called Nachtzehrer.²⁰

But what is important is to distinguish the words vampire and vampyre in their meaning of “undead“ from their zoological meanings. In Czech, we also call vampires or vampyres the bats of the leaf-nosed family, such as the long-lingual vampire¹⁵ or the

red vampire (also the great vampire). These bats live in Central and South America and feed on flower nectar, but also on the blood of warm-blooded animals, for which they also have very sharp incisors. ¹⁶

In vampirism we often find ourselves with the expression **revenant**. It means a revived dead body that comes into contact with the living (that is, it comes out of the grave repeatedly). It is derived from the Latin “revanire” (to return) and is mainly used in English and French, whereas it is rarely used in Czech. ¹⁷ There are reasons for the revenant to return (excessive mourning, bad burial, debts, suicide, or murderer, deceased in war), always causing damage, but not always having to suck blood. His posthumous mark is the absence of rigor mortis. ¹⁴

In Old Czech, the vampire was also called “morose”, which suggests that the vampire was actually a nightmare, a phantom that plagues a human at night. ¹³ It probably comes from the Latin ‘morosus’, and originally it had the meaning of a werewolf or vampire, and later of a night phantom that, according to popular tradition, tormented people in their sleep and had an evil and bewitching look under their fused eyebrows; its female equivalent was called **moth**. ¹⁸ It was about a human soul that left the body at night, wandering the countryside, tormenting people, and animals. Not only did it look like an ugly human, but sometimes it took the form of a cat, dog, or a snake; in later tradition, it also took the form of steam, flame, or smoke. The victims were mostly women. For the defense served the sanctified objects. ¹⁹ The word “plague“ is associated with the term “death“ in most Indo-European languages. ¹⁸

The term werewolf is also associated with vampirism. This is a human, who in the transition to the world of the dead, transforms into a wolf and harms people; it is therefore a transformation of the vampire. It arises similarly to vampire, i.e. a curse, specific circumstances of birth, bite by another werewolf, etc. The word “lycanthrope”, which originates in Greek, is sometimes used as a synonym. ²⁴

One of the characters in Dracula was also the inspiration for the title of the psychological illness, which is related to vampirism – it is so-called Renfield syndrome, or clinical vampirism. The disease, related to schizophrenia, manifests itself in an uncontrollable appetite for human blood, may be congenital or acquired by some trauma. Patients are mostly men who believe that blood will give them strength; drinking blood can often be associated with sexual pleasure. The disease has several phases – in the first

patient drinks his own blood; in the next phase he tastes the animal blood or eats their raw meat, and in the third phase the patient is already sucking the blood of strangers and for this purpose he is even able to commit a crime (breaking into a blood bank, killing etc.). Especially at this last phase it may already be a mental disorder in the true sense of the word.²⁷

From the above mentioned definitions of vampire and vampyre (not in their zoological significance), we can define vampirism as a collection of popular superstitions and myths about supernatural beings (vampyres or vampires) who, even when they have died, return to the living world to do harm and keep themselves alive by drinking blood most often to other people.

6.2. Vampires, their characteristics, and protection from them

Vampire most often became a person who died in an “unclean“ matter, such as a suicide, an executed criminal, a person who died a violent death or at a certain hour or day, a person who was not baptized or buried without the appropriate ceremony or with a defect in the ceremony, a witch’s child etc.¹⁴ New vampire can also be created by sucking the blood out of another vampire, drinking its blood, but also by sexual reproduction with a human (the so-called dhampir)¹⁴

The characteristics and behavior of vampires vary. They usually work only at night (from sunset to sunrise) when they scare people and drink their blood (but sometimes they also drink the blood of animals); they sleep in coffins during the day. Physically, they are much stronger than people and also have better senses than people, especially sight (seeing at night). Some vampires fly in the bat form or levitate. Vampires do not show up in the mirror. They can turn into some animals (wolf, rats) or fog. They can enter people’s dreams. A vampire is long-lived or even does not die; it is difficult to destroy. Ways to kill him are usually methods to keep him from leaving the grave. The methods are in particular the stabbing of the body (heart) with a stake, the burning of the dead body, the decapitation, the burial of the grave by stones, the wild rose on the grave, garlic (preventing from movement), religious symbols as the cross, the Host, holy water or sanctified weapons.¹⁴

6.3. Vampires and their representation in art

The phenomenon of vampirism is long-lived, and its traces can be already found in Greek mythology. Lamia, one of the monsters of the underworld realm of the dead ruled by the god Hades, went out into the human world to steal children from mothers, killed them, and drank their blood (the equivalent of Slavic noonday witch). She also seduced man and sucked their blood (she was very beautiful). Perhaps that was why she had become the mistress of the ruler of the gods, Zeus, whose wife (the goddess Hera) had turned her into a snake as punishment. ¹⁹

Greek mythology also includes Empúsa – another of the monsters of Hades’ underworld empire with one bronze leg and one donkey leg. At night she visited the human world, haunted them, fed on human flesh (and corpses). Even she, in the form of a beautiful girl, seduced men and sucked their blood. ²⁰

Romanticism, in particular, was a vampire renaissance. Within it was created a genre called the “Gothic novel“, whose stories usually take place in medieval castles, often dilapidated and haunted, usually at night, all of which allowed the story to incorporate a gloomy atmosphere with supernatural elements. The vampire theme fits perfectly into this framework. The Gothic novel can thus be considered a precursor of horror.

The vampire theme was for example the subject of Johann Wolfgang Goethe’s poem “The Bride of Corinth“ (1797). The famous English poet lord George Gordon Byron wrote the poem “Giaour” in 1813, in which, among other things, a vampire eats his female relatives, including his daughter. John William Polidori wrote “The Vampire” in 1816. Its main character, Lord Ruthven, became a prototype of the modern vampire, inspired by many other writers of the vampire genre. ²¹ Russian late romantic writer Alexey Konstantinovich Tolstoy wrote the works “The Vurdulak’s Family“ (1839) or “The Vampire“ (1841) ²² Irish writer Sheridan Le Fanu wrote the cult book “Carmilla“ in 1872. It is the story of a young woman named Laura and her lesbian love for the beautiful, aristocratic vampire, Carmilla, which ends with Carmilla’s death by driving a stake through her heart and decapitating her. Among the current authors, the American horror and fantasy writer Anne Rice should be mentioned. She wrote several vampire chronicles (i.e. Interview with the Vampire – 1976, The Vampire Lestat – 1985, The Queen of the Damned – 1988, The Tale of the Body Thief – 1992, Memnoch the Devil – 1995, The Vampire Armand – 1998, Merrich – 2000, Blood and Gold – 2001,

Blackwood Farm – 2002, Blood Canticle – 2003, Prince Lestat – 2014, Blood Communion: A Tale of Prince Lestat – 2018, and others) ²³

6.4 Vampirism in Bram Stoker's Dracula

The origin of Count Dracula's vampirism is not explained in the novel, so we can only speculate on it. Based on the historical template of this character (Prince Vlad III. Tepes), from the region of origin (generally the Balkans) as well as from the fact that this historical template is likely to have died violently in the battle with the Turks, offers as the cause of the vampire image of Count Dracula this very often inferred method of this unnatural death in the region.

Count Dracula is depicted as a typical Gothic hero – an aristocrat based in a medieval castle, located in a deserted place in the mountains in the somewhat exotic Romanian Transylvania. Unlike the original Slavic and Balkan traditions, however, he already looks like a typical product of Romanticism – that is, slim, tall, with pale skin, eagle profile, probably even handsome. Count Dracula does not miss other typical features and characteristics of vampires that Jonathan Harker gradually discovers, but at first he cannot rationally explain, such as: enlarged incisors, not displaying his figure in the mirror, not consuming human food, a disproportionate reaction to his blood when he cuts himself shaving, an active life at night, sleeping in a coffin, or in a crate with soil etc.

Unlike the literary works that apparently inspired Stoker's novel Dracula (*The Vampyre* by J. Polidori, and especially *Carmilla* by *Sheridan de Fazu*, his main vampire character is not directly associated with sexual activity. The subject of sexuality appears in Stoker's novel in only a few hints, most notably in the scene where Jonathan Harker is seduced by three beautiful female vampires in his dream. For vampirism in art, the association of sexuality with vampires, or rather only with female vampires, where beautiful female vampires seduce men (or even women – see the novel *Carmilla*), is rather typical and has its roots in antiquity (see also *Lamia* or *Empusa*).

As the story progresses, there are other, undoubtedly supernatural qualities and abilities in the person of Count Dracula's vampire that are typical of vampires, even according to Slavic and Balkan legends. It is typical for vampires (vampyres) to suck blood from other people, associated with the typical "revenant" act of laying down and returning to the grave (it does not change the fact that in the novel Count Dracula does

not return directly to his coffin or tomb, but only to the crate of “native“ soil), the ability to shape-shift into some animals (especially in bat or wolf) or even to control them, the ability to turn into fog and walk through doors or other crevices, night vision (described as “red-flaming eyes“), the gift of enormous physical strength, and last but not least, the essential ability to appear to people in dreams and control them in order to satisfy their need to drink their blood.

As for the diseases associated with vampirism, the novel tells us about anemia (Lucy Holwood), but especially in the person of patient Renfield, one of the first cases of mental illness ever described, which still bears his name.

It is only with the help of the knowledge of old legends and myths brought to the story by the character of Professor Van Helsing that we learn about the ways of protection, fighting and killing a vampire. These are not only generally known methods of defense against vampires, such as garlic, the (Christian) cross or (sanctified) Host, but also a number of other, less-known ways to finally eliminate them, such as the need to pierce their hearts or cut their heads off.

7. Summary

In my work, I have dealt with the Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* and Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*, their content, the main ideas, and the concepts of the monster in them. I introduced the two authors of these works as well as the historical template of the title hero of the novel “Dracula“.

I also covered the subject of vampirism, its basic concepts, content, history, and reflection in art. I then related the subject to Bram Stoker’s novel *Dracula*.

8. Anotation

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Název práce:	Zobrazení monstra v díle Brama Stokera <i>Drákula</i> v porovnání s dílem Mary Shelleyové <i>Frankenstein</i>
Název práce v angličtině:	The depiction of the monster in Bram Stoker's <i>Dracula</i> in comparison with Mary Shelley's <i>Frankenstein</i>
Anotace práce:	Bakalářská práce se zabývá zobrazením monster v dílech <i>Drákula</i> a <i>Frankenstein</i> a vysvětlením pojmů typů vampír, revenant či mora. Cílem této práce je nejen porovnat zobrazení monster v obou zmíněných dílech, ale i vysvětlení běžného konceptu vampirismu, jeho obsahu, historie či zobrazení v umění.

Klíčová slova v angličtině:	Dracula, Frankenstein, vampire, vampirism, comparison, monster, depiction of monster, conception
Anotace v angličtině:	The bachelor thesis deals with the depiction of monsters in Dracula and Frankenstein and the explanation of the terms like vampires, revenant or mora. The aim of this work is not only to compare the depiction of monsters in both mentioned works, but also to explain the common concept of vampirism, its content, history, or depiction in art.
Rozsah práce:	31
Jazyk práce:	angličtina

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