TRANSYLVANIA AND THE BALKANS AS MULTIETHNIC REGIONS IN THE WORKS OF BRAM STOKER

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Dissimilium infida societas [1]

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0. In the English-speaking world, the late Gothic novel *Dracula,* by the Anglo-Irish writer Bram Stoker (Dublin 1847 - London 1912) is considered a classic of world literature, or in any case a best-seller. But elsewhere, as in Italy for example, opinions on the content of this work and its artistic qualities continue to differ. For these reasons, it would be rash to define it, as one of its most reliable critics [Leatherdale 1985: 11-12] warns, «the most potent literary myth of the twentieth century». If, in fact, this definition is not altogether true or not at all true for many, it is undoubtedly true that «we all know Dracula», since an unending series of films, produced for the most part in the United States, shows that «in the United States especially, Dracula has been one constant in the volatile twentieth century» [Auerbach 1995: 1, 112]. To uphold this assertion it can be recalled that Mel Brooks has just (1996) directed a new, satirical version of *Dracula*. It is more than evident to all that in reality this leitmotif, although it originated in Europe at the end of the 19th century, has now become a product of and a way of dealing with the horrible that is typically American. This has authorised certain authors, under the protection of the international position of the English language, to disdain as «obscure» [McNally and Florescu 1995: IX] European historical and philological essays on Dracula, and at the same time to use their conclusions without feeling obliged to acknowledge them.

1. Thus, when one is about to introduce a subject connected with *topoi* such as Dracula, which is timeless, but marked by a multiform and uncertain cultural status, the first obstacle to overcome is the quality of the evidence to be used. To demonstrate on a solid basis that the coupling of the names Dracula and Transylvania is a widespread commonplace since now the mention of one immediately brings to mind the other, 'strong' examples must be employed, but more often than not these are just as poor as the 'weak' ones. This is precisely the case in an article entitled *In Darkest Transylvania* [Lukacs 1982] which appears to have provoked a certain sensation in the United States in 1982, and which is considered to have had certain political consequences as well; the entire event, with comments and replies, was later edited by Golea [1988] in whose responsibility I place my trust. Dealing with Transylvania and the region's interethnic conflicts, both of these authors (the former of Hungarian, the latter of Romanian descent) show such total anti-Romanian and anti-Hungarian bias respectively and such a lack of historical instruments in presenting and discussing their positions, which are rife with chauvinism, that to cite them would bring discredit on the person doing so. However, the fact is that Lukacs' article (reproposed by Golea) appears to have been used by members of the United States Congress in dealing with the problem of «the non-observance of the human rights

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[1] Motto on the coat of arms of a 16th-century Venetian printer, depicting a cat with a mouse in its mouth.

of the Hungarian ethnic minority [in Romania]», which in turn was connected with the more immediate issue of the renewal of loans to the Ceau_escu regime in Romania. The beginning of Lukacs' article represents the real introduction to our work herein. I reproduce it here, fully aware of the sense of situational inadequacy the universally known commonplace may give rise to in the European reader:

> When I tell my American friends that I traveled in Transylvania, their response is predictable, automatic, universal: "Dracula!" with a grin.[2]

Besides the coupled arguments announced at the beginning of this article, that is to say, the cliché Transylvania and Dracula, also pertinent to our argument is the idea of travelling, or rather the direct experience to be gathered from travel. I had already noted this [Lőrinczi 1992: 27-28] and have found further proof of it [Fracassi 1993; Giovannini 1994; the 'congress' on Dracula organised in Romania in 1995] that on the one hand the "Transylvania of Dracula" originates, exists and survives in that it arises from a travel literature; on the other hand, as a consequence of this premise, it is narratively based on introductory formulas of the kind «I have just returned from Romania/Transylvania...», «we have taken many trips...» [McNally and Florescu 1995: IX], and so on, the probative function of which is to confer rationality on an object that is far from rational (and which was not created to be rational). Even in the passage quoted above we are dealing with a trip; not a trip of initiation, a first time (the only one taking a trip of this kind is Harker, one of the characters in *Dracula*), but a trip which, if narrated in this context, has the function of confirming expectancies and therefore reinforcing the commonplace.

On a more general plane, the latter is a very well-known and oft-studied phenomenon. Since the tradition of the *grand tour* became consolidated in the 18th century [Brilli 1995], travellers in the centuries since then have chosen the predominating scenic and cultural attractions, which have now become tourist commonplaces [Fusco 1982]. The standardisation induced by the modern tourist industry has further parched and schematised these commonplaces. In the instructive travels of the 18th century, Pompeii and Herculaneum, with their threatening backdrop of Vesuvius, as well as Paestum with its ruins, permeated with the memories of the classic, sweet-smelling rose gardens, were obligatory destinations: «on y cherchait l'antique» [Roudaut 1990: 633/2].

In the first half of the 19th century, when the Mediterranean areas of the Ottoman Empire became more permeable and politically more desirable, Greece came into fashion, not only ancient Greece, but also the modern, Levantine and polyglot country. Moreover, in the 18th and 19th centuries, the Greek, together with the Turk, became the typical representative of the Eastern and Balkan worlds. Travellers, as historians tell us, saw Greeks and Turks everywhere, if only on the basis of their religious faiths. Therefore, even for Voltaire (*Histoire de Charles XII*, 1731), the Moldavian prince Dimitrie Cantemir (1673-1723) was a Greek; later, in Berlin, the dark-haired student Mihail Kog_lniceanu, the future great historian (1817-1891), was also taken for a Greek. Even a neo-classic spirit such as the English antiquarian Thomas Hope (1769-1831), perhaps better known as the patron of the Danish sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen, used this kaleidoscopic Mediterranean-Balkan world as the setting for an exuberant picaresque

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[2] I wish to thank the Bologna Center of the Johns Hopkins University, who were so kind as to send me a photocopy of the text that appeared in the periodical *The New Republic*. I was thus able to see that the map used to show Transylvania is, alas, marked by a... bat!

novel of great success at the time, which was even appreciated by Byron: *Anastasius, or, Memoirs of a Greek* (1819) [L_z_rescu 1986; Mulas 1991-1992].

2. The multiethnic composition of the Balkans not only seduced and exalted the romantic souls of the 19th century, but also marked the beginning, in the very same period, of Balkan studies and research, which was eminently comparative. To exemplify, starting from the studies of the Slovene Kopitar (1829) the concept of "Balkan linguistic league" (*Sprachbund*) slowly began to take form and became concrete. The concept is based on important phenomena of typological and lexical concordance in languages geographically close to one another but genetically different (as, for example, in Romanian, Bulgarian/Macedonian, Greek and Albanian) [Banfi 1985]. These phenomena are accompanied by widespread multilingualism, both collective and individual, which further articulates and stratifies the single *tesserae* of the ethnic-linguistic complex and leads to a distinction between mother and scholastic tongue and official/state language, or between mother tongue (as the first language) and the scholastic/official language (as a second language).

This alone would suffice to argue that *Balkanness* is more a cultural than a geographic or strictly political concept. Since its primary physical referent is the clearly delimited Balkan Peninsula - although in certain ways this leaves out 'classical' Greece - it is on the other hand difficult and problematic to identify its ultimate referent and trace its northern and continental boundary. In reality, the Danube, considered the historical *limes*, is more often than not a bridge rather than a natural confine among the variously 'Balkan' populations. Romanian, for example, which is linguistically a full-fledged member of the Balkan Sprachbund, extends far beyond the Danube (its presence is important and historically decisive in Transylvania, for instance). The Danube is, in fact, as Claudio Magris [1986] demonstrated with a striking image, a watercourse full of history whose banks hold together and at the same time divide an extraordinary mixture of peoples. Thus, as the geographer André Blanc states, «les Balkans sont plus un problčme qu'une région» [1965: 6]. A problem which, depending on the historical moment or viewpoints, assumes different contents.

Although geographically Transylvania is not a part of the Balkans, we can find in it that same peculiar mixture of the ancient (or better still of the archaic), the medieval and the modern associated with the clear, contemporaneous presence of various ethnic groups and idioms, if we consider the testimony of the 19th century collective imagination. Transylvania and the Balkans thus become excellent points from which to observe, in its perpetual dynamism, the 'melting pot' of ethnic groups, the multinational 'mosaic', the ethnic 'conglomerate', or 'tangle', the *bigarrure* of populations [Zinovieff and Thual 1980], the «whirlpool of European races» [Stoker, *Dracula*, III], the «commun habitat de diverses races qui s'y coudoient sans se fusionner» [Jules Verne, *Le château des Carpathes*, 1892, I]. The two literary citations are, however, fictional relapses to recurring statements in the best travel literature from the 18th century onwards. Let us use two authoritative examples. The imperial General Marsigli (Bologna, 1658-1730) already in his time held that

> i Transilvani [sono] una Babilonia di genti per la varietà delle Religioni, e delle Lingue [*the Transylvanians are a Babylonia of peoples owing to the variety of their religions and languages*] [1732: 102].

One hundred years later Marmont, a Marshall of France, defined Transylvania as

> un monument vivant du mouvement que les sičcles ont imprimé aux divers peuples. En aucun lieu on ne trouve des mélanges pareils [1837: 136].

It is the concept of "hybridism/hybridisation" underlying the "mixture", a concept that sometimes outcrops in testimony or definitions and sometimes does not, but which in any case impresses upon it a connotation of anxiety. The words that appear in the quotations given above all indicate an unceasing movement of composition-division-decomposition-recomposition which cannot but raise a certain alarm if for no other reason than the extension of the lands involved and their being frontier lands. Borrowing (as a linguist) a term from the field of geolinguistics, these multiethnic regions appear as a kind of 'grey zones', which is to say transition areas (supposed or real) where, however, transition becomes the norm; where, paradoxically speaking, transition becomes stable. It is for this reason that the polymorphous ethnic situations can also be considered substantially viscous or even absurd and irrational, and which should therefore be submitted to processes of 'regulation'. Thus when they, in their quality as products of history, are brought back to the concept of post-Jacobin, 19th-century nation-state (or ethnostate), which decrees the exactness and naturalness (and therefore the universality) of the equation: state=history=nation=language [Hobsbawm 1991; Michel 1995], they inescapably become explosive. It is in the concreteness of history that this chain of equivalencies reveals itself as ruinous, as has occurred time and time again when it is rigidly applied (either by adoption or by imposition) to regions which had been, up to relatively recent historical times, the cross-roads of migratory flows, owing to geographic conditioning and historical vicissitudes lasting thousands of years. In effect, the eastern part of Europe, and more precisely the eastern-Mediterranean part, should be considered multiethnic in its very essence, a situation for which not even the 'leopard-skin' model is satisfactory. But if confrontation with the other [Jedlowski 1995] is constitutive of the personality of the individual inhabitants of these regions, the confrontation is hardly ever on an equal footing and, in its potentially aggressive manifestations, as has already occurred, is dangerously manoeuvrable. This is another long premise to the analysis of literary re-elaborations of the real multiethnicism announced in the title.

3. In Transylvania, the two most numerous ethnic groups are, as is known, the Romanians and the Hungarians. In 1880 (at the time of Stoker), when Transylvania still belonged to Hungary, it is calculated that the Romanians represented approximately 57% of the population and the Hungarians 26%; in 1948, at the end of the Second World War, the Romanians had risen to 65% and the Hungarians had gone down to just under 26%; in 1992, the date of the latest Romanian census, the Transylvanian Romanians had reached 73,6% and the Hungarians had decreased to 20,7% [Kocsis and Hodosi Kocsis 1994: 69]. It is also important to note that each ethnic group has behind it other territories or states (especially Walachia and Moldavia for the Romanians and Hungary for the Hungarians) in which their fellow-countrymen have a clear majority. The overall ethnic picture in Transylvania is, however, far more complex [Zinovieff and Thual 1980; Lőrinczi 1985-86; Krefeld and Schmitt 1989] and, what is more important, it is generally discontinuous.[3] The ideal subdivisions (but there have also been some dramatically effective subdivisions in our century, between 1940 and 1945) in general create equally multiethnic zones, as if Transylvania were a fractal object.

For well over a century, and thus already in Stoker's time, Transylvania has been, to express it briefly, «l'enjeu et le théâtre de la confrontation roumano-hongroise» [Lacoste 1993: 1504; see also Köpeczi 1988, Nouzille 1993]. So much so that at the most delicate times foreigners

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[3] The population of Transylvania by nationalities according to the 1992 census: Romanians 73,6%, Hungarians 20,7%, Gypsies 2,5%, Germans 1,4%, others 1,8% [Kocsis and Hodosi Kocsis 1994: 69].

are (were) advised to avoid conversations on this subject. An eloquent example of this is to be found in *Rumania* [1944: 7-8]: «The province of Transylvania is disputed by the Rumanians and Hungarians (...) you would be well advised to avoid any discussion». Another starting point for us is to be found on the other side of Europe. In the 19th century, Ireland experienced the rise of particularly acute interethnic tensions, which have had violent and politically complex consequences ever since [see for example the series of writings under the heading *A Northern Change?*, 1994]. In a context of growing attention towards the destinies of the great empires wracked by serious problems, political observers compared Austro-Hungarian Transylvania with British Ireland, as the Irish declaration of solidarity with the Romanian Transylvanians engaged in the struggle for national emancipation bore witness to [Bodea and Seton-Watson 1988, I]. But the comparisons made between Ireland and Transylvania are also of another kind, at one and the same time coarser but more effective. Some of the details in *Dracula* were certainly influenced by Major E. C. Johnson's reports [1885] on his travels, the title of which is to be found among Stoker's preparatory notes [Frayling 1991]. Scornfully, the English officer compares the Walachian peasants in Transylvania to *our friend Paddy*, and more precisely, the simple cottages of the former to the *cabins in the Emerald Isle* of the latter. This brutal oxymoron, which brings together the misery of the "cabins" and the majesty of the emeralds, must certainly have struck Stoker and brought closer together in his mind the images of Transylvania and Ireland. It is worth mentioning that Paddy (the nickname for Patrick, a very common Irish name which is also that of the island's patron saint) is the well-known ironic, collective nickname for the Irish coined by the English.

4. In the light of the political and bibliographic situation briefly outlined thus far, the novel *Dracula* by Stoker, taking into account the self-referential coherency of a fantastic world, records with a certain intensity, as I have documented elsewhere [Lőrinczi 1991, 1992], problems and preoccupations of an inter/multiethnic nature. From Stoker's preparatory notes it can be seen that originally Styria was to have been the country of *the living dead Count Wampyr*, later replaced by *the vampire Count Dracula*, whom we find moved farther eastwards to Transylvania [Bierman 1977; Frayling 1991]. However, once the choice had fallen on Transylvania, Dracula was assigned to a specific ethnic group, since the Transylvanian enchorionym has no ethnic, but only spatial (geographic or political) references. Thus, whoever is Transylvanian can also be implicitly something else. It is perhaps this obligatory implication that causes a true, albeit brief, avalanche of data on the ethnic background against which the narration proceeds and that lends consistency, if only of a narrative kind, to the Anglo-Irish writer's interest in ethnic problems. To define it more precisely, I shall thus return to the question of Stoker's literary re-elaboration of ethnic problems connected, really or fictionally, both with Transylvania and later with the Balkans, a re-elaboration that in Stoker's novels is presented in a highly coherent and organic way.

On the literary plane, the chronological order in which Stoker develops these themes is marked by two dates: 1897 (for *Dracula*, partially set in Transylvania) and 1909 (for *The Lady of the Shroud*, set in the Balkans). This sequence leads to the supposition of a maturation of the knowledge with which Stoker organised the ethnic background of his characters. But, more than a maturation, there takes place an elucidation and an expansion of the ethnic questions, which go hand in hand with an inversion of the fictional characteristics of the two novels. Let us first consider these structural characteristics, beginning with the little-known plot of *The Lady*.

A wealthy British heir, Rupert, becomes the largest landowner, which is to say the leading economic power, of a small Balkan state known as the *Land of Blue Mountains*. Once installed in his fabulous and ultra-modern castle overlooking the bay, Rupert begins to receive nocturnal visits from a mysterious white lady who always appears in wet clothing and disappears at midnight, or when the cock crows. He falls in love and, on following her, discovers that she is not a ghost and much less a vampire, but Princess Teuta, an heiress whom the nobility of the state had kept hidden so that she would be believed dead. The young people fall in love and marry. The Turks, who wish to gain possession of the small state, kidnap the lady who represents it so that the Sultan can succeed in his political aims through a marriage alliance; but the princess is freed by her husband and a group of patriots.

The novel *Dracula* belongs to the fantastic-supernatural (or marvellous, in Todorov's [1977] terminology) genre, in which the effective and anxiety-causing supernatural (the non-dead, metamorphosis and so on) breaks into and blends with a realistic and everyday background that can be identified with the reality we know (London, Whitby and so on). At the end, the evil, alien - in a word disturbing - element is destroyed or chased away by the 'normal' world. Conversely, *The Lady* contains falsely supernatural components, only *étranges* [Todorov cit.], which find a natural, albeit unlikely, explanation, as for example the detail of the heroine who night after night appears in inexplicably and unjustifiably soaking wet garments; elements of this kind are placed against a falsely realistic geographic and human background (a non-existent country the real model of which is however recognisable) where, what is more, everything takes place with the psychological flatness of a fable. From this come critics' incredulity and annoyance in speaking of *The Lady* and their difficulty in defining it adequately (see below). To sum up, let us venture a paradoxical and provisional definition: *Dracula* is a realistic magic fable, while *The Lady* is an unbelievable realistic novel.

Simile by inversion sets up intertextual ties between *Dracula* and *The Lady* over the entire narrative span of both. Without giving a complete list of details, we must keep in mind that the ship carrying Dracula closed in a crate can be interpreted as the death ship of a nobleman, even though in Dracula the characteristic of coffin-ship is never indicated as such, but simply implied. On the other hand, in *The Lady of the Shroud* there is the description of a boat in the form of a coffin, which actually is a floating coffin containing a lady wrapped in a shroud. While the man Dracula lies in his crate, the lady is strangely standing (perhaps because, among other things, Dracula's ship is large while the lady's boat is small); the opposition here is between horizontal and vertical. And, if Dracula is a real, awesome Transylvanian vampire who challenges the world, the lady of the shroud, contrary to the initial, incomprehensible belief of the hero, who despite this belief stands in no dread of her, is neither dead nor a vampire, but rather a Balkan princess who is hiding under both guises to escape her enemies. While in *Dracula* it is the vampire who moves (travels), in *The Lady* the 'vampire' (non-vampire) is sedentary; while Dracula's castle is old, isolated and surrounded by mountains, dark forests and crags, *The lady*'s has been renovated, is hospitable and overlooks the endless expanse of the sea. Still more, if the vampire Dracula must coherently transform himself into a bat to fly, the non-vampire hero of *The Lady* uses, with the same degree of coherency, the aeroplane. Finally, if the vampire is 'black' (metaphorically speaking) the lady is materially dressed in white. Of the meaning and antithetical-complementary value of their names we shall speak farther on. The analysis, although brief, and the enumeration of these details lead one to assume that there was a conscious project of inversion in the mind of the writer, and give us a glimpse of a kind of literary engineering project.

The coincidences between *Dracula* and *The Lady of the Shroud* are therefore numerous, important and invest the two novels down to their minutest details, making the one the opposite and the complement of the other. The existence of these coincidences was imagined both by Leatherdale [1985: 215] and by Marigny [1985: 132] almost at the same time, and later by Carol A. Senf [1990]. Leatherdale established rapid parallelisms, but without going into detail, between the Eastern European geographic setting of the two novels and the presence in them of the Turkish threat; in both, in *Dracula* symbolically and in *The Lady* openly, the real threat to the West represented by Austria-Hungary and Turkey on the eve of the First World War appears to be represented. Marigny, however, immediately rejects the hypothesis of a "rewritten" *Dracula*, since in his opinion *The Lady of the Shroud* is nothing more than a narration *d'un singulier mauvais goût*, badly written, absurd and sometimes falling into the ridiculous. Neil Barron's [1990: 151-152] opinion is similar. He defines *The Lady* as a long and confused Gothic and political novel with some supernatural inclusions and a conclusion bordering on science-fiction. Senf instead [1990] believes that *The Lady* represents a watered-down version of *Dracula*, especially on the plane of the psychoanalytic implications of the sentimental-erotic events; but it is not for this reason that she denies its charm or capacity to influence the reader's recollections of *Dracula*. But, to judge from the title of Senf's article, perhaps it is especially the contrary that is true: considered separately, *The Lady of the Shroud* is a decidedly bizarre piece of writing which, to be understood properly, requires another text to support it. And perhaps the reason for the nightly appearances of the princess, who is at first believed to be a vampire, has this very diegetic come-on function, which could be developed as follows: «You, my readers, who have already read stories about vampires, who have read *Dracula*, for example, will jump to the conclusion that this young lady is also a vampire, while instead...».

Having demonstrated the soundness of the comparisons that can be made between *Dracula* and *The Lady*, let us now comparatively summarise the ethnic backgrounds given them by the author.

5. In the 19th century, Transylvania, with its Latin name whose literal meaning is still mysterious (what is it that is concealed beyond the forest?), ringed by the Carpathian Mountains, became a frontier land between the West and the East of Europe in the Western collective imagination. The sharp sensation that Harker feels in the first chapter of *Dracula* is that (Buda)pesth is precisely the last city of the West. The fictional ethnic configuration conceived by Stoker for Transylvania is obviously a simplification and an alteration of reality since it assigns, almost always on an exclusive basis, a land to each ethnic group, thus avoiding the cohabitations that instead became manifest and explosive in *The Lady*:

> In the population of Transylvania there are four distinct nationalities: Saxons in the South, and mixed with them the Wallachs, who are the descendants of the Dacians; Magyars in the West, and Szekelys in the East and North. I [= Jonathan Harker] am going among the latter, who claim to be descended from Attila and the Huns [Chapt. I].[4]

Later, to the four main populations are added, in random order, Slovakians and Czechs, which to the character Harker appear

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[4] Cfr. Malte-Brun [1827, s. v. *Transilvania*]: «Dividesi la Transilvania in tre distretti principali, chiamati, secondo i nativi che gli abitano, paese degli Ungheri, dei Sassoni, degli Szekler; e la popolazione componesi inoltre di armeni, valachi, bulgari, ebrei, zingari, polachi».

more barbarian than the rest (...) They are very picturesque, but do not look prepossessing (...)
They are (...) very harmless and rather wanting in natural self-assertion [Chapt. I]

but in any case they give rise to hostility in the population and are therefore unjustly accused of homicide. Since at the time of departure and during the final stage of his return Dracula's helpers are Slovakians and gypsies, this means that both are situated on the bottom rungs of the social ladder; below them we find only Evil. In his novel, Stoker assigns no effective or important role to the real contestants to power in the real Transylvania. First of all, he does not consider the ethnic *Roumanian* a synonym of *Wallach*, as was the custom in the 19th century. While the Wallachs are said to live in the south of Transylvania mixed with other peoples, the Romanians are placed beyond the Carpathians, on the two Russian ships bearing Dracula, or in an unnamed region which in reality coincides with Moldavia, whose flag is in fact *Roumanian* [Chapt. XXVI]. If the real Romanians are divided into fictional Wallachs and Romanians, with the former playing no part in the novel, the Magyars are never called, as is the modern usage, Hungarians, and they too have no active role in the story. At least on the surface Stoker avoided mentioning the rivalry between Romania and Hungary. But only on the surface. If between Hungarians (Magyars) and Walachians (Romanians) no direct, fictional conflicts can arise, since Stoker keeps them to one side, they do arise from their real languages, without this being made explicit, in three words quoted: *pokol* "Hell", *ordog* "devil" (from Hungarian) and *stregoica* "witch" (from Romanian). These words thus supply a brief multilingual characterisation both of Dracula's habitat on the fictional plane and, if we like, of the real Transylvania, agitated by "devilish" conflictuality. To these words must be added *vrolok* and *vlkoslak*, said to come from Serb and Slovakian ('inferior' languages in that they are Slavic, see above) to which are assigned, coherently with the subject of the novel, the meanings of "werewolf" and "vampire" [Chapt. I]. Incidentally, the name of the character Count *Orlok* in Murnau's renowned expressionist film *Nosferatu* (1922, Germany) almost certainly derives from the word *vrolok*. Stoker's *vlkoslak* recalls the Greek *brucolacas* "vampire", the *vrkolak* "vampire" in Macedonian and other idioms (while in Romanian *vîrcolac* means "supernatural being that consumes Moon and Sun, thus causing lunar phases and eclipses; ghost"); *vrolok* refers to words like Maced. *krvolok* "bloody, tyrannical".

The British 'nation' with which Dracula enters into fictional conflict is obviously not a part of the agglomerate and the world presented, but is at the opposite end of Europe, which thus must be reached by Dracula. The conflict breaks out not because of the manifest colonial tendencies of a great power (the concrete Great Britain), but because it is the weaker, ethnically and territorially, of the two, who becomes the aggressor, since he is more determined and more highly motivated (if for no other reason than by his evilness). The numerous ethnic references are no more than a part of the scenery (introduction) of the story, or are, all things considered, details inefficient on the diegetic plane. Indeed, *Dracula* could work as a story even without this ramified ethnic network. For this reason, in the filmed versions of the novel the Transylvanian setting, when it is maintained, is usually decorative or, at most, evocative of an exotic, barbarian provenance, or has the function of making the main character appear more threatening; the figure of the main character, independent of specifications of an ethnic nature, appears rather to respond to typically late-Victorian concerns connected with Great Britain's position as a declining power and the claims of colonised populations in general (*anxiety of reverse colonisation* [Arata 1990]) or of the Irish in particular [Arata cit.; Lőrinczi 1991, 1992]. What really counts, when all is said and done, is Dracula's generic and aloof foreignness and

aggressiveness, which comes down to him from mythical ancestors (and they too are therefore distant, but on the chronological plane).

6. Conversely, *The Lady* is completely pervaded by Stoker's manifest interest in ethnic minorities in general and, more specifically, in the destiny of small ethnic groups who find themselves in the sights of expansionist powers whether nearby or far away. It is just as clear that the ethnic model on which Stoker exercises his imagination and daydreams are the Balkans, which in his time were, together with Transylvania and Ireland, in the forefront of European history and politics (it is to be remembered that we were then on the eve of the First World War). Thus, the function of interethnic conflicts, without which *The Lady* would have neither the "persecution" (the bellicose intentions of the Turks) nor the "damage by subtraction" (the kidnapping of the princess) is a constituent part of the narrative structure. On the model of the 19th century Irish novel the plot, which is rather simple, assumes a subordinate position with respect to problems of race, religion and nationality [Flanagan 1959: 35, cit. in Yeats 1994: 11] which indeed become supports in *The Lady* as well.

While Transylvania is a historical name, the name *Land of Blue Mountains* is fictitious. However, the orographic and demographic characteristics of the latter country tell us that the real model chosen by Stoker was Montenegro, which was then already a principality freed from the Turks and celebrated all over Europe for its "untamed" nature (this characterisation comes from the *Warrier's Ode on the Present State of Dalmatia, Montenegro and Albania* by the Dalmatian Stefano di Zannovich, b. 1752) and for its being the land of renowned social brigands [Lovrich 1776/1777]. From 1516 onwards, even though it was tributary to the Turks, Montenegro was governed by a bishop-prince, known as *vladica* in the local language. This title was changed to *gospodar* in the 19th century. And it is the very narrator of *The Lady* (Rupert) who compares the fictitious Land of Blue Mountains to the real state of Montenegro to point out their almost identical political and religious institutions.

The tiny state designed by Stoker is in effect Slavic, even to judge from the linguistic viewpoint, and the religion of its inhabitants is Greek Orthodox. The few words of Slavic origin indicating the high political and religious offices are used with fairly high frequency, since some characters are the *voivoda* or the *gospodar,* "lord", or the *vladica,* "bishop, lord". The princess's title, on the model of *tzarina*, is *voivodina* (which in reality is the place name of another multiethnic southern Slavic region, the Voivodina). In this region, as Stoker describes, the effects of a possible armed conflict would be catastrophic. Once war broke out, it would in all probability degenerate into a war of religion, which in the Balkans is tantamount to saying a war of races, with consequences that no one would be capable of foreseeing or even so much as imagining [Book I]. The prophetic significance of these assertions is incredible if we consider that «in one of the most spectacular and unexpected reversals of recent history, Yugoslavia has gone from being a relatively well-working federated (...) multi-ethnic state to becoming the ugly scene of multilateral civil wars, "ethnic cleansing", cultural genocide and the violation of human rights on a scale unknown in Europe since World War II» [*The Rise and Fall…* 1994: 325]; this cannot be explained except through the profound sensitivity of the writer towards problems of an interethnic nature. Stoker's sensitivity and clairvoyance was certainly generated by his personal situation as a Protestant, an Irishman and an English speaker and thus by his belonging to a minority within another minority; concerning his political convictions and their degree of elaboration, we have no basis for an in-depth analysis. However it may be, the writer moved in harmony with the views of his contemporaries if already in 1910 *The Lady* could appear as «a

huge prophetic melodrama of the Near East: he [Stoker] creates in outline form at least that Balkan Federation, which may or may not be feasible, but certainly seems essential to the curbing of Austrian ambitions on the one hand and Turkish pretensions on the other» [from *Bookman* 1910, 37, in Senf 1993: 155]. At the end of World War I J. Paul-Boncour, a French deputy, appears to have delineated, too late and in vain, the multiethnic situation in words that appear taken from Stoker's novel:

> Sur ces frontičres, enchevêtrées, juxtaposées, opposées les unes aux autres, des nationalités s'entrechoquent, et leurs qualités et leurs défauts font que ces nationalités guerričres peuvent chercher un jour dans la guerre la solution des problčmes qui les divisent [1921, cit. in Zinovieff and Thual 1980: 33].

In the novel, the annexing of the small state, inhabited by a poor, proud and courageous people, who had never bowed down to the will of anyone, was desired by many other nearby and faraway European states: Albania, Dalmatia, Herzegovina, Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey, not to mention Austria, Italy, Russia and France. The main cause of conflict lies in this colonial arrogance represented most concretely by the Turks.

7. But who in *Dracula* is poor, proud, courageous and a fighter for his own freedom? In contraposition to the placing of Teuta's ethnic group in the novel, and since in the *Dracula-Lady* couple the inversion mechanism functions perfectly, it is foreseeable that in Dracula the ethnic group to which those very qualities can be ascribed is indeed the ethnic group to which the protagonist belongs, but that there is also an important temporal separation with respect to the moment of the narration. It is Dracula himself who speaks, in a long and interesting story, full of pathos and thus not without efficacy, of the most intricate multiethnic origin and the later vicissitudes of his glorious lineage. From the monologue we learn that ethnically (but remember only fictionally!) Dracula is a Szekely, and thus belongs to the population that legend, but also learned historiographers, up to the romantic ones, considered as descendants (together with the Magyars) of the Huns. In the novel Dracula is thus supposedly a reincarnation of Attila, of the *flagellum irati Dei*, and plays the same role as an executioner. The monologue also projects back in time, to legendary Middle Ages which have ended once and for all, and to a primordial ethnic orgy, conflicts which in *The Lady* make up the more immediate backdrop for the actions of the story. The documentary care (identifiable sources: the 6th century *Getica* by Jordanes [Lőrinczi 1992], and Wilkinson [1820], see below) and the declamatory tone reveal the writer's interest in a subject that will, in fact, be reshaped and updated in *The Lady*.

> We Szekelys have a right to be proud, for in our veins flows the blood of many brave races who fought as the lion fights, for lordship. Here, in the whirlpool of European races, the Ugric tribe bore down from Iceland the fighting spirit which Thor and Wodin gave them, which their Berserkers displayed to such fell intent on the seaboards of Europe (...) Here, too, when they came, they found the Huns, whose warlike fury had swept the earth like a living flame, till the dying peoples held that in their veins ran the blood of those old witches, who, expelled from Scythia, had mated with the devils in the desert (...) Is it a wonder that we were a conquering race; that we were proud; that when the Magyar, the Lombard, the Avar, the Bulgar, or the Turk poured his thousands on our frontiers, we drove them back? Is it strange that when Arpad and his legions swept through the Hungarian fatherland he found us here when he reached the frontier; that the Honfoglalas was completed here? And when the Hungarian flood swept eastward, the Szekelys were claimed as kindred by the victorious Magyars, and to us for centuries was trusted the guarding of the frontier of Turkey-land; (...) Who more gladly than we throughout the Four Nations received the 'bloody sword' (...)? When was redeemed that great shame of my nation, the shame of Cassova, when the flags of the Wallach and the Magyar went down beneath the Crescent? Who was it but one of my own race who as Voivode crossed the Danube and beat the Turk on his own ground? This was a Dracula

indeed! Woe was it that his own unworthy brother, when he had fallen, sold his people to the Turk and brought the shame of slavery on them! Was it not this Dracula, indeed, who inspired that other of his race who in a later age again and again brought his forces over the great river into Turkey-land; who, when he was beaten back, came again, and again, and again, (...) since he knew that he alone could ultimately triumph! (...) Again, when after the battle of Mohács we threw off the Hungarian yoke, we of the Dracula blood were amongst their leaders (...) Ah (...) the Szekelys - and the Dracula as their heart's blood, their brains, and their swords - can boast a record that mushroom growths like the Hapsburgs and the Romanoffs can never reach [Chapt. III].

8. In analogy with that of *Dracula*, the name *Teuta*, given by Stoker to the princess in *The Lady*, synthesises an entire project. But let us start from the first, limiting ourselves to its function in the story.

Stoker knew the exact literal meaning of the historical name Dracula and also the valour in battle of the Walachian *voivode* Vlad (XV century) whom the Turks had nicknamed The Impaler and whom others knew as Dracula. The source from which Stoker took the name Dracula as well as some minor diegetic motives is surely a text written by Wilkinson [1820], a former English consul at Bucarest. Wilkinson's book reached a certain notoriety, since in the space of a few years it was republished, translated into French, rewritten in German and summarised in Italian [L_z_rescu 1986]. Wilkinson's mention of Dracula was found among Stoker's notes, but only the parts referring to the crossing of the Danube and Dracula's later attack and (temporary) success, episodes which appear in the monologue quoted above. The most pertinent points here are:

> Their Voļvode [of the Wallachians], also named Dracula* [...] with an army he crossed the Danube and attacked the few Turkish troops that were stationed in his neighbourhood.
> [Note] *Dracula in the Wallachian language means Devil. The Wallachians were, at that time, as they are at present, used to give this as a surname to any person who rendered himself conspicuous either by courage, cruel actions, or cunning [Wilkinson 1820: 19].

Dracula's literary personality contains the meanings that Wilkinson attributed to the name of the historical personage, just to limit ourselves to Stoker's sources, as well as the more glorious actions of the real model. Therefore, Dracula is said to descend from anti-Turk warriors, to be diabolic, cunning and aggressive. If we continue to consider *The Lady*, either by inversion or by mirror image, the opposite of *Dracula*, the name *Teuta*, on the plane of the possible literal meaning and thus on that of motivation, must also bow to the inversion mechanism and to the necessity for symbolic representation.

But, first of all, like *Dracula*, *Teuta* is a historical name, little-known today, but quite well-known in the 18th and 19th centuries [e.g.: Fortis 1774/1987: 215, 220, whom I cite here since he is one of the authors who in the 18th century described Balkan and Transylvanian beliefs concerning vampires]. *Teuta* was the name of an Illyrian (Balkan) queen, and as such is part of a series of Illyrian names which probably come from the same root and are semantically similar: *Teutana*, *Teuticus*, *Tautomedes* [Benveniste 1976: 280].

Queen Teuta, who lived in the first half of the 3rd century AD, courageously and with pirate-like actions opposed the might of Rome. There is no need to illustrate the possibilities of interpreting the actions of this personage in the patriotic vein. They clearly make her similar both to the historical Dracula and to the courageous and bellicose ancestors of Stoker's Dracula. From the historical model, the fictional Teuta takes above all the role of symbol representing her people. It is for this reason that the Turks in *The Lady* intend to defeat the people of the Blue Mountains by kidnapping their noblest and most precious representative.

Starting from this representative role, it is also possible to attribute literal meanings to the name *Teuta*, in other words, to motivate its choice and make it transparent to the same extent as *Dracula*. Stoker's evident, culturally justifiable love of things Germanic (and not of Germans!) on which, however, we shall not insist too much in this work, authorises us to repropose a fanciful Germanic etymon, fanciful in this context, much less arbitrary on a general linguistic plane. *Teuta* could be connected in a fairly linear way, to the same extent as the other Illyrian names given above, to the ancient German *theoda* "people" or to the ethnic *Teutons* [Benveniste 1976: 278-286]. It is also surprising to learn that from the same Indo-European root from which the German *theoda* derives, also comes the ancient Irish *tuath,* "people, country, tribe, small kingdom", which is in turn connected to the name of the Celtic god *Teutates* "god of the tribe" corresponding to Mercury or Mars [Benveniste cit.; Agrati and Magini 1982: introd.; Moscati (ed.) 1991: chapt. *La religione celtica...*]. Let us stay with classic testimony (Lucan, *Pharsalia*) or with the Irish tradition (mythology, legends) for the lexical family *Teutates*, *tuath*, texts and testimony surely known to Stoker. Thus to uphold this possible fanciful etymology of the fictional name *Teuta*, which at first sight appears arbitrary, there is above all the important and fitting meaning ("people") of the supposed etymological nucleus and the role of "representative of the people" played by the literary character.

In conclusion, I believe that in *The Lady* the simultaneous presence of different ethnic groups and the interethnic conflict become, in opposition to *Dracula*, the most important themes, which are developed and exploited throughout the entire story; that the novel contains, even in the knowledge of uncontrollable developments, a message of encouragement in the struggle for national emancipation/liberation. This message in *Dracula* is instead placed in the past of the eponymous ancestor and possibly, as I hypothesised in the past [1992], in the implicit meanings or semantic implications of the narration.

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