

# Scandinavian Transformations of *Dracula*

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## Abstract

A couple of years after the publication of Bram Stoker's classic vampire novel *Dracula*, different versions were published in one Icelandic and two Swedish newspapers. The Icelandic version could be a translation of the shorter Swedish version. Both explore the Transylvanian part considerably. The longest version of *Mörkrets makt* was republished in Swedish in 2017. What is intriguing is that no English original has been found, and the question is whether an original exists or has existed or if the Swedish and Icelandic newspapers have expanded on the text, and whether this was done with Stoker's consent or not? International copyright laws were not signed by these countries at that time, but there are hints that Stoker had accepted these new parts, but did he? The importance of copyright is still truly relevant, so this will be discussed briefly. Another significant aspect is that the 'Scandinavian' *Dracula* turns out to have fascistic ambitions. The intention here is to analyse the texts, compare them and see to what extent they coincide and if it is possible to see whether somebody else has written the new parts of *Dracula* or if it seems to be a homogeneous work by Stoker, where the author for some reason had chosen to leave out some parts or has added parts later.

Keywords: *Dracula*; *Makt Myrkranna*; *Mörkrets makter*; vampire; Gothic; Stoker

'For many of us, *Dracula* is a formative novel. A book we pick up as children or young adults and revisit as the years pass, a constant on the bookshelf, an old friend.'

—Dacre Stoker (2018: 483)

## Introduction

Three years after the publication of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), the Icelandic magazine *Fjallkonan* [The lady from the mountain] published a serialized version of the novel (January 13 1900 – March 20 1901) under the name of *Makt Myrkranna* [Powers of Darkness].<sup>1</sup> However, as it

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<sup>1</sup> This novel has nothing to do with Leo Tolstoy's play with the same name, *Власть тьмы* [vlast tmy] in Russian, published in 1886.

turns out, there were two Swedish papers (*Dagen*, June 10 1899 – February 7 1900, and *Aftonbladets Halfvecko-Upplaga*, August 16 1899 – March 31 1900) that published their serialized versions bearing the same name, *Mörkrets makter*, and their publications started before the Icelandic version was published, which is something that had been ignored, although the existence of the Icelandic version was known but seldom read and never translated into English. This indicates that the Swedish versions were the first ones and that the Icelandic version was a modified translation of the shorter Swedish version (*Aftonbladets Halfvecko-Upplaga*).

What is intriguing is that no English original has been found, and the question is whether an original exists or has existed or if the Swedish and Icelandic newspapers have expanded on the text, and whether this was done with Stoker's consent or not? International copyright laws were not signed by these countries at that time, but there are hints that Stoker had accepted these new parts, but did he? The importance of copyright is still truly relevant, so this will be discussed briefly. Another significant aspect is that the 'Scandinavian' *Dracula* turns out to have fascistic ambitions. The intention here is to analyse the texts, compare them and see to what extent they coincide and if it is possible to see whether somebody else has written the new parts of *Dracula* or if it seems to be a homogeneous work by Stoker, where the author for some reason had chosen to leave out some parts or has added parts later.

Although these Scandinavian versions are the main focus of this article, the recent story does not stop there. In 2012, John Edgar Browning published some, until then, unknown works of Stoker's in *The Forgotten Writings of Bram Stoker*, and Elizabeth Miller and Dacre Stoker published *The Lost Journal of Bram Stoker*. Thus, in a few years' time, important texts that help our understanding of *Dracula*<sup>2</sup> have appeared, but these texts have also made the field more enigmatic—for better or worse.

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<sup>2</sup> For a good analysis of the novel see for instance Miller (2005), Eighteen-Bisang & Miller (2019: 225-244), Riquelme (2002) and for more details on Stoker's life see Belford (1996) or Murray (2004).

*Dracula and the Gothic Tradition*

It is quite clear that *Dracula* is an emblematic Gothic novel (cf. Goss 2012) that has inspired and fascinated people for more than a century, but the Gothic tradition is older than that (see Luckhurst 2018: 11-53). This then 'new' literary branch challenged and offered alternatives to the 'progressionist' evolutionary framework that formed the common element of the narratives, a framework that it had been partly formed by and also became a defining component of the anthropological paradigm (ibid.). It offered other ways to conceive the relationship between past and present, animal, and human (vampires and werewolves, etc.) and the eternal conflict between savage and civilized, and here we also find geo-ethnic prejudices. Southern Europe had long been an ideal literary setting for bandits and monsters of different kinds in literature. With the more 'monster-focused' Gothic literary wave, the Balkans combined the mystical South with the barbaric and unknown countries, full of monsters and superstition. As a result, it also offered alternative ways to conceptualize and question who was human and who was 'humanlike.' If these monsters were inferior or superior to ordinary human beings remained to be seen. This shows how the attitude to the Balkans (i.e. Transylvania) in these texts reflects a general attitude of backwardness and superstition associated with this part of the world, i.e. the South-Eastern part of Europe, and how its chaotic political relations cause troubles that seem medieval to contemporary European eyes as is reflected in *Dracula* and other stories from the same epoch.

Scientific achievements were also very popular at the turn of the century and were often used for literary purposes as in *Frankenstein* or in Jules Verne's novels, and Stoker himself was interested in things like blood transfusion, hypnotism and physiognomy which is a term borrowed from Cesare Lombroso who describes the traits and physiognomy of the 'born criminal' (Gallet 2008; Skal 2015:340-341; Davis 2017), and also the social implications of these views, as can be seen in *Dracula*'s social-Darwinist perspective in the longer Swedish version (*Dagen*).

Punter (1996) describes the continuity between late-nineteenth century Gothic fiction and an earlier Gothic tradition, as well as the innovations of late nineteenth-century Gothic literature. He shows that the burst of symbolic energy in this 'new' Gothic literary wave is as powerful as that of the original Gothic, and alongside these older ones,

such as Frankenstein's monster and the Byronic vampire (Lord Ruthven in Polidori's short story 'The Vampyre,' 1819), we can, of course, see new monsters, the Doppelgänger in Shelley's drama *Prometheus Unbound*, Thomas Preskett Prest's *Varney the Vampyre or the Feast of Blood* (1847), where the elegant aristocratic vampire was introduced,<sup>3</sup> Le Fanu's *Carmilla* (1872) and the new, improved vampire of *Dracula/Draculitz*. The vampire, as such, is, of course, much older (Arries 2007; Höglund 2011; Sherman 2014), but that is another story.<sup>4</sup>

Tropp (1990) sees Count Dracula together with Frankenstein's monster and Doctor Jekyll/Mr. Hyde as modern myths that help us understand a new urban form of terror, which I would also suggest could be regarded as the origin of modern urban fantasy literature. In that sense Count Dracula is somewhat in between as he starts off in the mysterious Transylvanian Gothic landscape but continues the story in an urban English milieu, which makes Stoker a forerunner, and could be interpreted as a factor that has kept the novel 'modern.'

#### *Dracula's Many Versions*

In 1894 Bram Stoker was travelling the USA as manager for the famous English actor Henry Irving and his Lyceum theatre in London. At that time, he presented a much longer version of *Dracula* to an editor in Boston and, according to Lovecraft, also to a journalist and writer, Edith Dowe Miniter, who considered the possibility of revising the text that the editor had found too long and lacking a certain coherence, but she may

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<sup>3</sup> In Romanian folklore the *zmei* is some kind of vampire (dragon) that can take the shape of a good-looking young man in order to seduce young women and enjoy their company and flesh (Cărtărescu 2017).

<sup>4</sup> It is also true that there are several filmic interpretations of *Dracula* (cf. Peirse 2018: 179-191; Abbot 2018: 192-206) that start with *Nosferatu* in 1922 and later with the emblematic interpretations of Bela Lugosi and Christopher Lee. Some films have tried to connect Count Dracula with the Wallachian prince Vlad III Dracula (cf. Söhrman 2016: 14-16). Despite the film *Nosferatu* being often considered the first one, it is not, but since the very first one, the Hungarian movie, *Drakula halála* [Dracula's death] (Peirse 2018: 180) is now lost, *Nosferatu* has taken its place as the first (still existing) filmic version of the novel. However, films are pieces of art in their own right and do not have to follow the novels they may be based on, and it is not in the films that we find new traces of the story.

have charged Stoker too much or maybe she just turned him down (Lovecraft 1965<sup>5</sup>; Skal 2015: 329-231), so this never happened. There are different versions of what really took place. This manuscript is supposed to have been twice as long as the known version of the novel. Stoker decided, as it seems, to listen to the critics but continued writing and editing the text on his own.

However, there are, supposedly, 101 pages that after this Boston experience were taken away from the original manuscript and thereafter forgotten and somehow destroyed. The short story 'Dracula's Guest,' published posthumously in 1914 is often considered part of these 'lost' pages (Berghorn 2017: 12-14; see also further down). Some researchers like Browning think that this original manuscript ended up in Sweden and represents the original (Stoker 2017: 7), but, as we shall see, there are too many differences between these versions to confirm this assumption.

As stated above, three Scandinavian versions of *Dracula* have recently been discovered, and none of them is a true translation of the novel as we know it. Dacre Stoker states that '[t]he changes go far beyond simple variances in translation' (Dacre Stoker 2018: 486). In all three of them certain things have been added and other paragraphs have been extended or omitted. So, it comes down to three concepts of change: *extension*, *reduction* and *transformation*, and in the following I will try to show the consequences and outcome of these textual manipulations and changes. Before going into the matter, it is important to establish the questions that will lead us through this study.

Thus, there are four questions to answer:

- Do these early translations or adaptations change our interpretation of Stoker's novel *Dracula*?
- In what way do they differ from the original?
- Are there any references to these changes in Stoker's notes?
- Was Stoker aware of the changes or was he the original author of these versions?

Hopefully, these questions will help us to see and explain what has happened and what remains to be investigated in order to solve these

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<sup>5</sup> In letters to Belknap Long Oct. 7 1923, to Wandrei Jan. 29 1927 and to Barlow dec. 10 1932; cf. Berghorn 2017: p. 14.

problems or questions and possibly others related to the relation between these newly found versions and the classic novel. Unfortunately, only the first two questions can be answered in a reasonable way while the last two remain to be solved and here I will only speculate on what could be plausible answers.

*The Enigmatic Scandinavian Translations*

As we saw earlier, three years after the publication of *Dracula* (1897), the Icelandic magazine *Fjallkonan* [The lady from the mountain], published a serialized version of the novel (January 13 1900 – March 20 1901) under the name of *Makt Myrkranna* [Powers of Darkness]. In Icelandic the title could also have been *Myrkraöflin*, but this is more ‘the force of darkness,’ and more important is that *Makt Myrkranna* turns into an alliteration, which is always preferred in Icelandic literature.<sup>6</sup> Although it is not as important when it comes to Swedish style, it is still never wrong and sounds better and more literary than without it, and thus we have *Mörkrets makter*

Furthermore, the Swedish editor and author Rickard Berghorn discovered that two Swedish papers (*Dagen*, June 10 1899- February 7 1900, and *Aftonbladets Halfvecko-Upplaga*, August 16 1899 – March 31 1900) published their serialized versions bearing the same name, *Mörkrets makter*, and their publications started before the Icelandic version was published, which is something that had been ignored until Berghorn pointed it out. These two newspapers had the same editor-in-chief, Harald Sohlman, which explains why the story appears in both newspapers but in different shapes. *Aftonbladets Halfvecko-Upplaga* was more of a ‘light version’ paper than *Dagen*. Are these three Scandinavian versions connected, and in what way? The longer version in *Dagen* was later republished in the magazine *Tip-Top* (1916-1918), but never after, until 2017!<sup>7</sup> However, the *Dagen* version, is the one I will discuss here, since the other two seem abridged versions of it, as it is twice as long as

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<sup>6</sup> Here I would like to thank Professor Lars Lönnroth who pointed this out to me.

<sup>7</sup> Although the novel *Dracula* is so emblematic as we have seen it was not translated into Swedish until 1967 by Berit Skogsberg after which there have been at least four more translations, but it seems a bit strange that it took so long. Were people happy with the films or the English original? Why was there no earlier translation?

the novel *Dracula*. It also seems very plausible that the Icelandic version is an abridged translation of the shorter Swedish version, which many Icelandic researchers have suspected (Berghorn 2017: 10).

The same year that the serialization ended, the whole text appeared in Iceland in book form. Outside Iceland, however, it was not read nor really known although it was for many years (since the 1980s) considered the first translation of *Dracula* into any language.<sup>8</sup> It was published by the Icelandic publishing house Nokkrir Prentarar, and the editor-in-chief of *Fjallkonan*, Valdimar Ásmundsson, was credited as the translator, and everything indicates that this was the case.

In 1986 Richard Dalby presented an English translation of the ‘Editors’ Preface’ from the Icelandic translation. This preface is much longer in all three Scandinavian versions, some three pages, while there are only 7-8 lines in the English version, and these prefaces intend to confirm the authenticity of the novel as a documentary, but the short lines in the novel are rather laconic in comparison with the introductions given in the Scandinavian versions that are signed B.S., while the English version is not signed. There is also a reference in the longer preface to Jack the Ripper (or the Whitechapel murders as they were usually called at that time) that is nowhere to be found in *Dracula*.

In 2018, the Dutch literary researcher Hans Corneel de Roos thought that the last part of the Swedish preface, that does not appear in *Makt myrkranna*, was copied from the memoirs of Swedish priest and art collector, Bernhard Wadström (de Roos 2018). The article had been published a couple of months before the preface to *Mörkrets makter* and also appeared in the newspaper *Dagen* (de Roos 2018), but the parts that coincide are idioms and words that are frequent in Swedish, especially in a text like this, and it does not seem to be much more than a coincidence, albeit it would be very tempting and interesting if it were otherwise, but as de Roos points out it is unlikely that a famous Puritan priest would participate in the translating of a Gothic novel.

De Roos released a complete English translation of *Makt Myrkranna* on the 7<sup>th</sup> February 2017. He had found the Icelandic version and could see that it was not an abridged version of the novel as many had believed

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<sup>8</sup> However, it turns out that there was an earlier translation into Hungarian in 1898, which is, supposedly, the very first translation ever made (cf. Berni 2016). It was a serialized version published in the magazine *Budapesti Hírlap* and translated by Jenő Rákosi (de Roos 2017: 132).

it to be until then. In fact, Stoker had himself (or the publishing house) published an abridged version of his novel in 1901. The part set in Transylvania is longer in all the Scandinavian versions than in the original, while the second part is very reduced and seems more like a sketch than a finished work in the Icelandic and the shorter Swedish versions, and the whole Icelandic book is about half as long as the novel. The epistolary style Stoker adopted in the novel is given up in the second part of this one. The characters that appear are partly different and those who are found in both versions are given other names, such as count Drakulitz, (de Roos 2017), Tom Harker (not Jonathan). We also find other names, Vilma Murray (sometimes spelt Wilma, and not Mina Murray) and Lucy Western (not Lucy Westenra). Skal (2016: 338-339) finds it likely that the Icelandic version is based on an earlier version of *Dracula* and that there are coincidences such as the appearance of detective Barrington Jones and Dracula's deaf-mute housekeeper. This woman is mentioned but crossed out in one of Stoker's note (Eighteen-Bisang and Miller 2019: 24, 28). Why these names are modified in the Scandinavian versions is not at all clear or understandable, since they are all easily identified as variants of the names in the novel, and they do not seem to be Scandinavianised names either, which could have been understandable.

Nevertheless, there is no indication that Ásmundsson had any personal contact with Stoker, but there might have been a connection through Stoker's friend Hall Caine (Browning 2012: 159-165; Dacre Stoker 2012: 251) who knew Iceland quite well. On the other hand, this is just a possibility, and there are no proofs that this may have been the case (Skal 2016: 337-338). Caine was one of Stoker's friends and *Dracula* is actually, but enigmatically, dedicated to Caine under his nickname Hommy-Beg 'little Tommy.'

There are passages in *Makt Myrkranna* that clearly refer to information given in Stoker's notes but that were excluded from the final version of *Dracula* (Berghorn 2017: 9). On the other hand, de Roos has shown that the story differs radically in many aspects, and the main points are the introduction of the blond female vampire and the presentation of Draculitz' political ambitions as leader and financier of a social-Darwinist conspiracy (de Roos 2014) of which there is no trace in the novel or in Stoker's notes.



These versions are presented as a ‘Swedish adaption for *Dagen* by A. –e’ (Svensk bearbetning för *Dagen* af A. –e). Who could this A. –e be? There have been several guesses, but the most probable one is Albert Andersson-Edberg in favour of which de Roos argues (2017), but Berghorn (2017: 19) is not convinced, so the discussion goes on, and there are so far only indications and no real proofs. Both Albert Engström and August Strindberg have been suggested as responsible for the translation, but this seems unlikely both stylistically and because it seems strange that any of these well-established authors would do such a thing without being recognised in the book

The longest version, i.e. the *Dagen* version, is extended and transformed compared to *Dracula*, while the Icelandic version is seen as a slightly transformed version of the shorter (*Aftonbladet*) Swedish version. The two Swedish versions start off in the same way, but very soon we can see that the content is reduced in the later and shorter *Aftonbladet* version. Berghorn (2017: 9-10) sees this as the possible result of a lack of appreciation by the readers of the newspaper, but this has not been sufficiently proven. We can speculate, but nothing can be confirmed if no written comments on this matter can be found.

In order to facilitate this presentation, I will limit this article to compare mainly the plot of the original and the one in the longer Swedish version (*Dagen*).

Already in the first chapter we find discrepancies between this translation and the original. From the readers’ point of view this is very interesting, especially after so many years with so much published—and filmed—since the first three chapters seem to be the most well-known ones. As Frayling (1991: 303) states: ‘Not only are these by far the best-known chapters of *Dracula*—they reappear in all the major screen adaptations—but they are also the chapters for which Stoker did the most interesting research.’ This is confirmed by the resemblance between Stoker’s description of the count and nuncio Modrussa’s report on Vlad III *Dracula* (see further down; Söhrman 2016: 14) as well as other similarities between the 15<sup>th</sup> century documentation of the Wallachian prince and the description of the protagonist of the novel. When Stoker describes the count’s brother, no name is given, but it clearly reflects Prince Radu’s (the younger brother of Vlad III) life—from what seems Prince Vlad’s antagonistic perspective, which shows Stoker’s meticulous research work on the matter.

The daily entries in Harker's journal are extended already when Harker comes to the inn from where he is supposed to leave for the count's castle, and he describes the innkeeper's wife who tries to persuade him not to go and the reactions of the villagers as he is leaving. It is not that different, but the description is more detailed in the *Dagen* version than in *Dracula*.

The voyage to the castle is much more detailed in *Mörkrets makter* and gives a more thrilling description of the wolves and the threat that they constitute on the way to the castle. In the original Harker writes not only on the 5<sup>th</sup>, the day of his arrival, but also on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, while there is no journal entry on the 7<sup>th</sup> in the Swedish version, but the 5<sup>th</sup> is much longer than in the original. That is also where a mysterious and seductive young woman appears in Harker's room, which she does not do in the original. Already here the order of the events is changed, which is some kind of transformation of the action. It would be interesting to put the two texts next to each other and compare the content paragraph by paragraph, but it seems prudent and sufficient for this presentation to indicate the fact that there are many differences between the two versions both when it comes to dates and the novel's contents. The most interesting ones will thus be indicated. It is also clear that the Icelandic version and the shorter Swedish one have a shortened content in comparison to the novel *Dracula*, especially in the second part of the novel, and they mostly have the same plot transformations as the *Dagen* version.

None of the two Swedish versions have so far been translated into English, although the longer one is now being translated. In the novel *Dracul*, which Dacre Stoker, the great-grandson of Bram Stoker's brother Georges, wrote together with J. D. Barker (see further down) they use some of the differences found in the Icelandic *Makt Myrkranna*, and the main vampyresque figure in *Dracul* is female. This suggests that Bram Stoker's nanny, Ellen Crone, has made Dacre Stoker, as many others, regard Bram Stoker's posthumously published short story, 'Dracula's Guest,' with a female vampire as a part of the original 101 pages that Bram Stoker supposedly took away from the novel. In *Dracul*, the count is mainly a background force who participates little in the plot. However, that story takes place in Styria in southern Austria, and there are few resemblances between the protagonist, whose name is never mentioned, and Jonathan Harker. On the other hand, Bram Stoker's son,

Noel Stoker, gives credit to a certain Jarvis who helped Florence Stoker to edit the remaining short stories after Stoker's death (Skal 2015: 503), which reduces the possibility of Stoker being the sole author of these stories. However, there are a few comments in an early draft of *Dracula* where a beautiful vampire woman is slain by lightning (Eighteen-Bisang and Miller 2008: 179), and she might be the origin of the female vampire in the Scandinavian versions who is seductive and flamboyant in a way that the three female vampires in *Dracula* are not.

Furthermore, it is seldom pointed out that Stoker worked as a theatre critic at the *Dublin Evening Mail*, which was co-owned by Sheridan Le Fanu who wrote the short vampire novel *Carmilla* in 1872 with a female vampire as protagonist (Skal 2016: 73-75). This story also takes place in Styria where Stoker localised the plot in 'Dracula's Guest.' That Le Fanu inspired Stoker is often acknowledged but few have pointed out that they had a close professional relationship. Le Fanu's novel has been reprinted many times but is much less known than *Dracula*.<sup>9</sup> In Le Fanu's book the sexual and homoerotic implications are clear and have been so in many vampyresque novels and films ever since, although it seems to have been 'overlooked' at the time of its publication. Whether Le Fanu's female vampire has had any influence on the Scandinavian versions is uncertain.

In 'Dracula's Guest' the unknown but scary vampire is a lady that arises from her bier. On the other hand there are clear resemblances between this vampire and the attractive blond woman that Harker finds in Draculitz' castle in the Scandinavian version and who seduces him while there are three more insignificant women in *Dracula*, and they do not attract Harker nor are they so openly erotic as this blond vampire is. The count actually warns him about them. Harker arrives to Draculitz' castle on the 5th of May, and on the 7<sup>th</sup> of May the count leaves a message for him: 'I have to be absent for a while. Do not wait for me' (21). Harker then goes to the library where he meets the blonde lady who attracts him strongly, but she disappears as the count comes in. She comes back on several occasions in the story.

In Stoker's last novel *The Lair of the White Worm* (1911), the vampire is once more a seductive woman who is a snake and lives in a cave. According to Romanian folklore vampires could sneak out of their

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<sup>9</sup> There is actually a modern Swedish filmic reinterpretation of this novel, *Carmilla* or *En läkares vittne* [A doctor's witness] from 1968.

graves transforming themselves into snakes (Sherman 2014). The difference between vampires and werewolves (as well as dragons) is not that great in Romanian folklore, and the count appears as a bat and possibly as a wolf in the original novel, although it is not perfectly clear whether he is the wolf or not.

While the original novel takes the protagonists back to Transylvania, the Swedish version ends in Hampstead, where Harker is accompanied not only by his friends but also by Barrington Jones and two policemen, Teller and Grey, who both have lost their beloved ones to Dracula (*Mörkrets makter* 406).

Doctor Seward, a psychiatrist and friend of Harker, dies a madman in the Swedish version but in *Dracula* he gets married and lives happily ever after as indicated in the last chapter ‘Note’ supposedly written seven years later, which does not appear at all in *Mörkrets makter*.

There are also formal differences such as the division of the text in chapters. In the original there are 27 chapters while *Mörkrets makter* contains four sections, of which the first one (The Carpathian Castle) describes the events in Transylvania and it is just one, very long chapter. The next (The Cemetery in Whitby) consists of 11 chapters, and the third one (The old House in London) has just two long ones. The fourth (On the Track), which is rather short, has five chapters. However, Stoker’s original epistolary style is upheld through the whole novel in the *Dagen* version, but not in the shorter ones.

The chapters in *Dracula* are all very formally labelled—‘Jonathan Harker’s Journal,’ ‘Dr. Sewars Diary,’ etc.—while some have more thrilling names in the *Dagen* version, such as ‘In the Den of the Predator’ (the last chapter), and ‘The Journal of the Doctor of the Madhouse’ instead of ‘Dr. Sewar’s Journal.’

As it is an epistolary novel it is easy to see that in the *Dagen* version there are more days included. Sometimes it is just the same text but divided between different days, although sometimes dates and texts are added.

There are ongoing discussions about whether the extensions keep to the Stoker style and whether it seems likely that he has written these parts. It is, of course, very difficult to answer these questions as we are dealing with texts in two (even three) different languages, and if the Swedish translator is also the person who has extended the text, there will not be any noticeable difference in the Swedish text, and then there

is the question of whether you can see Stoker's style through the translation and adaptation, which is at least very questionable.

Finally, how could an earlier version of *Dracula* end up in Sweden and be the one that would be translated into Swedish? Berghorn (2017: 17-19) suggests with reasonable arguments that the Swedish writer Anne Charlotte Leffler and her brother professor Gösta Mittag-Leffler might be the answer as they had many friends in London and spent much time there (Lauritzen 2012: 292-318; Leffler 1922). Leffler was quite respected and popular in England at that time. There are, according to Berghorn's investigations, letters in Kungliga Biblioteket [Royal Library] in Stockholm to Anne Charlotte Leffler from Mathilda, Charlotte and George Stoker, Bram Stoker's siblings (George is Dacre Stoker's great-grandfather). So, there was a relation between the Stoker and the Leffler families. Anne Charlotte Leffler also met Oscar Wilde's mother in London, and Wilde was also a friend of Stoker's from Dublin. This might be an explanation or at least a glimpse of one, but there are no proofs.

So far nobody has commented on the very name of these Scandinavian versions. Why not use *Dracula* as it would fit in well in Scandinavian languages and be an attractive and at the same time enigmatic title? I would not exclude that the Scandinavian titles are a reference to the Bible and to the apocalyptic situation when Jesus is captured after Judas's kiss and Jesus said to his capturers: 'but this is your hour, and *the power of darkness*' (S. Luke, 22, 53). This would add more foreboding to the even more apocalyptic and political Draculitz.

#### *Political Implications*

The obvious political touch to these texts is the question of the copyright. However, the emblematic German film *Nosferatu*<sup>10</sup> is without any doubt

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<sup>10</sup> The very name of the film is supposed to be an old Romanian name for vampire, but this is not entirely true, and although Stoker used this word it seems that he took it from Emily Gerard's book on superstition in Transylvania (1888), an author whom he personally appreciated very much (Skal 2015: 386-387; Eighteen-Bisang & Miller 2019: 105). There is no proof of the existence of this word meaning *vampire* in Romanian folklore before Gerard's book, and linguistically it seems to be a very strange combination and distribution of phonemes in this word if it really were Romanian. Nevertheless, it has been

also a copyright infringement as Germany had signed the Bern convention that regulates the authors' copyright already at the time when the film was made, and Bram Stoker's wife, Florence Stoker, managed to make the film company destroy most copies and negatives of this representation, but, fortunately enough for us, not all of them (Skal 2016: 505-510).

Thus, Florence Stoker succeeded in preventing the distribution of the German film *Nosferatu*, but, as Sweden did not sign the Bern convention until 1904 and Iceland not until 1948, it was totally legal in both countries to 'rewrite' and publish someone else's text, but was this the case? The truth is that we do not know. There were or could have been contacts with Stoker through the Leffler family as we have seen, but as long as this is only a possibility, it seems most reasonable to regard the Scandinavian versions of *Dracula* in relation to the law, and the copyright infringement law was not applicable in Sweden and Iceland at that time. The Leffler link to the Stoker family is much more tempting, but clearer proofs have to be provided if this possibility is to be turned into a probability as the infringement was quite frequent at that time and it was also the way contemporary literature was spread among ordinary people. This was particularly important for the spread of popular fantasy and crime fiction.

The other political issue in these texts is Dracula's social-Darwinist standpoint in the Scandinavian texts. Where do they come from, and how can they be interpreted? Count Draculitz repeats on several occasions that 'The world belongs to the strong.' The count is presented as an educated monster who seeks to survive in his 'new' shape as a vampire, but in the Scandinavian versions he also tries to promote this social-Darwinist political message that goes well with the intellectual spleen at the turn of the century and the emerging totalitarian elitist ideas where Darwin's lemma 'the survival of the fittest' is taken as a reason to reform the people and promote a new order in society (Skal 2016: 337).

In these versions, Tom Harker discovers a secret hall in the cellar of the castle where he sneaks in and witnesses a ceremonial sacrifice to some 50 vampires who all resemble the count, and Harker recalls that he

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suggested that the word could exist but then meaning 'plague-bearer' (Eiðen-Bisangt & Miller 2019: 107) which metaphorically could possibly be used for other 'outcasts such as vampires.' This seems more than doubtful, and proofs are lacking.

has seen their faces in the count's portrait gallery. There are also some apelike monsters present. Three young women are sacrificed to the vampires' bloodthirst, and Harker gets out, completely shocked (Stoker 2017: 109-111). This is an added scene, and it gets even more political as Harker detects a letter in French where the count has written that the great catastrophe is approaching and that he (the count) is gaining more and more supporters. The count also complains that the elite has suffered long enough under the rule of the despicable majority (Stoker 2017: 111-112). Harker also finds other letters to well-known English politicians and upper-class representatives with whom the count is obviously corresponding on the subject. It does clearly indicate references to these social-Darwinist ideas that Nietzsche and other philosophers had presented and that came to be so utterly abused by the growing fascist and Nazi groups in the coming decades. However, the question remains, why was this part included? Where does it come from? The editor Sohlman was originally a liberal, but it seems that he turned more and more conservative in his ideas in opposition to socialism (Elovson 1953). Whether he had any influence on this is an open question, but it is a possibility. And, of course, as long as we do not know for certain who A. –e was, it is impossible to detect the interests behind this extended story with such a political message. On the other hand, as it is the horrible count Draculitz who is the promotor of these ideas, it could just as well and even more probably be a contrary point-of-view that the editor is trying to give as a protest against ongoing political activities. These latter interpretations seem more plausible as many English and European politicians and nobles disappear or are dismissed from their positions after Dracula's death in these versions which implies that their contact with Dracula had turned into a serious disadvantage for them. This is also a part of a chapter 'Final Words' that does not correspond to anything in the original. Punter's idea of the symbolic energy in the Gothic novel at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that has been discussed earlier on in this article also seems truly relevant as an influencing trait in this Swedish version (Punter 1996).

Here we also find an interesting detail that shows that the Swedish adaption is posterior to the original novel as doctor Seward in a conversation refers to the 'Orleon complot,' which were rumours of a conspiracy by the French royal pretender Louis Philippe Robert, duke of Orléans, who was supposed to organize an overthrowing of the French

republican government in 1898-1899, and since this comment refers to an event or rumours that had emerged after the publication of *Dracula* it must have been added later on. It also indicates a political reactionary touch and not just the elitist ideas of Draculitz and therefore the message must be contrary to these ideas.

*Bram Stoker's Unknown Life and Work*

As many contemporaries have remarked, Stoker was an extremely prolific writer as he had to write many letters a day as business manager to Henry Irving's Lyceum theatre, and therefore he had to dedicate his spare time to his novels and other writings (Skal 2015: 328-329). In *The Times* an unknown journalist wrote an article entitled 'Mr. Bram Stoker' in which he described the author in the following way:

A fluent and flamboyant writer, with a manner and mannerisms which faithfully reflected the mind which moved the pen, Stoker managed to find time, amid more arduous and distracting work to write a good deal. He was the master of a particularly lurid and creepy kind of fiction represented by 'Dracula' and other novels. (April 1912)

There are several biographies of Bram Stoker such as the ones by Belford (1996), Murray (2004) and Skal (2016), but since Stoker's correspondence and comments have been found and published (Eighteen-Bisang and Miller 2008; Browning 2012; Skal 2015) we have now more information about Stoker's original ideas and thoughts. However, as Dacre Stoker (2012: 250) rightly points out, there was no contemporaneous biography of Stoker, and this means that there are many things that we are not able to find out afterwards.

A great part of Stoker's manuscripts and notes are now in the Rosenbach Museum and Library in Philadelphia (Eighteen-Bisang and Miller 2019: xxiii). The last contribution<sup>11</sup> is Dacre Stoker's and J. D. Barker's *Dracul* which is a fictional biography of Bram Stoker based on his notes and journals. In this novel Bram has a nanny who turns out to be a vampire, and it is she who heals him and turns the sickly little boy into a fine sportsman, and this transformation of the boy who was not expected to survive because of an illness that kept him in bed (and that

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<sup>11</sup> The Irish author Joseph O'Connor has also published a fictional biography but focusing more on Henry Irving, *Shadowplay*, 2019.



he never revealed), corresponds to Stoker's actual experience as, at the age of seven, he was somehow healed and grew up to be a sturdy sportsman (Belford 1996: 13-20, 29-30). Like Harry Potter, Bram Stoker was 'the boy who lived'! His great-grandnephew gives an unexpected explanation to this important and happy change, thereby turning Bram Stoker into a vampire-influenced human.

To make the novel *Dracula* scarier, Dacre Stoker (2018: 484) states that 'Bram Stoker did not intend for Dracula to serve as fiction but as a warning of a very real evil.' Thereby the younger Stoker adds argumentative strength to the plot of his own novel. That an author suggests that his story is real is nothing unusual in literature and must of course not be taken seriously.

The Romanian researcher Paul Binder is convinced that the Dracula family branch from Vlad Dracula's third son Vlad suffered from porphyria, which causes paleness, photosensitivity, and gum disease that makes the teeth look longer, all symptoms that make the patient 'vampire like.' As this family is called *Draculya* and Dracula himself, at least on one occasion, wrote his name *Dragwlya*, Binder considers his claim proven (Kaliff 2009), but that is only a suggestion that has not really been convincingly proven.

However, it remains interesting that both the historical person and the author of the novel have been suggested to be influenced by vampires or vampire folklore. Dacre Stoker seems reluctant to see Vlad III Dracula as the origin of Dracula, but there are clear indications in the novel. When Jonathan Harker meets the count for the first time, the description is almost word for word the very same description as the one given by the papal nuncio, Nocolò Modrussa, who met the real prince in 1470 (Söhrman 2016: 14), and the description of a relative (brother) of the count is to a great extent a description of the life of Vlad's brother Radu.

On the other hand, Radu Florescu and Raymond McNally (1972, 1989) have convincingly showed the influence that the historic Wallachian prince's personality had on Stoker's vampire and this turned out to be a minor literary revolution.

Another coincidence that has never been pointed out, as far as I know, is that the mad Renfield, who wanted to become a vampire, torments rats and birds, exactly as Prince Vlad is supposed to have done as he was held prisoner in Hungary, according to Russian sources (Efrosin; Söhrman 2016: 133).

One reasonable theory of how Stoker came up with the idea of using the name Dracula is his meeting with the Hungarian historian Hermann Bamburgers, who called himself Arminius Vambery, and just his self-imposed surname seems significant. He is supposed to have been the model for Van Helsing in the novel, and there are clear references to his research work in the novel. For some time Stoker intended to call the novel *The Un-Dead* or, as an alternative *The Dead Un-Dead*, but at least at some point Stoker called it *The Wampyre* (written with a W), with a reference to Polidori's short story, but this name disappeared in 1890 (Eighteen-Bisang and Miller 2019: 24, 28).

The year after the publication of Dacre Stoker's novel *Dracula*, David Thomas Moore published a collection of five short stories called *Dracula—Rise of the beast* written by five different authors trying to link Prince Vlad III to Count Dracula in an interesting way, where the vampire possesses different bodies throughout history starting with Attila the Hun and connecting with Vlad Dracula and king Matthias of Hungary and then the infamous Hungarian bloody countess Elisabeth (Erzsébeth) Báthory whose husband Ferenc is possessed by the vampire. The authors have mainly kept Bram Stoker's epistolary style with letters and comments from different persons and from different epochs in order to give a vampyresque continuity of the prince transformed into a count and the idea is that these letters have been left by Mina and Jonathan Harker's great grandson Jonathan Holmwood who answers a request from Dani Văduvă (which means 'widow' in Romanian) as Jonathan's father presumably had done some investigations on vampires due to the family's connection with count Dracula. And, finally, it is stated that the role of the evil power is taken over from the finally dead vampire, Vlad III, by the Raven King, i.e. the Hungarian king Matthias Corvinus or Matthew Corbin in his later disguise. It is therefore linked to the Stoker stories and not just another example of the vampire literature that has been ever so rich especially since Anne Rice's famous novel *Interview with the Vampire* was published in 1994.

### *Conclusions*

*Dracula* is not just a Gothic novel that has become a classic belonging to the Western canon but it is also a piece of work that has been re-evaluated and which many recent events have opened up to new interpretations. It is also interesting and a bit strange that forgotten

versions (Icelandic and Swedish) have recently been found in Scandinavia without any trace of an English original. Who changed the text and why did they end up in Scandinavia, while reasonably faithful translations have been made to other languages?

In order to answer the four questions suggested at the beginning of this article we cannot say that these early translations or adaptations change our interpretation of Stoker's novel *Dracula*, but Dracula turns more sinister in the Scandinavian versions as he declares his fascist and elitist ideas and has an army of vampyresque relatives and monsters, while in the canonical version of the novel, count Dracula is a loner who does not entertain any ambitions to alter the world order, even if he wants to find more victims for himself (and other vampires) by moving to England.

The names of the characters are different in these Scandinavian versions, and, in the *Dagen* version, the events are explained in more detail and are partly more Gothic and thrilling. Some parts of the story are considerably extended and changed, such as the political message and the deceitful and beautiful female vampire who seduces Harker. The events also do not always take place in the same order.

Some of the persons and events are found in the Scandinavian versions are mentioned in Stoker's notes, suggesting, for example, that Stoker had thought of this blond female vampire, and as she is also present in 'Dracula's Guest' she could be considered an idea of Stoker's. On the other hand, there are many things that are not found in his notes or journal, so to what extent was Stoker himself aware of the changes? It is hard to say, and it is also impossible to find convincing proofs that he was the original author of these Scandinavian versions, but since things that are found in Stoker's notes are used in *Mörkrets makter*, some kind of connection must have existed. Suffice to say, at this stage, that there were connections between the Stoker family and the intellectual elite in Stockholm, but whether that means that the newspapers got access to an unknown and longer version of Stoker's text is more than doubtful, at least with our limited knowledge of this possibility. However, that the Icelandic version is an abridged and adapted version of the shorter Swedish version seems plausible. As neither Sweden nor Iceland had signed the Bern convention there are many reasons to presume changes and adaptations of the text by known and unknown writers, although we have only suspicions as to the identity of them.

The discovery of Stoker's notes and comments have given a lot of new material, but there are obvious lacunas in our knowledge that must be investigated. There are now also new, sometimes fanciful, interpretations as in Dacre Stoker's novel *Dracul*. However, this article has hopefully shed some new light on the novel and its enigmatic 'new' versions and its way into the literary canon in many countries. Let us sum up this article with the words of Bram Stoker that Dacre Stoker (2018: 492) quotes: 'There are mysteries which men can only guess at, which age by age they may resolve only in part.'

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