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Vampire is other, a symbol that inhabits the edges of boundaries and exists in liminal spaces. The vampire is a figure that at once inspires fear and longing within itself and in those with whom the creature comes into contact. *The Vampire in Nineteenth-Century Literature: A Feast of Blood* outlines the cultural characteristics of the Victorian vampire figure, arguing that John William Polidori's 1819 *The Vampyre: A Tale* solidified vague and fragmented folk tales and legends about the walking, life-feasting dead into a new version that set the standard for the Victorian literary vampire and beyond (1). The book also looks at other Victorian iterations of the vampire that contributed to its currently recognized version. Through collected essays focusing on four major themes—race and postcolonization, desire and sexuality, time and history, and adaptation (6)—this volume examines how the vampire represents shifting cultural norms and fears of the Victorians in an era of unprecedented social and economic upheaval. The collection also traces the wanderings of the vampire, "not[ing] the distinctly global exchange of ideas" (3) that contribute to its modern conception, as the volume explores the colonial influences of the monster (4).

Vampires inhabit spaces of liminality, muddling the lines of time, identity, history, doubleness, life, and death. Thus, while the four thematic divisions are not clearly delineated either in the table of contents or between sections, the editors note that the thematic focuses feed into and build upon one another. Thematic section divisions are not expressly noted in heading or subheadings in the organizational structure of the book but only mentioned in the introduction.

Notating these sections would have contributed to more effective organization and easier access to the contents, major themes, and arguments of the individual essays and provided more coherence to the collection.

The first section of the collection focuses on postcolonial and racial identities represented by the vampire through the examination of non-British, non-traditional influences on the Victorian vampire legend. The three essays in this section focus alternately on Black, invalid, and Hindu representations of the life-feasting creature. A representative essay contained in this section is Giselle Liza Anatol's "Black Female Vampires in Nineteenth-Century Writing and Folklore." It considers African influences on vampire lore, preceding Bram Stoker's popular novel *Dracula* (1897), which "range from newspaper articles about slave revolts, to ethnographic texts describing the bloodsucking, skin-shedding *soucouyant* of Caribbean lore, to literary works such as Florence Marryat's *The Blood of the Vampire*" (11). All of these texts include Black vampire imagery, especially that of "vampiric Black women in particular" (11), and highlight the fears of colonial administrations. Colonial interests in the Caribbean use news reports to characterize slave revolts with vampiric symbolism and imagery, including the "consumption of blood" (12) and cannibalism. The Black woman vampire of *The Blood of the Vampire* (1897) is not bound by convention or social and cultural norms of family and home but is considered to be out of control.

Much of this fear of the Black female vampire's threat to British colonial interests is bound up in the "anxiety over African women's uncontrollable bodies" (13) and the effect this has on the empire. Indeed, the vampire of Marryat's work does not even feast on the blood of her victims but on their "energy, health, and life essence" (17), feeding into the fears about the overly lustful African female. The lust and desire associated with the Black woman vampire figure translates to fear of unpure British bloodlines. Anatol even argues that *Dracula* raises questions of ethnic

impurity and the tainting of English blood with foreign vampire blood (23). Indeed, this concern of foreign blood staining the purity of the British line, in the mind of colonial interests, could come from either the impurity of eastern European Slavic threats or African Caribbean ones, thus making the foreign vampire an existential threat to the empire.

Related to the theme of endangered bloodlines, the second section of the collection examines vampires as embodiments of lust and desire. Representative essays discuss the queer themes in *Carmilla* (1872) and characterize the vampire as a symbol of addiction. In Kimberly Cox's "The Vampire's Touch in 'Olalla' and *The Blood of the Vampire*," the author continues the theme of the sensual nature of the foreign female vampire in relation to perceived threats to the British empire. Both the title character of Robert Louis Stevenson's "Olalla" (1885) and Harriet, the central figure of Marryat's *The Blood of the Vampire*," possess unusual strength in their touch and at the same time entrance and repel the "young, White Englishmen" with whom they come into contact (115). The exotic foreign provenance of both Olalla (Spanish) and Harriet (African) presents a threat to polite British society. Neither woman can or will have children, which threatens the "reproductive family" (115) and values of Victorian familial culture. Even Olalla's mother and brother possess touches that, at the same time, repel and entice the British soldier with unnatural attractions.

However, although Cox argues that Olalla's touch represents how "Victorian xenophobia and gender normativity served to demonize erotic contact" (112), she misses something in Stevenson's story. While Olalla is exotic and foreign to the soldier and represents to him an enticement away from polite British society and any hope for family, Olalla's touch actually saves the soldier, literally and physically, from her mother and brother, and later from herself. Olalla's humble mission to put a stop to her feral and cursed bloodline will not allow her to marry or

reproduce. Olalla sacrifices herself, her future happiness and hope of family or companionship, to save the soldier from her fate. Although Olalla is a foreign, exotic sexual enticement for the soldier, her self-control and denial of her own desires ultimately allow the soldier to escape the monsters of her house. Olalla is the hero and savior of the story as she denies herself to save the soldier. This turns the notion of the devouring foreign vampire on its head.

The third thematic division of the collection focuses on "Vampiric Time and History" (6). The two essays in this section explore the liminal spaces of time and how the figure of the vampire relates to spatial and chronological concerns. Both essays examine the activity of different groups in British society that were perceived and characterized as vampires. Rebecca Nesvet in "'Keep[ing] Time at Arm's-Length': Vampire and Veterans in *Varney*" interrogates the perception of British war veterans of the Victorian period as portrayed in *Varney the Vampire* (1845-47), which depicts the "social stigmatization of the veteran" (130) as vampire, living off the funds of the community and no longer holding military positions of consequence. Nesvet argues compellingly that the veteran, much like the vampire, is a creature of the past who haunts the present (128). She suggests that perhaps *Varney* represents a "brief literary tradition … of veteran trauma" (134).

The fourth and final section of the collection includes essays dealing with the adaptation of the Victorian vampire story in stage productions, in nineteenth-century America, and in modern Neo-Victorian retellings. In "America's First Vampire Novel and the Supernatural as Artifice," Gary D. Rhodes and John Edgar Browning discuss the American perception of horror and the first vampire tale published in the United States, *The Vampire; or, Detective Brand's Greatest Case* (171), which was published in 1885, predating Stoker's *Dracula*. Before 1885, the American reading public thrived on tales of true crime and reports of court and legal proceedings. Since the

mid-eighteenth century, "gallows [dime] broadsides" were popular with American audiences (173). The horror genre tended toward the realistic or real crime matters; the idea was to "invoke the supernatural only to rationalize it" (173). Thus, although *Detective Brand's Greatest Case* was something new to American audiences, it also continued in this same vein. The American press used the term "vampire" to refer to people who took advantage of others or to wasting diseases. Similarly, the novel is a detective crime story in which the vampire is merely an evil, psychotic man using the vampire guise to commit crimes. Although the novel does use the artifice of a vampire, the supernatural horror is ultimately revealed as human "trickery" (173).

*The Vampire in Nineteenth-Century Literature: A Feast of Blood* includes a diverse collection of essays that examines critical moments, issues, and themes in the Victorian vampire tradition. It explores widely the progenitors and influences of vampire legend, globally and in British literature, and adaptations and reiterations, both Victorian and modern. The collection also narrowly focuses on critical themes in Victorian vampire studies such as colonial xenophobia, lust and desire, and time while also exploring new ideas found in the figure of the vampire. This is a valuable resource for anyone researching vampire lore and literature and the relation to the Victorian period.

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