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Early Nineteenth-Century Vampire Literature and the  
Rejection of Enlightenment Rationalism

by

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*To Rachel, thank you for putting up with the long distance and hours  
and for supporting me in the pursuit of my dreams.*

*To Andrew, thank you for giving me the opportunity to study the  
the wonderful world of vampires!*

## **Abstract**

This thesis argues that early nineteenth-century vampire literature rejected the Enlightenment's attempts to rationalize and explain away the early eighteenth-century vampire craze. Enlightenment scholars of the eighteenth century rationalized famous vampire accounts to dispel supernatural beliefs in the Age of Reason. Through an examination of the tales of John Polidori, Lord Byron, E.T.A. Hoffmann, Johann Ludwig Tieck, Théophile Gautier, and Aleksei Tolstoy this research reveals that they used the central themes of early eighteenth-century vampire accounts in conjunction with Enlightenment vampire metaphors to reject Enlightenment rationalism. Furthermore, the vampire was contemporized in the nineteenth century as an aristocratic evil, providing an escape for readers from their current reality by returning to the realm of the supernatural. This thesis follows the reader response approach focusing on early eighteenth-century vampire accounts, Enlightenment scholarship that rationalized supernatural beliefs, and the contents and consumption of early nineteenth-century vampire tales.

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## Introduction, Context, and Methodology

Vampire literature in the first half of the nineteenth century rejected the French Enlightenment rationalization of vampire epidemics from the early eighteenth century. Throughout the eighteenth century French Enlightenment scholars refuted claims of the validity of vampires, mocking the idea of their existence, through Enlightenment rationalism and Enlightenment irreligion.<sup>1</sup> Nineteenth-century vampire tales reiterated known legends, myths, and folklore condemned by the Enlightenment, all the while contemporizing the folkloric vampire in the guise of the metaphorical political vampires created by the Enlightenment. The impact of early nineteenth-century vampire literature and the inadvertently mocking political metaphors of Enlightenment scholars on nineteenth-century readers are even more apparent now. Through Sara Libby Robinson's study *Blood Will Tell: Vampires as Political Metaphors before World War I* one can see how often vampires were used as political tools in the latter half of the nineteenth century. If the belief in vampires, the fears towards them, and the desire for them had not been real to the public, they would not have achieved such a strong impact and would not have continued to be used so extensively.<sup>2</sup>

Vampires have played an important role in society and thought for more than three centuries. As of late, they have re-emerged as a subject of extensive academic study and research possibly due to their resurgence in pop culture. They can be found throughout all forms of fiction, from love stories, to horror stories and even children's books. Up until and

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<sup>1</sup> For the remainder of this project in discussing the French Enlightenment and French Enlightenment scholars, I will be referring to both as simply the Enlightenment and Enlightenment scholars, respectively.

<sup>2</sup> Sara Libby Robinson, *Blood Will Tell: Vampires as Political Metaphors Before World War I* (Brighton: Academic Studies Press, 2011): 1-192.

during the eighteenth century, the similar phenomena of witches and witchcraft were a consuming fear throughout most parts of Europe. Supposed witches, male and female, were burned at the stake. Whether or not they were actually witches or rather just unfortunate targets of personal vendettas is not important at this moment, but simply the fact that witchcraft was a common superstition found in almost every European country. In the eighteenth century, the decline in the popular belief in witches and witchcraft coincided with the rise of the vampire craze in Europe. Partially this can be attributed to Maria Theresa, Empress of Austria, by officially recognizing vampire incidents when she “removed from the Parish Priests, Inquisitors and local authorities all power to deal with the world of magic.”<sup>3</sup>

Although many scholars and vampire enthusiasts will state that vampire beliefs—or beliefs that resemble vampirism such as the sucking of one’s life source or the consumption of blood—can be traced back thousands of years, it was not until the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that Western Europeans became aware of vampire sightings and disturbances.<sup>4</sup> Such stories from Eastern Europe made their way to Western Europe through returning travellers and soldiers, government investigations into cases of vampirism and the annexation of territories filled with vampire lore by the Austrian Empire. Larry Wollff argues that the concept

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<sup>3</sup> Christopher Frayling, *Vampyres: Lord Byron to Count Dracula* (London: Faber and Faber, 1992): 30.

<sup>4</sup> Montague Summers and Dudley Wright initiated vampire scholarship in the twentieth century. Their monographs included extensive vampire connections that reach back throughout the ages. This trend continues until the present as vampire monographs and compilations continue to cite vampire connections that have existed since before the Common Era. Montague Summers, *The Vampire in Lore and Legend* (Mineola: Dover Publications, Inc., 2001). Originally published in 1929 by E.P. Dutton, New York; Dudley Wright, *The Book of Vampires* (Mineola: Dover Publications, Inc., 2006). Originally published in 1924 as an extension of the 1914 edition by W. Rider & Son, Ltd, London. Furthermore, it is not only the history of vampire beliefs that is contended. Katharina M. Wilson writes about the origins of the word vampire and presents four different arguments as to its origins. She argues that it is probably of Slavic origin but it was Western Europe that popularized the word vampire. Katharina M. Wilson, “The History of the Word *Vampire*” in *The Vampire: A Casebook*, ed. Alan Dundes (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998): 3-9.

of Eastern Europe is a creation of the Enlightenment as a way to distinguish Western Europe from, what civilized Western Europeans believed to be, uncivilized Eastern Europe. Although many scholars who wrote about Eastern Europe had no personal experience in which they based their ideas, many travellers from Western Europe returned to write about their voyages creating strict binaries that labeled Russia and eastward uncivilized compared with the lands to the west.<sup>5</sup>

In the 1730s, scholars of the newly formed modern university began to focus their studies on vampirism. They provided a rationalized understanding of vampirism through theological studies. By mid century Enlightenment scholars were not giving as much credence to the validity of vampire claims, but they helped spread the idea of vampires simply by recognizing others' beliefs within their work. Furthermore, they used the main themes and legends of the vampire incidents to create their own vampires through the use of political metaphors. Although to contemporary Enlightenment scholars the vampire craze in Eastern Europe was quickly dismissed as mere eastern superstition of the uncivilized, in actuality the vampire had penetrated Western Europe through word of mouth and scholarly attention after the annexation of Serbia.

Even though the power of vampires in popular imagination continues to this very day and continues to grow in popularity, as can be seen in film, fiction, and popular culture, the turn of the nineteenth century is one of the most important moments in vampire history. Vampires moved from the realm of fact to one of fiction. For the most part though, this only seems to be

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<sup>5</sup> Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994): 4-49.

within the scholarly world. Cases of vampires or vampirism in the eighteenth century were not fiction, at least not when it came to methods of handling them.<sup>6</sup> Supposed vampires were dug up from their graves, staked, beheaded, and burned. Enlightenment scholars and theologians argued against the existence of vampires and mocked belief in them to push them into the realm of fiction and create a distinct contrast that differentiated the West from the East. Although vampire literature in the first half of the nineteenth century is fictitious, writers of vampire literature provided a new reality to vampire superstitions by bringing them into the contemporary world of the nineteenth century and placing them within the context of Western European society, while basing their tales on the vampire epidemics of the early eighteenth century. By doing so, the typical vampire changed from a peasant in rural societies to a member of the elite, or aristocracy. The vampire's new persona, widely disseminated via print media, was not all that unbelievable after centuries of the majority of the European population being metaphorically drained of their livelihood by the upper echelons of society.

This paper will make use of a wide variety of different forms of sources. Through an analysis of some of the most well-known vampire accounts, eighteenth-century Enlightenment thought, and early nineteenth-century vampire fiction/literature, this paper will show the continued impact of vampire beliefs on the general European public and the rejection of Enlightenment rationalism and Enlightenment irreligion. It will directly engage the ideas found

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<sup>6</sup> Summers provides a description of how to destroy a vampire. His comments portray how non-fictitious vampires were to the superstitious mind of the early eighteenth century. He states: "When the stake has been thrust with one drive through the Vampire's heart his head should be cut off, and this is to be done with the sharp edge of a sexton's spade, rather than with a sword." Summers, *Vampires and Vampirism*, 206.



within nineteenth century literature to show, first, the connection to actual vampire cases from the previous century and, second, the rejection of Enlightenment scholarship.

The first chapter focuses on the accounts of Arnold Paole, Peter Plogojowitz, and Pitton de Tournafort's vampire. They can be found in almost every scholarly monograph on the subject of vampires. Although they are all quite similar in their translations, as most are just copied from another vampire monograph, there are significant differences in the lacking of information. This paper will make use of Paul Barber's translations from *Vampires, Burial and Death: Folklore and Reality* as it seems to be the most complete and thorough direct translation.<sup>7</sup>

The second chapter provides an analysis of Enlightenment scholarship. To provide a thorough understanding of the ideas of Enlightenment scholars this paper will make use of two different forms of scholarship. Firstly, it will provide an extensive look and analysis of Voltaire's definition of vampires from his *Dictionnaire Philosophique*. Voltaire's definition is exemplary of many Enlightenment reactions to the vampire craze of the early eighteenth century. Secondly, this paper will make use of Christopher Frayling's discussion of Enlightenment reactions towards the vampire in *Vampyres: Lord Byron to Count Dracula*. Frayling provides an extensive and inclusive analysis of different reactions by Enlightenment scholars. Although it is more fitting for a study such as this to directly use primary documents, these documents can be found in many different kinds of vampire scholarship. Frayling has managed to create an

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<sup>7</sup> Paul Paul Barber, *Vampires, Burial, and Death: Folklore and Reality* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988): 15; Translations of vampire accounts can be found in almost every vampire monograph or compilation of short stories. For the most part, the translations vary or are paraphrased, and often contain only sections of the account that are relevant to the argument being made by the author. Paul Barber discusses the issues associated with the different translations of vampire accounts.

encompassing view that brings together an extensive variety of Enlightenment scholars' thoughts and quotes. Frayling's analysis provides a clear and concise view of Enlightenment scholars who dismissed vampire superstitions, those who mocked believers in vampire superstitions, those who dismissed vampire superstitions while creating metaphorical vampires, and those who attempted to rationalize the superstitions that surrounded the deceased bodies that were claimed to be vampires.

Lastly, the third chapter will provide an in-depth analysis of vampire literature in the first half of the nineteenth century, focusing directly on vampire short stories and the existing modern secondary scholarship. The reasoning behind focusing on short stories is that vampire stories in the period under discussion were short. It was not until the latter half of the century that vampires began to invade the realm of the novel. Although *Varney the Vampire* was released in the middle of the nineteenth century, it can technically be considered a novel for its extended length as it was released as a serial. This study leaves *Varney the Vampire* alone as it would need its own extensive study to adequately tackle the content.<sup>8</sup> The vampire tales included in this paper are as follows: John Polidori's *The Vampyre*, Lord Byron's *The End of My Journey*, E.T.A. Hoffmann's *Aurelia*, Johann Ludwig Tieck's *Wake Not the Dead*, Théophile Gautier's *La Morte Amoureuse* (translated as *The Deathly Lover* or *Clarimonde/Clarimonda*), and Aleksei Tolstoy's *The Family of the Vourdalak*.

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<sup>8</sup> To understand the extensive nature of *Varney the Vampire* one must only look at recent publications of the vampire tale in its entirety. It is a mammoth book that spans just over 800 pages. James Malcom Rymer, *Varney the Vampire: or, The Feast of Blood*, Introduction by Curt Herr (Crestline: Zittaw Press, 2008).

A study such as this uses literature in an unorthodox fashion. It does not directly look at who the authors were or even try to provide an understanding of why authors were writing these stories. In a different fashion, this paper lets the stories speak for themselves. It uses what is said in the stories; whether it is what the characters are saying, what is being said about them, or what they are doing to focus on how they were consumed and their lasting effects: in other words, what the stories' readers read and how it can possibly be interpreted. It follows the methodological model of the recent vampire scholarship by Sara Libby Robinson. In her *Blood Will Tell* she looks at vampire metaphors of the latter half of the nineteenth century. She was interested in what "looking at the text, speaking for itself, could reveal about the beliefs and prejudices of the time and place in which it was written, whether or not the author was conscious of this when writing."<sup>9</sup> This project follows that model methodologically, while focusing directly on how the vampire returned to prominence in the minds of the European population battling the scholarly world of the Enlightenment and its efforts to rationalize and explain the fearsome creature—the vampire.

Yet the point of this project is not to claim that context is unimportant. Context is extremely important, just in another fashion. In other words, the context of the author or understanding why he wrote his tale is not so important; it is the context in which the readers of the tales were consuming the vampire literature and what can be learned from the reader response approach. It is almost a form of interpretive anthropology as best said by Clifford

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<sup>9</sup> Robinson, xix.

Geertz: it “is not to answer our deepest questions, but to make available to us answers that others...have given, and thus to include them in the consultable record of what man has said.”<sup>10</sup>

Tales of the supernatural vampire reached western European populations at the beginning of the eighteenth century; the vampire continued its rise into the spotlight through scholarly attention, ultimately reaching its zenith in the realm of fiction at the beginning of the nineteenth century, where it continues to reign until this very day. Although there are a select few vampire stories from the eighteenth century in literature and poetry, it was not until the nineteenth century that vampire tales really began to grab the attention of the Western European population. This can be justified by the number of theatrical plays that hit the stage after the release of Polidori’s *The Vampyre* and the number of publications of vampire literature.

The eighteenth century saw vast social and hierarchical changes through the French Revolution and the Enlightenment. The effects of the French Revolution reverberated all across Europe and social classes. The aristocracy and monarchs of Europe watched in horror as the French leaders and upper echelons of French society crumbled at the hands of the masses. The common people of Europe watched in awe as their French counterparts broke free of the chains of inequality and oppression. All Europeans recognized the instability and bloodshed that flooded the streets of their French neighbours.

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<sup>10</sup> Clifford Geertz, “Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture,” in *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (Basic Books, 1973): 30.

The French Revolution, in essence, was caused by the apparent inequalities suffered by the masses. The monarchy was overturned in a battle against feudalism, aristocratic excess, and religious power and privileges. The French revolution was another example of the instability felt throughout Europe, a continent racked by war and bloodshed spanning centuries. Furthermore, the French revolution drew on the ideals of the Enlightenment. Enlightenment thinkers had mocked vampire accounts to discredit them. The revolution, representing the ideals of the Enlightenment, resulted in decades of war under the new French leader, Napoleon. It is not surprising to see a rejection of Enlightenment rationalism and Enlightenment irreligion; Europe had been turned upside down by a war instigated by the ideals of reason. A return to the supernatural world without rationalization and reason provided an escape from the present. Keeping this in mind, it does not seem to be surprising that the vampire literature craze of the early nineteenth century began a couple years after the fall of Napoleon and the Congress of Vienna.

Although war had always been a fact of life, the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth century had been filled with constant religious wars that devastated the lives of the population. Wars had caused great famines, spread disease, and fuelled persecution of any and all who opposed or failed to support the cause. Although all of this seems far from important to vampire literature in the early nineteenth century, it lies right at the heart of the issue. The European mind was constantly concerned with natural enemies, in the form of war, and supernatural enemies, in the form of witches and vampires. Furthermore, the wars were a natural religious battle, while vampires—and witchcraft for that matter—were supernatural

religious battles. To be more concise, religious beliefs were a core component of the unease and instability that was felt by the European population. In Eastern Europe, vampire beliefs may have been more prominent, but western Europeans were not far behind. Through military service soldiers encountered the superstitions of the east, returning westward with new ideas to cause fear in the minds of those unaware, yet not unable to believe, and the supernatural in the form of witchcraft was already an aspect of life in the west. Although they were late in familiarizing themselves with the vampire, the countries of Western Europe were filled with supernatural lore that was localized and that crossed borders connecting populations through their fear of the unknown. By the turn of the nineteenth century, ideas of vampires were common in Western Europe. Beliefs in witchcraft were on the decline in all of Europe, and the vampire was making his rise to prominence, but not without heavy resistance.

Vampire scholarship of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries is very similar to the scholarship and accounts of the eighteenth century in its rationalist approach. Early twentieth century vampire scholars, such as Dudley Wright and Montague Summers, produced extensive monographs of vampire accounts. They focused on Dom Calmet's eighteenth-century treatise to form the basis for their studies, producing reiterations of vampire accounts from the early eighteenth century and vampire beliefs that reach back through the centuries. Their monographs are problematic for the advancement of vampire scholarship as they do not introduce any new information concerning vampirism, except for Summers' extensive rants about the supernatural that are far-reaching in their connections to vampires. The monographs went on to be the basis for much of the future vampire scholarship up until the 1980s. While

simply reiterating vampire accounts, both provide minimal amounts of useful knowledge for furthering the understanding of vampire beliefs.

Even though most of their monographs can be dismissed for the lack of new research for vampire scholarship, they both contain an important aspect worth considering. Throughout Summers' extensive rants concerning the supernatural, what is most important is that he seems to believe what he is writing. This is an important point to consider as many of the vampire accounts of the early eighteenth century treated vampirism as truth. The account's authors had a difficult time not believing in vampires as they had witnessed the events. Furthermore, the actors within the accounts were also believers as shown by their methods and knowledge of handling the vampire. While most vampire scholarship has continuously attempted to rationalize the epidemics, Summers' beliefs connected him directly with those involved with vampires.<sup>11</sup>

The idea of beliefs also leads Wright's account. He introduces a very important point by quoting Pierart, who states: "After a crowd of facts of vampirism so often proved, shall we say that there are no more to be had, and that these never had a foundation? Nothing comes of nothing. Every belief, every custom, springs from facts and causes which give it birth."<sup>12</sup> Therefore, although the Enlightenment was able to provide a scientific rationalization for the vampire craze, it is irrelevant. What is important is that these people believed and they believed for a reason. Their belief system stemmed from their history of understanding

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<sup>11</sup> To understand Summers' belief in vampires see footnote 4. Summers presents methods of handling vampires as just that, a method of handling vampires. He does not state those methods were how believers dealt with vampires; the information seems to be presented more as a how-to guide, instead of a historical study presenting methods of the past.

<sup>12</sup> Wright, 8.

supernatural events. The vampire provided a coping mechanism for dealing with the unexplained, and they found truth within that understanding.

Piero Camporesi, in his study of the peasantry of preindustrial Europe in *Bread of Dreams*, furthers the argument that studying the context and beliefs of the peasantry is important for understanding history. “Historians need to address themselves to the myths by which people live, and the totality of the conditions which support these collective fantasies.”<sup>13</sup> In other words, rationalizing superstitions will not provide the historian with a full understanding. Looking at the actual events, the long standing beliefs surrounding the events, and the history of the beliefs together can provide a better understanding into the superstitions of the eighteenth and, for that matter, every century.

In the eighteenth century the Enlightenment provided a rationalization that undermined the vampire beliefs that flourished in Eastern Europe. The majority of vampire scholarship published in the past thirty years has repeated that fallacy. Although unlike the Enlightenment thinkers who mocked believers in vampires, recent scholars have again rationalized the vampire accounts to provide an understanding of the vampire in history. Paul Barber’s monograph *Vampires, Burial, and Death* provides an extensive analysis of the decomposition of the body and the details of the vampire accounts; in essence though, he is reiterating the Enlightenment rationalism found in Gerard Van Swieten’s study of the vampire epidemics. They both provide

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<sup>13</sup> Piero Camporesi, *Bread of Dreams: Food and Fantasy in Early Modern Europe*, translated by David Gentilcore (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989): 15.



scientific understandings for decomposition, blaming the lack of education for the lack of understanding of dead bodies.<sup>14</sup>

Both David Keyworth and Brian J. Frost use modern psychology to provide explanations for beliefs in the supernatural of the early eighteenth century. They both conclude that the vampire is basically in the mind of the beholder, whether it be through dreams or the sub-conscious. These arguments are not new. In 1744 Archbishop Giuseppe Davanzati claimed that it was all a result of the imaginations of peasants.<sup>15</sup> Camporesi follows a similar train of thought in believing that superstitions could be attributed to dream-like states during hallucinations, but at least he backs his argument with contemporary causes—the food peasants were eating.<sup>16</sup>

While their arguments are based on modern evidence, Keyworth and Frost put forth important points for understanding how vampire beliefs spread through Western Europe. Frost argues that it was the publication of scholarly treatises that disseminated the vampire craze; Keyworth attributes Western knowledge of the vampire, and the extensive amount of the scholarly treatises for that matter, to the annexation of parts of Eastern Europe into the Austrian Empire.<sup>17</sup>

Gabor Klaniczay follows that same argument. The Austrian annexation of Serbia forms one of the main focuses in his discussion of the rise of vampirism. In his chapter “The Decline

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<sup>14</sup> Paul Barber states that this is a “problem that arises naturally in any preliterate culture.”

<sup>15</sup> Frayling, 30.

<sup>16</sup> Camporesi, 18.

<sup>17</sup> Brian J. Frost, *The Monster With a Thousand Faces: Guises of the Vampire in Myth and Literature* (Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1989): 36; David Keyworth, *Troublesome Corpses: Vampires & Revenants From Antiquity to the Present* (Essex: Desert Island Books Limited, 2007): 217.

of Witches and the Rise of Vampires in the Eighteenth-Century Habsburg Monarchy” from his monograph *The Uses of Supernatural Power: The Transformation of Popular Religion in Medieval and Early-Modern Europe*, he discusses the impact the annexation had on the supernatural world of vampirism and witchcraft. He argues that in a form of “enlightened absolutism,” Empress Maria Theresa banned not only witch hunts, but the digging up of vampires.<sup>18</sup> Gerard Van Swieten, her chief physician, had provided a rationalized account of the vampire incidents recommending the need to stop such superstitions because of the desecration of the dead and the burning of those accused of witchcraft. Unlike other recent vampire scholarship, Klaniczay is not prone to offering modern explanations for the vampire craze. He has presented clear evidence to provide an understanding for the spread of vampire ideas. His focus is strictly on understanding the vampire as replacing the witch in the dominant position of supernatural beliefs. This is helpful for this study in understanding the transition from the vampire being a peasant belief to being the focus of scholarly attention during the Enlightenment. Furthermore, he provides an interesting argument as to why the vampire’s popularity and dissemination overtook the belief in witchcraft. He argues that the vampire as a corpse offered “tangible proof” for witnesses and was easier to place blame than on a living woman or man accused of witchcraft.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Gabor Klaniczay, “The Decline of Witches and the Rise of Vampires under the Eighteenth-Century Habsburg Monarchy” in *The Uses of Supernatural Power: The Transformation of Popular Religion in Medieval and Early-Modern Europe*, translated by Susan Singerman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990): 171.

<sup>19</sup> Klaniczay, 186.

## Chapter 1: Paole and Plogojwitz: Vampire Accounts and Believers

In order to understand the connections between vampire lore and literature, and the connection between the Enlightenment writings and their rejection by nineteenth-century literature, it is important to first take a look at the recorded cases of early eighteenth-century vampirism. One of the most prolific and well-known cases of vampirism is that of Arnod Paole.<sup>20</sup> This paper uses Paul Barber's translation from *Vampires, Burial, and Death: Folklore and Reality* as Barber strives to provide as accurate and direct translation as possible.<sup>21</sup> As one of the most prolific cases of vampirism, it is an important resource for this analysis as it would have been one of the main resources used by Enlightenment scholars to condemn and mock vampire superstitions. The contents of the account might seem ridiculous to modern medical knowledge, just as they seemed ridiculous to enlightened thinkers who understood the workings of a corpse. In this paper though, providing an understanding of decomposition is not important. This study focuses on what was recounted in the narrative, how it was attacked by scholars of the Enlightenment, and the rejection of the Enlightenment in nineteenth-century vampire literature by using the themes, ideas, and occurrences of eighteenth-century vampire incidents in a realistic nineteenth-century contemporary setting.

The written report concerning the epidemic that followed the death of Arnod Paole is not at firsthand. The investigator did not arrive until several years following the incident to investigate. Therefore, it consists of second-hand accounts that were relayed to the authorities. In mid 1720s, after having contact with a supposed vampire, Arnod Paole fell from

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<sup>20</sup> As translations vary, so does his name. Some of the variations are: Arnod Paole, Arnold Paole, Arnold Paul, etc.

<sup>21</sup> Barber, 15.

a wagon and died.<sup>22</sup> Within a month Paole was said to have returned from the grave to terrorize the town, killing several people. There were reports of townspeople being attacked during the night in their beds. Those attacked became vampires. No one was considered safe as vampirism spread through the township affecting men, women, and children. Furthermore, Paole was said to have taken to drinking the blood of animals which, in turn, accelerated the spread of vampirism through those who ate the infected animals. Paole was disinterred, along with all of his victims. The bodies were found to still be in healthy condition without decomposition, with plenty of fresh blood either on or in their bodies. The bodies were then staked and burned, some beheaded, and their ashes thrown either back into their graves or into the local river.<sup>23</sup>

There are several important themes appearing here that need to be discussed: midnight attacks, issues of blood, the state of bodies when dug up, methods of transmission, and methods of dealing with vampires. The midnight attacks are an important theme as they were prevalent in so many cases of vampirism and an important aspect of vampire literature. Similar to cases of apparitions, cases of vampirism are filled with accounts from witnesses complaining that the supposed vampire came to their home during the night and attacked them. In many of these accounts there is no drinking of blood, but the end result is still the same. After the attacks the victims themselves become seriously ill, and die shortly thereafter. In this vampire case, a woman is attacked at night by a vampire but there is no mention of blood and she is not

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<sup>22</sup> The report was written in 1732. Sources place the events in either 1726 or 1727.

<sup>23</sup> Barber, 15-18. Barber uses a German text originally published in 1732, republished in 1968 in, Dieter Sturm and Klaus Völker, *Von dem Vampiren oder Menschensaugern* (Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1968).

in the list of victims. As she is not mentioned, it can be assumed that she did not succumb to vampirism.<sup>24</sup> This is an important aspect to consider as David Keyworth argues that it was not until the eighteenth century that the vampire began to take the blood of his victims. Terrorization by revenants in previous centuries was not directly linked to blood.<sup>25</sup> The eighteenth-century beliefs connecting vampires to blood became the main theme in accounts during that period, Enlightenment scholarship, and the vampire in literature for centuries to come.

As previously discussed, the issue of blood is an important theme and needs to be given further attention, specifically in correlation with the state of the bodies when dug up and the methods of transmission. When suspected vampires were dug up their bodies had not yet decomposed and were filled with new blood. Although Enlightenment science and medicine would later rationalize such accounts by providing explanations for the lack of decomposition, the state of the corpses was enough to confirm the superstitious beliefs of the witnesses.<sup>26</sup> The authors of nineteenth-century literature rejected the rationalization of Enlightenment thinkers and used these themes and ideas in their tales of horror. Using recent superstitious beliefs to accentuate the horrors of their tales, nineteenth-century literature presented ideas already known, and possibly believed, to their readers. They presented their vampires as being completely unchanged by death. In Johann Ludwig Tieck's *Wake not the Dead* the vampire

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<sup>24</sup> Barber 17-18.

<sup>25</sup> Keyworth, 51-56.

<sup>26</sup> Barber states that when an individual dies a sudden death, the blood does not coagulate the same. After coagulating, it returns to a liquid state. This provides some understanding to the blood found on and in vampires. Many supposed vampires died suddenly, which would corroborate this evidence.

returns from the grave years after her death looking exactly as she had before her death.<sup>27</sup> In Théophile Gautier's *La Morte Amoureuse* the main character actually finds the vampire, body still intact and as she was in life, lying in a coffin with blood on her mouth.<sup>28</sup>

The connection between blood and methods of transmission is another important theme used in nineteenth-century literature. In Paole's case of vampirism, all those who are infected and become vampires have a connection through blood, whether it be smearing of vampire blood, being bitten by a vampire, or eating animals that have been drained of blood by a vampire. Enlightenment scholars, such as Voltaire, attacked the absurdity of such notions and made jokes about the very idea of men returning from the grave to feast on the blood of the living. From the very start, nineteenth-century literature focused directly on the consumption of blood as the main method of vampire attack. In 1819, John Polidori's vampire first consumed the blood of a young Greek peasant girl then finished his reign of terror on the main character's sister when he "glutted his thirst" in his attack.<sup>29</sup> This trend continues to this day as the vampire's victims always feel the teeth of their attackers. Although it is how vampires kill their prey, the transmission of vampirism through the consumption of a victim's blood is not a central theme found in the initial vampire stories of the nineteenth century. After succumbing to the vampire, victims are usually not discussed. It was not until Aleksei Tolstoy's *The Family*

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<sup>27</sup> Johann Ludwig Tieck, *Wake not the Dead*, c.1800; in Michael Sims ed., *Dracula's Guest: A Connoisseur's Collection of Victorian Vampire Stories* (New York: Walker and Company, 2010): 78.

<sup>28</sup> Théophile Gautier, *La Morte Amoureuse*, 1843. Translated and published in English as *The Deathly Lover* in Sims, 131.

<sup>29</sup> John Polidori, *The Vampyre and Other Tales of the Macabre*, eds. Robert Morrison and Chris Baldick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998): 23. *The Vampyre* originally published by Sherwood, Neely, and Jones in 1819.

of *the Vourdalak* in 1839 that this theme would re-emerge.<sup>30</sup> In previous vampire tales, it is never told how the vampires became what they are and once the victims are dead, they stay dead or are no longer discussed. In Tolstoy's tale, the initial man infected spreads vampirism throughout the whole town. This is very similar to the account of Paole. After he returned to his town, just like Tolstoy's initial vampire, the whole town was in danger of being infected as the victim count rose and infected vampires furthered the spread.

Lastly, the methods of dealing with the vampires in Paole's account are important aspects of vampire themes to come. To dispense with the vampires, the townspeople in Paole's account staked, beheaded, and burned the corpses of vampires. Not until later in the nineteenth century would all of these become necessary to dispense with vampires. In the first half of the century the vampires in literature were destroyed by use of just the stake. Tieck's vampire is staked with a dagger to the heart by the very man who requested she rise from the dead. In *The Mysterious Stranger*, an anonymous and slightly later tale, the vampire is staked through the lid of his coffin, sealing him inside and stopping his reign of terror.<sup>31</sup>

While not in the Arnod Paole incident, another important vampire trend found in vampire accounts is one of the most important aspects of vampire literature in the nineteenth and, even more so, the twentieth and twenty-first century. This aspect is the sexuality of the vampire. In the case of Arnod Paole there is no discussion of sexuality; the focus stays on the spread of vampirism, the transmission of blood, and the destruction of the bodies after they

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<sup>30</sup> Aleksei Tolstoy, *The Family of the Vourdalak*, 1839. Originally published in French; in Sims, 144.

<sup>31</sup> Anonymous, *The Mysterious Stranger*, 1860. Anonymously published in *Odds and Ends* magazine in 1860; in Sims, 232-233.

have been dug up. In other cases of vampirism sexuality was a key component. Gabor Klaniczay argues that sexuality was an important factor in vampire cases as can be seen in the incident of the vampire Kaszparek who returned every night “to pay secret visits to his widow.”<sup>32</sup> Vampires of the nineteenth century were sexual predators. Polidori’s vampire is alluring to all he encounters and destroys the main character’s sister on their wedding night. Tieck’s vampire fulfills her husband’s every sexual desire then drinks from him once he is asleep. Gauthier’s vampire is a beautiful seductress who comes to her victim’s room in the middle of the night to drain his blood and life. Tolstoy’s vampire uses her sexuality to lure her intended victim into her arms, knowing of his love and lust for her. The inherent sexuality of eighteenth-century vampires may have been a cause of fear for the loved ones of supposed vampires, but it caught the imagination of the readers of nineteenth century and ensured its popularity. To this very day, the vampire’s popularity can be seen in the amount of new literature that continues to be written and published.

Not long before Arnold Paole rose from the dead to terrorize a small Serbian town, in 1725 Peter Plogojowitz, a recently deceased Serbian man, was believed to be a vampire who terrorized his village and claimed nine victims. The account of Plogojowitz reached the west, as Paul Barber argues, because parts of Serbia and Walachia became part of the Austrian Empire with the Peace of Passarowitz in 1718. The territory in question had previously been under the

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<sup>32</sup> Klaniczay, 184.



rule of the Ottoman Empire and with the annexation came reports of the dead rising from their graves.<sup>33</sup>

Again, this paper looks to Paul Barber for his translation of the account. Barber provides a direct translation, while others have simply paraphrased. Barber claims that prior translations or paraphrasing lose details that may be important for understanding the contemporary beliefs of the vampire craze.<sup>34</sup> This paper will not provide a translation, but, rather, an analysis of the account to understand the lore that would later be used to cause horror through the medium of fiction.

Peter Plogojowitz lived and died in the village of Kisilova. In the week following his death, there were another nine sudden deaths, all attributed to Plogojowitz. He was said to have come in the middle of the night to throttle them. Even his wife stated she had seen Peter when he returned one night to get his shoes. Furthermore, not only were the victims said to have been throttled, Plogojowitz had sucked their blood. Like the Arnold Paole account, witnesses all attest to being attacked at night by the vampire. In nineteenth-century literature, similarly, the vampires attacked at night. When it is revealed who the vampire is believed to be, the main characters—or the authorities and townspeople in historical accounts—hurry to the grave. When the vampire is found in his, or her, grave, there are traces of blood found on the mouth.<sup>35</sup> For vampire hunters in nineteenth-century literature, the blood on the mouth is

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<sup>33</sup> Barber, 5.

<sup>34</sup> Barber, 5.

<sup>35</sup> Barber, 6-7. Originally published by M. Michael Ranft in his 1728 dissertation *De Masticatione Mortuorum*. Barber provides his own translation of the account published in Rudolf Grenz, "Archäologische Vampirbefunde aus dem westslawischen Siedlungsgebiet," in *Zeitschrift zur Ostforschung* 16:2 (1967): 263-265.

one of the key signs that the body is actually a vampire who has risen from the grave to suck the blood of the living.

Knowing the signs of the vampire, the local authorities dug up Plogojowitz's body. As found in Paole's case and in all vampire literature to come, the authorities looked for signs of the lack of decomposition and the continued growth of "skin, hair, beard and nails."<sup>36</sup> Although the Imperial Provisor of the Gradisk district, the author of the account, implored them to notify higher authorities, the townspeople refused as they feared the whole village would be destroyed if they did not act quickly to destroy the vampire. Plogojowitz's body was exhumed and the Imperial Provisor, along with the local church authority, went to see the body. The body was found to have all the signs of the vampire.<sup>37</sup>

The vampire was immediately staked through the heart and a large amount of fresh blood was said to flow from the body. The body was then dealt with according to custom and burned. This vampire account contains important details that were used in later fiction and formed the core of beliefs for the vampire genre: a man returns from the grave, attacks local victims in the night, there is blood found on his lips at the exhumation, he is staked and burned, then there are no longer any vampire incidents.<sup>38</sup>

After the Imperial Provisor account, Paul Barber includes a source reproduced by Dom Calmet. The source is from 1746 and can be seen as representative of the anti-Enlightenment sentiments that would surface at the end of the century and work their way into early

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<sup>36</sup> Barber, 6.

<sup>37</sup> Barber, 6.

<sup>38</sup> Barber, 7.

nineteenth-century literature. “Thanks be to God, we are by no means credulous. We avow that all the light which science can throw on this fact discovers none of the causes of it. Nevertheless, we cannot refuse to believe that to be true which is juridically attested, and by persons of probity.”<sup>39</sup> This quotation needs to be dissected line by line because it lies at the heart of the whole argument taking place in the middle of the eighteenth century. We are not gullible. Calmet is saying that they are not just going to believe any account and there is a reason for doing so. Even though the Enlightenment had attempted to rationalize the vampire accounts through the use of contemporary modern science, it did not provide adequate explanations for the causes or beliefs. Their mocking tones, which will be discussed below, do not shed light on the heart of the matter, which is the long standing beliefs held by believers and witnesses of the accounts. The witnesses cannot simply be discounted. They are reputable members of the authorities who have been witness to the events. The accounts cannot simply be dismissed; they need to receive the scholarly attention that is deserved to understand the events that took place.

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<sup>39</sup> Barber, 7.

## Chapter 2: Eighteenth Century Enlightenment: Voltaire, Rousseau, Van Swieten, and Other Unbelievers

Dom Augustin Calmet's extensive work of vampire scholarship, *A Dissertation Concerning Vampires, or the Spectres Which Appear in Hungary, Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia*, was published in 1746. Calmet's 'dissertation' is one the most important works of vampire scholarship as it continuously appears in basically every serious vampire scholarly monograph and collections of vampire short stories and accounts published to date. Furthermore, and most important for this study, it instigated responses from philosophers, such as Voltaire and Lenglet Dufresnoy, that responded with mockery to the idea that vampires deserved such extensive scholarly attention, and would eventually be used as an introduction to Polidori's 1819 tale. The mockery was the result of the belief that his study furthered supernatural beliefs through the examples he presents.

In his 'dissertation' Calmet set out to present the evidence that had been relayed and the connection to vampirism, and then sets out to disprove vampire beliefs. Calmet's work focused on returning souls, people buried but not actually dead, the lack of decomposition of bodies, visions of the deceased, and peasant imaginations, all grounded in religious beliefs. Calmet worked to disprove the belief in vampires, attacking the evidence and witnesses based on his main question: how is it that vampires leave the grave to feed off the living and then return to the grave, while not disturbing the earth?<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Augustin Calmet, *Dissertations Upon the Apparitions of Angels, Daemons, and Ghosts, and Concerning the Vampires of Hungary, Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia*, translated from French. (La Vergne: ECCO Print Editions,

The mockery Calmet received from Voltaire, Dufresnoy, and other enlightened scholars seems unfounded after a close analysis of his dissertation. Calmet's scholarship is completely dismissed even though he presented an argument against the existence of vampires. Voltaire's mockery of Calmet must be attributed to a form of Enlightenment irreligion and Enlightenment rationalism. Although Calmet is very thorough in his refutation of the existence of vampires, he continuously returns to religious ideas. He puts forth the argument that the existence of vampires could be attributed to the devil, then argues against it as God would not have given the devil that ability.<sup>41</sup> Sadly, Calmet's thorough analysis of vampire accounts becomes overshadowed by his religious explanations to disprove the possibility of vampires. Furthermore, Calmet puts forth extensive accounts concerning men of the Church returning from the dead or their bodies having a lack of decay.<sup>42</sup> While he discounts the validity of witnesses to vampire accounts, he does not discount witnesses to supernatural religious events and seems to accept the existence of "wizards and witches" as something that does not even need to be justified.<sup>43</sup>

Another important argument made against Calmet concerns his sources. He is criticized for his acceptance of the witnesses within sources and accounts. In this lies a contradiction. Although he does not discount witness accounts from centuries past, he is very critical of the witnesses in vampire accounts. This is a key point, as the existence of vampires is the focus both of his study and the Enlightenment challenges to his research. In discussing the existence

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2011): 283, 302. Originally published in 1746. English translation published in 1759 for M. Cooper at the *Globe*. Edition used is a scanned published copy of the original 1759 English translation.

<sup>41</sup> Calmet, 332.

<sup>42</sup> Calmet, 293-325.

<sup>43</sup> Calmet, 304.

of vampires, he continuously rejects the possibility of their existence contrary to the accounts of his research. He states that he “[discovers] all the symptoms of an epidemical fanaticism, and [is] convinced that their death is occasioned by nothing but the impressions of their own fear.”<sup>44</sup> Farther on in his study, he again states that in vampire accounts can be found the “clearest symptoms of the dreadful effects of fear and prejudice.”<sup>45</sup> He discusses the two ways in which the vampire epidemic may be handled; rationalizing the accounts or, “by far the wisest, is by denying entirely the truth of all these stories.”<sup>46</sup> While Calmet recognizes that denial is a better way of handling the vampire craze, as is done by Voltaire and other philosophers, he seems to make use of both methods. He entirely denies the existence of vampires, but does so through a form of religious rationalism further fueling Voltaire’s mockery. In his conclusion relating to all of his research he states that “what we want is unprejudiced witnesses, free from fear, interest, or passion, who will seriously assert, after mature deliberation, that they have seen, heard, or spoke to these vampires, and been witnesses of their exploits, and I am convinced that such as these we shall never have.”<sup>47</sup>

Although Calmet works to disprove the existence of vampires, he does so with evidence that seems to be unrelated to vampires except for having similar traits. To understand the return of vampires, he puts forth accounts of men of the Church returning from the dead. These men have returned to settle their affairs or to provide information pertaining to the afterlife. He also argues that the supposed vampires were actually in a state of trance and alive

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<sup>44</sup> Calmet, 208.

<sup>45</sup> Calmet, 210.

<sup>46</sup> Calmet, 204.

<sup>47</sup> Calmet, 325.

when buried. Calmet provides a thorough discussion of animals being in a trance or hibernation state. The animals seemed to have no life, and upon being warmed by spring return to life. Calmet states that he believes it is not “unreasonable to suppose, that the vampires of Hungary, Silesia, and Moravia, may possibly be persons who have died of acute disorders, and still retain some principle of life, just as the animals above-mentioned.”<sup>48</sup>

One of the main reasons for the mockery and objection to Calmet’s dissertation was that it perpetuated the possibility of the existence of vampires. As already discussed, Dufresnoy criticizes Calmet for publishing tales of the supernatural as fact because of the impact on less educated readers, or “feeble minds”. It must be remembered here that Calmet’s dissertation was a bestseller. Although Calmet reported a large number of supernatural stories, none of them was contemporary and for the most part they did not concern vampires. They are almost all religious and reminiscent of accounts concerning saints, which would not be surprising for a population where religion and the Church still played a central role in everyday life. Jean-Claude Schmitt argues in his *The Holy Greyhound: Guinefort, Healer of Children Since the Thirteenth Century* that the lives of saints and religion continued to be central to everyday life all the way down to the nineteenth century.<sup>49</sup>

Interestingly enough, Calmet is aware of the perpetuation of beliefs in the supernatural by historians. Voltaire mocks him as the “vampire historian,” blaming him for the continued spread of vampire ideas. The Enlightenment arguments against Calmet after the publication of

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<sup>48</sup> Calmet, 300.

<sup>49</sup> Jean-Claude Schmitt, *The Holy Greyhound: Guinefort, Healer of Children since the Thirteenth Century*, translated by Martin Thom (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009):133-143.

his 'dissertation' were already refuted within his own writing. He even states that "no one of a philosophical turn can be ignorant" to the fact that anything of the supernatural spreads rapidly through word of mouth and in scholarship.<sup>50</sup> Therefore, much of the mockery and arguments made against Calmet had already been answered in his 'dissertation.' Much of his book is a response or an extension of the original Enlightenment scholarship published in the 1730s, right after the vampire epidemic reached Western Europe. Although he does introduce a wealth of random stories that seem to veer far from the topic at hand, he is not ignorant of the arguments that will be made against his work. Oddly enough, even though Calmet argues against the existence of vampires, Enlightenment philosophers were right in their summation that the publication of his dissertation was damaging enough as it presented the accounts to a wider audience. This was apparent right at the beginning of the nineteenth century as Polidori's tale, that initiated the nineteenth-century vampire genre, included a vampire account in the introduction, quoting Calmet, and presented it as fact to provide an aspect of reality and believability to his tale.

Western European Enlightenment rationalization of vampire accounts can be found as early as the turn of the eighteenth century, preceding the vampire craze of the 1720s and the Enlightenment dissertations that began in the 1730s. Pitton de Tournefort, a French botanist, witnessed the effects of a vampire epidemic in Greece and provided a rationalized account.

While visiting the island of Mykonos, Tournefort began to hear of vampire attacks taking place during the night. People of all social classes were complaining of nocturnal visits by

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<sup>50</sup> Calmet, 210.



supposed vampires playing “tricks,” vandalising and stealing from local houses.<sup>51</sup> The attacks were believed to be the work of vampires. Knowing that a local peasant had recently passed away under suspicious circumstances, they disinterred his body. The local authorities brought in a local butcher to investigate the body. While the butcher opened up the body and cut out the heart, Tournefort observed that the body brought forth a gagging stench which seemed to go unnoticed by the local population present. They observed that the body was still warm and the blood still appeared fresh, concluding that the deceased was a vampire. While Tournefort attempted to rationalize the state of the deceased, the imaginations of the locals had already ensured their initial conclusions of having found the vampire; the heart was taken to the coast and burnt while the body was reburied.<sup>52</sup>

Even though they believed they had dealt with the vampire, the attacks did not cease. “How is one to bring an entire population back to its senses?”<sup>53</sup> Tournefort’s attempts to rationalize the incidents with the local authorities were countered with Jesuit scholarship validating the claims of the existence of vampires. To further refute Tournefort’s rationalization and support their claims that vampires existed, the local authorities claimed that the ceremony must have failed as the vampire continued his nocturnal disturbances. Tournefort recommended a night time patrol be instituted, which resulted in the capture of a “few vagabonds” believed to be responsible for the disturbances.<sup>54</sup> The nocturnal disturbances again continued which Tournefort attributes to the hasty release of the culprits. Not to be

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<sup>51</sup> Barber, 21. Originally published M. Pitton de Tournefort, *Relation d’un voyage du Levant*, Vol. 1 (Paris, 1717).

<sup>52</sup> Barber, 21-22.

<sup>53</sup> Barber, 23.

<sup>54</sup> Barber, 23.

dissuaded from their beliefs, the local authorities again disinterred the body of the supposed vampire and burned the rest of the corpse. After the flames had consumed the body, the vampire never returned to plague the community, further solidifying their superstitious beliefs of vampires.<sup>55</sup>

Tournefort was confounded at the absence of reason in dealing with the local population on the island of Mykonos. Although he attempted to rationalize the events he was witness to, the deep-seated beliefs of the population concerning the supernatural could not be swayed. Theological scholarship supported their superstitious beliefs and their methods of successfully combating the vampire furthered their convictions. Enlightenment rationalizations were rejected: the local authorities did not listen to Tournefort's explanations. Tournefort's attempts explain his rationalizations went unheard and caused a negative enlightened reaction to superstitions that were common half a century later in the responses of such famous philosophers as Voltaire. Tournefort concluded his account by stating that the "Greeks of today are not the great Greeks, and that there is among them only ignorance and superstitions!"<sup>56</sup>

In his *Philosophical Dictionary* Voltaire explores the idea of vampires. Actually, he does not exactly explore the idea of vampires; he dismisses any possibility of their existence while managing to make a mockery of any and all believers. Right from the start, Voltaire's sarcasm was apparent in his discussion of the existence of vampires. "What! Is it in our eighteenth century that vampires exist? Is it after the reigns of Locke, Shaftesbury, Trenchard, and

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<sup>55</sup> Barber, 23-24.

<sup>56</sup> Barber, 24.

Collins?”<sup>57</sup> He did not seem willing to consider the idea that vampires could possibly exist.

After all the Enlightenment and contemporary scholars had done to further rational thought, why would it even be worth considering the idea that vampires could exist in the eighteenth century?

Voltaire discusses Dom Calmet’s vampire history in a mocking tone to show his disapproval. He goes on to provide a description of vampires, albeit using Calmet’s descriptions, yet continues his mockery by making a joke and creating metaphorical vampires. He states “We never speak of vampires in London, nor even at Paris. I confess, that in both these cities there were stock-jabbers, brokers, and men of business, who sucked the blood of the people in broad day-light; but they were not dead, though corrupted. These true suckers lived not in cemeteries, but in very agreeable palaces.”<sup>58</sup>

While joking, he has brought up another important point to be discussed. All vampire accounts take place in Eastern Europe, not Western Europe, or the enlightened or civilized countries of Europe. This is an interesting point to make when used in correlation with the Gerard Van Swieten’s letter to Maria Theresa, the Empress of Austria, which will be discussed in further detail later in this paper. He points to an incident in England of a body being found eighty years after death which had not decomposed. This is brought up as it is never even

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<sup>57</sup> M. De Voltaire, *A Philosophical Dictionary Volume VI* (London: C.H. Reynell, 1824): 304.  
<http://books.google.ca/books?id=2uhJAQAAIAAJ&pg=PA304&lpg=PA304&dq=philosophical+dictionary+vampires&source=bl&ots=-L9MGjmTky&sig=IED3KHOiuaylYz4w0l2iUr5YC5l&hl=en&sa=X&ei=c-umT8HqJ-afiQKtmJmVAg&ved=0CFQQ6AEwAw#v=onepage&q&f=false>. Originally published as a supplement to his *Dictionnaire Philosophique*.

<sup>58</sup> Voltaire, 305.

considered to be a vampire, where elsewhere the population would have probably staked the body, cut off its head, and burned the body.

Next Voltaire moves on to examine the idea of Greece as having a long lasting history of vampire myths and legends, and the site for recent vampire activity. His thoughts were reminiscent of Tournefort's. "Not from the Greece of Alexander, Aristotle, Plato, Epicurus, and Demosthenes; but from christian Greece, unfortunately schismatic."<sup>59</sup> Interestingly enough, Greece would end up being a major setting for several vampire stories of the early nineteenth century.

Voltaire describes the actions of vampires and ways in which they were dealt with. He even mentions scholars who were witness to such events. It is not so much what is said within this explanation that is important, but how it is said and what is not said. Firstly, it is all just retold as a story. He does not address the validity of the statements. Furthermore, in discussing the scholarly attention he says "the celebrated Tournefort," mockingly attacking the scholarly witnesses.<sup>60</sup> This is an important aspect to note as Voltaire seems to have had similar ideas concerning Greek ideas about vampires, yet still seems to mock Tournefort for his efforts to rationalize the events which he witnessed. Next, what is most important is what is not said. Again, he does not attempt either way to discuss the validity of the tale. This is important because it is a continuation of Voltaire's process of thought in that he sees beliefs in vampires as too ridiculous to even consider whether there might be any truth to the matter. It may be argued that by even taking the time to include vampires in his philosophical dictionary he

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<sup>59</sup> Voltaire, 305.

<sup>60</sup> Voltaire, 305.

provided credence to such beliefs but that is not so. He seems to have included vampires merely in order to mock their existence and to mock anyone who might have been a believer.

Voltaire does provide an interesting point in his discussion of the spread of vampire myths and other equally superstitious beliefs. He states “After slander, nothing is communicated more promptly than superstition, fanaticism, sorcery, and tales of those raised from the dead.”<sup>61</sup> He has perpetuated both of these aspects. He slandered believers and witnesses while perpetuating the communication of the supernatural to other philosophers through his writings. He then goes on to confirm Calmet as their historian because he “treated vampires as he treated the Old and New Testament, by relating faithfully all that has been said before him.”<sup>62</sup> Something as exciting as vampires was bound to spread like wildfire through the minds of men, scholarly or not. Calmet related the vampire incidents and provided rationalizations where he could and was still chastised simply for making the effort.

The scholarly attention received by vampires piques Voltaire’s curiosity because of the official inquests into incidents where witnesses confirmed the dead bodies to be vampires and observed their destruction. “Who, after this, dares to doubt of the resuscitated dead, with which our ancient legends are filled, and of all the miracles related by Bollandus, and the sincere and revered Dom Ruinart?”<sup>63</sup> The question that Voltaire then says needs to be answered is by whom were the dead raised, “by their own virtue, by the power of God, or by that of the devil.”<sup>64</sup> He tells of theological studies on such topics that cannot come to any

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<sup>61</sup> Voltaire, 305-306.

<sup>62</sup> Voltaire, 306.

<sup>63</sup> Voltaire, 306.

<sup>64</sup> Voltaire, 307.

conclusion as there is no precedent in history. There were tales of rising from the dead, but “had nothing in common with the vampires who rose to suck the blood of their neighbors...”<sup>65</sup> To Voltaire, and so he assumes his enlightened public, vampires simply do not exist and were of no interest for scholarly study. To Voltaire they did provide a tool for contemporary political metaphors, as they would continue to do for centuries as Robinson points out in her extensive vampire study. Voltaire believed “the true vampires are the monks, who eat at the expense of both kings and people.”<sup>66</sup>

Although this study is only examining how Voltaire’s writing would have been consumed by his peers, for the most part it is not trying to make a judgment as to whether he was right or wrong in his beliefs, that is, until his conclusion. It is not for lack of understanding, but simply because he could not foresee the popularity that vampires would garner with their rise in literature in the first half of the nineteenth century. He compares the vampires of Europe to many things that no longer existed: “Convulsionaries in France,” “demoniacs,” and “Jesuits.”<sup>67</sup> To Voltaire, they were just a passing phase.

In 1755 Gerard Van Swieten the chief physician to the Empress of Austria, provided a report on the vampire craze that was sweeping the continent. In his report he does not so much focus on providing arguments against the vampire craze, but rather attacks believers, pointing out how ludicrous vampire and witchcraft beliefs can be. In his report he discusses a body found in London in 1750. The body of a man was found without any signs of

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<sup>65</sup> Voltaire, 307.

<sup>66</sup> Voltaire, 308.

<sup>67</sup> Voltaire, 308.

decomposition. The body had been in its casket for about eighty years and had not been embalmed. His discussion represents how men of western thought and Enlightenment felt about the vampire craze in Eastern Europe. He states with much sarcasm, “There you have an English vampire, which for 80 years had rested peacefully in its tomb, bothering no one.”<sup>68</sup> It is the same style in which Voltaire would later write his vampire definition. He writes it as an attack on vampire beliefs and supernatural superstitions, driving the stake home with sarcasm.

Van Swieten then looks directly at a case of supposed vampirism where a body was disinterred and burned. He points out that the body had not decomposed and “it is worth noting that [that] winter has been particularly harsh.”<sup>69</sup> The tone in this sentence is exemplary of the condemnation he feels for the events. It is saying that it should have been obvious as it was not an uncommon practice for anatomists to “keep cadavers in the open for six weeks and even two months without putrefaction” because of cold weather.<sup>70</sup> Next he attacks the witnesses directly, the so-called “surgeons,” present who ordered the burning of the body.<sup>71</sup> He notes that they were actually sterilization specialists with no actual experience in dealing with corpses. Lumping witchcraft and vampire superstitions together, he continues his attack on believers saying that the desecration of these bodies must be stopped as they are “sacrileges.”<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Dr. Gerard Van Swieten’s report to Empress Maria Theresa of Austria, 1755; in Jean Marignay, *Vampires: Restless Creatures of the Night* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, 1994): 112. Document quoted from Roger Vadim, *Histoires de Vampires* (Paris: Laffont, 1963).

<sup>69</sup> Marignay, 112.

<sup>70</sup> Marignay, 112.

<sup>71</sup> Van Swieten’s quotations.

<sup>72</sup> Marignay, 113.

Like Voltaire, he is shocked that in the eighteenth century anyone could have such beliefs, especially educated men. It bothers him to the point of anger and he closes his report stating: "What a shower of disasters! Such things upset me and put me in such a fury that I must here end my account before I overstep the bounds of decency."<sup>73</sup> His report would lead to Empress Maria Theresa's banning of digging up vampires, witch burnings, and any dealing of supernatural occurrences by authorities at the local level.<sup>74</sup> This is an important point to note. While much of the peasant population would either not have had access to Enlightenment material or the ability to read, through the Empress' intervention based on Enlightenment rationalism, local peasant populations were directly affected by Enlightenment scholarship.

Christopher Frayling explores the eighteenth-century vampire craze through an in-depth analysis of the writings of scholars, theologians, and Enlightenment philosophers in his monograph *Vampyres: Lord Byron to Count Dracula*. He provides a clear perspective on the main traits and thoughts of the Enlightenment. Through an analysis of his work, the connection between the central themes of nineteenth-century vampire literature can be found in original vampire epidemics and the learned reactions they received. Frayling points out that published vampire accounts and Calmet's treatise were both bestsellers and reprinted in several different languages.<sup>75</sup> This is very important as it can provide an understanding as to why the vampire was so vehemently attacked by educated thinkers. The vampire craze was a hot topic sweeping the continent and enlightened thinkers wanted to extinguish supernatural beliefs through their

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<sup>73</sup> Marignay, 113.

<sup>74</sup> Klaniczay, 170-171; Frayling, 30.

<sup>75</sup> Frayling, 28.



scholarship, yet they only managed to dismiss those who gave credence to the possibility of the vampire's existence through Enlightenment rationalism and mockery.

Many different responses and explanations were provided to rationalize vampire superstitions. They included thoughts of what happened to the bodies of the dead during decomposition, mocking believers, attacking Calmet and his bestselling vampire treatise, and metaphorical links of societal relationships between secular and sacred powers and the masses. Pope Benedict and Jean Baptiste de Boyer, the Marquis d'Argens, used Enlightenment rationalism to provide an understanding of decomposition. Jean Baptiste de Boyer focused on the specifics of the account, arguing that it cannot be completely dismissed because of the witnesses, but there needs to be a "*rejection of the 'supernatural' account*" with a "*simultaneous acceptance of the documentation.*"<sup>76</sup> Benedict focused more directly on the credibility of the witnesses, pushing for a rational understanding of decomposition.<sup>77</sup> Van Swieten, as already discussed above, agreed with the need to look at the credibility of the witnesses. In his report he focuses on inconsistencies put forth by one of the lead investigators. Originally it was reported that a large amount of fresh blood was found within the deceased body. After his report, his story changed when he revealed that it was actually only about a "*spoonful.*"<sup>78</sup>

Like Voltaire, many scholars simply attacked believers of superstitions. While Voltaire's response was filled with sarcasm, many others were more direct in their mockery. Giuseppe

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<sup>76</sup> Frayling, 24-25.

<sup>77</sup> Frayling, 26.

<sup>78</sup> Frayling, 30.

Davanzati, the Archbishop of Trani, was quite abrupt and direct in his mockery, observing that vampires are always peasants. He stated: “Why has the demon never known to assume the form of a man of quality, a scholar, a philosopher, a theologian, a landowner or a Bishop? I will tell you why. It is because men of education and men of quality are not so easily deceived as idiots and men of low birth and therefore do not so easily allow themselves to be fooled by appearances.”<sup>79</sup>

Mockery of believers is also connected to mockery of Calmet, as he is somewhat blamed for the continuation of beliefs. Lenglet Dufresnoy was one to make that connection, but not the only one to mock Calmet. Frayling argues that Dufresnoy came to the conclusion that Calmet was at fault as he “should have thought more about the possible impact of some of his bizarre anecdotes on feeble minds—the number of which greatly exceeds clever ones.”<sup>80</sup> In this, Dufresnoy is mocking both Calmet and believers, while placing himself on a pedestal above such nonsensical beliefs. De Jaucourt’s response to the vampire craze is similar. He states that “Father Calmet has written an absurd book on this subject...It only goes to show how far the human mind is prone to superstition.”<sup>81</sup> While not as mean spirited as his contemporaries towards believers, De Jaucourt focuses his attack more directly on Calmet.

Calmet received criticisms for two central reasons. First, he was criticized for even taking the time and effort to publish such an extensive study on vampires. Philosophers such as Voltaire and Rousseau could not understand Calmet’s need to produce a work such as this, for

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<sup>79</sup> Frayling, 30.

<sup>80</sup> Frayling, 29.

<sup>81</sup> Frayling, 29.

they did not believe vampires should receive such scholarly attention. Second, he was criticized for the way he treated his sources. Calmet is continuously criticized for taking the accounts and witnesses at face value. Frayling argues that many believed his study was “evidence of his senility, intellectual decay or both.”<sup>82</sup>

Metaphorical links between governing powers and the masses were published almost immediately after the Arnold Paole case began to be circulated throughout Europe. In an English article in *Gentlemen’s Magazine*, the vampire of Eastern Europe was compared to the controlling powers the Turkish and Austrian Empires had over the occupied territory of Hungary.<sup>83</sup> Others made the connection more directly to the power of the church over the masses. Rousseau argued that sacred powers used supernatural crazes and vampire superstitions to assert its control over the masses. The masses looked to the church to provide an understanding of supernatural events and the church, in turn, used that power to reassert their control. Furthermore, Rousseau argued that the vampire was a metaphor for the divisions in society. The vampire was man preying on others, “a master-slave dialectic, with teeth.”<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Frayling, 28.

<sup>83</sup> Frayling, 27.

<sup>84</sup> Frayling, 33-34.

### Chapter 3: Nineteenth-Century Vampire literature: Polidori to Tolstoy

New to the vampire genre, the vampire became aristocratic in the first half of the nineteenth century. The majority were aristocrats who preyed upon society and peasants. As will be discussed in more detail further below, Polidori's Lord Ruthven and Tieck's Brunhilda, wife of Lord Walter, were both of a higher class. Lord Ruthven left a trail of sorrow wherever he went as he preyed upon the weaknesses of men and killed a young Greek peasant girl. Brunhilda drained the whole region of its livelihood as she preyed upon the townspeople's children. The metaphorical connections made by the previous century's scholars played an important role in vampire literature. Furthermore, the myths and legends that were so eagerly dismissed by scholars were directly used and referenced in nineteenth-century literature. This can be seen as a complete rejection of enlightened ideas. Not only is Polidori and Tieck using the myths and legends scoffed at by the Enlightenment, they are incorporating the societal metaphors. For the reader, using those same metaphors lends a reality to the vampire as there is a connection to the known scholarly studies of the Enlightenment.

Théophile Gautier's vampire in *La Morte Amoureuse* rejects the metaphors of the Enlightenment in another fashion. One of the main arguments made by Rousseau was that vampires were representative of the abuse of power of the church. The vampire's victim in Gautier's tale was a priest. In this tale the rejection can be seen in the inversion of roles between predator and victim. Enlightenment philosophers professed that vampires were a metaphor for sacred power over the masses. In this tale, the vampire holds power over a priest or, in other words, the church and sacred power.

It is very important to note that it was not only the authors of the early nineteenth century who were rejecting the ideas of the Enlightenment. European readers were growing tired of Enlightenment rationalism and its effects on their lives. Christopher Frayling argues that by the 1780s, audiences wanted a change. He quotes a Parisian mesmerist as saying: “The reign of Voltaire and of the *Encyclopedistes* is collapsing. One finally gets tired of cold reasoning. We must have livelier, more delicious delights. Some of the sublime, the incomprehensible, the supernatural.”<sup>85</sup>

The early nineteenth century saw an explosion of vampire tales in the literary world. John Polidori’s 1819 tale *The Vampyre* is one of the earliest fictional vampire tales to reach a broad contemporary audience. It was initially published in London’s *New Monthly Magazine* and attributed to Lord Byron. This is an important aspect for its consumption. Byron’s popularity helped Polidori’s tale reach a wider audience.<sup>86</sup> It places the vampire in a contemporary setting with real locations, while rejecting the Enlightenment rationalism of the previous century. Polidori’s tale tells the story of a young rich orphan, Aubrey, who meets a rich mysterious man, Lord Ruthven, in the wealthy circles of London aristocracy. Aubrey’s curiosity and interest regarding Ruthven leads the two to take a tour of Europe together. Unbeknownst to Aubrey, Ruthven is a vampire. During their travels, Aubrey sees first-hand Ruthven’s foul character and takes his leave of him. Aubrey travels to Greece, where he meets, and falls in

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<sup>85</sup> Frayling, 35.

<sup>86</sup> It is assumed that the editor who published the tale attributed it to Byron. He was not the only one to believe that the tale was Byron’s. Michael Sims writes that Goethe believed it was “some of Byron’s best work.” Byron’s popularity also helped push the publication of the tale in other countries. Sims, 44-45. Furthermore, Polidori and Byron had a similar relationship to that between Aubrey and Ruthven. They travelled together, Polidori being Byron’s personal physician. Byron’s known vices were similar to Ruthven’s and therefore may have provided further credibility to the tale through the comparison.

love with, a young poor Greek peasant. The young girl and her family warn Aubrey of the existence of vampires and to be careful during his daily excursions in the nearby ruins and to not be out after dark. Aubrey ignores their warnings and is late to return one night. He hears a horrible scream, rushes to the rescue, only to find that it is his new love who had screamed as she became the latest victim of the vampire. The shock of the death of his love sends Aubrey into a horrible illness. During his recuperation, Lord Ruthven returns and takes to his side, helping him through his recovery. Once he had recovered, they continue their tour together until one night Ruthven is shot and killed by some local bandits. Before he passes away, Lord Ruthven demands that Aubrey swear not to tell anyone of his vices or death until one year and a day has passed. The following morning, Ruthven's body disappears and Aubrey heads for home to be with his sister and guardians.<sup>87</sup>

Not long after his return, it is time for the introduction of his sister into society. During the first several evenings in society Aubrey encounters Ruthven and is reminded of his oath to keep silent. These encounters send Aubrey into madness. He begins roaming the streets and eventually ends up sequestered in his room under medical care. The knowledge that his sister is to be wed breaks through his madness. The realization she is to marry Lord Ruthven, now in London under an alias, returns him to madness. He pleads with his sister to not go through with the marriage, but to no avail. His guardians and doctors blame his insistent ramblings on his madness and he is ignored. The wedding takes place the day before he is able to tell the truth about Lord Ruthven. As soon as his oath to wait a year and a day has been fulfilled, he

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<sup>87</sup> Polidori, 3-17.

tells all to his guardians and dies. But “It was too late...Aubrey’s sister had glutted the thirst of a Vampyre!”<sup>88</sup>

*The Vampyre* contains many aspects that help portray a sense of reality, bringing the vampire into contemporary western society and rejecting Enlightenment rationalism. It contains aspects of old myths and folklore known to its readership. It is set in Greece, the exact location Voltaire discusses in his philosophical dictionary. The story contains contemporary traditions and ways of life of the aristocracy and Lord Ruthven is an aristocrat who preys on the lives of the less fortunate, leaving a trail of despair wherever he travels.

Polidori’s early vampire tale presents discussions of real life events, practices, places, vampire myths, legends, folklore, and representations of real people. These devices create a realistic portrayal of vampires in a contemporary setting, providing readers with links between the natural and the supernatural, and the real and surreal. Vampire myths, legends, and folklore are presented through characters within the story. The settings, practices, and places provide plausibility to the story. Polidori’s vampire character Lord Ruthven is a representation of his once friend, employer, and travel companion, Lord Byron.

Polidori’s decision to use Greece as the setting for the initial vampire attack cannot be seen as a coincidence. Some of the most well-known vampire myths, legends, and folklore find their origin in Greece.<sup>89</sup> This is not only important in portraying to the audience the myths, legends, and folklore it would possibly already know, but can be seen as a direct rejection of Voltaire’s discussion of vampires. Voltaire is shocked that Greece could be the setting for

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<sup>88</sup> Polidori, 17-23; quote page 23.

<sup>89</sup> Calmet’s traces vampirism back to Greece in his discussion of vampires in antiquity. Calmet, 217.

vampire myths and legends, whether it is in Aristotle's age or the age of the Christian church. While Voltaire scoffed at the idea of Greek vampire myths and legends, Polidori uses those exact myths and legends to set the stage for his vampire tale.

Just after Aubrey left his travel-mate, Lord Ruthven, he made the trip alone to explore Greece. Through Aubrey's interactions with Greek peasantry, he was warned off traveling alone after dark because of vampires in the region. Aubrey, an English character, laughs at the idea of any truth in vampire legends and proceeds on his way to explore old ruins in the area alone. Losing track of time, Aubrey is late returning and must travel at night to return to his lodgings. This is when the vampire strikes, not only killing his love, but providing validity to the warnings of the Greek peasantry. This incident plays an important role in providing realism to the story. The story is English and would have been read initially by an English audience. Aubrey's reaction to such vampire myths would have been the same as that of the tale's audience. Along with the Enlightenment came a large amount of scholarship attempting to disprove the validity of vampire stories, sightings, and myths, while mocking the idea that vampires could even exist. The world of the supernatural had been under scholarly scrutiny for over a century. Along with the death of his love, came the realization that vampires do exist. Aubrey, an enlightened educated Englishman, now believes in vampires. This, in turn, suggests to the audience, other enlightened educated Englishmen, the possibility that their disbelief in vampires might in fact be incorrect.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Polidori, 8-13.



The motif of the Grand Tour, a tradition for young gentlemen of wealth once they reached adulthood, further lends an air of reality to *The Vampyre*. The rise in literacy rates over the past centuries ensured that Polidori's tale found a readership among a much wider audience than ever before possible, and not only among the upper echelons of society who would have been able to afford such luxuries as Grand Tours. Furthermore, a significant amount of the information known to the public concerning vampires came from Enlightenment scholarship. This story would have provided a new, in-depth, and to some, realistic view into eastern beliefs and views of vampires.

Of all the vampire tales of the first half of the nineteenth century, John Polidori's *The Vampyre* is the most popular and has received the most scholarly attention. There are several reasons to which this can be attributed as found in the arguments of modern scholars. Although she does not provide an in-depth analysis of Polidori's work, Olga Hoyt in her *Lust for Blood: The Consuming Story of Vampires* provides insight into the success of *The Vampyre*. She argues that "the proof of success was in the imitations."<sup>91</sup> *The Vampyre* hit the stage as dozens of plays based on the tale were acted out across France in the following decades beginning in the early 1920s. Furthermore, Hoyt argues that the continued success of Polidori's tale was a result of Ruthven being the "prototype of the vampire that was to remain with English readers for more than a hundred years."<sup>92</sup> Through these two arguments we can see that not only was the tale reaching a wide audience in different art forms, it was crossing language barriers.

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<sup>91</sup> Olga Gruhzt Hoyt, *Lust For Blood: The Consuming Story of Vampires* (Lanham: Scarborough House, 1984): 134.

<sup>92</sup> Hoyt, 134.

Carol A. Senf provides further evidence for the success of *The Vampyre* and provides a detailed analysis of the tale in her monograph *The Vampire in 19<sup>th</sup> Century English Literature*. She argues that after the eighteenth century, “English writers and readers were prepared to experience that odd love-hate relationship with the vampire that lasted almost the entire nineteenth century.”<sup>93</sup> She furthers the argument by stating that there was a “genuine belief” in the supernatural, which she supports by quoting Jeffrey B. Russell as saying “the uneducated nineteenth-century Englishman was very superstitious.”<sup>94</sup> Furthermore, Senf focuses on the characters and setting to understand the popularity of the tale. Polidori’s tale brought the vampire into the contemporary world of the readers and created relatable characters to form an element of realism that “[avoided] the stultifying rationalism...associated with their predecessors in the Enlightenment.”<sup>95</sup>

In her analysis of *The Vampyre* Senf argues that Polidori created a moral vampire while not focusing directly on aspects of the supernatural. By doing so, Polidori provided further believability to his tale. Senf argues that Lord Ruthven was a “moral parasite” whose vices prey on those he came in contact, with causing suffering and destruction.<sup>96</sup> Senf sees this as a metaphor for the aristocracy preying on society. Senf states that the focus of morality was intentional. Polidori said that a tale that is completely unbelievable would “disgust a rational mind” and so he focused on the issue of morality while pushing the supernatural “into the back

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<sup>93</sup> Carol A. Senf, *The Vampire in 19<sup>th</sup> Century English Literature* (Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University Press, 1988): 21.

<sup>94</sup> Senf, 22.

<sup>95</sup> Senf, 24.

<sup>96</sup> Senf, 35.

ground as much as was in [his] power.”<sup>97</sup> Another vampire scholar, Clive Leatherdale, poses a very similar argument but he labels Ruthven a psychological vampire because of the lack of focus on blood in the tale.<sup>98</sup>

Senf is not the only scholar to focus on morality as the main theme in Polidori’s tale. Brian J. Frost in his *The Monster with a Thousand Faces: Guises of the Vampire in Myth and Literature* follows the same argument while focusing on the connections between Lord Ruthven and Lord Byron, and Aubrey and Polidori.<sup>99</sup> This is one of the most common interpretations of Polidori’s tale. While often briefly mentioned, James B. Twitchell in his *The Living Dead: A Study of the Vampire in Romantic Literature* by far produces the most extensive analysis of the connection between the characters of Polidori’s tale and his relationship with Lord Byron. He argues that “Polidori seems to use the myth in part as an analogy to explain how people interact.”<sup>100</sup> He provides extensive biographical information for Polidori and the tumultuous relationship between him and Lord Byron. In essence, Twitchell argues that *The Vampyre* is representative of the feud between Polidori and Byron.<sup>101</sup>

Matthew Gibson furthers the study of the relationship between Polidori and Byron in his chapter “Polidori’s *The Vampyre* and the Dangers of Philhellenism to Italian Liberation” found in the monograph *Dracula and the Eastern Question: British and French Vampire Narratives of the Nineteenth-Century Near East*. While he recognizes the connections between Polidori and

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<sup>97</sup> Senf, 37.

<sup>98</sup> Clive Leatherdale, *Dracula The Novel & The Legend: A Study of Bram Stoker’s Gothic Masterpiece* (Wellingborough: The Aquarian Press, 1985): 50-52.

<sup>99</sup> Frost, 38-39.

<sup>100</sup> James B. Twitchell, *The Living Dead: A Study of the Vampire in Romantic Literature* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1981): 112.

<sup>101</sup> Twitchell, 103-115.

Byron with the characters of the tale, he argues that Polidori's work was a response to Byron's *Fragment* and its apparent philhellenism.<sup>102</sup> Gibson argues that Byron loved Greek culture and his unfinished tale was representative of Byron's push for a "continuation of the status quo in Greece."<sup>103</sup> Polidori believed that Italy and Italian culture deserved the attention received by Greece and his work represents a push for Italian liberation. Gibson sees Ianthe (Polidori's love interest in Greece) as being representative of Greece. She believed in vampires and her beliefs eventually resulted in her demise at the hands of the vampire.<sup>104</sup> Gibson concludes that *The Vampyre* is the culmination of Polidori's long-standing ideals. He looks extensively at both author's earlier works and uses letters written by Polidori to his father and to Byron to argue that Polidori supported Italian liberation and rejected philhellenism in *The Vampyre*.<sup>105</sup> Leonard R.N. Ashley in his monograph *The Complete Book of Vampires* quotes Polidori to show the connection to Greece. Polidori states that his tale was representative of contemporary Greek culture after the division of the Church.<sup>106</sup> This in a way reinforces Gibson's argument because it shows that the superstitious nature of the Greek characters' beliefs was intentionally portrayed as contemporary in a rejection of philhellenism.

Even though Polidori's tale was based on Byron's tale, I have placed my discussion of Byron's after my discussion of Polidori's in this study for a number of reasons. In Polidori's *The Vampyre* Lord Ruthven is explicitly named a vampire. The Greek peasantry discuss vampires at

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<sup>102</sup> Matthew Gibson, "Polidori's *The Vampyre* and the Dangers of Philhellenism to Italian Liberation" in *Dracula and the Eastern Question: British and French Vampire Narratives of the Nineteenth-Century Near East* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan Ltd, 2006): 15-16; Byron's *Fragment* also known as *The End of my Journey*.

<sup>103</sup> Gibson, 17.

<sup>104</sup> Gibson, 23-24.

<sup>105</sup> Gibson, 31-41.

<sup>106</sup> Leonard R.N. Ashley, *The Complete Book of Vampires* (New York: Barricade Books, 1998): 133.

length and in the end it is revealed that Ruthven is in fact a vampire. Byron's tale is not as explicit; it does not actually use the word vampire but refers to the binaries of good and evil, and death and resurrection. Twitchell argues that it was never Byron's intention to make his story about vampires. He claims there is no evidence of vampirism and the only connection is Polidori's tale.<sup>107</sup> Furthermore, Polidori's tale was much more popular and had a much larger impact on society. As Polidori's tale is much lengthier than Byron's, it is not necessary to provide a lengthy discussion concerning the details of the story. The following will discuss first Byron's story, focusing on the differences from Polidori's tale, and conclude with an extensive look at the contents and the rejection of Enlightenment ideas about vampire beliefs.

Byron's tale is in the form of a story recollected by the author. Written in 1816, the story reminisces about an event that took place in the previous century. It can be supposed that it would have taken place in the latter half of the eighteenth century as it is written in 1816, the author is still alive, and the events took place after he had reached adulthood. The author was a young man who had no worldly travelling experience. He was intrigued by another man, Augustus Darvell, within the upper echelons of society and did whatever he could to make his acquaintance and befriend him.<sup>108</sup> The tone of evil is set right from the beginning of the story in his descriptions of Darvell. He believed him mysterious and "where there is mystery, it is generally supposed that there must also be evil."<sup>109</sup> He was planning a trip through Eastern and Southern Europe and knowing Darvell's past experiences and knowledge

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<sup>107</sup> Twitchell, 114.

<sup>108</sup> Lord Byron (George Gordon), *The End of My Journey*, in Sims, *Dracula's Guest*, 38-39. Originally told during the famous ghost story night with Polidori and the Shelleys. The night is famous because not only did Byron's tale influence Polidori's *The Vampyre*, the idea for Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* was thought of that fateful night.

<sup>109</sup> Sims, 39.

of the world, wanted him to accompany him in his travels. Finally making his acquaintance and befriending Darvell, the author first asked for travel information to pique his interests, then requested that that he accompany him, to which Darvell agreed.<sup>110</sup>

Like Polidori's tale, the two travellers begin their journey through Southern Europe before heading east. Unlike Ruthven, Darvell is not shown to be filled with vice, leaving a trail of destruction and desolation in his path. The two travel east together to Smyrna, Greece. During a day trip to see the Greek ruins of Ephesus and Sardis, Darvell's health rapidly declines. They stop at a Turkish cemetery where it was revealed that Darvell had been to this location before. As Darvell lay dying, just like Ruthven, he demanded an oath that nothing be told of his death and that certain other strict directions be followed. As he lay dying, they see a stork with a serpent in his mouth sitting on a tombstone watching them but not devouring the snake. When the author questions why the stork is not devouring the snake, Darvell responds that "it is not yet time." He very suddenly passes away and his body rapidly blackens and begins to wither.<sup>111</sup>

There are several important aspects that need to be discussed in this conclusion. First of all, the location of his death is very important. Not only is it located in Greece, it happened at the "broken columns of Diana—the roofless walls of expelled Christianity."<sup>112</sup> As in vampires, all Christianity has been expelled and what is left is nothing but evil and a force of the devil. Second, the serpent and the stork are an important metaphor. The stork is

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<sup>110</sup> Sims, 39-40.

<sup>111</sup> Sims, 40-43; Quote on page 43.

<sup>112</sup> Sims, 40.

representative of all that is good and holy, while the serpent represents evil and the devil. The evil, in this circumstance Darvell, may be in the grips of death, yet “it is not yet time.” Reading this tale in correlation with Polidori’s, it can be understood that although his body is withering, he knows that he will return. That is why he makes sure the author made an oath of silence concerning his death and would uphold his obligation to fulfill his requests.

As already discussed, the location of the story is an important aspect of vampire tales. It is set in Greece, which was well known, and still known, for vampire superstitions, myths and lore. Furthermore, vampires as a superstition are in essence a rejection of religion as the unholy or those who do not follow the prescriptions of Christianity become vampires. Darvell’s death, or beginning of his undeath, is set in a historic location of Christianity’s defeat. Byron is not only playing on known locations of vampire beliefs, he was using actual vampire beliefs to link his tale to other known myths and beliefs of pre-Enlightenment thought. Furthermore, he uses religious symbols, the stork and the serpent, to portray to the reader the battle that is raging between good and evil, and suggests that evil is not being destroyed. This would have portrayed a strong image to a religious world. As the Enlightenment provided rationalism to combat superstitions, Byron’s story rejects that rationalism by reconnecting ideas and symbols of Christianity with supernatural beliefs and superstitions.

E.T.A. Hoffmann’s *Aurelia* is a very interesting addition to the vampire genre at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It was written between 1819 and 1820. The construction of the story is very similar to some of the other vampire tales researched within this project. Like many other vampire tales, it is in the form of a story being told by one of the main

characters or witnesses of a vampire incident. The Serapion Brethren, characters in the story, meet to discuss the supernatural and tell each other tales. In this case it is Cyprian who is the storyteller. The initial discussion of the Brethren concerns the vampire epidemics of the previous century and the way in which vampire literature, such as *The Vampyre*, use the eighteenth-century accounts to produce horror.<sup>113</sup> Furthermore, although the tale being told within the story is not directly stated to be a vampire tale, it contains aspects of vampire lore.

The tale begins with a discussion of the introduction of the vampire into literature. The characters attribute the new vampire tale to Lord Byron. It was not yet recognized that Polidori authored *The Vampyre*. The character Sylvester states that he has not read the tale for fear of the vampire. He is laughed at by Lothair, one of his brethren, for in his occupation of literature he must have made use of supernatural accounts. Lothair continues, stating his knowledge of vampirism and expresses the need to look into the early eighteenth-century vampire scholarship of Michael Ranft who published a treatise in 1732. He provides details of vampire epidemics: the dead rising from the grave, the sucking of blood, the destruction of whole villages, the official inquests, and the methods of dealing with vampires.<sup>114</sup>

After their discussion of vampire epidemics using Ranft's scholarly treatise, the Brethren discuss the way in which the vampire and accounts of the supernatural can be used in literature. Both these topics are important aspects for this project. Lothair's descriptions detail

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<sup>113</sup> E.T.A. Hoffmann, *Aurelia* (c.1819-1820) in Frayling, 190-194.

<sup>114</sup> Frayling, 190-194; The Brethren also mention Johann Ludwig Tieck's ability to use the supernatural in his tales of horror. It is kind of ironic as it was only a couple years later that Tieck would publish his own vampire tale. It was not published until a couple years later so it would be interesting to know whether Tieck had already had it in mind to write a vampire tale or if Hoffmann's tale mentioning his ability to use supernatural lore inspired him to write his own.



vampire accounts of the eighteenth century through the use of Ranft's 1732 treatise. It seems odd that Calmet's work is not mentioned, but it is noted that many works of scholarship followed Ranft's model. Although Sylvester states that Ranft's work "may, no doubt, be sufficiently absurd and even rather crack brained," as Calmet's work was similarly believed to be, the main focus of the discussion revolves around the fear produced by the vampire and its potential use in literature.<sup>115</sup> In this we can see the rejection of the Enlightenment protest against vampire beliefs. At no point do Hoffmann's characters discuss the efforts of the Enlightenment to discard vampire beliefs. To them, the vampire is a figure to be feared, or more specifically, to be used to cause fear. The vampire is a supernatural force that rose from the grave at the beginning of the eighteenth century, causing widespread fear, and could not be reburied. The fear created by the vampire could not be stopped, as if the Enlightenment had never taken place.

Lothair states: "I believe that the imagination can be moved by very simple means, and that it is often more the *idea* of the thing than the thing itself which causes our fear."<sup>116</sup> Readers of nineteenth-century vampire tales did not necessarily need to believe that vampires existed. By putting vampires into a realistic or believable context, just the possibility that vampires could exist was enough. The vampire became the perfect tool used by writers as "it certainly is one of the most horrible and terrible notions imaginable."<sup>117</sup> The Brethren continue to argue that readers wanted the vampire in literature. Although it caused fear and horror,

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<sup>115</sup> Frayling, 192.

<sup>116</sup> Frayling, 193.

<sup>117</sup> Frayling, 192.

writers used the vampire to “[cause] our soul to thrill, not altogether unpleasantly.”<sup>118</sup>

Hoffmann’s characters are exemplary of the rejection of the Enlightenment. They present known vampire occurrences and real scholarship to discuss with their readers what their readers are feeling. Even though the Enlightenment mocked and discarded vampire beliefs, the consumers of vampire literature wanted to be thrilled and scared. As discussed above, the population was growing tired of Enlightenment rationalism concerning the supernatural.<sup>119</sup>

Cyprian does not actually mention that his antagonist was a vampire. Aurelia is more accurately described as a spectre, or ghost. Her features and qualities could be described as interchangeable between those of a vampire and those of an apparition. The tale follows the story of Count Hyppolitus falling in love with Aurelia. She is the daughter of a distant relative of Hyppolitus’s father. Hyppolitus inherits his father’s castle and is visited by the distant relative Baroness and her daughter. The Baroness is only known to Hyppolitus as despised by his father, but he is unaware of the full details of the hatred. Hyppolitus instantly falls in love with the daughter and requests that the two women stay with him.<sup>120</sup> When he first touches Aurelia’s hand he is shocked to feel that it is as cold and white as a corpse. Furthermore, he is startled by the “death-like whiteness of her face.”<sup>121</sup> These attributes of Aurelia can be interpreted as the qualities of a ghost or a vampire. Both supernatural entities are dead. Even though she is being presented as a spectral being, the ideas associated with vampirism have

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<sup>118</sup> Frayling, 192.

<sup>119</sup> In recent years there has been a surge of the supernatural in pop culture. While over the past two centuries there have always been elements of supernatural in pop culture, recent supernatural tales in fiction, television and film have been a dominating force. Since the 1950s, the world has faced extensive upheaval, war, and financial uncertainty. Perhaps the recent surge in the supernatural can be attributed to the need for escape from our current reality.

<sup>120</sup> Frayling, 194-197.

<sup>121</sup> Frayling, 196.

already been placed in the mind of the reader by the initial discussion of the Brethren. They discussed vampires, claiming they are dead corpses that return from the grave. Therefore, the reader is further inclined to associate Aurelia's "death-like" qualities and appearance with those of a vampire instead of those of a ghost.

Although Hyppolitus is shocked by Aurelia's appearance, it does not take long for him to warm to her and ask for her hand in marriage. On the day they are to be wed, the Baroness is found dead outside the castle and the wedding is postponed for a short while. Hyppolitus is unsure what to think of Aurelia's reactions to her mother's death as she seems more numb than distraught. As the wedding nears, Aurelia's mood darkens and she finally reveals her true feelings towards her mother and the reason for Hyppolitus' father's dislike for the Baroness. The Baroness had always mistreated her daughter, especially while in the company of a wealthy man they resided with. It is then revealed that the supposed wealthy man was the local hangman's son and a murderer. When the hangman's son is arrested, the Baroness and her daughter are shunned by the community and flee to Hyppolitus' castle. Fully understanding the reason for Aurelia's distraught manner, Hyppolitus pushes up the date of the wedding.<sup>122</sup>

After the two are married, Hyppolitus begins to notice very strange behaviour on the part of Aurelia and a further distance growing between them. He notices that for months she has not eaten a single thing. She seems repulsed by food, often fleeing the table at meal time.<sup>123</sup> Hyppolitus begins to hear rumours that Aurelia has been leaving the castle at night and

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<sup>122</sup> Frayling, 196-203.

<sup>123</sup> Interesting side note concerning Aurelia's lack of appetite for real food. Although it is not an aspect of eighteenth-century vampire lore, it has connections to later vampire tales. The most famous vampire story ever contains the same idea of vampires not eating real food. Dracula is present during many meals, but he never eats.

does not return until morning. He attempts to stay awake at night to follow her but cannot help succumbing to sleep. It is then that he realizes she is giving something to him in his tea to put him into a deep sleep so that she can make her nightly escape. One day Hyppolitus does not drink the tea prepared for him, fakes sleep, and follows her outside the castle walls. He follows her to the local cemetery where he sees her and several other women feasting on the body of a man. He flees the scene, returning home to find her in bed. When he confronts her she attacks him. He pushes her off. She falls to the ground and “gave up the ghost in the most terrible convulsions.”<sup>124</sup>

While the tale does directly link Aurelia to a ghost, the details of the tale contain aspects of vampirism. Hyppolitus finds her in a cemetery feasting on the body of a man. When linked to the Brethren’s discussion of vampirism, the connection is simple. The Brethren state that the vampire rises during the night to suck the blood of the living. Aurelia, whose appearance Hyppolitus compares to a corpse, is found feasting on a body. While differing from myths in that the vampire rises from the ground to attack people in their sleep, the details are very similar. She is still rising during the night to seek out her prey and feasting on a human body. After reading the vampire discussion of the Brethren, the reader can make the connection between Aurelia and aspects of vampirism.

The story finishes with a closing discussion by the Brethren. It is stated by Theodore, the last of the Brethren, that he has heard this tale before and that it has caused him much

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<sup>124</sup> Frayling, 203-206; Quote page 206.

fear. Like the reader, he is familiar with the details of supernatural tales. Having that knowledge further provides an extended aspect of reality and fear to the story.<sup>125</sup>

Hoffmann's *Aurelia*, a tale of the first half of the nineteenth century, plays an important role in the rejection of Enlightenment rationality and rationalization. It differs from other tales in its rejection of the Enlightenment not by what is said, but by what is not said. The tale does not actually discuss the Enlightenment or the connection to vampirism, leaving readers to make their own connections. The discussion of vampirism by the Brethren at the beginning of the tale recalls to the reader's minds the details of eighteenth-century vampire epidemics; the story is a tale of horror that is filled with vampire lore of corpses returning to feed off the bodies of the living.

Johann Ludwig Tieck's *Wake not the Dead* was published between 1800 and 1823. Although this is a wide gap, there does not seem to be a consensus concerning the date of its publication. Tieck continues the vampire genre, or possibly initiates the genre, using details of the supernatural to fuel his tale while creating new and long-lasting vampire attributes that would be adopted by later authors. Like his predecessors, Tieck's vampire is of the aristocracy. Although the rejection of Enlightenment metaphors by moving the vampire up the chain of society had already begun, Tieck's tale re-enforces the stature of the aristocratic vampire.

Tieck's tale begins when Lord Walter of Burgundy is devastated by the death of his wife Brunhilda. He eventually remarries, this time a woman named Swanhilda who bears him two children. For a while Walter is happy, but it does not take long for his lost love Brunhilda to

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<sup>125</sup> Frayling, 206-207.

return to his mind to haunt him. He spends his nights by her grave longing for her return. One night while visiting her grave, he is approached by a sorcerer who offers him her return but with a warning to “wake not the dead.”<sup>126</sup> Walter cannot remove the possibility from his mind that his deceased wife could possibly be returned to him even though he has been warned. He returns to the grave to meet the sorcerer and asks that she be returned. The sorcerer revives her and Brunhilda steps from the grave, looking just as she did alive. This is an important aspect of vampire lore. The deceased are found in their graves looking just as they had when alive lacking any sign of decomposition.<sup>127</sup>

Thrilled by her return, he whisks her away to his private residence in the mountains where she can regain her strength. Brunhilda’s weakness stems from her inability to face the light of day. Eventually it is said that she will be able to, but that will take a few weeks. This is playing off the idea that vampires are night creatures and they must avoid sunlight. In vampire lore it is said that if you cover your roof with seeds, the vampire will be so distracted by them, he will sit and count them until sun up, when he must return to his grave.<sup>128</sup> The two stay in the castle for weeks as Brunhilda’s strength returns. When Walter makes sexual advances, Brunhilda recoils, stating that it cannot be until the moon is full, as is her strength. When her

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<sup>126</sup> Johann Ludwig Tieck, *Wake Not the Dead* in Sims, 76. Published in English in 1823 in *Popular Tales and Romances of the Northern Nations*. The original German publication date is not revealed but estimated to be c.1800.

<sup>127</sup> Sims, 74-78.

<sup>128</sup> In future vampire tales, the effects of sunlight will take a leading role in the destruction of the vampire. The sunlight becomes one of the main ways of dispersing with the vampire as it burns the skin and kills the vampire.

strength returns with the full moon, Walter's advances are again denied until Brunhilda is returned to her position as his wife.<sup>129</sup>

Walter leaves the castle to return to his present wife Swanhilda to acquire the separation needed to remarry Brunhilda. Swanhilda departs, leaving her children and provides Walter with a warning of her own. She is aware of the nightly cemetery visits and that this will be his "destruction."<sup>130</sup> This in itself is a form of rejection of the Enlightenment rationalism of vampire beliefs. As in the early eighteenth century and re-enforced by the Enlightenment, only peasants and Eastern Europeans believed in vampires. Swanhilda is not claimed to be of the aristocracy when she marries Walter. She believes in the supernatural and knows what Walter has done and the repercussions that will follow. Walter, an educated lord, cannot even fathom what he has done. If Swanhilda were to have explained what he had done, it would have been in vain as he would have dismissed the idea just like Enlightenment scholars, such as Voltaire.<sup>131</sup>

Upon the return of Walter and Brunhilda to the castle, it is not long before the local peasants and employees of the castle begin to talk. Although Walter and Brunhilda create a story claiming that Brunhilda simply looks like Walter's deceased first wife, the truth is known. They claim she was "recalled to life by the power of a necromancer."<sup>132</sup> Brunhilda, like all other vampires, is a source of fear for the local peasantry living within and around the castle. She stays out of the sunlight, a clear indication to them that they are correct in their beliefs of her vampirism.

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<sup>129</sup> Sims, 79-81.

<sup>130</sup> Sims, 82.

<sup>131</sup> Sims, 81-82.

<sup>132</sup> Sims, 83.

As in other vampire tales, Brunhilda begins to prey on the whole village. The population of the village wanes as the inhabitants either succumb to the vampire or flee in fear after watching their loved one pass away as their life is sucked out of them. Even though they cannot find the marks of the vampire, they know Brunhilda is at fault. Before long, the village is abandoned. Similar to vampire accounts, the whole town is affected. The only difference seems to be that none of the victims become vampires. This is a creation of a new trend in the vampire genre. In eighteenth-century accounts, vampire victims were destined to become vampires. In Tieck's tale, and so many others to come, not all victims become vampires.<sup>133</sup> During the town's destruction, Walter is completely unaware of what is happening.<sup>134</sup> This can be understood two ways; his love for Brunhilda has blinded him and he is an aristocratic unbeliever in the supernatural entity known as the vampire. He is so happy to have Brunhilda back in his life that he does not even notice the evacuation and destruction of the peasantry. More importantly, he is representative of the learned unbelievers of the previous century. Even though he knows her afflictions better than anyone else, the supernatural connection is never made: her rising from the dead, her fear of sunlight, or the rapidly increasing death toll of the population.

Once the town is deserted, Brunhilda has nowhere else to turn to for sustenance other than Walter's children and eventually, Walter. Never previously paying them any attention, Brunhilda enchants the children to get close to them before making them her next victims.

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<sup>133</sup> For the most part, it is only the main characters that usually become vampires after being bitten. Beginning with Bram Stoker's famous tale there needed to be a reciprocal transference of blood to ensure the victim would return as a vampire. Furthermore, whether or not the victim becomes a vampire has turned into being a conscious choice made by the main vampire. He/she decides who is given the gift of eternal life and hunger in the form of a vampire.

<sup>134</sup> Sims, 84-86.



Once the children are gone, she begins to take nightly feedings from Walter's own breast. Finally realizing what Brunhilda is doing by catching her in the act, he flees for the sorcerer to beg of him his help. With the aid of the sorcerer, Brunhilda is destroyed by being staked through the heart with a dagger, but not before placing a curse upon Walter's life.<sup>135</sup>

Walter goes to Swanhilda to confess what has happened and beg for her forgiveness. Hearing what has become of her children, Swanhilda offers no such forgiveness. Walter returns home, encountering travellers along the way, one of whom bears a striking similarity to Swanhilda. He welcomes them into his home and provides days of festivities. Eventually he confides in the woman who looks like Swanhilda and makes her his new wife. The great festivities continue until the night Walter brings his new bride to his room with sexual intentions. She turns into a large serpent and kills him while his castle is engulfed in flames. Before he dies, he again hears the warning, "wake not the dead!"<sup>136</sup>

The end of the tale makes several important connections to vampire lore, Enlightenment philosophers, and another vampire tale. The connection is made through the use of the serpent that the bride becomes upon entering Walter's embrace in his private chambers. Byron's tale uses the serpent as a metaphor for the battle between good and evil as the serpent is representative of the devil. In Voltaire's description of the vampire, while mocking their existence he discusses the origins of the vampire and who is at fault for conjuring up the dead. He questions whether it was the work of the devil. Byron and Tieck's tales implicitly reject Voltaire's mocking of vampire existence. In the eighteenth century it was

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<sup>135</sup> Sims, 87-96.

<sup>136</sup> Sims, 97-100; Author's quotations.

believed that excommunicates were at risk of becoming vampires, as were those born with marks of the devil. Tieck and Byron's tales returned the vampire to the realm of religion where the supernatural was directly connected to the devil. The devil or, in other words, the vampire has risen from the grave to destroy Walter and drag him to the depths of fiery hell.

In recent major scholarship, Tieck's *Wake not the Dead* is discussed very briefly, if at all, in analyses of vampire literature from the first half of the nineteenth century. The majority of vampire scholarship provides an extensive analysis of Polidori's tale, as discussed above, and jumps forward to the next highly popular vampire tale, *Varney the Vampire*. The importance of Tieck's tale, as argued by Senf, is that the vampire simply exists without justification and "exists primarily to prey on ordinary human beings."<sup>137</sup> If it is concluded that the tale was penned right at the turn of the century, it can also be concluded because the author felt no need to justify the vampire's existence, that vampires and their appetites were already well known prior to Polidori's popular tale.

Senf also argues that the vampire being female allows the author to present women's sexuality as evil.<sup>138</sup> Tony Thorne, author of *Children of the Night: of Vampires and Vampirism*, accentuates the argument by focusing on women's roles in society. He argues that Tieck shows the importance of family and how it can be destroyed by women's sexuality as represented by the female vampire. "The work powerfully evokes the reversal of the mother-instinct and the helplessness of parents in the face of the loss of their children."<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Senf, 145.

<sup>138</sup> Senf, 161.

<sup>139</sup> Tony Thorne, *Children of the Night: of Vampires and Vampirism* (London: Guernsey Press Co., 1999): 44.

Published in 1841, Aleksei Tolstoy's *The Family of the Vourdalak* begins the trend whereby religion became the main focus in the battle against vampirism. It contains direct references to vampire lore through Dom Calmet's treatise, while invoking religion as a main weapon in the battle against vampirism. By focusing on a religious theme and using Calmet as a basis for vampire knowledge, Tolstoy's tale, in effect, rejects Enlightenment irreligion and rationalism. Enlightenment scholars mocked Calmet's work and claimed that the vampire epidemic was a tool used by the church to assert its power over the peasantry. In Tolstoy's tale, Calmet's treatise is discussed as a factual guide to vampirism and holy relics and religious icons are symbols of protection against the vampire.<sup>140</sup> In other words, it was not the mockery of the Enlightenment that was going to stop vampire epidemics; it was the works that provided knowledge, as knowledge is power, and religion would triumph over the supernatural evil of the devil.

The tale is a fictitious, yet meant to seem non-fictitious, account of the Marquis D'Urfé's encounter with vampirism in 1759. The storytelling takes place in 1815 during the Congress of Vienna amongst soldiers, émigrés, and others who were waiting for the completion of the congress so they could finally go home. The tale is an important point in understanding the explosion of vampire literature in the early nineteenth century.<sup>141</sup> First, it provides a real setting familiar to the reader. Second, Europe had been in turmoil since before the French Revolution.

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<sup>140</sup> Sims, 141.

<sup>141</sup> Sims, 137-138.

The characters of the story met frequently to tell each other tales of horror and the supernatural. They had only one rule: politics were not to be discussed as “Everyone had had enough of *that* subject.”<sup>142</sup> As were the characters in the story, the population of Europe was tired of the constant turmoil and the vampire provided an avenue of escape.

The Marquis’ tale takes place in 1759. He had been in love with a beautiful duchesse who toyed with him and denied his advances. Out of spite, he accepted a “diplomatic mission to the hospodar of Moldavia.”<sup>143</sup> The knowledge of his departure proved to be shocking to the Duchess who entrusted with him a cross to be worn around his neck until his return. Although the Marquis does not realize the meaning behind the gift, the cross is provided as a form of protection against the evils of the supernatural that were prevalent in the area to where the Marquis was travelling.<sup>144</sup>

During his voyage, the Marquis stopped in a small Serbian village to rest for a night in a local residence. While his intention was only to stay for the night, bad weather prevented his departure for several days. The family of the house were all very anxious. They were waiting for the return of their father, Gorcha. They relayed to the Marquis that their father had left ten days earlier to kill a Turkish man named Ali Bek who had been terrorizing the area. They were told by Gorcha that if he did not return within ten days he had been killed and to mourn him. If he returned after ten days, he was a “cursed *vourdalak*, come to suck [their] blood.”<sup>145</sup> The

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<sup>142</sup> Sims, 138; Author’s italics for emphasis.

<sup>143</sup> Sims, 139.

<sup>144</sup> Sims, 139; In later vampire tales, the cross around one’s neck always scares away the vampire. During an attack as the vampire is about to strike, the sight of the cross around the victims neck scares away the vampire and usually leads the victim to understanding the power of religion over the evils of the vampire.

<sup>145</sup> Sims, 140.

Marquis stopped at this point to provide background information to his listeners. He informs his audience that vourdalaks are Slavic vampires who rise from the dead to drink the blood of their closest relatives. The vampire's victims then become vampires. The Marquis was familiar with the writings of Dom Calmet and this is where he got his knowledge of vampires. He then discusses the extent of attention that vampire crazes received from government authorities and the reputable witnesses that verified the validity of the accounts. He informs his audience that "with this information as background, it should be easier for you to understand."<sup>146</sup> The Marquis' tale takes place at the height of the Enlightenment attack on vampire accounts. The Marquis was an educated man, and therefore it can be assumed that having knowledge of Calmet's work, he would have been familiar with the Enlightenment response. It is important that the Enlightenment response to the vampire craze is not even mentioned. Tolstoy's tale rejects the Enlightenment's rejection of vampire accounts by only using Calmet's work. He focuses on the elements of the treatise perhaps most attacked by the Enlightenment, namely taking accounts at face value, not critically analyzing the vampire exhumation witnesses, and presenting the vampire accounts as factual.<sup>147</sup>

The Marquis continued that his arrival coincided with the tenth day of Gorcha's absence which was the reason for all the anxiety. Gorcha lived with his two sons and their families, and his daughter. The Marquis immediately fell in love with the daughter Sdenka, who bore an uncanny resemblance to his love from home, the duchess. While waiting, no one would speak of Gorcha as the Marquis explained that speaking of the vampire will invite him to you. When

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<sup>146</sup> Sims, 141.

<sup>147</sup> Sims, 140-141.

his name is brought up by the children, they are immediately punished. At the sound of the church bells ringing eight o'clock, Gorcha exited the forest wounded. While most of the family was happy for his return, his son Georges believed that it was too late and that his father is a Vourdalak. When Georges offered his father help with his wounds, secretly wanting to look at the wounds for signs of vampirism, Gorcha pushed him away and would not allow any inspection of his wounds. Gorcha admitted that it had been ten days but did not admit to being a vampire. Everyone entered the house and the Marquis states that Gorcha's "features could have been taken for those of a corpse."<sup>148</sup> Like the vampires of early eighteenth-century accounts of Serbia that the Marquis quotes from Calmet, Gorcha had risen from the dead and returned to his family to make them his victims.

After everyone was asleep that night the Marquis awoke to see Gorcha watching him from outside the window to ensure that he was asleep. Gorcha then quietly went to wake his grandson and lure him outside. The Marquis jumped out of bed and awoke the rest of the house by banging on the walls because Gorcha had locked his door from the outside. Georges ran out of the house and found his son unconscious in the forest unharmed. The next morning Gorcha could not be found and Georges prepared a wooden aspen stake. Still the rest of the family could not believe that Gorcha was a vampire and hid the stake from Georges. The following night Gorcha returned for his grandson. Although the family awoke, thanks again to

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<sup>148</sup> Sims, 140-146; Quote page 146.

the Marquis, the child did not survive until morning. The night of the burial Gorcha returned, this time looking for his other grandson but was foiled by Georges.<sup>149</sup>

The Marquis went to profess his love for Sdenka, asking her for an hour of her time. She recoiled due to her innocence and for fear of being caught alone with him in her room by Georges. Georges came into the room but was distracted from his sister's breach of decorum by Gorcha standing at the window. Up until this point it was still only Georges and the Marquis who believed Gorcha had been responsible for the death of Georges's son. When Gorcha returned the next day he was invited to dine with the family. When asked to say Grace, Gorcha remained silent. This was a clear indication of Gorcha's guilt and shows the power of religion over the vampire. Gorcha was unable to say Grace. Georges rushed to retrieve his stake, finally realizing that it had been hidden.<sup>150</sup> "Whoever has hidden it must answer for all the evils which will befall us."<sup>151</sup> By not being able to find his stake and stop the vampire, everyone's demise, just like in vampire accounts, is inevitable. The Enlightenment rationalized vampire epidemics as the spread of disease or simply superstitious minds connecting sudden deaths. In this tale, and in towns ravaged by vampire epidemics, vampirism was the only possible cause they could comprehend and their own supernatural knowledge was the only effective tool for being rid of the vampire.

Gorcha took off into the forest with Georges chasing close behind. That night Georges returned, having driven a stake through the heart of Gorcha. He informed the Marquis that the

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<sup>149</sup> Sims, 147-152.

<sup>150</sup> Sims, 152-156.

<sup>151</sup> Sims, 156.

road was now clear and he could take his leave. The following morning the Marquis left the village and Sdenka. He travelled to his destination where he would stay for the next six months, subconsciously putting the events to the back of his mind. He returned to the rational world of politics, away from the supernatural world of the peasantry. When his mission had been fulfilled, he set off for home, passing through the village once more. Upon his arrival, he could not help but notice a drastic change.<sup>152</sup>

He stopped in at the local church where a monk offered passing travelers food and lodging. The monk informed him that vampirism had taken over the small village and that no one was spared. Gorcha's vampirism had spread through the whole village and no one had been spared except for the priest. Not quite believing the monk's tale, thinking he was trying to trick the Marquis into staying in the church for a fee, the Marquis went to see with his own eyes what had become of the village.<sup>153</sup> The Marquis was a western man who, although familiar with vampire accounts through the works of Calmet, could not quite believe what he was told. The superstitions of small villages were not a way of life for him, as they had been for the local population. To him, an educated western man, the account by the monk seemed an abuse of Church power fed by greed. This is the same idea professed by scholars of the Enlightenment. The church, they charged, used vampire superstitions to assert its power and control over the population. In this tale religion was the only effective power over the vampire as can be understood through the local church being the only safe haven left around.

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<sup>152</sup> Sims, 156-158.

<sup>153</sup> Sims, 158-161.



The Marquis went into the village and found it completely deserted. He left his horse in a stable and returned to his previous accommodations. Once inside, he found signs that Sdenka was still around. Not long after he had lain down on her bed, Sdenka came to see him. She was wearing the same outfit as the night the Marquis had approached her in her room. She looked the same but was different; the innocence she once had was gone. The sexuality of the vampire flourished as she begged for an hour of his time. Slowly he began to notice other differences. The most important was the absence of the religious icons she had always worn. Sdenka now represented the essence of evil, or the opposite of holiness. She had lost all her innocence and her connection to religion, in the form of the religious symbols that had previously adorned her neckline, had been cast aside.<sup>154</sup>

During his description of his encounter with Sdenka, the Marquis returns to the present to divulge a few things to his listeners. He provides the context for the style in which his tale is being told. He states: "Things have changed a lot since then, and it was not so long ago that the Revolution, having overthrown both the traces of paganism and the Christian religion, erected the goddess Reason in their place."<sup>155</sup> This furthers the rejection of Enlightenment irreligion and rationalism and the eventual revolution spawned by its ideas. This is important in correlation with the setting in which the tale is being told. The comment seems not to condone the overthrow of the everyday way of life that centralized religion. As has been seen throughout the tale, religion was the beacon of faith that protected against vampires. Furthermore, for the listeners the age of reason had only brought decades of war, destruction,

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<sup>154</sup> Sims, 161-163.

<sup>155</sup> Sims, 162.

and political turmoil. They wanted a return to the past through an escape from their current reality.

While in the arms of Sdenka, the Marquis was poked by the cross he was wearing, the one given as protection by the Duchess, and brought him out of a spell he was under. He began to notice the rest of the villagers, who were now vampires, lurking outside the house waiting to come in and devour him. Sdenka had been luring him into a spell until the time was right for the vampire villagers to strike. Furthermore, he began to notice Sdenka's real appearance; just like the vampires from the eighteenth century accounts, she looked like a corpse while retaining the features she had before her death.<sup>156</sup>

To escape from Sdenka and the village vampires lurking outside, the Marquis uses trickery to outwit his would-be attackers. In vampire lore and superstitions, trickery through distractions was a common method used to outwit the vampire. As already mentioned, if you covered your roof with seeds the vampire would stop to count them, distracting him/her until morning when he/she would have to return to the grave. The Marquis told Sdenka that he must attend to his horse and would return; doing so in a loud voice to be heard by the lurking vampires. Although this is not through the use of seeds, he has provided a simple distraction to fool the vampire to avoid becoming prey. Once it was realized that he was trying to get away, a great pursuit ensued, but the Marquis made his escape.<sup>157</sup>

The Marquis completes his tale of horror and closes by telling his audience, specifically the females, that "If I had given in to my enemies, I would myself have become a vampire. As it

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<sup>156</sup> Sims, 164.

<sup>157</sup> Sims, 165-166.

was, Heaven did not allow things to come to that, and so far from wishing to suck your blood, mesdames, I only ask—old as I am—to be granted the privilege of shedding my own blood in your service!”<sup>158</sup> In this closing statement, two things are apparent: the protection provided by religion and shedding of one’s blood for one’s country. For the Marquis, through the cross around his neck and the nearby church, religion protected him against becoming a victim of the vampires.

The second point is something that has not yet been thoroughly tackled within this project but is worth a short discussion. The Marquis shedding his blood for his country creates the metaphor of secular power as a vampire. Secular powers shed the blood of their soldiers to survive and grow strong. The Enlightenment provided the ideas for the Revolution which spawned the rise of Napoleon and the decades of war that ensued. Napoleon shed the blood of the French nation in order to grow strong through expansion. Oddly enough, the Marquis is willing to offer up his blood to the vampire of secular power, especially if it can be done for a woman.

Théophile Gautier published his *La Morte Amoureuse* in 1843. His tale continues the focus on the power of religion over the vampire, which would be a common trait of vampire literature in the following period. It presents the battle between good and evil or god versus the devil, as represented through the relationship of a priest and a vampire. Furthermore, Enlightenment irreligion is challenged as it takes men of the church to vanquish the evils of society that the vampire represents.

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<sup>158</sup> Sims, 167.

The tale is a recounting of events by a priest. Romauldo, the priest, had spent his whole life devoted to becoming a priest. On the day of his ordination, his faith wavered when he happened to see a woman of such beauty that thoughts of her nearly sent him into madness at the idea of dedicating his life not to her, but to God.<sup>159</sup> Romauldo's ordination took place during the week of Easter. This is an interesting point to note. Easter is the time of the resurrection of Jesus. Resurrection is one of the key components of the vampire myth. After death the vampire is resurrected from the grave.

When they met eyes, Romauldo felt a connection to her that almost prevented him from taking his vows. She observed him taking his vows and could only say "Oh, unfortunate man! Unfortunate man! What have you done?"<sup>160</sup> Romauldo did not even know who this woman was; just the sight of her had changed him forever. Shortly after, a strange man approaches Romauldo and secretly hands him a note revealing that the woman was called Clarimonda, and where she could be found. He begins to think of ways to travel to town to find her. It was driving him to madness, which did not go unnoticed by his superiors. Father Serapion came to tell him that he had been assigned to position in a small church a couple of towns away. During their discussion, Serapion implored Romauldo to be careful of his actions and thoughts as they would lead him in the wrong direction.<sup>161</sup> This is the beginning of the battle between good and evil. Serapion speaks to him: "Beware, my brother, and do not listen to the suggestions of the devil. The evil spirit, angered at your having devoted yourself to the Lord, prowls around you like a ravening wolf, and is making a last effort to draw you to

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<sup>159</sup> Sims 103-108.

<sup>160</sup> Sims, 109.

<sup>161</sup> Sims, 109-111,

himself.”<sup>162</sup> Romauldo begins to realize his error but does not seem to be able to conquer the evil that is calling to him. He does not realize she is not just a woman, but that she is evil itself.

The following day Father Serapion and Romauldo left together travelling to Romauldo’s new appointment. While en route they passed through the local town where Clarimonda lived. Romauldo’s eyes wandered in an attempt to find out where she may be, but it was not until after they left the town and were looking back that he got his answer. After noticing a large palace, he inquired with Serapion to who lived there. Serapion answered that it was Clarimonda’s residence and “fearful things take place there.”<sup>163</sup> They continued on their journey with Romauldo longing for a glimpse of his love.<sup>164</sup>

After they had arrived at their destination and Romauldo had settled in, Serapion departed to return to the monastery. As time went on, Romauldo began to feel like he was being watched. When he thought he had seen someone in the bushes, he went to the spot but could only find a small print. Romauldo claimed it was the size of a hoof made by a small animal.<sup>165</sup> This can be interpreted through the medieval representation of the devil as a goat. As revealed later in the tale, Serapion believed Clarimonda to actually be the devil.

In the middle of the night, Romauldo was woken and brought to see a woman who was dying and wanted to see a priest. By the time he arrived the woman had already passed away. Upon his arrival though, the man who helped him from his horse was the same man who provided the note of information concerning the identity of Clarimonda. He raced to the body

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<sup>162</sup> Sims, 111.

<sup>163</sup> Sims, 113.

<sup>164</sup> Sims, 112-113.

<sup>165</sup> Sims, 114.

only to confirm that it actually was his love that lay there dead. He shed tears over her body and pressed his lips to hers. Surprisingly, or maybe not so surprisingly to the reader, Clarimonda awoke and returned his kiss. She thanked Romauldo for the life he provided in the kiss, told him she would see him soon, and lay back down dead.<sup>166</sup>

Romauldo awoke a few days later in his own bed without any knowledge of what had transpired since the kiss. He was not sure if it had been a dream until his housekeeper provided him a description of the man who had returned him to his home; it was the same man who had fetched him in the first place. Hearing that Romauldo had been ill and sleeping for days, Father Serpion came to visit. To Romauldo it seemed as if Serapion already knew the whole situation. He told informed Romauldo that Clarimonda had passed away after taking part in an orgy that lasted over a week. He said that all of Clarimonda's lovers had met with violent deaths. It was believed she was a vampire but, as already noted, he believed she was the devil, and it was rumoured that this is not the first time she had died. He went on to warn Romauldo against the temptations of the devil and that he was in a precarious situation.<sup>167</sup>

That night Clarimonda came to Romauldo in the outfit in which she had been buried. She told him that she would return the following night to take him away. For months, Romauldo was unaware of what was reality. By night he lived in Venice with Clarimonda gambling and destroying lives in his path.<sup>168</sup> This is comparable to Lord Ruthven, in Polidori's tale, who takes part in the same vices and also leaves his victims in despair. By day, he was a

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<sup>166</sup> Sims, 115-119.

<sup>167</sup> Sims, 119-121.

<sup>168</sup> Sims, 121-127.

local parish priest “doing penance for his excesses.”<sup>169</sup> In this, the priest and the vampire become metaphors for the aristocracy and the vices they take part in. Although he does penance, evil is triumphing over good.

Eventually Clarimonda fell ill again. No one could figure out what was wrong with her. One day Romauldo accidentally cut himself and Clarimonda jumped on the wound to consume his blood. She immediately felt revived. The vampire, or evil, shows itself in the form of Clarimonda. For many nights to come, every night Clarimonda would drink a prick of blood from Romauldo to maintain her health. Clarimonda did not know Romauldo was aware as she drugged him every night, but he tricked her one night by not taking medicated tea and faked sleep. The vampire in this tale, like many others, needs blood to maintain life. Furthermore, in several tales previously discussed, the vampire drugs his/her victim in order to secretly feed. Romauldo realizes that Serapion had been right in calling Clarimonda a vampire, but he did not care. He would willingly give his blood to keep her alive.<sup>170</sup>

Father Serapion again came to visit Romauldo. He came to take Romauldo to Clarimonda’s grave to show the decomposed shell she had become. Together they travelled to her grave and dug her up. When they opened her coffin, her body had not decomposed and there was blood on her mouth. This is the same as in vampire accounts of the previous century. It is claimed by witnesses that the bodies of supposed vampires had not decomposed and there was blood present around the mouth. The blood was proof that the vampire had left his grave to suck the blood of the living. Father Serapion throws holy water on the corpse and it turns to

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<sup>169</sup> Sims, 127.

<sup>170</sup> Sims, 127-130.

dust.<sup>171</sup> Religion prevails over the evil of the supernatural. This is a direct challenge to the Enlightenment. Not only did the Enlightenment rationalize supernatural aspects of Christianity, Enlightenment thinkers claimed that the real vampires were the priests and that religion used the supernatural to maintain their dominance over the masses. In this tale, the priests are the ones being attacked and are also the ones with the knowledge needed to vanquish evil.

Gautier's *La Morte Amoureuse* has been extensively analyzed in French academia. The scholarship focuses on themes similar to those of Tieck's tale. This is not surprising, as in both tales the vampire is a woman representing the evils of female sexuality. Jean Bellemin-Noël looks at Gautier's tale in his *Plaisirs de Vampire: Gautier, Gracq, Giono*. Bellemin-Noël's analysis focuses on the sensuality, sexuality, and eroticism of the characters, while also looking at metaphorical interactions of the characters. He focuses on the sensuality, sexuality, and eroticism of the tale as the vampire Clarimonde represents "l'amour physique" whose sensuality comes forth in her consumption of Romauldo's blood.<sup>172</sup> When Romauldo cuts his finger, Clarimonde becomes excited and consumes the blood. This incident is not typical of the vampire's consumption of blood in literature or folklore as it does not contain elements of evil or destruction. The consumption is of an erotic and sensual nature that solidifies the bond between the two central characters.<sup>173</sup>

The relationship of Romauldo and Clarimonde is not only seen as innocent and positive; it is argued that the relationship between the characters is representative of a reversal of the

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<sup>171</sup> Sims, 130-132.

<sup>172</sup> Jean Bellemin-Noël, *Plaisirs de Vampire: Gautier, Gracq, Giono* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2001): 46.

<sup>173</sup> Bellemin-Noël, 44.



mother-child bond. Clarimonde drinks from Romauldo's bosom while he sleeps, inverting the natural connection of breast feeding.<sup>174</sup> Bellemin-Noël sees this as a "représentation typique de la mère abusive."<sup>175</sup> Their relationship also represents the power of the supernatural—in the form of the vampire—over the Age of Reason.<sup>176</sup> Furthermore, Clarimonde's power over Romauldo is seen as a near castration and in the end it is necessary for Romauldo to conquer the vampire to return man to a position of power over woman and to a state of enlightened knowledge over superstitions.<sup>177</sup> This contradicts the argument of this research by stating that Romauldo is representative of reality and reason. He is of the Church, which in itself was opposed by philosophers in mid eighteenth-century Enlightenment irreligion.

Florent Montclair's study of Gautier in *La Vampire dans la Littérature Romantique Française 1820-1868: Textes et Documents* agrees with Bellemin-Noël's conclusion that Clarimonde is representative of sensuality and pleasure. "Elle est donc le plaisir et l'incarnation de la félicité et de la beauté."<sup>178</sup> While Montclair does agree with the representations of Clarimonde presented by Bellemin-Noël, it is not central to the analysis. Montclair focuses on the religious representations found in *La Morte Amoureuse*. While Romauldo sees Clarimonde as sacred, to the reader she represents the "incarnation du démon."<sup>179</sup> Furthermore, Montclair argues that she has serpent and feline qualities. The serpent is a metaphor for the devil, while the feline qualities are to express her savage nature. Most importantly,

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<sup>174</sup> Bellemin-Noël, 43.

<sup>175</sup> Bellemin-Noël, 42.

<sup>176</sup> Bellemin-Noël, 46.

<sup>177</sup> Bellemin-Noël, 56-57.

<sup>178</sup> Florent Montclair, *Le Vampire dans la Littérature Romantique Française 1820-1868: Textes et Documents* (Franche-Comté: Presses Universitaires de Franche Comté, 2010): 153.

<sup>179</sup> Montclair, 153.

Montclair's argument pertaining to religious representations focuses on the consumption of Romauldo's blood. Contrary to Bellemin-Noël, who sees sensuality in the interaction, Montclair sees it as representing communion, the drinking of the blood of Christ. Romauldo is a figure of the Church who consents to the consumption of his blood.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> Montclair, 153-155.

## Conclusion

Vampire literature in the first half of the nineteenth century rejected Enlightenment rationalism and Enlightenment irreligion. Scholars of the Enlightenment mocked believers while rationalizing the vampire epidemics of the early eighteenth century. Scholars such as Voltaire were confounded at the idea that the belief in vampires could exist in their Age of Reason. They believed the only people with vampiric traits were men of business and men of the Church who preyed on the masses, exploiting them for their own financial gain to maintain the status quo in the social hierarchy. Early nineteenth-century vampire literature contemporized the vampire and presented him/her in the guise of the aristocrat who preyed on the masses and was often powerless against relics and men of religion. Furthermore, vampire literature used the beliefs found in the vampire epidemics of the early eighteenth century to form the basis of their storylines.

Vampire literature of the early nineteenth century was not the first literary movement to reject the Age of Reason by focusing on the irrationalism of human nature. The Sturm und Drang movement began in Germany in the 1770s. Their tales focused on the “the inner life of the burgher world and [asserted] its values with a far greater confidence and passion, even recklessness. They [overthrew] the ‘reasonable’ compromises.”<sup>181</sup> The Sturm and Drang movement looked to the personal experiences and knowledge of the common people. They “appreciated the richness and ‘warmth’ of burgher existence and grasped the critical points at

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<sup>181</sup> Roy Pascal, “The “Sturm und Drang” Movement,” *The Modern Language Review* 47, 2 (April, 1952): 131. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3718800>. Accessed 1 May 2012.

which burgher values were threatened.”<sup>182</sup> In this we can see a connection to the vampire tales of the following century. Authors of vampire literature may have contemporized the vampire into an aristocratic supernatural monster, but they did so based on the knowledge and experiences of the lower-class rural populations of Eastern Europe that were threatened by Enlightenment rationalism of the mid eighteenth century concerning supernatural beliefs.

Chapter one presented the vampire epidemics of the early eighteenth century to show the superstitious beliefs held by the peasant population and to initiate the connection of themes used in vampire literature a century later. One of the most prolific themes was the consumption of blood, which distinguished the vampire from other supernatural entities that also wreaked havoc in nocturnal visits. Arnod Paole consumed the blood of his victims and of the local population’s farm animals. Peter Plogojowitz came in the night to throttle his victims, which is reminiscent of the nocturnal visits of apparitions, and also consumed their blood. As discussed in chapter two, Pitton de Tournafort’s account presented a case where vampires caused trouble for the local population. Although they were not prowling by night to consume blood, the supposed vampire disinterred was found with fresh blood on his lips, confirming the belief that he was the vampire. From the start of the nineteenth century, authors of vampire literature used the focus of blood to direct their tales of horror: Polidori’s vampire drank from his victims, Tieck’s vampire consumed the blood of most of the local village’s children and of her husband, Hoffman’s vampire gathered with other women in a local cemetery to feast on the body of a man, and Gautier’s vampire secretly consumed the blood of her lover to survive.

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<sup>182</sup> Pascal, 135.

Chapter two explored the Enlightenment rationalization of vampire epidemics while mocking the possibility of their existence and those who believed. Tournefort rationalizes the events surrounding the supposed vampire attacks to no avail. He is confounded by the logic and reason that supports their vampire beliefs. Voltaire and others turned to mockery to attack vampire superstitions. To them, it seemed incredible that people could hold such superstitious beliefs. Furthermore, Voltaire attacks Calmet and his vampire scholarship for perpetuating superstitious beliefs and becoming the vampire's historian. Ironically, Voltaire has perpetuated superstitious beliefs by continuing the vampire debate and creating the metaphorical vampire aristocrat.

Many other Enlightenment scholars attacked Calmet's scholarship for the simple fact of providing the vampire with serious scholarly attention. As previously discussed, Frayling argues that his peers believed his scholarship was evidence of him losing his mind. Calmet's 1746 'dissertation' is one of the most important sources for vampirism. It is not so much important for the scholarship itself as it is for how it has been used. Calmet worked to dispel vampire beliefs, yet was attacked by philosophers for his effort. Furthermore, his accounts have been the basis for numerous vampire tales, have been used to introduce vampire literature, and are contained within almost every piece of vampire scholarship to date. His analyses of vampire beliefs were mimicked—side by side with criticisms by Enlightenment scholars—and continue to influence modern scholarship.

Voltaire was not the only scholar of the Enlightenment to portray abuses of power through the creation of a metaphorical vampire. Immediately after the account of Arnod Paole

reached Western Europe, the *Gentlemen's Magazine* in England published an article comparing the vampire to the Turkish and German governments' power over occupied Hungary.

Philosophers of the mid-eighteenth century gave the Church vampiric traits. Rousseau argued that the relationship between vampire and victim was representative of the relationship between the Church and the masses. The Church promoted vampire epidemics to assert their control as only it had the tools to combat the supernatural predator. Gautier's tale would directly reject Enlightenment irreligion as the vampire feasted on a priest and religious knowledge was required to vanquish the vampire.

Dr. Gerard Van Swieten studied vampire accounts, attacking the credibility of the witnesses and rationalized the events by providing an understanding of decomposition. In his investigations, witnesses' stories changed and contemporary modern medicine provided a rational understanding for the supposed vampires' bodies were found not to have decayed. He was angered at the desecration of bodies and reported to Empress Maria Theresa, initiating the banning of local authorities' ability to deal with supernatural occurrences.

Chapter three explored vampire literature in the first half of the nineteenth century. The first and most famous vampire tale of the era was Polidori's *The Vampyre*. It was published in 1819 and captured the imaginations of western Europe. It initiated a genre of vampire tales and plays that were immensely popular. A close analysis of these individual vampire tales shows the rejection of Enlightenment rationalism and Enlightenment irreligion. Calmet's 'dissertation,' discounted by Enlightenment rationalism and irreligion, helped set the stage for the nineteenth-century vampire.

The metaphorical aristocrat vampire created by philosophers of the Enlightenment became the staple character in the majority of vampire tales in the first half of the nineteenth century. Polidori, Byron, Hoffman, and Tieck all created aristocratic vampires. The philosophers of the Enlightenment had rationalized vampire accounts to dispel superstitious beliefs. The authors of following century rejected their rationalism and contemporized their metaphorical vampire into a blood-sucking supernatural being.

Details of the myths, legends, and lore contained within vampire accounts of the early eighteenth century were used in the following century in literature. As the vampire moved from the realm of fact to that of fiction, his qualities and traits did not change. Methods of transmission and the fears of eighteenth-century Eastern European rural populations stayed the same. As previously discussed, early eighteenth-century vampire accounts were differentiated from vampire accounts of the previous centuries by the vampire's consumption of blood. The nineteenth-century vampire thrived on the blood of his/her victims.

The rejection of the Enlightenment in vampire tales was implicit and explicit. Vampire accounts are often directly referenced and their details are reproduced. The rejection is implicit in that while the accounts are referenced, the rationalism and irreligion of the Enlightenment are ignored. Referencing Calmet's 'dissertation' vampire accounts are used, but his efforts to argue against the existence of vampires is left out. Tolstoy is not as implicit in his rejection of Enlightenment rationalism and irreligion. In his tale, the group that gathered to hear the Marquis' vampire tale only wanted to hear of the supernatural. They were tired of politics and reason and wanted an avenue of escape found in the vampire.

Beliefs in vampires were an aspect of everyday life for centuries for the rural peasant populations of Eastern Europe. With the annexation of territories into the Austrian Empire, vampire epidemics reached the western world and became the basis of extensive scholarship. The vampire epidemics were rationalized in theological studies. By the mid-eighteenth century, scholarship changed. Philosophers of the Enlightenment believed they were above dealing with the silly superstitions of the masses and turned to mockery to express their views. With the Age of Reason came the Revolution. After decades of turmoil, the return of the vampire provided a much needed escape. Europeans were tired of the rationalism and reason of the Enlightenment and wanted a return to the supernatural world of the past. The Age of Reason had led to chaos, while supernatural beliefs had always provided an avenue of understanding and escape from life's mysteries. The imagination of nineteenth-century authors of vampire literature rejected the Enlightenment rationalism and irreligion in their supernatural tales; as Albert Einstein said, "Imagination is more important than knowledge."<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> Walter Isaacson, *Einstein: His Life and Universe* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007): 7.



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