MODERNISM, ROMANCE AND THE *FIN DE SIÈCLE*

Popular Fiction and British Culture

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Contents

Incorporated bodies: Dracula *and professionalism*

> The dinner was very long, and the conversation was about the
> aristocracy – and Blood. Mrs Waterbrook repeatedly told us that if
> she had a weakness, it was Blood.   *David Copperfield*

In the romances of the *fin de siècle* we have tended to see a literature of
anxiety symptomatic of some more general cultural crisis. The mon-
strous anachronisms of such novels as *She*, *Dracula* and *Dr Jekyll and Mr
Hyde* consequently seem to mirror a whole set of anxieties: the collapse
of empire, the degeneration of the race in the light of evolutionary
theory, and the rise of the New Woman, to name but a few. These are
indeed anxious texts, but I want to argue that they may produce and
manage anxiety as well as express it. In this chapter I will give an
account of the way one of these romances, Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, uses
anxiety to produce as both necessary and natural a modern form of
professional, male, homosocial combination – the team of experts.[1] I
will also be advocating a reconsideration of the *fin de siècle* as a period of
crisis. Despite an increasingly shrill rhetoric of decline, Britain was in
fact far from collapse. On the contrary, the British empire grew dra-
matically during this period, while at home state power was also under-
going a phase of expansion. This latter phenomenon depended on the
existence of a new class of experts, and the adventure romance played a
part in the formation of this professional class. The immediate context
for *Dracula*, I will argue, is what Harold Perkin has called the 'rise of
professional society',[2] a historical shift that links such apparently dispar-
ate phenomena as the dramatic increase in the number of professional
associations at the end of the nineteenth century, the expansion of the
state sector, and the emergence of the specialist literary languages of
high modernism. If as a literary artifact Stoker's novel looks back to the
Gothic romances of Horace Walpole and Ann Radcliffe, ideologically it
belongs to a specifically modernist culture that we associate with the
work of Joyce, Woolf and Eliot. To this extent *Dracula* is part of what Jon

Thompson calls 'a larger culture of modernism that includes popular culture and is not limited to institutionalized high art'.[3]

Attempts to historicize the 'revival of romance' too often take the *fin de siècle* at its own estimate. Patrick Brantlinger's assessment of the 'revival' in *Rule of Darkness* typifies this approach. Arguing for the use of the term 'imperial Gothic' to describe the romances of Stoker, Haggard and others, Brantlinger suggests that after the mid-Victorian era the British found their own myths of progress to be increasingly unconvincing. Instead they began to worry about 'the degeneration of their institutions, their culture, their "racial stock"'.[4] He continues: 'Apocalyptic themes and images are characteristic of imperial Gothic, in which, despite the consciously pro-Empire values of many authors, the feeling emerges that "we are those upon whom the ends of the earth are come".' Images of cultural and physical degeneration certainly did circulate widely in the late nineteenth century, abetted by theories which built on Darwin's speculations on the possibility of species 'reversion' in *The Descent of Man.* Max Nordau, analyst of cultural morbidity, found a wide audience for his *Entartung* (1892), published in English in 1895 as *Degeneration*. Drawing on the criminological work of Caesar Lombroso he sought to show that degeneracy had set its stigma on the literature, music and visual arts of the period. 'Degenerates are not always criminals, prostitutes, anarchists and pronounced lunatics: they are often authors and artists', he proclaimed.[5] Where Lombroso traced the signs of degeneration in the facial asymmetries, hare-lips and strabismus of his subjects, Nordau identified the stylistic correlatives of such traits in the work of the Pre-Raphaelites, the symbolists, Nietzsche, Zola and others. Not one to pull his punches, he warned that 'We stand now in the midst of a severe mental epidemic; of a sort of black death of degeneration and hysteria.' Civilization had become 'an immense hospital ward'.[6] Bram Dijkstra's recent study of the female body in *fin-de-siècle* art is just one account that demonstrates how pervasive such theories were in late Victorian culture.[7] The rhetoric of decline became familiar enough for Oscar Wilde to recast it in an ironic light in the following well-known exchange from *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Lady Narborough, like many late nineteenth-century commentators, sees changes in sexual mores as the harbingers of decline:

'Nowadays all the married men live like bachelors, and all the bachelors like married men.'
'*Fin de siècle*,' murmured Lord Henry.
'*Fin du globe*,' answered his hostess.

'I wish it were the *fin du globe*,' said Dorian with a sigh. 'Life is a great disappointment.'[8]

Wilde appears to be keenly aware of something that Brantlinger and other present-day critics overlook – that reiterations of crisis and imminent apocalypse may conceal real continuities.

I would go further and suggest that the spectre of decline may be put to work during periods of development. The heyday of Brantlinger's 'imperial Gothic' coincided with a period of actual imperial expansion. Anxious or not, Britain added to its empire some 750,000 square miles in Asia and the South Pacific, and another 4,400,000 square miles in Africa beween 1870 and 1900.[9] In fact Britain would retain most of its empire until after the Second World War. Within Britain's own borders, these same years witnessed an extension of state control into regions previously treated either as part of the private sphere or as part of the free market. The decline of liberalism as an ideology was accompanied by a marked increase in the willingness of the state to concern itself with the family and with the relations of employers and employees. In part this was a transformation within liberalism itself, some of the cries for state action emanating from within the Liberal party, from 'New Liberals' such as L. T. Hobhouse and C. F. G. Masterman.[10] A wave of social legislation was one symptom of this shift; the appearance of an army of experts familiar with new theoretical tools such as psychology and eugenics – that is to say, a group capable of overseeing the new relations of the state and the private sphere – was another.[11] In turn this shift can be understood in the context of Britain's economic fortunes. It is often argued that Britain was losing ground to Germany and the United States by failing to undergo fully the 'second industrial revolution' associated with the use of electricity, the internal combustion engine and chemicals. But as W. D. Rubinstein has shown it is quite misleading to represent Britain's (partial) decline as an industrial power as a general economic crisis. Despite its mid-Victorian reputation as the workshop of the world Britain's prosperity had since the eighteenth century been based on 'a commercial, financial and service-based' economy, and what we see at the end of the nineteenth century is the reassertion of the dominance of this tertiary economy, within which the professional was an increasingly important figure.[12]

Widespread warnings that things fall apart, then, coincided with signs that the centre was not only holding, but actually entering a phase of expansion. This apparent paradox may be resolved by taking a look at one historical example. Seen through the lens of crisis the Boer war

appears as a traumatic national event; fears for the degeneration of the race and the security of the nation were apparently borne out when considerable numbers of British recruits were rejected as unfit for service.[13] Nevertheless, the end result of the war was not only management of the trauma but also an expansion and consolidation of certain power structures. Evidently, anxiety provided the occasion for state intervention on a grand scale. While the Committee on Physical Deterioration set up after the war found *no evidence* of actual physical or mental degeneration, it did see environmental factors as affecting the health of the poor. The outcome was new legislation whose influence Harold Perkin describes in these terms:

The Report on Physical Deterioration was one of the most influential social documents of the age, and many of its recommendations, including school meals for poor children, medical inspection, physical education for both sexes, cookery and domestic science for girls in schools, tighter control of the milk supply and food adulteration, social education of mothers by midwives and health visitors, juvenile courts, and a ban on the sale of alcohol and tobacco to children, all passed into law before the [1914] war.[14]

Fears there may well have been for the decline of Englishness within England, as well as for assaults from without, but these fears had the effect of buttressing – not enfeebling – the power of the state. Of equal importance, these fears established a mission for a new group of professionals in human management, whose area of expertise would extend into that which liberal ideology had once designated as the private sphere.[15]

While we cannot ignore the existence of a *fin-de-siècle* discourse of crisis and anxiety, neither can we take it at face value. As I suggested in my Introduction, additional problems attach to the labelling of late nineteenth-century adventure fiction as Gothic, or Victorian Gothic, or imperial Gothic. Accounts of Gothic have tended to view it as a literature of crisis, in which the anxieties of a culture find their most explicit expression. The Marquis de Sade may have been the first to impose this construction on the Gothic fiction of 'Monk' Lewis and others, describing it as 'the fruit of the revolution of which all Europe felt the shock'.[16] More recent criticism endorses the general tenor of the Marquis's comments, while offering different views as to what revolutionary crisis is at stake. Thus David Punter, for example, suggests that Gothic reflects the social trauma of the industrial revolution.[17] Psychoanalytic criticism treats Gothic fiction in the same way, while

effectively privatizing the revolution; Gothic becomes the textual arena in which the sexual anxieties of an age are rehearsed. Whether in its Marxist or psychoanalytic/feminist versions, the basic theory of the functioning of fiction remains the same: anxiety exists 'out there' somewhere beyond the text, generated by some impending crisis in the culture; the dominant representations of a culture obscure this, but in Gothic this anxiety returns as the 'repressed' of the culture. Criticism's role, then, by an etymological coincidence,[18] is to identify the particular crisis that bubbles below the surface of any given culture, and to show how the anxiety generated by this crisis is expressed in a particular text.

A glance at critical accounts of *Dracula* from the last twenty or so years confirms that this theory of Gothic fiction, which we might call anxiety theory, has dominated the interpretation of Stoker's sensational tale. For a novel that enjoys a rather ambivalent relation to the canon, *Dracula* seems to solicit interpretation, and critics have been generous in obliging. Psychoanalysis, Marxism, feminism, gender studies and other varieties of critical thought have each taken at least one turn at reading the text. In this respect the critical fate of *Dracula* resembles that of *Frankenstein*, a text in which the monster who dominates the action has been seen to embody threats ranging from the emerging working class to language itself.[19] In the pandemonium of interpretive activity around Stoker's novel, Count Dracula has appeared as the embodiment of fears about degeneration, the influx of eastern European Jews into late Victorian England, a subversive female sexuality, reverse colonization, nascent media culture, male homoeroticism and monopoly capital, among other things. However, the apparent diversity of critical conclusions masks a broad consensus that Stoker's text *reflects* certain anxieties, be they late Victorian or universal. The reading practice that accompanies this theory of Gothic fiction is allegorical: the text mirrors extra-textual anxieties; the vampire is the figure in the text for those anxieties; criticism decodes the figure to reveal its real referent. For example, Richard Wasson writing in 1966 argues that 'Count Dracula . . . represents those forces in Eastern Europe which seek to overthrow, through violence and subversion, the more progressive democratic civilization of the West.'[20] It may be easy to smile at this, to say the least, overdetermined reading, which tells us more about cold-war America than about Stoker's novel, but the same basic trope recurs again and again in the criticism. Writing eleven years later, Phyllis Roth sees the novel as reflecting pre-Oedipal anxieties, while Judith Weissman sees it

as representing a fear 'that women's sexual appetites are greater than men's'.[21] More recently still, Christopher Craft confidently traces the novel's origins to 'Victorian culture's anxiety about desire's potential indifference to the prescriptions of gender'.[22] The tenor in these readings of the monster becomes more complicated, but the basic tenor/vehicle relation returns in a way that is itself more numbing than uncanny.

The tendency to see *Dracula* in relation to specific late nineteenth-century historical contexts marks the most recent accounts of the text. Stephen Arata describes his essay on the novel as moving from the psychoanalytic to the historical in order to identify the text with a late Victorian 'anxiety of reverse colonization'.[23] *Dracula*, he argues, is one of the stories that culture tells itself in order to 'assuage the anxiety attendant upon cultural decay'.[24] Jennifer Wicke takes the refreshing tack of seeing the novel as looking forward to the twentieth century rather than back to the nineteenth. Yet she too is drawn into allegory, this time rewriting the text as a liminal modernist artefact: 'the social force most analogous to Count Dracula's as depicted in the novel is none other than mass culture, the developing technologies of the media in its many forms, as mass transport, tourism, photography and lithography in image production, and mass-produced narrative'.[25] It may be doing a certain violence to Wicke's careful prose to read her characterization of the novel as 'refract[ing] hysterical images of modernity'[26] as yet another version of the anxiety story, but that is what it seems to be, nonetheless.

In what follows, I will try and leave the anxiety story behind, reading the text as more performative than reflective, as providing a cultural narrative that reshapes society rather than mirroring social anxieties. Questioning the separation of text and history, I will be taking for granted that, as Ann Cvetkovich puts it, 'the work of . . . novels is itself a part of Victorian history'.[27] In the end it may appear that I am simply producing another allegory of the text, one with the 'little band of men' at its centre in place of the monster. The difference between a reading that places the text outside of the historical processes it supposedly reflects and a reading that makes it part of those processes is in practice a difficult one to maintain – *Dracula* as myth of origins may look very much like *Dracula* as historical allegory. But if the text still appears as an allegory in my account, it is an allegory of the future, or rather an allegory that helped to construct the future that its own narrative could then be seen to reflect.[28]

In suggesting that this is the way to read *Dracula*, I am also proposing that we treat late nineteenth-century romances as part of their moment – the moment of modernism. If we pay less attention to the formal links to Gothic fiction and stress instead the way in which such a narrative engages its moment, we can discover what *Dracula* shares with novels included in the canon of modernist fiction. The emergence of modernism was accompanied by a new concentration of metropolitan power, a new imperialism, the spread of consumerism, and the expansion of a culture of experts. While all of these are at some level related, it is on this last aspect of modernist culture that I want to concentrate here.[29] As Thomas Strychacz has shown, the culture of the expert, when translated into the field of literary practice, possesses its most obvious equivalent in the specialized languages of experimental modernism. As Strychacz puts it: 'If a body of formal knowledge underpins a professional's power within a mass society, then the idiom of modernist writing – arcane allusion, juxtaposition, opaque writing, indeterminacy, and so on – performs precisely this function within mass culture.'[30] The rise of a culture of experts, then, coincides with the appearance of texts that seem to demand of the reader an ability to master their private languages. Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* is perhaps the ultimate product of this trend, but the pattern is established much earlier, in the work of James and Conrad for example. In this chapter, however, I will be arguing that *Dracula,* a text more often seen as the polar opposite of the modernist novel, is equally concerned with the culture of the expert. Specifically, *Dracula* provides a myth of origins for such a culture.

THE POWER OF COMBINATION

Where does one begin a reading of *Dracula*? Well, why not at the end? If the text has accomplished something, let us catch it tallying up its gains. The last word lies with Jonathan Harker, in a note appended to Mina's typewritten account of the adventure and the other vestiges of seven years before. Harker begins his note thus:

Seven years ago we all went through the flames; and the happiness of some of us since then is, we think, well worth the pain we endured. It is an added joy to Mina and to me that our boy's birthday is the same day as that on which Quincey Morris died. His mother holds, I know, the secret belief that some of our brave friend's spirit has passed into him. His bundle of names links all our little band of men together; but we call him Quincey . . . We could hardly ask anyone, even did we wish to, to accept these as proofs of so wild a story. Van

Helsing summed it all up as he said, with our boy on his knee:-
'We want no proofs; we ask none to believe us! This boy will some day know what a brave and gallant woman his mother is. Already he knows her sweetness and loving care; later on he will understand how some men so loved her, that they did dare much for her sake.'[31]

The novel ends with Quincey, son of Jonathan and Mina; he is at once a sign of the promise of the future and a souvenir, through his 'bundle of names', of the past.[32] But we know that other blood flows in his veins. The giving and taking of blood throughout the novel means that more than the original Quincey Morris's spirit 'has passed into him'. Mina has drunk Dracula's blood, Dracula has drunk Lucy's, Lucy has had transfusions of blood from all the novel's main characters except Jonathan.[33] In other words Quincey stands as a record of the adventure in more than his 'bundle of names'. But this also means that the vampire's blood flows in little Quincey's veins, which suggests, not to put too fine a point on it, that Quincey is part-vampire. What then has been accomplished? Society has been saved from the vampire; Quincey, emblem of the society of the future, *is* – at least partly – a vampire.

This would scarcely seem to represent a triumph over the nosferatu. But what if we consider that the real accomplishment of the novel is bringing that 'little band of men' together? What if the threat of the vampire has largely been an instrument for the formation of an association between these men? As the ending of the novel shows, the team of men doesn't simply wither away once the vampire has been destroyed. The little band is also brought together by their common love of Mina ('some men so loved her, that they did dare much for her sake'). To avert a threat posed by a monster, to save a 'gallant woman' from that monster: this is the charter for this league of men. I want to argue that the vulnerable woman is, like the vampire, needed by the narrative.[34] At the same time, though, as we shall see, the celebration of the mother of the future generation dissimulates the text's investment in producing an exclusively male (and disembodied) model of social reproduction. The female body becomes in fact the exemplary object for the expertise of the team of men. Not surprisingly, then, the home, the 'feminine sphere' for the Victorian middle classes, becomes the privileged site for their activities.

Let us consider the sorts of men who are united by their loathing of the vampire and their love of Mina, and consider also the way their positions change in the course of the narrative. Jonathan Harker introduces himself to us first as a young solicitor, and becomes in the course

of the narrative the successor to his employer, Hawkins. Upon the death of Mr Hawkins, the Harkers become wealthy beyond their modest dreams with a suddenness that shocks Mina:

It seems only yesterday that the last entry was made, and yet how much between them, in Whitby and all the world before me, Jonathan away and no news of him; and now, married to Jonathan, Jonathan a solicitor, a partner, rich, master of his business, Mr Hawkins dead and buried . . . The service [sc. for Hawkins] was very simple and very solemn. There were only ourselves and the servants there, one or two old friends . . . and a gentleman representing Sir John Paxton, the President of the Incorporated Law Society. (206)

One generation passes away, and another succeeds it. But succession is not based on biological ties between father and son: one professional man replaces another, the transition sanctioned by the relevant professional body, in this case the Incorporated Law Society. The biological body yields to the legal body as the agent of reproduction.

This is not the only case of succession in the novel, nor is the older 'biological' model completely defunct, as least in the case of non-middle-class characters. Throughout, there is the sense that one social formation, as represented by one generation, is being replaced by another. Mr Hawkins's death occurs at the same time as two others: that of Lord Godalming and that of Mrs Westenra, Lucy's mother. Arthur in turn becomes Lord Godalming, the new generation of aristocrat. Lord Godalming is the team's equivalent for the 'Sir John Paxton, the President of the Incorporated Law Society' who appears by proxy at Hawkins's funeral: his presence confers a suitable air of dignity and respectability on the business in which he is engaged, in this case the hunting of Dracula.[35] Lucy does not replace Mrs Westenra in this way, of course; as Lucy herself dies at the same time (due to the depredations of Dracula), Arthur, Lord Godalming, comes to inherit that estate too under Mrs Westenra's will. Male succession seems to be a far less problematical matter than female succession, for reasons that I hope will become apparent.

Consider the novel's other 'leading men': Dr Seward, Professor Van Helsing and Quincey Morris. Two of the three, Seward and Van Helsing, are, like Jonathan, professional men, experts in their fields.[36] Seward is the new medical professional: an alienist and physician, at an early age it would seem he has reached the top of his profession, having charge of his own asylum for the insane. He is also, in a sense, the professional offspring of Van Helsing, as he has learnt his craft at the

latter's feet. He is Van Helsing's 'disciple' even according to the rules of vampiric influence, as he has on an earlier occasion sucked Van Helsing's blood to save him from infection after a surgical accident. For Seward, the latter is 'my old friend and master, Professor Van Helsing' (137). Van Helsing also thinks fondly of those good old days, while acknowledging Seward's full professional status in the present: 'You were always a careful student, and your case-book was ever more full than the rest. You were only student then; now you are master . . .' (146). Van Helsing is the professional *ne plus ultra*. He is 'the great specialist' (144). In addition to his qualifications as a doctor and scientist, we also learn that he is a qualified lawyer: 'You forget that I am a lawyer as well as a doctor' (197). Thus it is that this super-professional is the natural leader of this new social group composed largely of professional men.[37] It is interesting to note that among the characters originally planned for the book were 'a detective – Cotford', and a 'psychical research agent – Alfred Singleton', two further variations on the expert theme.[38] These roles do not really disappear from the finished text, though; rather they are assumed by the polymath Van Helsing. The proliferation of professional men would seem to suggest that the men are, as David Glover suggests, 'members of a liberal bourgeois order'.[39] Yet as we shall see the novel undercuts the traditional values of liberalism, in part through its deployment of the idea of professionalism itself.

Quincey P. Morris, the Texan adventurer, is the only real outsider in this group and, significantly, he is also the only expendable member of the team. But his inclusion is by no means fortuitous, and it is interesting that he is one of the characters who also appears in the original notes (though he does change from 'An American inventor from Texas' to 'A Texan – Brutus M. Marix' before assuming his final identity). The novel's investment in professionalism is nowhere as clear as in Quincey's removal from the winning team. It would be easy enough to imagine a novel of which Quincey and Lord Godalming would provide the centres of interest, but *Dracula* is not that sort of novel. Indeed, Quincey and Lord Godalming might best be considered less as individual characters than as fragments of an older idea of masculine heroism which the novel replaces with the idea of the heroic professional. The novel preserves some of the prestige of that older heroic model in the character of Godalming, who, as I have suggested, adds a certain traditional gloss to the new professional team, but in killing off Quincey it clearly rejects the heroic amateur values of what Martin Green has called the 'aristo-military caste'. Thus in Stoker's first novel, *The Snake's Pass*, the profes-

sional man, Dick Sutherland, plays second fiddle to the landed amateur adventurer, Arthur Severn, but *Dracula* reverses that pattern. Quincey is not dispatched before he proves his usefulness, though. When the team finally tracks Dracula back to Transylvania (a romance territory that might be thought of as a nightmare version of Anthony Hope's Ruritania), it is Quincey who finally 'stakes' Dracula. As Mina tells us: 'on the instant, came the sweep and flash of Jonathan's great knife. I shrieked as I saw it shear through the throat; whilst at the same moment Mr Morris' bowie knife plunged in the heart' (447). This staking is a necessary task for the closure of the narrative, but one that it skirts around gingerly. In Mina's account the weapons themselves seem to be doing the work without the effort of the men who wield them. While Jonathan's decapitating of the monster is part of the protocol, it is clear enough from the earlier 'saving' of Lucy that it is the actual staking that is symbolically central. But whereas elsewhere in the novel this symbolic penetration is performed on females by males, here the act is male–male. This seems to threaten the homosocial arrangement of the text, and it should not be surprising that Quincey, who is 'only too happy to have been of any service' (448), does not survive to take a part in the new order.

I have not yet explained Mina's role in this new professional order. Mina, evidently, is not part of the 'little band of men'; rather she is meant to be the ideal centre around which it revolves. She is, however, related to the society of professionals who ostensibly protect her. In fact if Seward, Van Helsing and Harker resemble the new ruling class, an elite group of 'experts' whose power lies in education and affiliation to various incorporeal bodies, Mina may be seen as a soldier in the army of cheap (here, free) female labour that sustains that group. Mina begins the narrative as a teacher, more accurately as an 'assistant schoolmistress' (70), one part of the cheap female labour force, but in the course of the novel she becomes stenographer, typist and nurse to the band of men.[40] Thus she resembles the New Woman in her skills, but she is a New Woman with no desire for equality. Women were themselves becoming independent professionals at the end of the nineteenth century, and forming their own professional associations (including the Society of Women Journalists in 1894), but Mina is happy to leave professionalism to the men. One can, of course, interpret Mina's position in a more optimistic light. David Glover, for example, argues that Mina recalls a number of late Victorian women 'whose contradictory response to the suffrage movement gave them a strategic position in late Victorian society'.[41] Yet in terms of the novel's 'team' ethos, it is difficult

to see that her skills entitle her to the same claims to status as the men. The narrative needs her to be more vulnerable than the men, for her defence comprises their raison d'être.

Mina's work for the team is not viewed as in any way exploitative in the text: Mina's interests are seen to be literally married to Jonathan's.

I have been working very hard lately, because I want to keep up with Jonathan's studies, and I have been practising shorthand very assiduously. When we are married I shall be able to be useful to Jonathan, and if I can stenograph well enough I can take down what he wants to say in this way and write it out for him on the typewriter, at which I am also practising very hard. (71)

Later, too, she happily embraces her secretarial work for the team; after all, as Van Helsing himself tells us at the end, the men are daring all for her sake, like knights of old.[42] While the non-professional Texan is ultimately killed off, and while Mina's gender disqualifies her from team-membership, their selflessness is nevertheless entirely in keeping with the logic of the new order. Part of the novel's ideological programme is the abnegation of simple self-interest. Van Helsing's final eulogy on the men's 'salvation' of Mina ('some men so loved her, that they did dare much for her sake' [449]) places their self-sacrificing mission on a par with the divine ('And God so loved the world . . . '). Earlier, one of the greatest compliments that Van Helsing finds to bestow on Mina is that she is not selfish:

She is one of God's women fashioned by his own hand to show us men and other women that there is a heaven where we can enter, and that its light can be here on earth. So true, so sweet, so noble, so little an egoist – and that let me tell you is much in this age, so sceptical and selfish. (227)

This occurs in a conversation between Van Helsing and Mina's husband, Jonathan. Vertiginous heights of homosocial rhetoric are reached, and once again Mina's role, even – or perhaps especially – in her absence, is to bond men emotionally. Jonathan is nearly overcome: 'We shook hands, and he was so earnest and so kind that it made me quite choky' (227).[43] Selfishness is in fact a vice of the generation/social formation that is displaced by the new professionals. The self-centredness of the dying Mrs Westenra is partly responsible for her negligence in caring for Lucy after the latter has become the Count's victim. Seward is inclined to take a benign view of this sort of egoism:

Here, in a case where any shock may prove fatal, matters are so ordered that, from some cause or other, the things not personal – even the terrible changes in

her daughter to whom she is so vitally attached – do not seem to reach her. It is something like the way Dame Nature gathers round a foreign body an envelope of some insensitive tissue which can protect from evil that which it would otherwise harm by contact. If this be an ordered selfishness, then we should pause before we condemn any one for the vice of egoism. . . . (147)

Subsequent events prove the dangers of this magnanimous view of things: through her ignorance of Lucy's condition Mrs Westenra is on more than one occasion responsible for the vampire's access to Lucy. Not once, but twice does she remove the garlic flowers from Lucy's neck, the first time opening the window as well to inadvertently admit Dracula. The defensive selfishness that Seward sees at work in her behaviour turns out to be fatal to others.

It would appear that Mrs Westenra is 'decadent' in the sense developed by Paul Bourget, whose ideas circulated in England in the 1880s and 1890s in the work of Havelock Ellis. The pseudo-scientific language used to define decadence is that which also comes to be the master discourse of *Dracula*. Here is Ellis's version of Bourget on decadence:

A society should be like an organism. Like an organism, in fact, it may be resolved into a federation of smaller organisms, which may themselves be resolved into a federation of cells. The individual is the social cell. In order that the organism should perform its functions with energy, but with a subordinated energy, and in order that these lesser organisms should themselves perform their functions with energy, it is necessary that the cells comprising them should perform their functions with energy, but with a subordinated energy. If the energy of the cells becomes independent, the lesser organisms will likewise cease to subordinate their energy to the total energy and the anarchy which is established constitutes the *decadence* of the whole. The social organism does not escape this law and enters into *decadence* as soon as the individual life becomes exaggerated beneath the influence of acquired well-being and of heredity.[44]

The sort of thinking that *Dracula* produces, then, is coming to be familiar to an English readership in this period from other discourses. Mrs Westenra's egoism, however excusable it may seem initially to Seward, causes damage to the social organism. Her behaviour links her to the text's ultimate egoist, or ego-maniac in Max Nordau's terms, Dracula himself (Mina, at least, has been reading Nordau, and identifies the Count as 'a criminal and of criminal type . . . Nordau and Lombroso would so classify him').[45] As Van Helsing describes it, the fight against the vampire is the struggle of 'combination' against selfish individualism:

we too are not without strength. We have on our side *power of combination* – a power denied the vampire kind; we have resources of science; we are free to act and think; and the hours of the day and the night are ours equally . . . We have self-devotion in a cause, and an end to achieve that is not a selfish one. These things are much. (my emphasis)

Van Helsing, and the professional middle-class fraction from which he comes, are not above learning a lesson from the working class, it seems. Combination, which as E. P. Thompson shows once evoked middle-class and aristocratic fears of Jacobin conspiracy as well as of unioniz-ation, is here reborn as the cornerstone of professional middle-class power.[46] If the aristocratic prestige of a Lord Godalming can be re-modelled as a useful tool for this enterprise, some of the collectivist practices of the working class can be similarly appropriated. What is involved in this collectivism is not so much a rethinking of the relations of self and society, in which the self must give more ground to society, as what Patrick Joyce describes as the late Victorian recognition of 'the social' conceived as a system with laws of its own. As part of this process, the Victorian ethos of independence and 'self-help' yields to one in which 'rights and obligations [are] seen in terms of collective solidarities and responsibilities, and articulated in a language of "exter-nal", extra-personal, social responsibilities [and in which] individual needs [are] now seen as "social" needs'.[47] The new class of experts would more and more combine to define what those 'social needs' were.

THE RISE OF PROFESSIONALISM

Franco Moretti has argued that Dracula represents the threat of mon-opoly capitalism itself, against which the more 'traditional' forces repre-sented by Van Helsing's team set themselves.[48] Similarly, in a recent essay that lends support to my own view that *Dracula* is a tale of professionalism, Jani Scandura sees the Count as representing some-thing new, 'a socially and economically aspiring Other who scales the slippery facade of free enterprise'.[49] But from what we have seen of the text it seems more likely that the meanings that congeal around Dracula designate him as dated, as last year's model. It is in his archaic or traditional individualism that he is most monstrous. By contrast, the little band of men formed in the text are an emergent formation; they are part of the emergence of monopoly capital, in the specific form that takes in the professional monopolies.

Professionalism is a rather difficult concept to pin down.[50] Histories of professionalism run the risk of assuming a false continuity between its pre-industrial and its nineteenth-century varieties, or between its relatively independent nineteenth-century practitioners and the modern corporate professional. The sociology of the professions has to strive to distinguish between the objective attributes of professionalism and the professions' own self-image. Magali Sarfatti Larson provides a useful definition of professionalism as 'the attempt to translate one order of scarce resource – special knowledge and skills – into another – social and economic rewards'.[51] This translation cannot work without certain conditions, notably state endorsement of the particular monopoly of resources being established. Even for the most 'traditional' of the market-oriented professions (which excludes the military and the clergy), these conditions aren't established until well into the nineteenth century. The Law Society was not established until the Solicitors Act of 1825; in medicine the complicated system of physicians, surgeons, apothecaries and apothecary-surgeons was finally rationalized by the 1858 Medical Act.[52] Of more concern to us here, though, is the remarkable rise of occupations that reinvented themselves as professions in the late Victorian period. There are two different processes at work in the rise of professional ideologies in the late nineteenth century. On the one hand, there is a considerable increase in the number of what we might call dependent professionals. (This is an awkward usage, since it is the way in which these groups begin to define themselves as professionals that is of interest – potential professionals might be a better term.) As Harold Perkin describes, these

were growing with the expansion of service occupations during the Victorian age. By 1911, if we add the lesser professionals and technicians to the higher ones, the professions were 4.1 per cent of the occupied population, not much short of the 4.6 per cent who were 'employers' in the census of industrial status, and if we add 'managers and administrators' the figure rises to 7.5 per cent, larger than the category of 'employers and proprietors' (6.7 per cent).[53]

What is more significant for our purposes, however, is that more and more individuals who depended for their livelihood on the marketing of particular specialized knowledges began to amalgamate along the lines of the existing 'liberal professions', such as medicine and law. At work here is the professional ideology of the self-regulating organization of experts, but also the more general collectivist ethos of the late nineteenth century. The last quarter of the nineteenth century is generally recog-

nized as the moment of combination in industry and business, of the formation of cartels, syndicates and trusts. Even Britain, which was losing ground as the pace of industrial and economic development increased elsewhere, participated in this international trend towards concentration of capital. As Eric Hobsbawm puts it: 'From 1880 on the pattern of distribution was revolutionized. "Grocer" and "butcher" now meant not simply a small shopkeeper but increasingly a nationwide or international firm with hundreds of branches.'[54] There was a similar tendency towards combination among those who possessed educational 'capital'. Professional associations of all sorts proliferated. To name only those involved in the sphere of literary production, the late nineteenth century sees the appearance of the Associated Booksellers of Great Britain and Ireland (1895), the Publishers' Association (1895), and the Society of Authors (1883). Perkin charts the dimensions of this transformation:

To the seven qualifying associations of 1800 – four Inns of Court for barristers, two Royal Colleges and the society of Apothecaries for medical doctors – the first eighty years of the nineteenth century had added only twenty more, for solicitors, architects, builders (not successful as a profession), pharmacists, veterinary surgeons, actuaries, surveyors, chemists, librarians, bankers (another unsuccessful attempt), accountants, and eight types of engineer. From 1880 down to the First World War there appeared no less than thirty-nine, from chartered accountants, auctioneers and estate agents, company secretaries and hospital administrators to marine, mining, water, sanitary, heating and ventilating, and locomotive design engineers, insurance brokers, sales managers, and town planners. To these we should add the non-qualifying associations . . . which often combined professional aspirations with something of the character of trade unions or employers' associations.[55]

A large section of the middle class who were not owners of capital in the traditional sense, and who clearly did not see themselves as clerks, began to define themselves in the terms of expertise that had only relatively recently been fully appropriated by the 'real' professions. As Perkin suggests, the dream of professionalism is of resources (knowledge and skill) which in theory at least are susceptible of almost infinite extension: everyone can be a capitalist where human capital is in question. Medicine (and to a lesser extent law) was the profession that offered the dominant model for the new groups of experts to aspire to: high social status, the ideal of public service, self-regulation, and the idea of expertise based on a developing scientific field were all highly attractive to these groups.[56]

Medicine's role as a master-profession is important for an attempt to understand the particular contribution which *Dracula* makes to the late Victorian imaginary. While, as I have noted, its protagonists are for the most part professionals of the (somewhat) more established sort, this narrative of the deployment of expertise and the power of combination spoke to all those other groups for whom medical expertise provided the ideological image of their own specialized knowledge. The men's collectivity of Stoker's text, then, speaks to a more general movement in middle-class England, providing them with a collective origin myth and with a fantasy of control through expertise. Rather than representing the last gasp of liberal English culture against monopoly capital, as Franco Moretti would have it, the group led by Van Helsing *are* the new men, an increasingly fraternal, or associationist, and in specific ways patriarchal, group. The threat that ostensibly unites them is, so to speak, a back-formation; and the woman in whose defence they claim to be working also provides the secretarial and other support services that sustain them. It is in this sense that we can speak of the text's *using* fear toward a particular end, rather than expressing it.

In his illuminating study *Thrillers: Genesis and Structure of a Popular Genre*, Jerry Palmer traces the origins of the thriller to the mid-nineteenth century, specifically to the rise of ideologies of competitive individualism and a new, class-based, hostility to economic crime.[57] The figure conjured up as the appropriate hero for the new genre is the professional, especially the detective as a crime-expert. The isolated, self-reliant, professional is defined against two other types: the bureaucrat, who unlike the professional is incapable of unplanned activity, and the amateur, who does not understand anything (thus the trio of Sherlock Holmes, Lestrade the police bureaucrat and Watson). The professional hero defends the natural order of society against the unnatural criminal conspiracy, and anything that he does, however 'criminal', is justified in advance by this greater evil that he opposes. Palmer's analysis is convincing as far as it goes, but the slightly awkward combination of structural analysis and the sociology of genres leads him to overlook the appearance at the end of the nineteenth century of a species of professional heroism that does not correspond to ideologies of competitive individualism. *Dracula* and the other 'team' novels of the 1880s and 1890s indicate a shift away from the values of laissez-faire, competitive individualism, and a subsequent equation of professionalism with a more associationist ideal. Like Moretti, Palmer assumes that individualism is a value enshrined in popular fiction, but the message of *Dracula* is

that competitive individuals are a menace to be destroyed: the new hero is corporate. H. G. Wells's *The Invisible Man* (also 1897), where the lone megalomaniac scientist, Griffin, is finally surrounded by the crowd and literally kicked and beaten to death is in this respect an even more graphic instance than Stoker's novel.

THE VAMPIRE AS FIGURE

While I am arguing that we can to some extent decode the significance of the 'little band of men', I also want to insist that the figure of the vampire is better understood as just that – a figure. In other words, I want to shift the emphasis from what the vampire and vampirism might represent to the mode of representation, to the particular form that the vampire gives to danger. In the vampire we confront a monster whose primary usefulness depends on his capacity to *embody* threats, not so much in his own body, which remains elusively protean, but in the bodies of his victims, specifically women. Once a threat has been properly embodied, it can be dealt with. We can best understand the vampire's incorporative power by considering Stoker's own earlier 'monster', which appears in *The Snake's Pass* (1890), a text that we will study in more detail in chapter 2. In this, his first novel, he blends adventure romance after the fashion of H. Rider Haggard with an inter-ethnic marriage plot. His English hero, Arthur Severn, becomes embroiled in a land dispute and a search for treasure while visiting the west of Ireland. Severn eventually marries Norah Joyce, the daughter of an Irish peasant.[58] One of the most striking aspects of the text, though, is the amount of space devoted to describing the peculiar shifting bog which dominates the landscape. An old schoolfriend of Severn's, Dick Sutherland, is engaged in research into the bogs of Ireland, and through their conversations we are given a wealth of bog-lore. While the novel has a conventional villain, the money-lender Black Murdock, the only force in the text analogous to the threat of Dracula is in fact the shifting bog. The bog is, in its own way, a monster, as the following dialogue between Severn and his old schoolfriend shows:

'Is it a dangerous bog?' I queried.
'Rather! It is just as bad a bit of soft bog as ever I saw. I wouldn't like to see anyone or anything that I cared for try to cross it . . . [b]ecause at any moment they might sink through it; and then, goodbye – no human strength or skill could ever save them.'
'Is it a quagmire, then? or like a quicksand?'

'. . . Nay! it is more treacherous than either. You may call it, if you are poetically inclined, a "carpet of death!" . . . It will bear up a certain weight, for there is a degree of cohesion in it; but it is not all of equal cohesive power, and if one were to step in the wrong spot –' He was silent.

'. . . A body suddenly immersed would, when the air of the lungs had escaped and the rigor mortis had set in, probably sink a considerable distance; then it would rise after nine days, when decomposition began to generate gases. . . . Not succeeding in this, it would ultimately waste away, and the bones would become *incorporated* with the existing vegetation somewhere about the roots, or would lie among the slime at the bottom.'

'Well,' said I, 'for real cold-blooded horror, commend me to your men of science.'[59]

In this passage it is clear that the threat posed by the bog is of the dissolution of identity through a negative version of 'incorporation'. The bog, like the vampire, has the capacity to assimilate foreign bodies, to incorporate matter into its own substance. To be drained by the vampire is to have your blood circulate with his, to have your essence preserved, yet to be personally destroyed. In the case of the victim of the shifting bog 'the bones . . . become incorporated with the existing vegetation somewhere about the roots'. The threat of the bog functions in specific ways in *The Snake's Pass* that don't concern us here, but the earlier novel does allow us to see how the figure of the vampire is a more successful reworking of the earlier figure.

The bog is in many ways a greater threat than the vampire, or more accurately, the text has yet to evolve strategies for its successful control: the professional ideal is not as effective there as in the case of *Dracula*. It is not that the ideal is unavailable, as the following passage indicates. Dick Sutherland is explaining how to reclaim bogland:

'In fine we cure bog by both a surgical and a medical process. We drain it so that its mechanical action as a sponge may be stopped, and we put in lime to kill the vital principle of its growth. Without the other, neither process is sufficient; but together, scientific and executive man asserts his dominance.'

'Hear! Hear!' said Andy. 'Musha but Docther Wilde himself, Rest his sowl! couldn't have put it aisier to grip. It's a *purfessionaler* the young gintleman is intirely.' (56, my emphasis)

The draining operations undertaken, though, are on a less treacherous bog than the one described above. Eventually lime does become available in abundant quantities to further the work of reclamation, but only when the shifting bog has slid off into the sea: 'scientific and executive man' can only do their work when the real 'monster' of the text has been

conveniently removed. The monstrous, shifting bog represents a threat that has not been adequately embodied, one that in fact threatens to erase the boundaries of any corporeal self. While the collectivities of *Dracula* seem to provide a version of professional incorporation that is untroubling for the subjects of the novel, the Count himself, like the incorporating bog, threatens the very possibility of identity. The professional organizations offered the possibility of a job for life under their benign aegis, but becoming part of the Dracula corporation means complete self-sacrifice.[60]

Unlike the more properly abject bog, though, the threat of the vampire can be localized and overcome in the bodies of his female victims. We can discern both a continuity with the professional techniques of the engineer, Sutherland, and an advance over them in the shift from the language of the engineer to that of the doctor: cutting and draining are the equivalent to decapitation and staking in the control of the vampire; adding lime the equivalent of filling the mouth with garlic. One process stops the 'mechanical action', the other the 'vital principle'. Significantly, we only have one example in the text of all of these protocols being followed: the staking of the only English vampire, Lucy, in the tomb. As I have suggested, this localization of the danger in the body of women demonstrates the extent to which the threat of the vampire is custom-built for a certain emergent form of power: the collectivity is formed to deal with the threat of the outsider/ foreign body, but its most important activities are directed at extending its power 'at home'. Van Helsing, the vampire expert, but also professionally interested in Lucy as her physician, is the one who explains the means of her 'reclamation' in the following passage.[61] As in the case of Dick Sutherland's account of the treatment of the bog, the master language is provided by science. Professional knowledge distinguishes Seward and Van Helsing from Quincey and Lord Godalming, especially when the medical instruments used take on a strikingly domestic character:

Van Helsing, in his methodical manner, began taking the various contents from his bag and placing them ready for use. First he took out a soldering iron and some plumbing solder, and then a small oil-lamp . . . then his operating knives . . . and last a round stake some two and a half or three inches thick and about three feet long . . . With this stake came a heavy hammer, such as in households is used in the coal-cellar for breaking the lumps. To me, a doctor's preparations for work of any kind are stimulating and bracing, but the effect of these things on both Arthur and Quincey was to cause them a sort of consternation. (256–7)

The techniques of surgery (the operating knives) meet those of the handy-man (solder, coal-hammer, stake), the latter magically transformed by the alchemy of professionalism. There are further rituals: the actual staking, performed by Arthur under Van Helsing's direction, is accompanied by a 'prayer for the dead' (surely inappropriate if Lucy is not yet really dead) before the two doctors add the final touches: 'the Professor and I sawed the top off the stake, leaving the point of it in the body. Then we cut off the head and filled the mouth with garlic' (260). This is a far more elaborate process than that which is required to treat the other vampires, including the Count himself. The staking of Dracula is by comparison a very rushed affair, and even the destruction of the three vampire women who still inhabit Dracula's castle in Transylvania is handled without a number of the steps followed in Lucy's case. The English woman is the only proper object of these techniques. As we discovered through the fate of Quincey Morris, the staker of Dracula, the use of these same professional procedures against males, even against the monstrous Count, is fraught with danger, and runs counter to the logic of the narrative's project. In a very real sense, *Dracula* turns out to be not about Dracula at all: his staking is the least important in the text.

'Reclaiming' Lucy is different from reclaiming bogs in a fundamental respect, of course: Lucy's immortal soul is in peril rather than her body, and the 'surgery' employed is in effect ritual accompanied by prayers. The 'scientific man' of *The Snake's Pass* is replaced by the hybrid Van Helsing, who appears to be priest as well as doctor and lawyer, and who has recourse to a pre-scientific lexis of souls and salvation. This makes more sense if we assume with Nikolas Rose that the 'human technologies' that appear or develop a new importance toward the end of the nineteenth century – not just psychology, but also, for example, theories and practices of education, time-tabling, and statistics – take as their object something that might well be designated as 'the soul'.[62] *Dracula*'s medico-religious rituals provide a dialectical image of this process. As Rose shows, the new class of experts is not solely responsible for the government of the soul, and nor for that matter is the state, though modernist and, indeed, postmodernist fiction will be haunted by the idea of their collusion, condensed in such figures as the hateful psychiatrist of Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*, Dr Bradshaw, and the sinister forces that combine to exploit Tyrone Slothrop in Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow*.

Vampirism is a back-formation justifying a certain type of intervention, a new type of discipline, a new place for the qualified professional who straddles the public and private realms. Since vampirism is already

within the home, the professional must follow it there. Since women are the vampire's natural prey, they must become the special objects of the professional's watchfulness. Besides Dracula's castle, we are offered only two models of domesticity in the novel. The first is the Westenras' home, where the Count's attacks on Lucy necessitate (and this making necessary is very much the text's project) the turning of the home into a hospital: alternatively watched over by Dr Seward and Professor Van Helsing at first, and later guarded by the full male team excluding Harker, Lucy scarcely lives in a private house any longer. Later in the novel, the novel's principal institution, Seward's asylum for the insane, becomes itself a home: Mina and the band of men all come to live in the institution. The domestic merges with the institutional and the institutional merges with the domestic, which of course is only appropriate in a novel where the only marriage, that of Mina and Jonathan, takes place in a hospital.[63] Both of these carefully administered spaces, the institutional house and the domestic institution, have as their ostensible goal the protection of the vulnerable female body from the vampire, yet in both cases the Count manages to enter relatively effortlessly. But in this failure lies the strength of Van Helsing's group: it is only when the vampire-threat comes to be located within the female body that they can properly treat it. Similarly, it is only when the female body has been infected by vampirism that it can constitute a proper object of expert treatment: where there is no crisis, there can be no intervention. Some years later the 'crisis' within the national body announced by the military set-backs of the Boer War would lead to a reconceptualization of the relationship between on the one hand the state and on the other the private home, the family, and women's bodies, developments catalysed by the new science of eugenics.[64]

At a time when Victorian Britain was being transformed by professionalism, combination and collectivity, the Victorian romance conjures up a whole series of teams of men. H. Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* and *She*, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Lost World*, and arguably even the latter's *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* all lend themselves to analysis in these terms. The crisis-model developed in *Dracula* makes the process of team-formation particularly clear, but the expedition and the investigation, like the struggle against the monster, also posit some obstacle to overcome which requires the energies of the team of men. The ethos of good old-fashioned adventure hides the extent to which the collective characters at the centre of these narratives correspond to a distinct moment of modernization.

Of course the seamless way in which the male team establishes itself in *Dracula* glosses over the far more conflicted process of the consolidation of professional power. The rise of professional culture lacked the strong narrative drive of Stoker's novel: there were subplots and *longueurs*, not to mention problems of closure. Women were by no means content to act as the objects of professional intervention, and the rise of professionalism in fact created many opportunities for women to function outside of traditional domestic roles. While the professional associations were by and large hostile to the idea of women members, their strategies of exclusion were ultimately unsuccessful.[65] Even in the profession of medicine, which the novel makes its master-profession, women disputed male control almost as soon as it was first secured by the Medical (Registration) Act of 1868.[66] Nevertheless, the associationist ideals and the specific disposition of power/knowledge that *Dracula* presents in nascent form have proved to be extremely resilient. Moreover, while the shape of the crisis keeps changing, crisis narratives continue to provide terms in which professional intervention can be explained.[67] While the Count enjoyed an impressive afterlife in popular culture, then, one might argue that the real survivors of the novel are the 'little band of men': in countless films, books and television shows, the model of the team of men, each member possessing some particular skill, is reproduced.[68] Revamped in war stories, westerns and police procedurals, the narrative of professional combination shows no signs of dying out.

Where much adventure fiction unfolds against an exotic backdrop, in *Dracula*, Stoker uses the figure of the vampire to bring the action closer to home: his team of men are as comfortable – more comfortable, I would argue – policing the houses of London as they are tracking the vampire across Eastern Europe. *Dracula* allows us to see that imperial novels also have a domestic address: the professional man at home can see his own exotic reflection in the resourceful imperial team-member. However, romances like *King Solomon's Mines* or *The Lost World* cannot simply be understood in terms of late Victorian ideologies of professionalism. The new imperialism of the *fin de siècle* also generated and was sustained by specific fantasies of its own, and it is to these that we now turn.