

## **Constructing the Vampire Myth in Cinema: A Short Analysis of *Nosferatu* (1922), *Dracula* (1931) and *Dracula* (1958)**

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*The present work aims to present a brief analysis of the films *Noseferatu* (1922), *Dracula* (1931) and *Dracula* (1958). Our hypothesis is that these productions are the core of cinematic vampirical mythology in our culture. The idea of what would be a vampire can be traced through ancient myths along different cultures and was highlighted through urban legends in the middle ages. But it was only after Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) that this character started to take a more delimited form. If Stoker's novel can be a species of basis for the vampire myth, cinema would take this entity to a whole new level. In an audio-visual medium, *Dracula* stood as the most famous vampire and these three films would be the most important to start to form the figure of mediatic (and most of all, cinematic) vampire.*

Keywords: *Dracula, Vampire, Nosferatu, Cinema, Literature*

### **1. Introduction**

The vampire is an entity that manifests itself in mediatic narratives with an extremely mutable figure. Its origin can be traced back to some ancient myths – like Lilith, Lamia or Kali (Lecoutex 2005). In the middle ages, the image of terror that inhabits our imaginary with more persistence begins to be better developed.

In *Our Vampires, Ourselves* (1995), Nina Auerbach, traces a brief archeology of the figure of the vampire throughout cinema and literature - emphasizing the products with the greatest public reach - relating his image to the cultural systems that surround him. The author points out that each time and place has the vampire it deserves, and more than that, it is a reflection of ourselves and the space and time in which we find ourselves. From this study, we can try to understand what

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are the factors that shape the vampire in each moment and how we use this figure to transport our fears, beliefs, desires and repressions.

By becoming a common character in our culture through various representations, the vampire is no longer a properly constructed image and becomes a series of characteristics and models for the formation of a new image that fits the “vampire pattern”. We call the “vampiric pattern” the set of ideas that are attributed to the model necessary to characterize this being. We can highlight the pallor, sensuality, white and sharp teeth, beauty, ugliness, similarity with animals, different coloring in the eyes as some of the physical aspects that promote this range of images. Among other well-known vampiric characteristics are superhuman powers such as: extraordinary strength, speed, agility, power of hypnosis, power to fly, transformation into mist and diverse animals, control of wild animals and others.

The vampire depends on using some of these characteristics (physical, superpowers and more) to form an image. His immortality as a figure in our imagination lies in part in the possibility of adapting to several different realities. “we consume the vampire because it is present in our imaginary and in our collective unconscious.” (Zanini 2007, 16)

In 1897, the Irishman Bram Stoker published *Dracula*. Over the years, the book manages to become increasingly part of our culture, bringing the title character as the maximum representation of the vampire. The publication stood out in Gothic literature in the Victorian era and its repercussions continue to progress, and can be seen in its various products appropriated by different media (video games, series, films, comic books etc) in mass culture.

Bram Stoker did a detailed research for his book, which provides us with a total setting for the story. In addition to geographical characteristics with incredible precision for the time. The rich historical immersion presents us with specific data that inserted in the narrative develop a very descriptive plot. The character Dracula would have been based (though without any concrete evidence) on a prince of the same name, whose legends are famous in Eastern Europe.

In 1972, researchers Raymond McNally and Radu Florescu, when looking for a 15th century pamphlet to use as material for their book *In Search of Dracula* (1994), came across a discovery that would be an object of extreme importance in future research on the work of Stoker, the author's notes for the development of *Dracula*. After an organization and systematization of the notes, with indications and footnotes to facilitate the understanding, Robert Eighteen-Bisang and Elizabeth Miller published the notes under the title of *Bram Stoker's notes for Dracula: a facsimile edition* (2007). The book points to research by Bram Stoker on winds, storms and things related to sailing, to describe Dracula's voyage on the ship

Demeter and a study of European superstitions, vampires and Romanian customs. However, the connection with the historical character of the same name appears to be more subtle than is believed.

Dracula was in fact one of the names of a 15th century Valakian prince, also known as Vlad Tepes, Vlad III or Vlad Berasab. However, the story was not based on this character. In fact, Stoker's notes point out that during the development of the book, the author intended to name his character "Count Wampyr". However, upon encountering William Wilkinson's *An Account of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia* on shelf number O.1097 in the Whitby library, he became interested in the name due to its connection with the word demon.

Despite the importance of Bram Stoker's work and the impact that his vampire created in popular culture, the description provided in the book is extremely different from the one that our imaginary is used to and that cinema made popular.

His face was a strong—a very strong—aquiline, with high bridge of the thin nose and peculiarly arched nostrils; with lofty domed forehead, and hair growing scantily round the temples but profusely elsewhere. His eyebrows were very massive, almost meeting over the nose, and with bushy hair that seemed to curl in its own profusion. The mouth, so far as I could see it under the heavy moustache, was fixed and rather cruel-looking, with peculiarly sharp white teeth; these protruded over the lips, whose remarkable ruddiness showed astonishing vitality in a man of his years. For the rest, his ears were pale, and at the tops extremely pointed; the chin was broad and strong, and the cheeks firm though thin. The general effect was one of extraordinary pallor. (Stoker 2013)

We then seek to analyze, through the book and three specific films some of the transformations that occurred in the different versions. We can point out influencing factors such as changing media support, the time it was done, limiting resources, among others. Among the variations observed, we highlight the change in the central character (as seen above), both in appearance and in his motivations, as well as changes in the central plot and approach of the works, ranging from terror, drama, romance, comedy, action and adventure; classic and pop; mainstream, cult and trash. The films chosen to be analyzed are *Nosferatu* (1922), *Dracula* (1931) and *Dracula* (1958). We intend to demonstrate the importance of these productions as central to the development of the vampiric mythology.

In 1922, director F.W Murnau presents *Nosferatu*. The film is considered one of the greatest masterpieces of expressionist cinema, in addition to being the first known adaptation of the book. Although it is not generally known, an earlier

version was made in 1921 in Hungary called *Drakula*, but without any existing copy, due to copyright problems with Stoker's widow (Rhodes 2010). Facing the same problem, Murnau changed the names of the characters and the title of the film, which did not prevent most of the copies of the work from being destroyed. However, some appeared in the United States, making the film "survive".

In 1931, director Tod Browning brings actor Bela Lugosi as Dracula, this time without copyright issues, making the characters and the title retain their original name. Considered as a classic not only of horror cinema, but also of Hollywood, the film makes the villain created by the Hungarian actor stand as the figure of the vampire present in our imagination. An aristocrat, wearing robes and a huge black cloak, black hair combed back and an Eastern European accent. A seductive character that attacks its prey with fatal accuracy.

In 1958, the British production company Hammer released *Dracula* directed by Terence Fisher and starring Christopher Lee. Lee's Dracula would be marked by his first appearance with sharp teeth and a bloody mouth. The use of colors in the story, which, 27 years ago, had been portrayed in black and white, caused a great impact and fear in its viewers, marking Lee as a great figure of terror. The actor was the biggest representative of the character in cinema, having done it on ten occasions.

## **2. *Nosferatu* (1922)**

In 1922, director F.W. Murnau initiates a process that would leave his name in the history of cinema. Beginning his career as a director in 1919 in Germany, he became one of the biggest names in expressionism three years later with his eleventh film. *Nosferatu* is an unauthorized adaptation of Bram Stoker's novel.

Florence Balcombe, Bram Stoker's widow owned the copyright to her husband's work. To try to avoid paying royalties, Prana Film producers, Enrico Dieckmann and Albin Grau hired screenwriter Henrik Galeen<sup>2</sup> to develop a Project with a few modifications to avoid copyright problems. Among these changes, we find the title (*Nosferatu* in place of *Dracula*), the place invaded by the vampire (Wismar in Germany instead of Whitby and London in England) and the names of the characters: Dracula becomes Graf Orlock; Jonathan Harker is Hutter; Lucy and Mina are Ellen Hutter. The others, in addition to having their names changed, had a reduced participation in the plot which is also slightly modified.

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<sup>2</sup> Henrik Galeen (1881-1949) was screenwriter for some Horror movies in German like *Der Golem* (1915) and *Der Student von Prag* (1926), which he also directed.

Such changes end up presenting multiple interpretive possibilities about the film. Ken Gelder analyzes *Nosferatu* in a part of his book *Reading the Vampire* (2001). According to the author, German patriotism is highlighted in Murnau's work when presenting the vampire as a threat from another country to Germany. Still in its analysis, we notice other important associations. Among them, the most important would be perhaps the relationship exposed by Murnau between vampires and bubonic plague, again referring to the possibility of a plague striking his beloved country.

However, the relationship between Orlock and Ellen also presents us with an investigation that is worth emphasizing. Initially, the author returns to the question explored extensively in Stoker's work between the old x new, old x modern dichotomy. However, it goes deeper into pointing out the vampire as a predator of youth by highlighting the fact that the ideal prey for *Nosferatu* is new and virginal, while he is a much older being.

When thinking about this relationship between the victim and the predator, Gelder alerts us to the fact that Ellen puts herself as an offering and makes the sacrifice for the good of the motherland:

The decision is focused onto Ellen: killing the vampire becomes her responsibility alone – but it is also, by implication, a civic duty. *Nosferatu* now occupies the neighboring building and stares longingly into her bedroom. Sending Jonathan away, Ellen allows him to come *into* her bedroom, so that her civic function is now clearly channeled through her sexuality. To keep German property 'pure' – free of vampires – she must allow her body to become impure. (Gelder 2001, 97)

And in portraying the impurity that exists in Ellen's sacrifice, it brings more complexity in the relationship between purity and impurity, virgin and prostitute within the already complex possibility of representing the vampire.

By making Ellen's decision to let the vampire into her bedroom central to the narrative, *Nosferatu* inevitably invokes the conventional presentation of woman as virgin and whore – she *is* 'pure' (and is therefore appalled by what she has to do) but she is also not *really* 'pure' (because she makes her bed available to the vampire). (Gelder 2001, 97)

We can see, then, that these changes insert several meanings into the wide interpretive possibility. If the proposed modifications in the German work are due to the fact that they are essential aspects of the message that Murnau, Henrik Galeen and/or Albin Grau intended to convey or if they are only possible readings

that occurred because their directors wanted to avoid problems with Stoker's widow, it is a mystery that died with them. However, it is important to return to the authorial question, because, however masked the production was, its inspiration was visible.

Thus, after receiving an anonymous letter from Berlin, Florence Stoker files a lawsuit against the film and in 1925 obtains an order that all copies be destroyed. However, a copy survives in the U.S., where *Dracula* was a work in the public domain. German expressionism is a vanguard movement inspired by the expressionist aesthetic arts and *Nosferatu* appears as a landmark of that same movement. However, it presents a more hybrid contour when inspired by paintings of German romanticism, especially by Caspar David Friedrich. Among the changes found in the version of Murnau, it is worth highlighting one in particular due to the impact it caused on the film. While Stoker describes the vampire as a shadowless being, the director uses it constantly. "The shadows of German expressionism attain their most haunting manifestation in Murnau's images." (Perez 1998, 148).

*Nosferatu*'s image often appears with a shadow and in some cases, it appears alone, materializing as another being terrorizing its victims. "It is as a shadow, a shadow ascending the stairs and extending its long clawed arm toward the door, that the vampire comes to the wife in her bedroom; and as a shadow he grasps the palpitant heart within her breast." (Perez 1998, 148)

The use of shadows, name changes and small modifications in the story are not the only variations found in *Nosferatu*. The vampire's description is also different from that found in the book. In the film, he is tall, thin, pale, with long arms and fingers and large, pointed nails, looking more like a hybrid between a skeleton and an animal (a rodent due to his teeth) than a human. Its similarity with a rat increases its assimilation with the plague, which in "*Nosferatu*" appears underlining a relationship between vampire and disease. We note that Stoker's *Dracula* has the appearance of a man, hiding his monstrosity in his acts, speech and his macabre powers. In Murnau's adaptation, his monstrosity is made explicit in his image, possibly a characteristic reflection of the artistic movement of German expressionist cinema, which flirts with the bizarre, the macabre, the scary through its aesthetics. Max Schreck's terrifying and striking performance led to rumors that he would be a vampire in real life, an idea that inspired the E. Elias Merhige film *Shadow of the Vampire* (2000), mentioned in the previous chapter. It is worth mentioning here the curiosity that the German word "schreck" means "fright". In other words, the name of the actor itself already evokes the ambience of horror.

*Nosferatu* is a film of sensations, beautiful and at the same time ugly. A visceral film that challenges our voyeurism in a disturbing way. Inhibits and inflates our scopophilic drive. The repulsive and monstrous image of a rodent reflects his villainy. A look, a shadow and the vampire's very appearance show his intentions, while his prey sleeps soundly. In the film, nature does not have the same relationship with Count Orlock (Dracula). In it, she appears, for the first time in cinema, as her great enemy. The sun makes its debut as a vampire slayer in an epic ending in which we see the destruction of Orlock with his birth. Without representations, only the material impact on the enemy's skin, which dies and inaugurates a new trauma in the life of future vampires.

The end of *Nosferatu* sets a new standard for the next vampires to follow. The sun doesn't become only an obstacle between stakes, crucifixes and garlic. Now it is not only a limiter of performance; if they were free beings by day, but stronger at night, now they are restricted by questions of survival. Books and films begin to explore new possibilities and create deaths, burns, use of sunscreen, shiny skin and several new features.

Some readings of the ending created by Murnau point out as a metaphor for a burning film. The vampire has a direct connection with the light in this work. The use of shadows with intense importance shows us that just like cinema, this vampire needs the use of light for his materiality, but he also suffers from the effect of the sun. "This suggests that the vampire is made up of similar properties as film itself." (Abbott 2004, 20).

*Nosferatu* is a film, therefore materially vulnerable. However, like any work, it can be appropriated in different ways. The interpretations about the first vampire in cinema and about the debut of the sun as an enemy can be infinite, however, far from the mere mastery of interpretations, the fact is established that the first Dracula in cinema is responsible for numerous characteristics that are established throughout of vampiric mythology.

"*Nosferatu* also added its own iconography that remain associations within vampire films: the dark and foreboding shadows, the prolonged movements of the vampire, the 'reaction shots' that occur when a moment of horror occurs." (Beresford 2008, 142)

### **3. *Dracula* (1931)**

Carl Laemmle Jr. is recognized in the film industry for his reputation of spending a lot on films and earning a return that is not worth the cost. However, he was one of extremely responsible for the work to be analyzed, and for the famous golden age

of horror at Universal. He believed that Stoker's book had enormous potential to become a successful film in the U.S., and an enormous ease to transpose, since the work has always been in the public domain in the United States. His initial intention was to make a film in the style of the silent success of 1925, *The Phantom of the Opera* with renowned actor Lon Chaney.

Director Tod Browning had been called into the project due to his good relationship with Lon Chaney, who was the intended actor for the role of Dracula. However, Chaney was diagnosed with throat cancer in 1928 and died in 1930. After the great depression, Carl Laemmle Jr. was forced to change the planning of his film and reduce the budget for his production of Stoker's work. Seeing the successful adaptation of the Broadway play by Hamilton Deane and John L. Balderston, the solution found was to rely on the theatrical version that would make it possible to cut some costs.

With Lon Chaney's death, the producer was looking for a new protagonist. Among some major names like Paul Muni and Chester Morris, the Hungarian actor Bela Lugosi was the underdog. Although Bela played the role in the theatrical version for Broadway and received good reviews, neither the director nor the producer favored his choice. However, Lugosi had pledged to receive only \$ 500.00 a week and got the role. The author Matthew Beresford (2008) highlights these two changes as essential for the development of the image of the vampire in cinema:

[...] in 1924, a theatre version of *Dracula* was released in the form of Hamilton Deane and John Balderston's *Dracula: The Vampire Play* and, although an extremely spare version of *Dracula* (set in only two locations: Dr Seward's parlour and Carfax Abbey), the play was a great success and was instrumental in persuading Universal Studios to create *Dracula* on the big screen. It was this version, written by Tod Browning and released in 1931, and starring the Hungarian actor Bela Lugosi as Count Dracula, that transformed the image of the vampire forever. With the stage version, Deane realized that the opera cloak would not only have a great dramatic effect but could be used to cover hidden trap-doors as Dracula disappeared under the stage. Lugosi decided to carry the prop over into the screen version and the cape has now become as iconic for the vampire as fanged teeth or the stake that pierces the heart. (Beresford 2008, 143-144)

Indeed, the image of the famous vampire became totally attached do the character created by Bela Lugosi.

For many viewers, the Hungarian-born Bela Lugosi might well be the 'original' Dracula: this is often where vampire recognition begins, in the role



and image (and voice) that Lugosi perfected in the theatre and which continued to be marketed well after his death. (Gelder 2001, 91)

This image constructed by Lugosi proved to be of great impact on popular culture. On the Other side, the actor's career became marked by the villain portrait and the horror genre, and, above all, as the most famous incarnation of the vampire. Even though he tried to get rid of this label, Lugosi is forever recognized for being Dracula. He was buried on August 16, 1956 wearing the cape that immortalized him in cinema.

Vampires had, of course, occupied much of Bela Lugosi's time since he first portrayed Dracula onstage in the Hamilton Deane–John L. Balderston play in 1927. After that came West Coast appearances in the role in 1928, 1929, and 1930, after which he played the role in the 1931 film at Universal Studios. (Rhodes 2009, 9)

A famous urban legend of cinema says that Bela Lugosi did not speak English and had memorized his lines phonetically, however, the actor had been in the United States since 1919 and already spoke English fluently, even though he still had his famous Eastern European accent.

The production of the film was a total mess, with director Tod Browning letting director Karl Freund take over much of the footage (for unknown reasons, as Browning was famous for his commitment and meticulousness). Even so, *Dracula* became a great horror classic and leveraged the production of other films from the universal monster collection.

After the film's premiere at the Roxy Theater, news broke that some audience members had passed out during the film's horror scenes. This publicity, orchestrated by the studio, aroused enormous interest in the public and ensured a large number of onlookers filling the movie theaters. The success of the film not only served to start the golden era of universal horror, but also started a series of films about the character.

After Bela Lugosi's appearance in his Eastern European accent and dress, Stoker's character gained more notoriety. Even other vampires began to be associated with the image created by Lugosi and Dracula ends up standing out as the main vampire in the history of cinema and literature, and finally, of mass culture.

Currently, Lugosi's image is a trademark of the vampire and his character has served as inspiration for numerous films that have emerged later. We can still see that after the 1931 film, Dracula gained worldwide fame and became one of the

characters of literature most adapted to cinema. The number of vampire incursions is massive and reaches even greater amounts after the 1960s, when Stoker's work became public domain in all countries.<sup>3</sup>

#### **4. *Dracula* (1958)**

The small English film company Hammer Film Productions, after its success reviving a monster consecrated by the universal in the 30's, based on Mary Shelley's gothic novel in *The Curse of Frankenstein* (1957), decides to attempt another classic horror villain universal, also based on a work of Gothic literature. This time, the character would be Dracula, the vampire immortalized in Bela Lugosi's skin.

The quartet of the previous film returns to the production of the new film: director Terence Fisher, screenwriter Jimmy Sangster and actors Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee. In this version released in 1958, in addition to some changes in the plot, the central character is not the vampire, but Van Helsing. The actor Peter Cushing is the protagonist, portraying the vampire hunter in a way never seen before and that would serve as a basis to form several evil fighting characters in the innumerable incursions of classic horror monsters in action films – like *Van Helsing* (2004).

Peter Cushing's Van Helsing escapes the image created by Stoker and portrayed in the 1930s of an older scholar who uses his experience and intellect against the vampire. This time, we have a true vampire hunter who has extremely advanced scientific and mythical intelligence and knowledge, as well as an athlete's fitness. Dracula is the antagonist that uses some characteristics of the renowned version of Lugosi and inserts innovations that end up being used in almost all later vampire films. However, before analyzing the characteristics that emerged in the Christopher Lee villain, it is important to highlight here the main innovation of the Hammer film, the use of colors to portray the vampire who had become famous in black-and-white films.

The importance of color is obvious when we remember the vampire's diet. Terence Fisher's film, facing censors of the time who imposed strict codes regarding the violence and sexuality found in the films, explicitly brings blood in its version. In a way, Hammer's disobedience in producing a film that brings a dose of sexuality and violence above what is allowed is one of the main responsible for the success of *Dracula*. The producer was also known for this and increased the dose in its next productions.

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<sup>3</sup> Previously, the book was in public domain only in U.S.A.

The making of *Dracula* was not without its restrictions; the censoring board demanded that there should be no scenes depicting the vampires sinking their teeth into the victim's neck and that the act of staking the vampire should be depicted out of shot. Also, they demanded that women should be properly clad and there be no scenes of a sexual nature. Sex was something they believed there was no room for in a horror film. After watching a preliminary black and white rough cut of the film, the Board made further requests to remove the scenes showing the staking of Lucy, Dracula's seduction of Mina and the closing destruction scene of Dracula.

Hammer's response was to remind them that the x certificate suggested for *Dracula* would automatically prevent anyone under the age of sixteen from seeing the film and to argue that the audience expected a certain amount of horror and gore from the film. They also suggested that the proposed cuts would remove the excitement and shocks that the audience were expecting. (Beresford 2008, 146-147)

An interesting curiosity is the fact that the first adaptation of the book in a British production does not take place in England, nor in Transylvania and inserts its vampire in an unknown city, apparently in Germany. Still, the Dracula personified by Lee has a strong British accent, however the character has few lines in the film. Aside from the start of receiving Jonathan Harker at his castle, Hammer's Dracula does not seem too concerned with speaking, only with his maleficent actions.

In fact, in addition to Christopher Lee's British accent, we see a Dracula who, although wearing Lugosi's costume, has a different posture. This time, we have a strong and virile vampire, with an "alpha male" posture matching his impeccable malice. In addition, there is a greater animality in the villain who feeds on the blood of his victims by dirtying his mouth and presenting for the first time in the cinema one of the greatest vampiric characteristics of today: the pointed canines.

Lugosi was inevitably a point of reference for the new Dracula identity, but Lee was also able to distance his Dracula from the earlier one. Lee adopted the Lugosi Dracula's elegance and charm, the sleek, back-brushed hair, the arched eyebrows – but dropped the 'foreign' accent and underscored Dracula's sexual attractiveness and ferocity. (Gelder 2001, 91-92)

The ferocity expressed by Lee is not only found in his pointed canines, but also in his posture. While Dracula's attacks did not appear on the screen and were offscreen dependent on the viewer's imagination in previous films, here we see an explicit onscreen violence. Peter Hutchings in his work on Hammer's Dracula in the *The British Film Guide* (2003) collection highlights the role of power centered on a

male character throughout the film. According to the author, women are seen as an object of possession among men and there is a clear dispute for dominance between the alpha males of the film played by Christopher Lee and Peter Cushing

Dracula and Van Helsing are in constant dispute and coincidentally do not exchange a word during the film. The encounters of the characters serve for the physical clash and the attempt to eliminate the other. Without dialogues between them, we can see that the exchange of power between them covers the narrative. When the dominant is not one, it is another; and in the end, only the strongest will survive.

Within Hutchings' work we can see other observations that have already been pointed out during this analysis and a highlight for another second contribution of extreme importance to vampiric mythology. In addition to bringing the pointed canines into the vampire's imagination, "Dracula" highlights something that started in Murnau's film: death by exposure to the sun. While in the 1922 work we see the villain dying with the rising of the sun, the 1958 film describes an innovation in the way this death occurs. This time, the vampire burns his skin upon contact with the sun.

Stoker's book is an English work. And if it is in Germany from Murnau that the vampire first impacts with the sunrise, the Terence Fisher film, constitutes a hybrid between the two countries to dictate yet another rule of survival for the vampire. Taking place in a remote place in Germany, but filmed in England by an English producer and with a team full of British, Dracula's skin now burns when exposed to the sun.

## 5. Conclusion

The vampire is a being that has inhabited our imagination since the beginning of times through different myths. However, it is only with Gothic literature that it begins to be described in a way closer to what we understand today as a vampire. In this case, Bram Stoker is the author with the greatest responsibility for thinking of the vampire as he is today. *Dracula* (1897) is a bestselling book and has one of the most adapted characters for cinema.

Dracula seems to be an entity outside the fixed norms and standards that describe him. Instead, it has an extremely chameleon figure, molding itself to different representations over more than 100 years of existence. Stoker's vampire goes from monster to heartthrob, from repugnant to seducer, from animal to aristocrat. Although it is a gothic horror work, Dracula is present in several

cinematographic genres, encompassing multiple possibilities such as comedy, action, romance, musical.

This mutability presented by the vampire is present in the three specific works in this study. The analyzed films are the versions considered most relevant to what we believe is considered the most famous characteristics of the vampire. We see a Dracula who appears as a monster in 1922, to return to cinemas in 1931 as an educated and elegant aristocrat. In 1958 we have Christopher Lee as a vampire who feeds like an animal and presents innovative violence and virility to the character.

All these characteristics are very striking to what we believe to be part of our imagination about vampires. In several current films we see vampires who are beautiful, but turn into monsters; they are polite and elegant until they show their exaggerated animality and violence.

Still inherited from the analyzed films, we see this relationship between the vampire and the sun that emerges as his enemy in the 1922 film and starts to burn his skin in 1958. We can see here that what we understand as a vampire today points to several characteristics that appeared not only in literature, but also in cinema. Bram Stoker's character, in this case, is the greatest representative of vampires in our culture. We owe the book and its various cinematographic transpositions what we believe to be the "vampire pattern" or "vampire mythology". In other words, the countless characteristics attributed to the vampire are almost all from the same character: Dracula.

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