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DRACULA'S APOLOGETICS OF PROGRESS

By Lucas Kwong

RELIGION IN *DRACULA* STUDIES has often looked a little like the Un-Dead Lucy, a ghastly simulacrum of living faith. Indeed, readings of the novel frequently depend on a suspicious approach to the novel's professions of piety, one that regards them as a mask for more fundamental concerns: the heroes profess religious concern, but what they really want is to neutralize the New Woman, or racial degeneration, or sexual perversion. Under these conditions, Christianity provides, at best, a potent discourse through which the characters can manage these coded crises. When religion does enter the conversation, critics tend to read the text for clues to Stoker's personal position on the theological controversies of his day: the Catholic-Protestant divide in Ireland, the place of High Church ritualism in Anglican worship, the merit of the doctrine of transubstantiation.[1] As a result, we are left with a *Dracula* that functions as an elaborate code book, encrypting what Stoker secretly (or not-so-secretly) believed.

In what follows, I want to suggest that theology in *Dracula* is no mere sign of hegemonic social forces or pathological complexes, but a sophisticated and integrated system of belief and ritual, enmeshed in the pressures of its historical moment but irreducible to materialist demystification. Moreover, I want to eschew the temptation to read *Dracula* as an allegory for Stoker's doctrinal positions, as if the sole point of its supernatural elements was to encrypt meaning that originates outside the text. Instead, my argument takes its cues from Tzvetan Todorov's distinction between allegory and the fantastic. For Todorov, to read a fantastic text allegorically is to betray it, insofar as such a reading metaphorizes the marvelous events depicted in the text as real: "If what we read describes a supernatural event, yet we take the words not in their literal meaning but in another sense which refers to nothing supernatural, there is no longer any space in which the fantastic can exist" (64). In this light, it seems important to honor the non-allegorical ambitions of *Dracula*, a novel arranged as a series of legal, journalistic, medical, and personal sources that painstakingly testify to the existence of vampires – and, by extension, the operation of forces divine and demonic.

So what in God's name is going on in *Dracula*? This essay argues that, rather than deploying the supernatural to metaphorize an ideological position, *Dracula* purports to document how the supernatural's incursion into modern time-space tests the faith of a group of late Victorian Christians. As I will show, these true believers ground their response to this incursion in the premises of contemporaneous apologetics, the branch of theology devoted to defenses of the faith. In response to both popular interest in Eastern religion and greater awareness of global religious diversity, clergymen and social commentators elucidated what I

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call the apologetics of progress: arguments that depicted Christianity as the *telos* of religion's evolutionary development, an engine of civilizational improvement that accommodated both the truths of other religions and the demands of modernity. This complicated negotiation surfaces in the strategy of *Dracula*'s band of holy vampire hunters, who forge an ecumenical alliance that sacralizes scientific methods and esoteric beliefs. Indeed, *Dracula*'s Christian heroes do not conquer foreign religions so much as beat them at their own game, embodying a brand of spectacular (and technologically precise) wonderworking that other New Romance novels identified with Buddhism, Hinduism, and Theosophy. However, *Dracula*'s obsession with history, a product of the novel's indebtedness to the Gothic genre, undoes its triumphalist portrait of a religion of progress. Such a portrait finds its negative image in Dracula, who precedes the hunters as a medieval example of rational Christian heroism. The novel's consequent subversion of apologetic rhetoric ultimately issues not from an allegorization of Christianity's inconsistencies, but from the conflict between that rhetoric and the providential power that intervenes, marvellously and mysteriously, in the world of the novel.

"We Shall Keep an Open Mind": Abraham Van Helsing, Theologian of Progress

NICHOLAS DALY HAS CHARACTERIZED the aforementioned studies of *Dracula* as variations on "anxiety theory," identifying the Count with racialized and gendered threats to Victorian norms.[2] I want to risk one further congruence: if Dracula menaces masculinity and racial purity, he surely threatens Christian orthodoxy as well, incarnating the varieties of Eastern religion that vexed believers and attracted freethinkers towards the end of the century. Variously characterized by Jeffrey Franklin as a "Buddhist counterinvasion" and by Alex Owen as a "mystical revival,"[3] the popular interest in alternatives to Christianity mounted in the 1880s and 90s, as books and organizations disseminated the insights of comparative religion beyond elite intellectual circles. "With the approach of each new London season comes a new fashion in dress, new books, new theories, and new religious beliefs," "A. J. M. M." muses in an 1891 edition of the *Women's Penny Paper*, aptly conveying the sense of competing forms of belief clamoring for Britain's attention: "We feel that we ought to belong to some community, but cannot decide which, for every sect loudly declares that through its narrow wicket alone lies the Way of Life" (115).

For those Victorian Christians concerned about the flood of new religious beliefs gaining currency in England, Renfield, the servant of Dracula whom Dr. Seward diagnoses as a victim of "religious mania," is at least as unnerving as Dracula himself. Referring to Dracula as "Lord and Master" and declaring that he has "worshipped [Dracula] long and afar off" (170; ch. 8), Renfield inaugurates the novel's ongoing suggestion that Dracula is a kind of Antichrist, a perverse messiah who offers immortality by drinking blood rather than shedding his own. Dracula himself seems to relish his blasphemous associations: in an allusion to Satan's temptation of Christ, Dracula later offers Renfield "lives . . . through countless ages, if you will fall down and worship me" (387; ch. 21). As Paul Murray notes, his skill as a "worker of wonders and a seducer" confirms his association with the false prophet of Revelation, imbued with those same characteristics (193). But Dracula's links to the Antichrist particularly resonate within the context of the contemporaneous proliferation of alternative religions, since orthodox theologians frequently identified teachers of new religious systems with the "false Christs" warned of in the Bible. (Madame Blavatsky,

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the founder of Theosophy who hailed Christ as a master of yogic arts, jokingly referred to herself as "Antichrist in petticoats" [259].[4]) Dracula incarnates the enervating Eastern mysticism, legitimated for curious British audiences by novel readings of Scripture that provoked defenders of the faith. When he appears as mist in Mina Harker's bedroom, Mina perceives him as a type of the spiritual guidance provided by Yahweh in Exodus, "a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night" (cf. Exodus 13.21). Entranced by the false promise of such guidance, Mina succumbs to precisely the kind of vacuous meditative practice that Christian apologists associated with Buddhism and Hinduism: not even thoughts, but mere "things began to whirl through my brain, just as the cloudy column was now whirling through the room" (362; ch. 19). Dracula's momentary mastery of Mina and practical ownership of Renfield reproduces the kind of influence that such masters as Blavatsky were feared to exert upon their disciples.

Although Dracula bears conspicuous resemblance to the new creeds as imagined by Victorian orthodox Christians, I want to build on Dejan Kuzmanovic's contention that Dracula does not merely "stand for transgression, [but] also stands for – *or, paradoxically, enables* – a recuperation of stability and order" (413, italics added). In this regard, the text does not simply voice Christian fears of Eastern religions' contaminating effects; rather, Dracula's embodiment of those fears occasions a recuperation of Christianity, evoking the logic of contemporaneous theologians who responded not only to popular interest in other belief systems, but also to the foundational claims of the new science of religion. Pioneered in the 1860s and 70s by such figures as Max Müller and Egyptologist Cornelius Tiele, the discipline of comparative religion incorporated the Darwinian theory of evolution into its examination of the world's religious systems. Müller's contention that we must "see in the ancient religions . . . the Divine education of the human race" implicitly affirmed that each religion had contributed something important to humanity's development, and that religions were best compared through gradation rather than sharp distinction (151). Meanwhile, the anthropologist E. B. Tylor proposed a scheme of development within which belief in the supernatural constituted a "survival" of religion's evolution, from primitive animism, through totemism, polytheism, and finally monotheism.[5] Concluding that belief in the supernatural constituted a residue from lower stages of religious development, Tylor laid the groundwork for more radical scholars to name Christianity itself as the ultimate vestigial belief, to be swept away in the name of progress. Indeed, the comparativist James Frazer premised his deconstruction of Christianity on this variety of cultural evolutionism. In *The Golden Bough* (1890), Frazer earned notoriety for his insinuation that Christianity ultimately owes its central narrative to Oriental vegetation cults, which venerated a priest-king who suffers a sacrificial death and then undergoes resurrection.

Frazer and Tylor's thought exemplifies what historian Theodore Koditschek calls "the progress narrative" that dominated Victorian intellectual life, in varying iterations. Koditschek contends that, whereas the progress narrative structured the early nineteenth century's grand histories of Europe and Britain, in the latter half of the century that narrative disappeared from traditional historiography, only to resurface in the "new kind of bio-social evolutionary theory" that shaped comparative religion (211). In this context, progress entailed a slow shedding of vestigial beliefs and practices, which might one day culminate in Christianity's obsolescence. To counter this argument, many believers constructed their own evolutionary progress narrative, in which Christianity's superiority to other religions rested on its unique status within the *longue durée* of evolutionary history, not on its absolute

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separation from that history. Such thinkers as F. B. Jevons, Edward Caird, and W. B. Carpenter effectively appropriated Frazer's methods for their own ends: Christianity superseded other religions, precisely because it represented their teleological endpoint. In *An Introduction to the History of Religion*, Jevons, an Anglican divine and scholar in comparative religion, calls it "fallacious" to assume that "the application of the theory of evolution to religion would reduce the higher forms of it to mere survivals of barbarism, animism, and so on" (9). Instead, those lower forms intimate the religious ideal's consummation in Christianity – just as, in the case of Greece, the "barbaric stage of ancient carving" constituted a necessary phase en route to "the art of Phidias." The apotheosis of humanity's native monotheism, Christianity represented the final stage in religion's progress, even if not the final stage in its evolution.

For his part, Caird identified Christianity with the impetus of evolutionary progress, in order to maximize the portrait of its universality. In *The Evolution of Religion*, originally delivered as part of the University of St. Andrew's Gifford Lectures from 1890 to 1892, Caird argued that an evolutionary framework was essential to apprehending the full range of religious and philosophical traditions that found their culmination in Christianity: not only Greek philosophy and Judaism, but also "the primitive civilizations of Babylon and Mexico and Peru" (1: 26). These lower forms of religion expressed, in gradually less obscure terms, the theological concept that Christianity finally offered to the world, a "deepening and widening of the idea of God . . . [particularly] as compared with Greek polytheism and Jewish monotheism" (1:137). In particular, Caird argued, Christianity represents a maturation of Judaism, insofar as it preserves the latter's monotheism while jettisoning its notion that humans could only undergo moral regeneration via "a sudden divine interference with the course of nature." In contrast, Christ maintained that "victory [over evil] is to be attained as one not of catastrophic change, but of continuous growth" (2: 235). In a reassuring convergence between Christianity's teaching and its status in world history, Caird argued that Christ represented a progression beyond Judaism, precisely by becoming the prophet of progress: "It is not too much to say that in some of his words the idea that true progress is possible only by development, is more clearly expressed than it ever was by anyone down to the present century."

With this argument, Caird added a variation on the apologetics of progress: Christianity not only represents the *telos* of religion's development through evolutionary time, it also enshrined progress in its core doctrines, to a degree not seen in other faiths. In adopting this strategy, Caird joined other apologists who sought to prove Christianity's singular amenability, not simply to the evolutionary framework of the science of religion, but to the advance of technology and scientific insight. They did so by emphasizing Christianity's groundings in historical rather than philosophical claims, thereby making it a religion that welcomed empirical verification. "*We* have no horror of Biblical criticism; we have no jealousy of geology, or biology, or archaeology, or any other science," declared T. Vincent Tymms, council member of the Christian Evidence Society, in its 1889 annual report (41, qtd. in Johnson 569). "[W]e have convinced ourselves that the Gospels are narratives of facts, that Christ is the central fact of history . . . . [If] these are facts, nothing in the universe . . . can be at variance with them." Tymms implied that Christianity is suited to the march of history, because its central claims are uniquely available to modern tools of analysis. Dale Johnson observes that this emphasis on Christ's historicity naturally led to a focus on the history of the Church itself: "With history rather than logic becoming the most important dogmatic tool in the 'evidence' armoury, the evidences of Christianity's own

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history – its growth, universality, contributions to progress and civilization, and adaptations to human needs – took on greater force than they had for earlier apologists" (574).[6] Caird's valorization of Christ as the prophet of progress is thus reinforced by the empirical verifiability of the Church's track record of the Resurrection itself. The Congregationalist minister R. A. Redford in *The Christian's Plea Against Modern Unbelief*, published by the Christian Evidence Society, leveraged this argument to highlight the shortcomings of other religions. Confucianism, Islam, and Buddhism, he wrote, offer "no evidence of universal adaptation to the wants of men . . . . We can conceive their remaining long, under the gloom of ignorance and a semi-barbaric state; but we cannot conceive their, in any way, being adapted to harmonize with the intellectual, social, and moral progress of the modern world" (462). In speaking of the faith's unique harmony with "intellectual progress," Redford answers his booklet's principal objective: to demonstrate that Christianity "[has] stood the severest examination of the modern Criticism," as he writes in his defense of the Pauline epistles (380).

In embracing evolutionary progress and modern empirical methods, these progress-minded defenders of faith differentiated themselves from other Victorian Christians: from more conservative contemporaries, still hostile to Darwinian theory and wary of arguments that conceded Christianity's similarity to other religions; from earlier apologists, whose arguments had rested on stressing miraculous events in Scripture, rather than verifiable historical facts;[7] and from midcentury comparative theologians such as Hardwick and Maurice, who had posited Christianity as the *telos* of world religions, but without the framework of evolutionary progress, which gained steam in the 1860s.[8] Indeed, as Livingston notes, many of the late Victorian Christians who addressed the subject of religious plurality were not only well versed in the science of religion, but were trained comparativists themselves (268). Perhaps most significantly, in light of *Dracula*, the apologists of progress also distinguished themselves by the degree of their ecumenicism. Beyond minimizing differences amongst Protestant sects, such defenders of the faith even welcomed Catholics as fellow believers; defining the faith in its most basic terms not only ensured clear distinctions between Christianity and other faiths, but also maximized the faith's world-transforming power.[9] This becomes clear in an 1899 sermon, published in the *Bristol Mercury* and delivered at Argyle Hall, an interdenominational group comprised of such "earnest Christian laymen" as the speaker, Walter Bailey. Beginning by assessing Buddha, Confucius, and Muhammad, Bailey dismissed all three as spiritually impotent: in particular, Confucius "had no sympathy for progress," while Islam "has depraved and barbarised civilised nations." Christianity, in contrast, had had triumphant effects in world history, equally attributable to Catholics and Evangelicals. The "spiritual triumphs of Christianity are the most cogent witnesses on its behalf," Bailey declared, ranging from "the mighty thunderings of Savonarola," "the soft, silent pictures of Fra Angelica" and the lyrics of "all our best hymns, whether written by Romanists like Faber or Dissenters like Watts," to social reform, where "the love of Christ" not only "broke the fetters of the slave with Clarkson and Wilberforce," but also "toiled for temperance with Father Matthew." Christianity, in sum, is "the source of all the heroism and all the saintliness of nineteen centuries." Tellingly, this celebration gathers in a broad spectrum of Christian belief, from Romanist to Dissenter.[10]

It is not difficult to see how such grandiose defenses of the faith, replete with sharply drawn battle lines and appeals to heroism and saintliness, might have appealed to Stoker. The product of a strict Protestant upbringing, overseen by his mother, Charlotte, in Dublin,

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the epicenter of the Irish Evangelical revival, Stoker carried his convictions into his literary career.[11] In a 1908 essay titled "The Censorship of Fiction," Stoker castigated Britain's literary world for forsaking its true spiritual calling. Pointing out that the fiction writer follows in the footsteps of Christ himself, whose parables indicate an embrace of "[fiction] as a method or opportunity of carrying great truth," Stoker went on to lament how far commercially successful British novelists have fallen from Christ's example: "They in their selfish greed tried to deprave where others had striven to elevate. In the language of the pulpit, 'they have crucified Christ afresh'" (485). For Stoker, nothing less than the future of British letters depended on a revival of truly Christian storytelling. Stoker's upbringing as a specifically middle-class Protestant, surrounded by Catholicism and shielded from the most vituperative of Ascendancy anti-Papism, also would have primed him for ecumenical appeals to pan-Christian solidarity: Murray points out that Stoker shared a similar background as his friend, collaborator, and employer Henry Irving, whose Methodist convictions did not deter him from keeping a crucifix at his bedside (20).[12] As we shall see, however, upbringing alone does not account for the catholicity (but not, strictly speaking, Catholicism) of the beliefs and practices sanctified by *Dracula*'s holy warriors; nor does it account for the way that such sanctification echoes the rhetoric of Christians waging their own battle against the seductions of Eastern mysticism.

Dracula's emphasis on Christianity's palpable efficacy, as well as its demotion of sectarian differences, surface early in the novel, in Jonathan Harker's reaction to the crucifix that a Transylvanian peasant gives him. Harker writes, "I did not know what to do, for, as an English Churchman, I have been taught to regard such things as in some measure idolatrous" (24; ch.1). But when the object seems to hold the Count in check – "it made an instant change in him, for the fury passed so quickly that I could hardly believe that it was ever there" (61; ch. 2) – his opinion begins to change. Though he speculates that the crucifix works because it conjures "memories of sympathy and comfort," he feels no immediate need to explain its influence: "Some time, if it may be, I must examine this matter and try to make up my mind about it" (64; ch. 3).[13] Ultimately, what matters is simply that the crucifix works; the question of why it works can wait for another day.

Indeed, so effective are the crucifix's anti-vampiric properties that even Dr. Seward, self-proclaimed skeptic, admits to feeling "a mighty power fly along (his) arm" upon wielding it against the Count (418; ch. 23). Noelle Bowles has persuasively argued that the hunters' gradual acceptance of the crucifix may signal Stoker's sympathy to High Church ritualists within the Church of England, who advocated the use of crucifixes in worship over the objections of Low and Broad Church factions (248). Elsewhere, however, the hunters must accommodate beliefs and practices even less palatable to Protestant sensibilities than Van Helsing's crucifix. After Dracula establishes a psychic link with Mina late in the novel, the good Christian soldiers resort to methods evocative of both spiritualist and occultist technique. Hypnotizing Mina, Van Helsing periodically sends her soul to Dracula in a kind of astral projection, gaining information about his whereabouts via Mina's medium-like transmissions. Yet Van Helsing quickly defuses potential charges of divination by reminding us of his holy purpose. Unlike Dracula, he declares, "we . . . are not selfish, and we believe that God is with us through all this blackness, and these many dark hours" (459; ch. 25). Similarly, the "holy circle" that Van Helsing draws around Mina to protect her from the seductions of Dracula's brides, though drawn with the Eucharistic Host, seems more like something from a medieval *grimoire* than from a book of Catholic

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ritual, demarcating as it does a magic space of protection.[14] In these episodes, the "spiritual triumph" of Christianity appears indebted to practices antithetical to the foundations of the faith.

While some may view the hunters' simultaneous affirmation of Christian piety and pagan superstition as a sign of ideological incoherence, it would be improbable if Stoker had not reflected, at some point, on how to reconcile occultism with the devout orthodoxy of his upbringing.[15] Van Helsing's strategy, in fact, offers much for the apologists of the period to admire: Christianity's supremacy is proven not by its absolute difference from esoteric belief and practice, but by its capacity to gather in their worthier contributions and realize their purpose in Christ. Van Helsing underscores this rapprochement when he explains to Seward his openness to superstition and science alike: "We shall have an open mind, and not let a little bit of truth check the rush of a big truth, like a small rock does a railway truck. We get the small truth first. Good! We keep him, and we value him; but all the same we must not let him think himself all the truth in the universe" (281; ch. 14). Van Helsing's hallowing of hypnotism, astral projection, and superstition would, in these terms, appear to relegate Christian orthodoxy to the status of a "small truth" that must, in the end, give way to the "big truth" of other epistemes. But have a little faith: the scene in which Van Helsing secures the sacred pledge of his colleagues assures the pious reader which truth remains biggest. If they fail to subdue Dracula, Van Helsing warns, "We [will] go on for all time abhorred by all, a blot on the face of God's sunshine, an arrow in the side of Him who died for man. But we are face to face with duty, and in such case must we shrink?" (337; ch. 18). Van Helsing reminds his listeners that Christianity rests on the Crucifixion, that historical fact championed by Papist and Dissenter alike; they accordingly pledge their allegiance by laying hands on the crucifix, an object, having proven its usefulness to the cause, that emblematizes the Christian stress on practical action. Rather than suggesting a covert defense of Catholicism, as some critics have suggested, the scene thus seems closer to Walter Bailey's ode to "the source of all the heroism and all the saintliness of nineteen centuries." Armed with crucifixes symbolic of pan-Christian heroism rather than Romish idolatry, *Dracula*'s heroes can now attach sacred import to both the scientific and pagan methods on which Van Helsing stakes his ground (and with which he stakes his prey).[16] Hence, immediately after the pledge, Van Helsing declares, "We have on our side power of combination . . . we have sources of science; we are free to act and think" (337; ch. 18); later, Van Helsing clarifies that the "power of combination" also requires embracing the superstitions that account for the vampire's strengths and weaknesses: "To superstition we must trust at first; it was man's faith in the early, and it have its root in faith still" (441; ch. 24). In this familiar evolutionary view, superstition finds its *telos* under the banner of the cross. Christianity in *Dracula* begins to look rather like the religion touted by theologian Stewart Salmond, in an 1899 article titled "Non-Christian Religions and Christianity": a religion that "does embrace within itself all that the soul of man, through the long years of its history, has yearned for. And what it embraces it clarifies, illumines, and redirects anew" (6).

Van Helsing's open mind, his conjunction of basic Christian faith in "Him who died for man" and those strategic powers of combination, thus maps precisely onto the apologetics of progress, reproducing its emphasis on ecumenicism, tangible action, and Christianity's perfection of its superstitious antecedents. Van Helsing's model of belief also intimates the singular compatibility between Christianity and modernity – in Redford's terms, its suitability to the "progress of the modern world." Indeed, as Patricia McKee has argued, Van Helsing's

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coordination between "big" and "small" truths can be read in light of late nineteenth-century economic developments. Occupying what McKee calls "the position of the modern citizen under capitalism," Van Helsing proposes a strategic investment and withdrawal of belief, typical of an age when the rise of financial speculation depended on the mobility of capital (46–48). Writes McKee, "In their detachment and mobility, [*Dracula*'s] characters personify the movements and uses of capital as they enter speculatively into representations of different cultures" (47). To borrow a phrase from Jonathan Harker, the speculative logic behind Van Helsing's instrumentalist theology is "nineteenth century up-to-date with a vengeance," befitting a religion uniquely suited to history's flux. This mode of faith generates a return on investment: a positive result as empirically verifiable as the mighty power of the crucifix, beating back the advance of Eastern spirituality and turning modern skeptics into modern believers.

Beyond Apologetics: Dracula as Christian Hero and the Gothic Cusp

WE HAVE SEEN HOW THE VAMPIRE hunters' privileging of practical results and adaptable methods, visible in their embrace of crucifixes, occult procedures, and empiricist investigation, consolidates the allegiance between Christianity and modernity foundational to late Victorian apologetics. If, as Stoker once declared, "nothing is eternal but Truth and Progress," it is unsurprising that *Dracula* should reproduce arguments that venerate Christianity as the consummation of religion's long evolution, the one religion best adapted to civilizational development.[17] As Christopher Herbert notes, this makes *Dracula* an anomaly in an age of novels that usually counterpose the two (102); for him, the allegiance between Christianity and modernity faces off against "Dracula . . . [who] is *superstition itself*, come fantastically to life" (101). Herbert thus pitches Dracula as the incarnation of the "totemic protoreligion" that comparativist scholar Robertson Smith named as predecessor to Judaism's religion of ethical consciousness (104). As I have argued above, the strain of religious devotion that Dracula brings to London also evokes the Eastern-tinged creeds that captured the public's interest.

Yet Dracula represents still another form of menace to Victorian believers, one that prevents us from reading the text as a work of Christian apologetics. When Van Helsing contrasts the hunters' "power of combination" with the limitations of their nemesis, he does so not by associating Dracula with totemism or pseudo-Buddhist mysticism, but by acknowledging Dracula's past as a medieval Christian warrior. Stressing that Dracula lacks precisely the lateral mode of thinking that can accommodate multiple options, due to his primitive "child brain," Van Helsing points to the fact that Dracula's only strategy to protect his homeland was to cross over into Turkish territory "again and again," at tremendous cost of life (433; ch. 24). This recalls Dracula's veiled boast to Harker that he singlehandedly defended the Eastern borders of Christian Europe: "When was redeemed that great shame of my nation, the shame of Cassova, when the flags of the Wallach and the Magyar went down beneath the Crescent? Who was it but one of my own race who . . . beat the Turk on his own ground?" (67; ch. 3). Seen in this light, Van Helsing's vaunted "power of combination," visible in the arrangement between Christianity's big truth and superstition's small truth, takes on added significance: it marks the distance between modern Christianity and its past, when the defense of Christendom depended on primitive single-mindedness.

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Despite Van Helsing's diagnosis, Dracula defies easy categorization as a medieval soldier left behind in Christianity's march to the future. While scholars have debated Dracula's resemblance to Vlad the Impaler, the fifteenth century Wallachian ruler who did cross the Danube to fight Turkish armies, it seems clear that Stoker embellished the legend, particularly by playing up Dracula's erudition. As Van Helsing himself concedes, Dracula was also an "alchemist . . . *the highest development of the science-knowledge of his time*" (413; ch. 23, italics added), and possessed "a mighty brain, a learning beyond compare." It was precisely this thirst for knowledge that led him to the Scholomance, a school in the mountains where initiates learned the mysteries of nature from the Devil himself, "[who] claims the tenth scholar as his due" (342; ch. 18). Presumably Satan's tenth scholar, Dracula thus proved "there was no branch of knowledge of his time that he did not essay" (413; ch. 23). His quest for knowledge, which began during his career as a Christian soldier, culminates in a Faustian pact with the Devil.

Dracula's conjoint status as Eastern Antichrist and erudite Christian warrior means that the text cannot perform a reassuring exorcism of Britain's religious Others. Nor can it simply offer another example of Stoker's tendency to cast Christianity as a beleaguered standard of purity in a universe beset by Satanic evil. As Phyllis Roth argues, Stoker's fiction continually offers variations on a "preternatural Pilgrim's Progress," in which "the rational Christian hero exorcises vampires, a centuries' old white worm, and an Egyptian queen, destroying lustful Turkish heathens, malevolent usurers and Spaniards, and dissolute hypnotists, while reclaiming the truly penitent" (128). *Dracula* both recapitulates and resists this narrative structure: the enemy of the rational Christian heroes was himself once a rational Christian hero, who used his combination of cunning and military prowess to beat back the Turk. Such ironic mirroring also revises the Gothic quarrel with history, defined by Robert Miles, in his study of Ann Radcliffe, as the "Gothic cusp": a moment defined by the "supercession of the feudal by the modern" (167), in which tradition and enlightenment, respectively incarnated by older and younger generations, must contend with each other.[18] Though *Dracula* retains the conflict between modernity and history, it eschews the conflation of the past with reactionary ignorance. Instead, it offers us an enlightened Christianity that struggles to define itself against both its Eastern competitors, visible in Dracula, and its past medieval incarnation, *also visible in Dracula*.

Put another way, the terror that confronts our heroes proceeds, in part, from the implications of the history that confronts them in Dracula: the prospect that Christian faith might eventually "progress" backwards into its putative evolutionary antecedent, the seductions of Eastern mysticism. And indeed, as the hunters race to prevent Mina from falling prey to vampirism in the novel's final section, the protagonists' religion of progress comes to function not as the sign of their difference from their nemesis, but the sign of their resemblance to him. To be sure, on one level, this section neatly marries apologetic arguments to the ideological premises of New Imperialism, illustrating the colonial vocation of a Christianity adapted to modernity. As Phillip Curtin has pointed out, by the late nineteenth century enthusiasm for conversion declined as racist theories enjoyed increased intellectual legitimacy.[19] For many missionaries, believing in Christianity as a religion of progress meant accepting science's implications for conversion amongst the heathen: unequal evolutionary development had produced races possibly incapable of salvation.[20] Stewardship of these races, not conversion, thus became the task of a church keeping up with the latest in scientific

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theory. With perdition literally flowing in her veins, the infected Mina thus occupies the position of Kipling's "sullen peoples,/Half-devil and half-child," whose spiritual depravity, legible in their very biological makeup, require the paternalism of a modern Christian nation. When Van Helsing protectively touches a Sacred Wafer to Mina's forehead, the resulting burn functions as a sign that "the Almighty shuns (her) polluted flesh" (406; ch. 22). All of Mina's virtue cannot return her into God's favor, for as Seward observes, "so far as symbols went, she with all her goodness and purity and faith, was outcast from God" (420 ; ch. 23). In spite of Mina's virtues, her spiritual inferiority is thus embedded in her flesh. For her part, Mina enthusiastically embraces the subordinate position in which the Hunters consequently place her, pleading that Jonathan refrain from informing her of their plans and, ultimately, requiring the hunters to kill her, should her vampirism become irremediable. An outcast whose body bears evidence of her damnation, and who charges her unblemished male superiors to keep her in ignorance, steward her soul, and, if necessary, destroy her polluted body: Kipling himself could not have asked for a more compliant personification of the white man's burden.[21]

Yet even as Mina's plot thread offers a fantasy of colonial stewardship, one whose theological underpinnings implicitly reaffirm Christianity's hospitality to scientific advance, it also focalizes the parallel between the hunters' mission and the designs of their enemy. Suddenly aware that she may share Dracula's fate, Mina insists, "That poor soul who has wrought all this misery is the saddest case of all. Just think what will his joy be when he, too, is destroyed in his worser part that his better part may have spiritual immortality" (420; ch. 23). Pity for one's enemies, however redolent of the Beatitudes, hardly serves as a compelling motivation for the task at hand; vengeance is a more suitable emotion. Not satisfied with destroying Dracula's "worser part," Jonathan declares, "If . . . I could send his soul forever and ever to burning hell I would do it!" (421; ch. 23). Here, Harker reminds us of Dracula, who, under the banner of Christian imagery, carries out his own mission of vengeance, at the expense of his own soul and that of his foes: "My revenge is just begun! I spread it over centuries, and time is on my side" (418; ch. 23).

Indeed, as the novel barrels toward the final confrontation on Transylvanian soil, the quest to defeat this specter of medieval Christianity only enmeshes our heroes ever more deeply in his history. Witness Van Helsing's speech, late in the novel, in which he explains why the hunters must follow their quarry to his native land: "That the world, and men for whom His Son die, will not be given over to monsters, whose very existence would defame Him. He have allowed us to redeem one soul already, and we go out as the old knights of the Cross to redeem more. Like them we shall travel towards the sunrise" (433; ch. 24). Once more, Van Helsing frames the mission in the language of Christian duty, defending and reproducing Christ's sacrifice. Yet here, he explicitly ties vampire hunting to the valor of the "old Knights of the Cross," an allusion that recalls Dracula's own campaign across the Danube.

Seven years later, the hunters are compelled to retrace this eastward journey. The epilogue finds them returning to Transylvania, traversing what Harker calls "the old ground which was, and is, so full of terrible memories" (499; ch. 27). The equivocation expressed by "was and is" makes sense, as a sign of resistance to closure: since a faith defined by empirically verifiable displays of power threatens to dissolve when such displays become obsolete, journeying to the old ground becomes a necessary pilgrimage, for in keeping the terrible memories alive, the hunters also keep the faith. Yet this pilgrimage also provides the final

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sign of contiguity between the hunters and their quarry. Compare the scene with Dracula's account of his victory over the Turks, which closes with this lament: "The warlike days are over. Blood is too precious a thing in these days of dishonourable peace, and the glories of the great races are as a tale that is told" (69; ch. 3). In elevating tangible action as the ultimate show of piety, the hunters join Dracula in yearning for the glory of warlike days, when the heroism and saintliness of nineteen centuries finds opportunity to bear witness. History is not so easily escaped.

Toward Theodicy: Fantastic Hesitation and Two Readings of Providence

I HAVE SUGGESTED THAT DRACULA both powerfully aestheticizes the arguments of *fin-de-siècle* apologetics and subjects them to profound inversion. Even as the novel rallies scientific method, Catholic iconography, occult belief, and tangible action in the name of Christ, it also plagues that vision with the specter of history: it positions the religion of progress as a victim of its own success, as the elevation of empiricism and efficacy at once signals Christianity's contemporaneity and underscores its contiguity with its enemy. Indeed, in their quest to steward Mina's unholy body, the hunters both epitomize the duty of a modern Christian empire and follow in the footsteps of Dracula, that Knight of the Old Cross, journeying towards the sunrise.

All of which leads us to ask whether *Dracula* ends up on the side of James Frazer after all: initially appearing as an illustration of Christianity's triumph, it would then offer an allegory of its incoherence, its indistinguishability from the religions it seeks to demote. Herbert has articulated a version of this argument, suggesting that *Dracula* tacitly locates Christianity's "ferocious essence" (114) – explicitly embodied in Dracula and his disciple Renfield, unconsciously exhibited by the hunters – in an eroticized fixation with blood-drinking, thereby intimating the faith's affiliation with the atavistic mystery cults Frazer named as its direct predecessors. While Herbert's argument adeptly draws connections between *Dracula* and the blood-drenched imagery of Methodist hymns about the crucifixion, his skepticism about the difference between the Count who drinks blood and the Christ who offers it leads him to discount the intellectual coherence of Christian theology: "In complexes of supremely charged cultural imagery like the one surrounding blood-drinking in Western spirituality, logical consistency has not much of a role to play" (119). Herbert thus reduces theology to an unsuccessful alibi for pathology, a metaphysical cover for what is, at heart, a purely material phenomenon. *Per* Todorov, such a reading runs contrary to the spirit of the fantastic, which is premised precisely on destabilizing a materialist episteme by broaching the possibility of the marvelous. While some of *Dracula*'s uncanny elements might invite an allegorical interpretation – Dracula as false Messiah, vampiric Mina as subject race – its status as fantastic text requires us, in the end, to avoid reducing those elements to mere metaphor.

How, then, to account for *Dracula*'s subversion of apologetics? Here, I want to appropriate Todorov's concept of fantastic hesitation, which he identifies with any text that "[obliges] the reader to consider the world of the characters as a world of living persons and to hesitate between a natural and a supernatural explanation of the events described" (33). Certainly, *Dracula* begins replete with fantastic hesitation – think of Jonathan Harker, mulling the source of his crucifix's power – and ends on a note that resists totalizing explanations of the events related. In between, though, its conjoining of empiricism and Christian faith muddies

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Todorov's distinction between natural and supernatural explanations, since the hunters must draw on both in order to defeat their foe. Moreover, *Dracula*'s persistent affirmations of Providence eventually render the natural-supernatural conflict irrelevant, as the existence and sovereignty of a supernatural deity, once his effects in the material world have been established, are never truly placed in doubt. I suggest that *Dracula* performs a twist on the fantastic hesitation: though it begins by provoking uncertainty about the relative salience of natural and supernatural explanations, that hesitation gradually morphs into vacillation between conflicting readings of the metaphysics undergirding its marvelous universe. On one hand, Van Helsing constantly declares that God has ordained their cause and assured them of victory, a point that Mina is quick to reaffirm. Jonathan Harker comments upon reading his journals, "There is something of a guiding purpose manifest throughout, which is comforting. Mina says that perhaps we are instruments of ultimate good. It may be! I shall try to think as she does" (428; ch. 24). Mina's phrasing is at once generic and apropos, insofar as it harmonizes with the instrumentalist undertones of Van Helsing's model of belief: just as superstition, occult practices, and empirical method are useful technologies that find their *telos* in Christianity, so do the vampire hunters find their *telos* in a deity who, given the weight of available evidence, seems to employ them as instruments of his will.

On the other hand, Jonathan's comments, dated October 4, closely follow Mina's October 1 entry, in which she belies her public optimism with a darker interpretation of events: "It all seems like a horrible tragedy, with fate pressing on relentlessly to some destined end. Everything that one does seems, no matter how right it may be, to bring on the very thing which is most to be deplored" (360; ch. 19). Here, Mina echoes not so much the piety of contemporaneous theologians as the pessimism of Thomas Hardy's contemporaneous *Jude the Obscure* (1895). There, Sue Bridehead voices the notion of an inhuman universal principle that surfaces in Mina's speculations: "There is something external to us which says, 'You shan't!' First it said, 'You shan't learn!' Then it said, 'You shan't labour!' Now it says, 'You shan't love!'" (255; Part 6, ch. 2). Echoing Sue's despair, Mina thus raises the suggestion that God may not be setting the hunters up for victory, so much as leading them into a resounding "You shan't!," an expression of that anti-human "something" that reduces Sue to defeat. We might dismiss Mina's evocation of Hardy as a momentary lapse of faith, were it not for the fact that, between her journal entry and Jonathan's, Dracula ambushes her in her bedroom and seems to validate her dread. Having infected Mina, he gloats, "You would help these men to hunt me and frustrate me in my designs . . . [yet] whilst they played wits against me . . . I was countermining them" (396; ch. 21).

Dracula, of course, has no use for the machinations of fate, instead taking full responsibility for the hidden scheme that turns the hunters' efforts against them. Yet Mina's incipient pessimism resurfaces in Jonathan's insinuation, on October 30, that God is directly responsible for their misfortunes. When Van Helsing raises the possibility of fighting Dracula on his native ground, Jonathan exclaims, "'Oh, my God, what have we done to have this terror cast upon us!' and [sinks] down on the sofa in a collapse of misery" (473; ch. 26). Later that night, Jonathan writes, "My only comfort is that we are in the hands of God. Only for that faith it would be easier to die than live, and so be quit of all the trouble" (476; ch. 26). Jonathan's ambiguous qualification of his "comfort" suggests that, in fact, death may be more of a comfort than living with faith in such a God. Amidst the buoyant invocations of divine protection throughout the novel, Jonathan's dim faith, combined with a conspicuous lack of its renewal, is noticeable; it also makes sense of the gloom that underlies

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his aforementioned final narration, which recalls Mina's dread of "horrible tragedy" by hinting at a future resurrection of evil. As mentioned above, Harker's preoccupation with the "old ground which was, and is . . . so full of vivid and terrible memories" signifies his complicity in the Count's yearning for warlike days, but it also brings to mind Van Helsing's description of Transylvanian soil as a hotbed of "strangeness of the geological and chemical world," occult physical properties which "found their utmost" in Dracula's person (432; ch. 24). In light of the fact that Stoker removed the spectacular destruction of Dracula's castle that concluded the novel's first draft – not to mention that the hunters overlook proper protocol in dispatching Dracula with Kukri knives, rather than a stake – one cannot help but discern intimations of a threat to come, either in a resurgent Dracula or in some other avatar of the land's magnetic forces.

Dracula's final epistemological conflict, then, inheres not in the hesitation between natural and supernatural accounts, but in the hesitation between two readings of the ultimate principle that asserts itself in Seward's mighty crucifix. As the narrative reaches its conclusion, assurances of divinely sponsored victory brush up against suggestions of fate's complicity with Dracula and God's direct responsibility for the terrors that befall humanity. Does the latter reading trump the former, or vice versa? The text's reluctance to offer an answer, its conjuring of past horrors even after Mina receives her salvation, may suggest its kinship not with skeptics such as Frazer, but with a branch of theology rather different from apologetics: theodicy, the attempt to reconcile God's benevolence with the persistence of evil. Rather than reinscribing the answers of apologetics, *Dracula* broaches the questions of theodicy, by vacillating between affirming its heroes' faith and haunting them with that faith's limitations. Under the terms of this vacillation, the "ultimate good" of which Mina considers them instruments might not preclude the "horrible tragedy" she ascribes to fate; as a necessary corollary, the tragedy of Christianity's inability to escape its history does not, according to the logic of the text, preclude the possibility of providential design. If *Dracula* harbors an incipient critique of Christian apologetics, that critique thus issues from within a theological framework, not from outside it.[22]

In this light, we would do well to revisit Van Helsing's speech to Seward, which culminates in his aforementioned distinction between big and small truth, implicitly Christianizing the use of esoteric beliefs and empiricist methods. This affirmation of the apologetics of progress follows a litany of "things which you cannot understand, and yet which are" (276; ch. 14): giant spiders, vampire bats, the vampire itself. Framing this litany as a series of questions beginning with the demand "Do you know all the mystery of life and death?," Van Helsing clearly appropriates the structure and tone of God's monologue at the end of the Book of Job, where God similarly interrogates the titular protagonist with a litany of questions about nature's mysteries. With this allusion to the book of the Bible most famously concerned with the problem of evil, Stoker both signals theodicy's pertinence and provokes reflection on Van Helsing's divergence from Scripture. Unlike Van Helsing's speech, God's monologue culminates with the fearsome leviathan, traditionally interpreted as an emblem of chaotic forces that still, somehow, submit to divine authority – an emblem, in other words, of the theodical dilemma. In one sense, Van Helsing may be implying that Dracula is the unnamed leviathan of his litany, the avatar of chaos that "beholdeth all high things . . . a king over all the children of pride" (Job 41.34, KJV). If so, however, Van Helsing may be saying more than he intends: in the Scripture, the leviathan represents precisely the kind of knowledge unavailable for the empirical analysis or instrumental belief Van Helsing

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would apply to defeat Dracula. Insofar as Christian typology also specifically identifies the leviathan with Satan, headmaster of the Scholomance, Van Helsing's allusion casts a further pall over *Dracula*'s ending, the simultaneous presence and absence of Harker's "vivid and terrible memories." Dracula may be dust, but the leviathan persists.

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NOTES

1. See, respectively, Milbank "Powers Old and New," Bowles, and Starrs.
2. Craft argues that the novel's "originary anxiety" stems from Dracula's sexual attraction to Mina Harker (74). Meanwhile, Halberstam links the novel to the anti-Semitic discourse of its era, arguing that such a link manifests in "[Dracula's] appearance, his relation to money and gold, his parasitism, his degeneracy, his impermanency or lack of allegiance to a fatherland, and his femininity" (337). Finally, Senf coined a phrase that has recurred throughout *Dracula* studies when she argued that Jonathan Harker sees in Dracula "a kind of reverse imperialism," representing "the primitive trying to colonize the civilized world" (164).
3. Franklin expands on the concept of the Buddhist counter-invasion in *The Lotus and the Lion*, while Owen's *The Place of Enchantment* describes how this mystical revival was consonant with, rather than opposed to, the preoccupations of modernity. At any rate, both agree on the degree to which it infiltrated the popular consciousness. During this period, Max Müller's collected *Sacred Books of the East*, published between 1879 and 1910, made key works of Hindu, Zoroastrian, Buddhist, Taoist, and Islamic literature available to a non-specialized English readership for the first time; mass interest in such traditions was signaled by the establishment of such organizations as the Theosophical and Anthroposophical Societies, with their amalgam of Eastern mysticism and European esotericism.
4. In his book *Earth's Earliest Ages*, which went through five editions after its initial publication in 1872, the popular theologian G. H. Pember epitomizes the Evangelical attitude towards Blavatsky and other would-be masters of foreign religions: he names her as one of the "false Christs" who will proliferate on Earth immediately prior to the Second Coming. "At the time of the end, false Christs and false prophets are to show great signs and wonders; it may be that they are even now arising among us" (xxvi, preface to the Fifth Edition). Pember has in mind not merely non-Christian teaching, but specifically teaching that utilizes the Bible and elements of Christian theology to "[obscure] the true nature, gospel and mission of THE ONLY BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD, and gradually, but surely, [change] the characteristics of Christ into those of the Antichrist" (xxiii). Making the case for the Third Edition's relevance, Pember cites as evidence of such blasphemous enthusiasms "the latest spiritualistic and Theosophic publications - specifically those . . . of Madame Blavatski" (xxiv).
5. In this paragraph I am indebted to Wheeler-Barclay, who elucidates the history of comparative religion during this period. Wheeler-Barclay notes that the science of religion ultimately became an "alternate locus of discourse about religious issues," in contradistinction to discourse within the Church (14).
6. The combined research of religious historians Dale Johnson and James Livingston provides an insightful portrait of late Victorian apologetics. Johnson argues that the Christian Evidence Society, one of the largest apologetic organizations at the time, emblematizes how Christians of the period displayed an "emphasis on the empirical and . . . insistence on objective certainties in matters of religious truth" (575). Livingston attends to the way that apologetics in this period was specifically concerned with the fact of religious diversity; he also concurs that apologists who addressed this issue embraced modern scientific objectivity, "[finding] in the rational developmentalism of Tylor

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and Frazer . . . support for their own understanding of a progressive revelation and Christianity as the fulfillment of the developmental process" (271).

7. Whereas an earlier generation had founded the case for Christianity on the Biblical miracles as signs of Christ's authority, the newer generation saw this appeal to miracles as a hindrance rather than an aid to belief: Baden Powell, a liberal theologian whose career spanned the first half of the nineteenth century, anticipated this change in thinking when he wrote in 1860, "If miracles were in the estimation of a former age among the chief *supports* of Christianity, they are at present among the main *difficulties*, and hindrances to its acceptance" (140, qtd. in Johnson 571).
8. F. D. Maurice's work responded to early Victorian research on Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism, available through such sources as the Royal Asiatic society and Masonic journals. Maurice's *The Religions of the World and Their Relation to Christianity* (1847) posed a contrast between the ethnic and regional particularities that beset other religions, and the transcendent universality of the Christian message. Maurice argues that the "accidents of . . . life, the climate, (and) the soil of the lands in which they dwell" incorrigibly prevent other religions from accessing the transcendent truths available in Christianity (129).
9. To be sure, the heyday of Victorian anti-Catholicism had passed by the century's close; nonetheless, amongst the Evangelicals who would have affirmed Bailey's apologetics, anxieties about Rome continued unabated. Witness an 1895 article in the missions-minded magazine *Friendly Companion*, "Romanism in Board Schools: A Warning" (292).
10. Nor is Bailey's embrace of Catholics an anomaly amongst apologists of this time. W. B. Carpenter, a clergyman and theologian best known for being court chaplain to Queen Victoria, was an influential apologist who asserted that Christianity made "resistance to progress . . . impossible" (120). In *The Permanent Elements of Religion* (1887), Carpenter argued that Christianity, the religion of the future, could advance only at the expense of anti-Catholic prejudices, which obscure focus on Christ with fights over doctrinal purity: "No modern practice is more calculated to promote division in the Church, than the pernicious habit of those sectarian minds, who persistently call every novel custom or medieval revival by the name of Catholic usage" (279).
11. Murray points out the existence of a document titled "Rules for Domestic Happiness" in the family papers, which "relies heavily on the Bible as a recipe for success in life" (13). Murray also cites Stoker's childhood Bible, presented to him for his ninth birthday in 1858: "the underlining shows he read it with great care" (27). The piety of Stoker's mother was compounded by the fact that an Evangelical revival had swept Ireland's Protestant community, and Dublin in particular, in the decades prior to Stoker's birth. Ditchfield notes that the Revival's heyday lasted from 1770 to 1830, with Ulster undergoing revival in 1859 (93). Moreover, Acheson notes the key role of Dublin's Bethesda Chapel, a stronghold of Evangelical teaching, which received the official affirmation of William Magee, Archbishop of Dublin (1822–31). Acheson also cites yearly "April Meetings in Dublin," which occurred through the 1830s; these meetings "brought together Evangelicals throughout Ireland, saw to the business of [Bible literacy and missionary] societies, and inspired the clergy through their Annual Address" (144). The middle-class Protestant milieu of Stoker's upbringing would have had a particularly close attachment to the Revival and its attendant enthusiasms for the spread of true faith.
12. One might also cite the influence of Lady Jane Wilde, Oscar Wilde's mother, Stoker's close friend, and author of the popular *Ancient Legends, Mystic Charms, and Superstitions of Ireland* (1887). Murray notes that, in the 1880s, Wilde gave public lectures on parallels between Irish and Transylvanian legends (195). Born into a wealthy Irish Protestant family, Wilde nonetheless wrote sympathetically of the role Catholic objects played in popular ritual, not only recounting the power that locals ascribed to them, but depicting them as poetic features of rural devotional life: "Scenes of holy faith, tender love, and human pity are . . . frequent amongst the devotees at the holy wells of Ireland . . . . At these sacred places may be seen [women] going the rounds on their bare knees, with the crucifix in their clasped hands and their eyes raised to heaven in silent prayer . . . . Who can say but that the fervor

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of the supplication has often brought down the blessing of healing for the sick, or comfort for the sorrowing?" (252).

13. The Tractarian Edward Pusey made just such an argument in an 1881 letter to the Anglican Bishop of London; arguing for the crucifix's amenability to Protestant sensibilities, he compared it to "the picture of one loved but absent" (240).
14. Indeed, various critics have commented on the ways that even Van Helsing's "scientific" strategies for defeating the Count assume the tinge of pagan enchantment. Hurley points out that "both Seward and the reader are trained into an understanding of the permeable boundaries between science and occultism" (19); responding to Hurley's analysis, Holden argues that "science and occultism [in *Dracula*] are not so much two territories but two congruent shapes, laid on top of each other, sharing a perimeter and many common points of contact" (472). Meanwhile, Wadge draws our attention to Van Helsing's commonalities with psychical researchers, "spiritualism's legitimate sibling, born on the right side of the intellectual blankets" (38).
15. Stoker's association with occult and spiritualist circles throughout his career doubtlessly influenced Van Helsing's heterodox practices. A rumored acolyte of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, Stoker befriended such members of that group as J. W. Brodie-Innes, who dedicated his occult novel *The Devil's Mistress* to him, and Constance Wilde, Oscar Wilde's wife, who joined the Order after leaving Madame Blavatsky's Theosophical Society (Belford 213, 216).
16. One must forgive me: there had to be a "staking" pun somewhere in this essay.
17. In an 1872 address to the College Historical Society of Trinity College Dublin, Stoker expressed the conviction that "nothing is eternal but Truth and Progress. These are abiding principles which no force can stem or stay" ("Address" 32). Morash notes that Stoker's preoccupation with Progress would subsequently pervade both his fictional and journalistic prose, surfacing as a "complex and fraught dialectic . . . between a frantic endorsement of progress as a natural law of social development, and its dark alternative, atavism, barbarism, chaos" (100).
18. Mighall argues that this struggle between past and present usually preserves a distinctively theological dimension, since the Gothic keeps alive a Whiggish mode of historiography that casts Protestantism as forward-looking, Catholicism as reactionary: "That the virtuous [modern-minded] characters in Gothic romances are also honorary Protestants is also an important part of Gothic convention" (12). The Catholic-Protestant divide, then, is another aspect of the Gothic cusp that *Dracula* revises.
19. "Few [now] believed that any 'lower race' could reach the heights of Western achievement. Their salvation would have to be reached in some other way; but meanwhile they were entitled, in their inferiority, to the paternal protection of a Western power" (Curtin 415).
20. Various studies of the relationship between religion and empire have drawn attention to the way theological trends responded to scientific theories of race in the late nineteenth century. Kidd's *The Forging of Races* documents how both intellectuals and popular religious movements of the period "began to explain religious phenomena as manifestations of racial mentalities"; for them, "religion . . . [became] an epiphenomenon of race" (171). See also Bebbington, Maughan, and Sanneh, the last of whom documents how late Victorian missionaries, informed by the new theories, forced the resignation of Samuel Crowther, Nigeria's first African Anglican bishop.
21. Mina's subjection rehearses what has been recognized as a persistent trope in Victorian discourse, the metaphorical yoke between white women and people of other races. As Meyer argues, novelists such as Emily Brontë and George Eliot use race as a metaphor to focalize the white woman's sense of oppression at the hands of men; however, "the yoking of the two terms of this recurrent metaphor, 'white woman' and 'dark race,' produces some suggestion in the text of the exploited or vulnerable situation of the people invoked" (23). Hence, if race metaphorizes female subjectivity, so too can white women metaphorize the colonial subject (as Meyers suggests takes place in *Wuthering Heights*, when Catherine Earnshaw collapses her dark-skinned lover into herself with the declaration, "I *am* Heathcliff" [21]). The doomed Lucy Westenra, whose infected body calls for outright interventionist violence in the name of Christian duty, arguably also occupies a position similar to Mina's.

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22. Charlotte Stoker's written account of the 1832 cholera plague that struck her hometown of Sligo, which Bram procured in 1875, has often been cited as a major influence on *Dracula*. In it, Stoker's mother recounts how the town "became a place of the dead" (26), in which living victims looked so much like corpses that a local Catholic priest had to stand watch to prevent nurses from "dragging patients down the stairs by their legs . . . before they were dead" (27). Certainly, the account's description of victims who were neither dead nor alive sets a clear precedent for *Dracula*, originally titled *The Un-Dead*; as regards *Dracula*'s theodical undercurrent, however, Charlotte's account is also striking for its blunt juxtaposition of divine sovereignty and human misery. The account concludes with two sentences that practically beg the theodical question: returning to Sligo after a temporary escape, Charlotte and her family "found the streets grass-grown and five-eighths of the population dead. We had great reason to thank God who had spared us" (31). Given that Charlotte likely told such stories to Bram as a child, his religious convictions thus developed in tandem with reflections on the problem of suffering.

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