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Delights of the Night and Pleasures of the Void: Vampirism and Entropy in Nineteenth-Century Literature.

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Abstract

This dissertation explores the figure of the vampire in the nineteenth-century as a metaphor of disorder, especially as interpreted through the root metaphor of the second law of thermodynamics, also known as entropy. The theoretical approach used in the reading of several vampire texts is an entropy theory of literature, a mostly aesthetic approach of relevance to a comparatist study on vampirism and entropy. Chapter One considers the female vampire in one of her earliest nineteenth-century incarnations, the seductive Clarimonde of Théophile Gautier's La Morte amoureuse. Chapter Two is a study of the vampire women in Edgar Allan Poe's arabesque tales followed by a discussion of his Eureka. Chapter Three is a study of the vampire and disorder in the poetry of Charles Baudelaire and his followers, including Gabriele D'Annunzio, Maurice Rollinat, and Arthur Symons. Chapter Four is devoted to Bram Stoker's Dracula, focusing on Dracula's women and proposing that Mina Murray is the principal character of the novel. Chapter Five examines several works of fiction concerning art works with vampiric tendencies. After a consideration of short stories by Edgar Allan Poe, Jan Neruda, and M. R. James, the chapter concludes with a study of the vampire aesthetics in Oscar Wilde's The Picture of Dorian Gray.
In the Conclusion there is a brief discussion of the survival of the figure of the vampire as personification of a remnant culture of Decadence in twentieth-century film and popular fiction.
Introduction

The aim of this comparatist study is to explore the figure of the vampire as a metaphor of disorder in the nineteenth century, especially as interpreted through the root metaphor of the second law of thermodynamics, also known as entropy. My main thesis is that the modern vampire (first introduced into literature by Lord Byron in the 1810s) increased in importance through the nineteenth century as a figure in poetry and fiction to become a major literary myth by the Decadent era due to its entropic characteristics. It is my intention to show that vampirism in nineteenth century literature is a highly flexible and dramatic metaphor for entropy, degeneration, and decadence. Appropriately, the theoretical approach I use in the readings of vampire literature throughout the following five chapters is an entropy theory of literature, a mostly aesthetic approach of particular relevance to a comparatist study on vampirism and entropy.

For this study I will use the definition of a vampire that Brian J. Frost offers in The Monster With a Thousand Faces: Guises of the Vampire in Myth and Literature:

A vampire is fundamentally a parasitic force or being, malevolent and self-seeking by nature, whose paramount desire is to absorb the life force or ingest the vital fluids of a living organism in order to sate its perverse hunger and perpetuate its unnatural existence. (27)
While this definition seems broad enough to easily permit an abstract physics of vampirism, it is specific enough that it distinguishes the vampire from ghouls, revenants, shapeshifters, witches, and other such related supernatural monsters. Although vampires are a category of monster in the folklore of most cultures, European culture from the time of Lord Byron to the present has shaped the vampire into a plastic metaphor, most adaptable to the repercussions of Post-Newtonian science. It is interesting to note that the first modern vampire story was outlined by Lord Byron at the same time and place as Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley conceived the novel *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus*: Villa Diodati near Geneva in June 1816. Two of the greatest literary myths of the modern era were begun in the same literary circle on the same black night raked by lightning. It may not be too fanciful to assert that in that first year after Waterloo, arguably the first year of modern Europe, something revolutionary was intuited by the shores of Lake Leman. One might even suggest that this something could only be expressed in metaphor. As Mary Shelley wrote in her Author's Introduction to the 1831 edition of *Frankenstein*, "Invention ... does not consist in creating out of void, but out of chaos" (x).
Lord Byron's outline was written into a novella called *The Vampyre* by his physician and travelling companion of 1815-1816, John Polidori. In Polidori's story Lord Ruthven, the vampire of the title, is a thinly disguised Lord Byron. Mario Praz, in his classic *The Romantic Agony*, offers the primary study of Byronism, the origins of Satanic Romanticism, and the significance of the "Fatal Man" as vampire-like anti-hero in the first half of the nineteenth century.

What was it that raised the vampire from humble folk superstition to adaptable literary and scientific metaphor? Why by 1848 was Marx explicitly describing the economics of banking capitalism as "vampiric?" Why did the second law of thermodynamics formulated in the 1850s introduce a physics that can only be described as vampiric? Probably the same conditions were at work as with Darwin's theory of evolution. They had always been there—the economics of figurative wealth feeding off the abstract energy of labor and resources, the heat lost in transference of energy, the evolution of species according to the requisites of survival rather than divine engineering—but the world view of mainstream intellectual knowledge would not or could not see them. In part, science, physics, economics, and biology had not advanced far enough in experimentation and observation for a
Clausius, Marx, or Darwin to make such discoveries. But it also required European civilization to experience the transition between the old divinely-ordered cosmos and the secular, even atheistic, universe. As Eva Kuryluk writes in *Salome and Judas in the Cave of Sex*, "The transition can be considered a turning point more radical than others, when not centuries but millenia of beliefs collapsed and were exchanged for a scientific and technical approach toward reality" (6). The second law could not have been formally expressed previous to the nineteenth century because conditions of faith in God, nature, and order made it morally incomprehensible, which is to say satanic. It could not fit the existing root metaphors, and that it should itself be a root metaphor, a world theory, would suggest a perverse universe. The western Christian faith posed a material world on its way to dissolution in order to achieve a more perfect unity with God in the timeless energy stasis of heaven—a God whom millions still invoke as the enemy of chaos and entropy. To pose a contrary physics was to pose a satanic physics, as Sade, Byron, and Baudelaire clearly understood. For this reason I believe the popularity of the vampire as a major figure in the arts coincides with the advent of entropy physics: the vampire is a natural
trope for entropy (as well as the Decadence) because it is subversive, perverse, alienated, even evil, turning holy rite by parody to blasphemy.

Both vampire and entropy negate light; they degrade energy in a universe that has lost the assurance of faith coupled with knowledge, lost the presumption of the benignity of the processes of science and convention, of sunlight and eternity. It is interesting that the vampire escapes the heat-death of entropy, living outside of time and decay in a sphere of the un-dead with its own rules, hierarchy, and physics. This is not because the vampire subverts entropy: the vampire is the personification of entropy. It parodies the Christian God of heavenly order. It draws strength, form, and meaning by ingesting and polluting the energy of its wasting victims.

Entropy, the second law of thermodynamics, is "one of the bedrock truths that physics offers to the world" (Zencey 189). It is the law that states "that in the transformation processes energy is irreversibly dissipated so that disorder continually increases at the expense of order in the universe" (Zapf 218). By this law, energy is doomed to change in direction only from useful to useless, available to unavailable, and, most importantly, from ordered to disordered (Rifkin 6). Although this law of thermodynamics was defined in the middle of the nineteenth
century, the principle had been a point of scientific inquiry since Sadi Carnot's discoveries on the dispersion of heat in steam engines in 1824. Speculations on its consequences for the future of the universe must have been circulating by the 1840s. As we will see in Chapter Two, Edgar Allan Poe was already writing about the transformation of energy into nothingness and its cosmic consequences in *Eureka* in 1848.

An entropy theory of literature attempts to describe how texts simultaneously order and disorder themselves aesthetically and culturally. How is it different from a chaos theory of literature? Chaos theory belongs to the sciences. It is dependant on precise measurement of observable phenomena, and scientists believe that the term chaos theory should not be used in the humanities simply because quantification of that kind is practically impossible in art and literature. Also, chaos theory is more concerned with how disordered systems suddenly crystallize into ordered systems, fitting more precisely formism, the root metaphor in which many western systems have been anchored since Plato and Aristotle.

Entropy is itself a completely successful world theory. Eric Zencey describes a world theory as "a theory that offers a characteristic interpretation of the world, a theory that cannot dismiss any factual evidence as
irrelevent" (186). Zencey demonstrates conclusively that entropy is one of the handful of true world theories, or root metaphors, in company with such world theories as formism, mechanism, organicism, and contextualism. Thus chaos theory, a formist vision, is significantly different from a literary theory that recognizes entropy as its greater root metaphor or world theory. I am happy to oblige the scientific critics of chaos theory's application in the humanities by anchoring my critical theory in the dramatically different root metaphor of entropy, following the models of German entropy literary theorists Peter Freese and Hubert Zapf. Quantification is therefore no longer an issue since the processes are admittedly entirely metaphorical. The word entropy itself indicates trope as an integral part of its process, transforming and disordering language into new systems of increasingly complex meaning. Unlike chaos theory, entropy theory cannot be reductive since "in any spontaneous transformation improbable order succumbs to more probable chaos" (Zencey 188). All attempts at reductive reading must disintegrate into infinite disorder. The entropy theory reads through metaphors, inviting their multiplicity, reflection, fracture, and complexity, and therefore is, in total, beyond fixed representation just like the process of metaphor. Yet it
uniquely illuminates texts through these processes, and, of course, especially those inspired to one degree or another by the same world theory.

It seems especially apt to use for literary interpretation of the nineteenth-century Decadence an important literary myth that is a product of that same intellectual, cultural, and scientific period in history. The vampire and entropy share more than a zeitgeist, though. Both entropy and the vampire compel us to make metaphors in our inability to fix either in representation. Both are always poised for transformation, frustrating direct representation in their troping disintegration or transfiguration into a negative domain of un-dead energy. They appear to have an intimate relationship, almost as if the modern European vampire is a looming phantom of entropy, spreading bat wings over the grey, smoke-filled industrial skies of Europe and America, growing to gigantic stature as the nineteenth century advances until the science and the monster become the dominant subversive tropes of the fin-de-siècle.

It is especially fortuitous that I can apply world theory and vampire in a study focusing mostly on the period when both were dominant; however, I believe the root metaphor of entropy is significantly important in reading the literature of any era. It can represent the
tendency in all narratives to digress, to break down, to unravel into the disordered order of irresolvable conclusion.

The concept of entropy, for instance, is evident in all love poetry. The oldest narrative poetry in the western tradition equally invites entropy readings: the doubly disordered Iliad of Homer, his Odyssey, and also the disorder-plagued Aeneid of Virgil. In drama, Shakespeare especially invites an entropy literary theory as the perfect theater of dis-unities. Like all true world theories, there is no limit to its relevant application in any discipline. In the fin-de-siècle consciousness of our own era it is making a dramatic comeback after the unifying formism of Modernism, and so is the figure of the vampire.

Is it absurd to apply a nineteenth-century world theory to the poetry of Propertius or Shakespeare's King Lear? I think not. As a law of physics, as a root metaphor and world theory, entropy has been intuited throughout human culture. Many folk sayings express it: "you can't have your cake and eat it too," "there's many a slip between cup and lip," "don't count your chickens until they're hatched," and so on. No doubt one could make a booklength anthology of aphorisms from all around the world that basically state that order is an improbable
complex certain to fall into the more probable increasing complexity of disorder, that all life is perpetually touched by irrecoverable loss, and that the only constant is mutability. The world theory of entropy has been for ages a ruling root metaphor for the subversive expression of energy.

There is no facet of human culture and society removed from the anxieties of encroaching disorder. This is particularly evident in social and political conservatism. Recently two lesbian women in the United States Air Force were convicted of sodomy and now face years in prison. Non-procreative sex, sex for pleasure alone, between heterosexuals, and even more so onanism and male and female homosexuality, are as abhorred now as in the past by anti-decadent formists. Sodomy, by legal definition all sex acts except penetration of the female sex organ by the male sex organ (of the same species), has an entropic nature. Procreation, on the other hand, has the appearance of creating vital product from the expression of sexual energy. Lust, like sex without the possibility of procreation, is sometimes expressed as entropic, as in "Th' expense of spirit in a waste of shame" of Shakespeare's Sonnet 129. The entropic nature of sodomy may explain in part why there are gay and lesbian sexual resonances throughout vampire literature, from Coleridge's
Christabel to Anne Rice's *Interview with the Vampire*. The vampire has become a prominent figure in gay and lesbian studies, and if I have not fully explored the sodomitical facet of the vampire it is because it is already receiving attention from specialists in that area. Feminist readings of the vampire are many and multiplying.

The emphasis on women vampires in this dissertation is due to the predominance of women as vampiric agents of disorder in the second half of the nineteenth century. If the Byronic Fatal Male was the dominant vampire figure of the early nineteenth century, the Fatal Woman was the dominant vampire type of the late nineteenth century. Since this is a study of the vampire as trope in an entropic world theory, I do not claim to have written a feminist study, but the way women are represented as entropic agents may contribute to an understanding of the tropes of an era of fierce gender tension and division. There are unlimited and irreducible social and cultural contexts to be explored in the entropy root metaphor, but due to the limiting nature of such a study as this one I have focused mostly on the aesthetic context.

The following study is more or less in chronological sequence. Chapter One explores the disordering female vampire in one of her earliest nineteenth-century European incarnations, the seductive Clarimonde of Gautier's *La
Morte amoureuse. Chapter Two is a study of the vampire women in Poe's arabesque tales and a discussion of *Eureka*, which, as mentioned above, is a work which prefigures the cosmic implications of the entropy root metaphor while underlining the aesthetic as well as the scientific elements of the world theory. One can only be astonished that Poe intuited in his "poem" a world theory like entropy years before Clausius coined the term. Chapter Three is a study of the vampire as metaphor for entropy in the poetry of Baudelaire and his followers. Chapter Four is devoted to Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, the supreme fictional treatment of fin-de-siècle vampirism, focusing on Dracula's women, proposing that Mina is the principal character of the novel. In Chapter Five several works of fiction concerning artworks with vampiric tendencies are examined.

It is my intention to avoid reductive and unifying readings of the vampire by taking advantage of the entropy world theory's tendency to metaphor. The processes of metaphor tend to multiplicity rather than reduction, and it would be misguided to compress meaning into a unitarian interpretation. Although I hope every reading will be informed by the insight the entropy metaphor offers, it does not serve the theory's metaphorical tendencies to narrow meaning and restrict interpretation. I hope I have
succeeded in respecting the processes of metaphoric entropy disorder and multiplicity in the texts while inevitably integrating them into a simultaneous reordering by analysis. This has required a delicate balance between the processes of order and disorder. I believe Eric Zencey is right in asserting that the best use of the entropy root metaphor is allowing "that root metaphors often co-mingle and shade into one another" (197). All root metaphors can be seen as equally true, and sometimes one must borrow the world view of one to describe how another is manifested "in the philosophies, thought, language, and literature of an era" (Zencey 197). Thus the root metaphor of entropy may even appear to disorder itself.
In Theophile Gautier's *La Morte amoureuse* we find several established Gothic motifs—-all the best of them, in fact—-in an effective Romantic tale. There is a castle setting, a desperate priest, rumors of grand-scale debauches, ghost visions, and fantastical journeys through night forests. There are also suggestions of "doubling," reality as dream and dream as reality, and Oriental exoticism, more indebted to the fantastic tales of Hoffmann than the Gothic tale as is true of all of Gautier's *Recit fantastiques*. More importantly for this study of the vampire in nineteenth-century literature, it is a landmark ironic treatment of vampirism and one of the first literary depictions of a woman as vampire. Clarimonde is not only a lamia or succubus but a woman whose life can be sustained only by drinking blood. As fine as the other Hoffmannesque tales of this youthful period of Gautier's are, this novella is the most successful of them all. The tension between the double lives of Romuald, his craving for the complex and scintillating Byzantium of his night existence against the diurnal misery and ugliness that we know has supremacy at the opening of his narrative, the relatively sophisticated adaptation of the vampire story with an insightful exploitation of its erotic possibilities, the suggestions
of necrophilia, occultism, and satanism, give this fantastic tale a complexity and significance which, it may be argued, Avatar and Le Pied de momie do not completely achieve.

Until June, 1836, when La Morte amoureuse was published, the modern vampire of literature had been male, under the influence of Polidori's Byronic The Vampyre (1819). Female succubi, demon lovers, lamiae are here excluded as they were invariably placed in gothic settings (like Coleridge's Christabel and Keats's "La Belle Dame sans Merci") or otherwise archaic settings (as in the case of Goethe's Bride of Corinthe or Nodier's Smarra). While they have the subtly ironic and vampirical characteristics that I classify later in this chapter as entropic, they also take a psychic distance by their archaic and mythic settings.

Clarimonde, in La Morte amoureuse, is the prototype of the occult muse so important to the Decadents. Her appearance marks an important shift from the reign of the Byronic "fatal man," to borrow terms from Mario Praz, toward the reign of the Baudelairean "fatal woman." As Mario Praz writes in his excellent study of the "fatal woman" in The Romantic Agony: "Fatal women are to be found in the literatures of every period, and are of course more numerous during times in which the springs of inspiration
were troubled" (190). If so, the currents of the nineteenth century were troubled waters, indeed, as the fatal woman became more and more prevalent, and by the end of the century nearly omnipresent in all the arts. Of course, her simplest type is the devil in the guise of a seductive woman, or succubus. The succubus, as typified by Matilda in M. G. Lewis's *The Monk*, is a simple tool of the devil's to ensnare young men with sex in the manner echoed by the "honeypot" in contemporary spy novels. The female vampire is a progressively more uncanny character. Her lamia beginnings are explored by James B. Twitchell in his study of vampirism in English Romantic literature:

> While the male vampire was a tale of domination, the female version was one of seduction. In the usual scenario a young man has to deal with an older supernatural temptress who somehow drains his energy, leaving him weak and desperate. It appears as a simple story because the complicated part, namely the seduction, has been excised. Exactly how she drains the young man's energy is for the reader to imagine, for, like the cinematic fade-out, the Romantic poet takes us up to, and then abruptly around, this explosive scene. What does Geraldine do with Christabel between part 1 and part 2 of the poem? What happens to the knight in La Belle Dame's grotto? What has happened that the narrator cannot remember in *Berenice* or *Morella* or *Ligeia*? We are never told. (Twitchell 40)

As we shall see, there is more to Gautier's *La Morte amoureuse*. She is the insatiable courtesan, reputedly
satanic and deadly to her lovers, and also she is radiant knowledge. Here Gautier models a literary vampire who would have a profound influence on the writers and artists of the late nineteenth century: the fatal muse who blesses as she damns, craved by all true symbolists, indispensible to the connoisseur of the decadent. She is much more than the sum of her parts, more than a devil in drag in the manner of M. G. Lewis and Cazotte or a malign wood-nymph in the manner of Scott. Her Romantic credentials are transformed in the studio of the aesthetic-ironic into those of the occult muse of Baudelaire, Wagner, Swinburne, Pater, and Flaubert, and she carries the passport of a major literary myth within the entropic night land of the fin-de-siècle.

Clarimonde is a wonderfully complex and attractive phantom. She is the fantasy woman of neo-Romantic man, both whore-madonna and madonna-whore. She is sexually powerful, multi-orgasmic and self-possessed, but as potentially committed to one great love as her possession by her senses allows. Even the grave will prove no barrier to her passion for the man she would touch with knowledge. This is the great demarcation from the occasional fatal woman of the first stage of Romanticism. Previously there were voluptuaries, succubi, and
revenants, even flesh-eating female ghouls such as Hoffmann's Aurelia, but Clarimonde is all of these and much more.

Just as the lamia is a more subtle monster than the succubus, so is Gautier's Clarimonde a more advanced vampire than the lamia. Not only is the seduction not excised, but it is lovingly drawn. The actual blood-sucking does not come until late in the story, but the vampiric disorder of seduction becomes paramount early in the novella. (By the way, Clarimonde seems to have been equally seduced by the innocent, young priest, whom she takes as her one lover even though it means a starvation diet for her: thus even the agent of disorder is disordered.) Though the priest, the narrator of the story, is her "victim" and says he was in danger of losing his immortal soul, we cannot help but see his nightly incarnation as "il signor Romualdo, amant en titre de la Clarimonde" as a big step up from his pathetic existence as "cure du petit village de C____" (Gautier 108). Instead of becoming merely enervated and pallid, or becoming a vampire himself, the narrator of La Morte amoureuse is energized in a psychic way well worth exploring.

La Morte amoureuse, published in the middle of the first age of French Romanticism, is an extraordinarily
original work on three accounts. First, as mentioned above, the female vampire Clarimonde is far more sophisticated in her desires and character than the lamia vampire of Romantic poetry, and very different from the modern Byronic male vampire, of which, in 1836, Polidori's novella was still the one major representation. Second, the narrative is seriously ironic. The weak admonitions to virtue to a fellow priest that frame the narration, the platitudinous concern with canonical proprieties, and the cruelty of the narrator's religious superior, the Hoffmannesque Abbé Sérapion, all demand a pointedly gnostic reading. It is obvious to any careful reader which side the angels are on for Gautier—it is not the Church. The "pure" angel is Clarimonde. Sérapion may be a higher angel in a hierarchy, but he is an angel that enchains. And if the narrator's high religious tone has not been discredited enough by the end of his narration, Gautier makes the priest's regret for Clarimonde plain in his final speech: "... je l'ai regrettée plus d'une fois et je la regrette encore. La paix de mon ame a été bien cherement achetée; l'amour de Dieu n'était pas de trop pour remplacer le sein" (116). A third remarkable property of La Morte amoureuse is the structure of dual worlds in which the stress of conflict increases as the story develops. Once the narrator becomes Clarimonde's
lover, he has a complete nocturnal identity—a whole other life in Venice—different from his dreary diurnal identity as a village priest. This is a most original idea. With it Gautier suggests something yet more subtle than the early Romantic concept of dreams being a reality, and reality being a dream.

**La Morte amoureuse** is so tightly crafted and exquisitely written that it could be called a long prose poem. Romuald, as an old priest, tells the story of how he almost lost his God, hope of eternal salvation, and his life. As a young Italian seminarian he is taken up solely with the church and his vocation to the priesthood. At the very moment he is taking his vows he sees a woman of incredible beauty seated in the church. Sparks fly between them. "L'évêque, si rayonnant tout à l'heure, s'éteignit tout à coup" as the magnificent Clarimonde drains all of the radiance out of the church (79). She swallows light and all surrounding energy. He stumbles through the ceremony. Suddenly, against his will, he is a priest. In the very moment of suspension between two conflicting passions he is thrown against the bosom of the church by the momentum of his past desire, but the disorder Clarimonde provokes in his psyche lasts forever. Thus, he is initiated into not only the priesthood of the church but the priesthood of all-consuming obsessive
desire, the tension of inconsolable need between irresolvable loves. He has a wonderful psychic interchange with Clarimonde. She is, as her name suggests, light giver to his world—thus "Luciferian" while the church is the world of darkness although the world of day. The church is like black ink on white pages, while Luciferian Clarimonde is like the shining white ink inscribed on black paper of the most terrible sort of grimoire, the sort to be read in pitch darkness while invoking fearful demons. Thus her world is that of the night, black like her gown, though she is the bright language of energy.

"Malheureux! malheureux! qu'as-tu fait?" Clarimonde exclaims as he is leaving the church (84). She has resolved to win him and before he has gone far (and under escort) Clarimonde's servant, "un page negre," slips him her name and address. At this point one might expect the stock in trade of the Lewisian Gothic novel: innocent priest seduced by gorgeous woman in confessional and then led into horrible, blasphemous deeds—polluting the host, raping a virgin in a charnel house, etc.—and, after four hundred pages, the woman is revealed to be literally the devil in a red dress as the hypocritical priest is dragged by demons to hell. This sort of novel may well have been
quite popular in France due to its latent anti-clericalism coupled with a sure-fire formula for titilation, but *La Morte amoureuse* is not a stock genre novel.

Since Romuald is so unworldly Clarimonde's address is useless to him. He could not find his way without an escort. He is helpless outside the walls of the seminary. The tension of the situation has reached the point of desperation as the new priest is suspended in an agony of conflicting desire that mirrors the reader's. The reader wants the story to be resolved in gratification without tension, but that must mean the end of the story by the conclusion of desire. And like the reader's own life, the conclusion of desire is the death of the story.

Romuald rages in his cell, tormented by his conflict. Abbé Sérapion finds him writhing in agony and advises him to take comfort in prayer. He informs Romuald that he must leave the city of S____ to fill the recently vacant curacy of C____, a small country parish many miles away (88). One cannot help but wonder if "C" may not be both Christ and Clarimonde, a name that cannot be given because it is in fact two names that dissolve each other into invisibility. Romuald prays to God for protection from Clarimonde, the devil's work, the perversion of grace. In the morning he is escorted by Sérapion to C____, and, on the way out of S____, sees a palace illuminated by a
single beam of pure sunlight. He asks Sérapion what palace it is and is told: "C'est l'ancien palais que le prince Concini a donné à la courtisane Clarimonde; il s'y passe d'épouvantables choses" (90).

Sérapion is a mysterious figure. His omniscience is alarming. His eerie, black-clad figure is a significantly disturbing puzzle. Superficially he is Romuald's heavenly guardian, but he always falls across Romuald's path like a bird of ill omen. Sérapion is an abbé and may well be a character more likely to have worldly knowledge than a cloistered priest, but it is important to note that the name Sérapion has important Hoffmannesque connotations. The Serapion Brotherhood (Der Serapionbruder) is a literary circle that meets in Hoffmann's Die Erzählungen der Serapionsbruder to experiment with narrations of the supernatural using the principle of Serapionism which "involved presenting paranormal phenomena convincingly" (Frayling 190). This brotherhood was not only an imaginary literary device for examining structures of fiction. Hoffmann belonged to such a literary circle, named for St. Serapion as the group was founded on his feast day. This brotherhood had its rules and secrets, and to us becomes all of a part of the mystery of the tension of the fantastic, in that the division between the fiction and the reality is further projected into our own
time by our historical perception of the brotherhood and the prevalence of secret societies in Hoffmann's Germany.

There can be no doubt Hoffmann's collection of stories is the origin of the name Sérapion. As P. E. Tennant writes concerning the group of stories with which La Morte amoureuse appeared:

Gautier explores the world of the occult, adopting the Hoffmannesque formula of confronting the supernatural with everyday reality and indeed employing Hoffmann's recurrent devices: animation of the inanimate, doppelgänger and schizoid effects, hallucinations, macabre nocturnal happenings. These stories are based on the underlying assumption that consciousness exists simultaneously on several planes, spatially and temporally. Distance and time cease to have meaning, and, in particular, normal, everyday consciousness hides a more mysterious reality to which access is allowed through various means: drugs, dreams, and various states of mental hyperactivity. (86-87)

The young Gautier was greatly influenced by Hoffmann, and he paid the German fantasist the compliments of translation and imitation. Further, like Romuald, Hoffmann had led a kind of double life. In the daytime he was a Prussian civil servant, and at night he wrote the fantastic tales. Might not Gautier be suggesting by the name Sérapion the generic secret society, the occult double life, the general idea of illuminati, literary rather than political, and therefore a small leap to the
occult and satanic? According to Ritchie Robertson in his introduction to the Oxford World Classics collection of Hoffmann stories, The Golden Pot and Other Tales:

The imagination, a power within us, has to be activated by the external world; and what it shows us is our external reality, but with a clarity that comes from within. The Serapion Brethren resolve to exploit this duality in setting their stories in the external world while endowing them with a vividness that comes from the faculty of inner vision; and this duality is Hoffmann's Serapionic principle. This principle raises the unanswerable question of where to draw the boundary between inner and outer reality. The uncertainty of the boundary pervades Hoffmann's stories. (x)

One might see in the Serapionic principle the forerunner of the theory of correspondances of Baudelaire, and perhaps the skein that runs from Hoffmann to Poe and Gautier to Baudelaire and then the Symbolists. As Hoffmann wrote about his patron saint, as transformed by the fantasist's imagination:

Poor Saint Serapion, your madness consisted only in the fact that some hostile star deprived you of the awareness of the duality by which our entire earthly existence is governed. There does exist an inner world, and so does the spiritual power of beholding it in full clarity, in the supreme brilliance of active life; but it is our earthly birthright that the external world in which we are lodged serves as the lever that sets that power in motion. Inner phenomena are absorbed into the circle formed around us by external phenomena, and which our minds
can only transcend in dark mysterious intuitions that never become distinct images. (Hoffmann x)

This not only prefigures the Symbolists, but precisely prefigures Freud, and Gautier precisely shares Hoffmann's system of the fantastic in literature. The subject of the fiction is given to visions, dreams, and hallucinations—all products of the unconscious imagination—and significantly different from the primacy of the inner world in the idealistic Romanticism of Novalis which denies the outer world's reality. The tension of one world intruding into the other infuses the fiction with the complex and ambiguous juxtaposition of comedy and horror typical of the Hoffmannesque Baroque. The ironic element in Gautier's fiction is hard to miss, and his "horror stories" are created in a spirit more akin to the film The Addams Family than Lon Chaney's monster films.

Certainly this is but the first hint of the abbé's knowledge of the terrible and secretive, and we will see in the final scenes of the tale how Sérapiom becomes a destroyer of desire and light. How does this relate to Hoffmann's principle of Serapionism? Perhaps at this point let us only suggest that the abbé is dual knowledge, a perverse gnosis that holds the tale in the tension required to convince the reader to suspend disbelief, a
personification of Todorov's principle of the fantastic. Indeed, this is the aesthetic of the fantastic. While it would be inaccurate to call La Morte amoureuse a Serapionic tale—Hoffmann's one overtly vampire story "Aurelia" begins with a dramatic preface explaining Hoffmann's objection to the vampire as a serapionic device, and indeed Hoffmann's own vampire is really a ghoul—it would be fair to assert that Gautier's Abbé Sérapion is himself a serapionic character because of the secrecy he manifests as a character and the perverse duality he works within the plot.

After three days on the road, Romuald arrives at his backwoods parish (90). Sérapion sees that the new priest is properly installed and leaves him, returning to the city. For a year Romuald half-heartedly fulfills his priestly tasks. The memory of Clarimonde constantly haunts him. One night his old housekeeper opens the door to a dark stranger demanding last rites for his dying mistress. Romuald and the stranger mount black horses and take a dizzyingly furious ride through a night forest suggesting Goethe and Novalis. The Teutonic night journey is quite effectively done in La Morte amoureuse. The destination is a massive castle in a primeval forest. Romuald is led to the death chamber by Clarimonde's black page—he knows now on whom he must attend. Before they
reach her they learn that she is already dead. Unable to administer the last sacraments, Romuald falls to his knees and prays for her soul. Scattered around the room are disguises, a fan, a broken black mask. Evidently she had been partying intensely not long before. His eyes wander to the gorgeous figure under the sheer linen. He goes to take a close look. He pulls the sheet away from her face. She is too exquisite not to touch and kiss. With his kiss she comes back to life only long enough to tell him that though she has died from want of him, now they are betrothed and she will come for him. He collapses on her breast (98).

When he wakes he is in his own bed in the presbytery, and he learns from his housekeeper that he has lain there unconscious for three days. She saw the same stranger that had fetched him bring him back home in a closed litter the very morning after his midnight ride. Abbé Sérapion, hearing that he is ill, comes from S____ to see him. He casually mentions that the infamous courtesan Clarimonde has died after eight days and nights of continuous orgy:

"On a renouvelé là les abominations des festins de Balthazar et de Cléopâtre. Dans quel siècle vivons-nous, bon dieu! Les convives étaient servis par des esclaves basanés parlant un langage inconnu, et qui m'ont tout l'air de vrais démons; la livrée du moindre d'entre eux eût pu servir d'habit de gala à un empereur. Il a couru de tout
temps sur cette Clarimonde de bien
étranges histoires, et tous ses amants
ont fini d'une manière miserable ou
violante. On a dit que c'était
Belzebuth en personne." (100)

Romuald is very agitated by this, of course. Séraphion
marks this and knowingly tells him he is on the verge of
an infernal precipice. He adds that it is rumored that
Clarimonde has died more than once before.

Time passes. Séraphion returns to S____ and Romuald
regains his health. At last, one night Clarimonde comes
to him illuminated by the light of a grave lamp and
wrapped in that flimsy sheet that hardly conceals her
white skin. Romuald feels no fear.

"Je me suis bien fait attendre, mon cher
Romuald, et tu dû croire que je t'avais
oublié. Mais je viens de bien loin, et
d'un endroit dont personne n'est encore
revenu; il n'y a ni lune ni soleil au
pays d'où j'arrive; ce n'est que de
l'espace et de l'ombre; ni chemin, ni
sentier; point de terre pour le pied,
point d'air pour l'aile; et pourtant me
voici, car l'amour est plus fort que la
mort, et il finira par la vaincre. Ah!
que de faces mornes et de choses
terribles j'ai vues dans mon voyage! Que
de païne mon âme, rentrée dans ce monde
par la puissance de la volonté, a eue
pour retrouver son corps et s'y
réinstaller! Que d'efforts il m'a fallu
faire avant de lever la dalle dont on
m'avait couverte! Tiens! le dedans de
mes pauvres mains en est tout meurtri.
Baise-les pour les guérir, cher amour!"  
Elle m'appliqua l'une après l'autre les
paumes froides de ses mains sur ma
bouche; je les baisai en effet plusieurs
fois, et elle me regardait faire avec un
soirire d'ineffable complaisance. (103)
The suggestion of stigmata and adoration cannot go unremarked, and cannot be altogether accidental on the part of Gautier. No more than the choice of the name Clarimonde: "Pure World." The three days to C____ and the three days of unconsciousness are also suggestive of a parody of Christian symbolism. Is Gautier making a subtle Gnostic statement within the narrative of the old priest Romuald? I think it is certain. Does not a single ray of pure sunlight illuminate her palace in the beginning of the story? Gautier presents us with so many artful ironies. Sérapion and Clarimonde are opposing forces in Romuald's initiation to celestial knowledge, but it is Clarimonde that is the true force of light. Even at this date we see how the principles of art for art's sake, as defined in the preface to Mademoiselle de Maupin, are evinced, as if by instinct into the Clarimonde "clear world," an aesthetically-removed and suspended, amoral if not truly immoral, sphere of the perfect, erotic, and pagan. This vampirically unbridled pagan world is sinless, unlike the world of Nodier's nightmare Smara. The unholy Clarimonde blesses with joy and delight; the holy Sérapion curses Romuald with living death.

Tender caresses and vows of love are exchanged, and the necro-coquette asks him to follow her wherever she may lead him. He agrees. The next night, when he falls into
a deep sleep, she appears with a parcel of rakish clothing for him to wear. He dresses. She arranges his hair. Immediately he is transformed into the arrogant Lord Romuald, lover of the beautiful Clarimonde. With one more night journey, this time by coach, Romuald is speeding on his way into a double life. He actually lives two quite complete lives. He is not merely a discontented priest with vividly sensual dreams. He is not even categorically a fragmented personality. Half the time he is a simple country priest who dreams at night, so he remembers, of Venetian debaucheries. The other half of the time he is the Venetian cavalier who dreams at night of a poor, priestly existence in a country parish:

Je ne pouvais plus distinguer le songe de la veille, et je ne savais pas où commençait la réalité et où finissait l'illusion... Deux spirales enchevétrées l'une dans l'autre et confondues sans se toucher jamais représentent très-bien cette vie bicéphale qui fut la mienne. (107-8)

Two equal lives, the one disconnected for all meaningful purposes from the other. Again, the allegorical implications for the gulf between the practical (holy) world and the impractical aesthetic (unholy) world are unmistakable. And these two worlds are lived by one man:

Malgré l'étrangeté de cette position, je ne crois pas avoir un seul instant touché à la folie. J'ai toujours conservé très nette les perceptions de
mes deux existences . . . le sentiment
du même moi existé dans deux hommes si
différents. (108)

Gautier admirably carries off this fantastic piece of
plotting. Of course, this device has resonances of a
specifically Romantic mode. Romuald's dual life as
sensualist and quasi-anchorite is an easily identifiable
trope for the Romantic artist of the nineteenth century.
The discipline and solitude of these generally prolific
artists were joined by the imperative of sensually
experiencing the world with unrestrained intensity and
penetration. From Beckford to Wilde, Romantics were
fascinated by this dialectic. Some donned monk robes
while working, and even retreated temporarily to
monasteries, either active or abandoned. Liszt even took
secular orders without significantly changing his living
habits. Shelley, an outspoken atheist, loved to write and
study in the dark recesses of Italian churches. In a
sense, art was religion and genius was the proof of divine
election. While in Venice, Byron, the Romantic man par
excellence, found nothing incongruous in spending the day
with Armenian monks, then, at his palace, writing ottava
rime for Beppo while his gondolieri prowled the canals for
prostitutes for the poet's late night recreation.

The double life is also resonant of the state of
altered vision which is fundamental to the artist who
avers that art is only for art's sake. Imagination is the purest experience, not the pastime of an idle mind. It is an aesthetic coup that Gautier represents Romuald's other life not as a guilty dream, but as flesh and blood reality that pales the diurnal world with clarity and vividness. La Morte amoureuse is a declaration of art as reality, and perceived reality as dream. Further, Gautier suggests here as much as in his preface to Mademoiselle de Maupin, imagination is purer. Generally the priestly existence becomes a nightmare: "J'aurais été parfaitement heureux sans un maudit cauchemar qui revenait toutes les nuits, et où je me croyais un curé de village se macérant et faisant pénitence de mes excès du jour" (109). This overturns the expectations we have acquired from the popular culture vampire/ghost story, and which Gautier's audience would have also expected from works like Smarra and The Vampyre: the "unholy" as sadistic nightmare. But in La Morte amoureuse the "holy" reality is brutal, sterile, and ghastly, while the nocturnal and satanic life is happy and, in a sense, innocent. The village curé is debased and cruel.

Clarimonde manifests her vampirism. She has begun to waste mysteriously away, but is suddenly rejuvenated when she sucks blood from Romuald's accidently gashed finger. The incident is very loving and erotic, but:
... le soir même, lorsque le sommeil m'eut ramené à mon presbytère, je vis l'abbé Sérapion plus grave et plus soucieux que jamais. Il me regarda attentivement et me dit: "Non content de perdre votre âme, vous voulez aussi perdre votre corps. Infortuné jeune homme, dans quel piège êtes-vous tombé!"

Even Lord Romuald is distressed by her vampirism. One night he observes Clarimonde from the vantage of a mirror pouring a drug into his spiced wine. He pretends to drink the wine, but tosses it under the table. Retiring to his bedroom he feigns drugged sleep while Clarimonde slips in and takes a little blood. She does it so sweetly, and with such endearing words, that her vampirism seems a tenderness. She uses a little gold pin to puncture his arm, swallows a few drops of blood, and then rubs the wound with a healing ointment. No distended canines hungrily pierce his throat. No blood is sucked until the victim falls into a pallid weakness. "Une goutte, rien qu'une petite goutte rouge, un rubis au bout de mon aiguille: Puisque tu m'aimes encore, il ne faut pas que je meure." (111). Yes, she takes more than a drop, but not much more. Although Romuald is still distressed (in his Venetian incarnation) he is so touched by her gentleness that he accepts the situation as tolerable.

Compared to the scourging he inflicts on himself in his identity as village priest, Clarimonde's vampirism is

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a relatively benign aberration. Yes, she takes some blood, but she gives him in return an altered and considerably enriched nocturnal existence. She is occult, potentially deadly, and intriguingly powerful, and thus the grandmother of the female vamp of the Decadence, but she is not evil or vicious in even the Salome-like child/monster way of some fin-de-siècle women in literature. Even if she is a vampire of long duration, and has fed on many victims, she is not a monster to Romuald the cavalier. One might even suggest that she is quite tolerant to accept his double life and the curate's commitment to the Church. Unlike Sérapion, she makes no ultimatum.

Romuald the priest is in despair. Under Abbé Sérapion's mysteriously omniscient direction Romuald resolves to destroy Clarimonde. At midnight the priest and abbé go to the graveyard and attack her where, evidently, she spends her own "other life."

C'était un spectacle étrange, et qui nous eût vus du dehors nous eût plutôt pris pour des profanateurs et des voleurs de linceuls que pour des prêtres de Dieu. Le zèle de Sérapion avait quelque chose de dur et de sauvage qui le faisait ressembler à un demon plutôt qu'à un apôtre ou à un ange, et sa figure aux grands traits austères et profondément découpés par le reflet de la lanterne n'avait rien de très-rassurant. Je me sentais perler sur les membres une sueur glaciale, et mes cheveux se redressaient doloureusement sur ma tête; je regardais au fond de
The abbé sprinkles her marble-like body with holy water and she crumbles into dust, disintegrates in the manner we have accepted since as appropriate for the undead when entropy suddenly catches up with them.

The following night Clarimonde appears to the priest:

Suelement, la nuit suivante, je vis Clarimonde; elle me dit, comme la première fois sous le portail de l'église: "Malheureux! malheureux! qu'as-tu fait? Pour-quoi as-tu écouté ce prêtre imbécile? n'étais-tu pas heureux? et que t'avais-je fait, pour violer ma pauvre tombe et mettre à nu les misères de mon néant? Toute communication entre nos âmes et nos corps est rompue désor-mais. Adieu, tu me regretteras." Elle se dissipa dans l'air comme une fumée, et je ne la revis plus. (115-16)

Indeed, Romuald regrets her for the rest of his life. Regret for the lovely Clarimonde has been evident throughout his narrative. When he says: "l'amour de dieu n'était pas de trop pou remplacer le sien" we know he means to say that the church was a poor bargain for the supra-existence he had through Clarimonde (116). With this double talk, and an admonition too platitudinous to be read unironically, his story ends. The eternity he awaits has no beauty that can compare with Clarimonde. Gautier has made this plain through his descriptions of her sublime radiance. The church, like the grim Abbé...
Sérapion, is more demonic than sublime. Sérapion has destroyed Romuald's muse, his happiness, and angel of knowledge. The world Romuald is left with is no "pure world," no Clarimonde, but only a joyless existence of pointless duty under a cruel authority. Indeed, as Sérapion prophetically says, "et tous ses amants ont fini d'une manière misérable . . . " (100). Romuald becomes Sérapion.

It is not the ambition of this chapter to draw a Freudian reading from Gautier's fantastique novella La Morte amoureuse, though it has offered such readily to numerous critics. It would be useful, however, to review one quickly in context of our study of vampiric disorder. The most admired Freudian reading is that of Bellemin-Noël, which demonstrates the Oedipal triangle with Sérapion as the father, Clarimonde as the possessive mother, and Romuald as the afflicted son whose situation is happily resolved by the father's dominance. This reductive sort of Freudian reading, not much progressed beyond Marie Bonaparte's readings of Poe from the nineteen-thirties, seems to offer us little more than a formulaic psychoanalysis of Theophile Gautier through an examination of his writing. Through his Hoffmannesque origins, we can be sure Gautier was intending to make a mystery with a multiplicity of meanings, and he has succeeded. The aim
of this study is to attempt to examine what the figure of
the vampire had come to represent in the nineteenth
century through a study of one of its finest
representations in fiction, not to reduce those multiples
into a formula.

Just as Freud thought the conscious mind is just like
the tip of an iceberg, and that the unconscious mind is a
hidden, massive reality, so Gautier presents us with a
double life in his novella that prefigures both entropy
and the Freudian unconscious (Hall 54). The priest's life
is like the conscious mind. It is the diurnal existence:
dull, repressed, confused in what it wants, and burdened
with guilt. When he descends (or ascends) into the
unconscious, his life is incomparably enriched by desire,
gratification, and meaning. An example might be the
contrast between the priest's daylight journey with Abbé
Sérapion to his parish at C____ and the wild nocturnal
ride to Clarimonde's castle in the company of the
mysterious groom Margheritone. (Perhaps Sérapion's
nocturnal double?) Everything becomes suggestive of
meaning, sensually complex, and energized in his night
journey. His daylight journey is a weary "trois journées
de route par des campagnes assez tristes" (90). The light
is sucked into a vampire dimension where it is disordered, eroticized, and removed from the realm of the practical to achieve "art for art's sake" purity.

Of course, we cannot help but note that the priest seems willing to accommodate his nocturnal life until Clarimonde's gentle vampirism distresses him and he takes, as the priest, an incentive to keep away sleep. The priest does not energize his diurnal existence because of the vitality of his unconscious life, as would be the model of a healthy personality with ego-cathexes where "energy is made available for the development of realistic thinking (the secondary process), which takes the place of hallucinatory wish-fulfillment (the primary process)" (Hall 43). Instead, like a tormented ego he is consumed with guilt and loathing, especially of his hands: "... je n'osais pas toucher le Christ avec des mains aussi impures et un esprit souillé par de pareilles débauches réelles ou rêvées" (113). While I am not interested in making a major issue of adolescent masturbatory fantasy in lamia-vampire literature, it certainly is a contributing element and we may well take the priest's revulsion at his corrupted hands as being more than just a figure of speech. Let us add that masturbation, as mentioned in the Introduction, has an entropic character.
Let us consider the aptness of Freud's concept of the unconscious in light of the dream, or rather nocturnal, identity of Romuald. The man that has relations with Clarimonde, from their first meeting at the service of his ordination into the priesthood (79-83) to her last appearance (a kind of full circle, "comme la premiere fois sous le portail de l'eglise") falls under her spell and passively follows wherever the beautiful courtesan leads him. As the priest he is such a passive child that he cannot even figure out how he might make his way to her, though he desperately longs to. She has to send a guide to bring him to her. As the cavalier, he lives by the grace of the female. His very identity is centered around his reputation as Clarimonde's noble lover. Clarimonde is the unconscious, or, more properly the id: "... the primary subjective reality ... it loves and pursues pleasure and dislikes and so avoids pain. It does not think, but only wants and acts. In its primary processes, the id fulfills wishes by imagination, fantasy, hallucinations, and dreams" (Kelly 72). The id is the psychic source of energy and stimulates the rest of the personality through its drive. Il signor Romualdo, Clarimonde's Venetian lover, lives an existence charged with excitement, while the village priest lives an existence starved of the same. The one psyche of Romuald is disordered by duality, and
one side absorbs the energy from the other until the

It is now widely accepted that the vampire is one of
the great myths of the Romantic age and has earned a place
alongside such figures as Prometheus, Don Juan, and the
Wandering Jew (Twitchell 3). The male vampire has
historically overshadowed the female due to the Romantic
reader's fascination with what Mario Praz calls the Fatal
Man, made to the pattern of the Byronic hero, just as
Dracula has invariably drawn more of a public than
Carmilla, but the female vampire, the dominant vampire of
the second half of the century, offers a particularly
interesting insight into what Gautier was intuiting about
what Freud would later call the unconscious and later
still call the id. She represents the disordering
elements in the unconscious as well as the aesthetic.
That Gautier's novella predates both the Decadence and
Freud's published theories of the structure of the psyche
by more than fifty years does not present us with a
problem. Gautier himself informed the spirit of the new
age with serapionic vision. Certainly Freud himself was a
product of this new age, molded as he was by his interest
in the literature of the uncanny. Before looking at the
entropic implications of this text it will be helpful to examine how Freud's model of the psyche relates to disorder.

I suggest that Freud did not so much discover the unconscious as be the direct inheritor of a developing nineteenth-century concept of disorder that becomes the psychological concept of the unconscious. He mapped it, codified it, gave it the appearance of science, and attempted to cure the sick with it, but the disorder of the psyche was not an unprecedented discovery. The Romantics had been prowling the coasts and deltas of this terra incognita for years. As Harry Trosman writes:

Romanticism as a current of thought stresses spontaneity and emotional expressiveness . . . Forms become more experimental, previously taboo themes were taken up, Nature and the Individual were glorified, and a heightened emphasis was placed on passion and sensibility--as we see in Goethe's The Sorrows of Young Werther. A positive value was attached to the irrational; unconscious psychological processes were regarded as routes to higher truths. Man was seen as complex; his nature as conflicted and ambivalent. An appreciation for the value of early childhood experience and the concept of the unconscious, hidden nature were accompanied by a focus on imaginative over logical mental processes. (5)

This is not to suggest (though one would be unwise to deny it) that reading Byron or Poe or Baudelaire will cure hysteria, or that Freud has been given more credit than he
is due. It is only to assert that the zeitgeist of the Romantic age is distinguishable in Freud's theories of the psyche to the extent that psychologists such as Trosman account him as much a literary Romantic as a scientific theorist. Trosman discusses zeitgeist:

The zeitgeist, the intellectual and cultural spirit of an era, is generally recognized as pertinent in evaluating the birth of a set of ideas. The prevailing opinions, basic philosophical precepts, and sanctioned values form an amalgam so that it becomes possible to speak, for example, of the Age of Enlightenment or the Age of Romanticism. These broad cultural outlooks affect the content of creative works even when the contact between the representative, individual artists may be quite indirect. (51)

The disorder of the mind was Freud's particular study. La Morte amoureuse is a fictional work about a disordered psyche. How does the disorder of the psyche figure into a larger concept of energy disorder, and most particularly our study of the vampire as metaphor for energy transformation?

Clarimonde devours light and energy. The dual life Romuald experiences effectively symbolizes the vampire nature of energy transference and prefigures the entropy law. According to the the Newtonian law that preceded the second law (entropy), the first law of thermodynamics, in a closed system energy cannot be created or destroyed but remains a constant despite its transformation into other
incarnations. Romuald's life energy is drawn from the diurnal world of the priest to the nocturnal world of the Venetian cavalier. As long as the transference is equal, like night and day at the equinox, there is no crisis, but once Clarimonde becomes more overtly vampiristic and she excessively (and entropically) depletes the energy of the diurnal Romuald then the superego Abbé Sérapion asserts himself, reordering energy to a sad, simple stability. Thus Clarimonde can be seen as a metaphor for the second law of thermodynamics.

Abbé Sérapion fills this superego role perfectly, "the foe of the immoral, pleasure loving instincts" (Hall 48). He is also a superego that, psychoanalytically speaking, has been corrupted by the id to act cruelly for his own expression of primitive id forces, and it is certainly interesting how much the Abbé knows about the courtesan Clarimonde. He describes her death "à la suite d'une orgie qui a duré huit jours et huit nuits" with all the informed details of an insider (100).

At the conclusion we are left with a strong, if regretful, ego/priest, which works well with our study of the novella as a model of the disordered, reordered psyche:

There is only so much available energy and no more. This means that if the ego gains energy, the id or the superego—or both—have to lose energy. The energizing of one system of personality
means the de-energizing of
other systems. (Hall 48)

Now the means by which Gautier himself was informed
about this dispersal of psychic energy is through the
intuitive faculties of the Romantic writer open to the
increasing demands of the unconscious to recognition.
"Myth makers like poets and prophets shape the ubiquitous,
unconscious fantasy wishes of mankind in communally
acceptable ways. They are able to express the guilt-laden
private fantasies of individuals in the form of myths
which become instruments of socialization" (Kramer 16). A
strong case could be made that the Romantic moment was,
most importantly, the demand of the unconscious, the
irrational, for equal respect after its suppression
through the materialistic ages of eighteenth-century
enlightenment and revolution. This must be equally true
for the assertion of disorder into mainstream physics and
as a world theory or root metaphor. The female vampire
makes a peculiarly apt vehicle for the emanation of the
disordering unconscious into literature from life, for she
is the irreducible figure incorporating Eros and Thanatos
together.

Clinically, ideas of death in the unconscious are
often equated with orgasm (Blum 128). Literally, the
confusing and coupling together of love and death was a
prominent ingredient in Romantic art. The myth of the
vampire is a foremost illustration. Like the unconscious, the vampire is outside of mortal laws of time. She is also "un-dead"—neither annihilated nor at rest nor bound by normal physical laws. The law that binds her to the living is a law of blood, a fluid with a potent sexual association of its own. As D. H. Lawrence wrote in his essay "The Two Principles":

... blood has a perfect but untranslatable consciousness of its own, a consciousness of weight, of rich, down-pouring motion, of powerful self-positivity. In the blood we have our strongest self-knowledge, our most powerful dark conscience. The ancients said the heart was the seat of understanding. And so it is: it is the seat of the primal sensual understanding, the seat of the passional self-consciousness. (171)

This leads us to an interesting but unsettling point of view which begs our attention when reading nineteenth-century literature of a double reality. We have to ask ourselves if the vampire literature is the Romantic mythmaking of the Freudian unconscious, or, in fact, the Freudian unconscious is itself a literature, a fiction, of the aesthetic of an invisible vampirical universe, the entropy universe metamorphized by trope, in the Schelling-like sense that "the self produces a world unconsciously in order to objectify itself to itself" (Limon 110). Twentieth-century psychoanalysis believes that "the purpose of the id is to satisfy the inate needs of the
organism: the ego protects the organism from danger; and
the superego establishes limits of satisfaction" (Kelly
75). Is this theory of the psyche merely itself an ego-
developed shield to protect Post-Victorian positivists
from the disturbing intrusion of disordered imagination
and its capacity to dominate human desire, an objectifying
"science" made in fin-de-siècle Vienna by one of the last
great Romantic myth-makers? Should we consider a plane of
being for our Clarimonde like the one the modern
theosophist Marcel Bohrer wrote of in 1948:

Qu'au plan astral correspond le
corps astral, celui-ci comprenant entre
autres choses des hommes sans corps
physique, disciples en attente de
reincarnation et privés des joies du
paradis, c'est-a-dire "les decedes du
plan astral, les suicides, les vampires
et les loups-garous, entites dangereuses
d'origine humaine. (Faivre 163)

Can we give La Morte amoureuse a respectful reading
without reading beyond the material? Should we not
believe, as does Devendra P. Varma, "that the vampire is a
product of the night-side of the soul . . . the same as
the demon-goddess Kali . . . that the vampire legend is
used to lift the veil of Maya beclouding the vision of
rational man in order to instil in him an awareness of the
Deity and the consciousness of a just fate" (Bhalla 5).
Perhaps that is too much for most of us, who have been
raised in a Christian and/or Positivist context, even to
consider. Some would say our nearest reading to a mystic vampirical plane would be Jungian as demonstrated in the half-hearted, almost apologetic manner of the so-called Post-Jungian criticism of Joseph Andriano. He reduces the novella to the tale of a young man caught in the middle between an anima archetype (Clarimonde and Queen of Heaven) and the archetypal masculine (Sérapion and God the Father) and who ends up repressing and denying Eros and anima. Although Andriano claims that his critical method is not reductive, the results are too often as reductive as the dated criticism of Bellemin-Noël. The entropy root metaphor creates a vampire dimension where both Kali and Clarimonde incarnate the power of chaos. We desire and are disordered. We dream and we are disordered. Even spiritual love can disorder to disintegration. D. H. Lawrence wrote in his essay on Poe:

In spiritual love, the contact is purely nervous. The nerves in the lovers are set vibrating in unison like two instruments. The pitch can rise higher and higher. But carry this too far, and the nerves begin to break, to bleed, as it were, and a form of death sets in.

(112)

Lawrence then writes in depth about the disordering character of desire and specifically asserts that "the desirous consciousness, the SPIRIT, is a vampire" (115). In Poe the vampire is a gaping maw of nothingness, says Lawrence. While the modern European vampire has
everything to do with dreams, appetite, and desire, Poe underscores an inherent perversity in the vampire that corresponds with his advanced theories on physics, the universe, and nothingness where Gautier finds a gentler cosmic irony. With Clarimonde's little golden pin sweetly pricking disorder into the balanced energy transmutation of the first law of thermodynamics it is as if her appetite only licks at entropy by the smallest of cosmic black holes. The watery, labyrinthian Venice of Gautier's night world does not quite share the terror of Poe's nightmare universe, but the same unsettling physics have unmistakably begun to intrude.
Chapter 2

*Femmes Damnées* and Fantasists: Poe

Romanticism is the aesthetic of entropy; or, more correctly, romanticisms are the aesthetics of the perceived entropic universe. The late or neo-romantic movement, sometimes called the second age of romanticism and the Decadence, was an analogous aesthetic movement to the scientific enquiries into the movement in physics of order to disorder, from simplicity to complexity, dating from the publication of *Les Fleurs du mal* in 1857 to the outbreak of World War One (and continuing as an underground aesthetic and physics up to our own fin-de-siècle). The aesthetics of neo- or late or second-age romanticism are as much a part of an eternal aesthetics as an aesthetic could be, as the movement to disorder is inevitably married (as an opposition) to the movement to order, the constant of totalizing, unifying aesthetics. Disunity, disorder, the force of energy in the service of chaos (even nihilism, if you will) has always existed as a subversive aesthetic, and at certain times, usually during a crisis of faith, has been preeminent in all the arts.

In the two following chapters we will explore the aesthetics of disorder as conceived and promulgated by the two mid-nineteenth-century writers of greatest influence on the disordering literature of the late nineteenth century, the two writers we most identify with an
oppositional aesthetics to the realist, materialist, progressively ethical literature that has usually been given precedence in the study of late nineteenth-century England and the United States: that is, the literature we identify as typically Victorian. Edgar Allan Poe will be the writer studied in this chapter, and Charles Baudelaire will be the principal writer we will study in Chapter Three, in the company of some of Poe and Baudelaire's French, English, and Italian disciples.

This oppositional, negativistic aesthetic has complex origins, from the so-called Satanic Romanticism of Byron as well as the German grotesque of Tieck and Hoffmann; German philosophy and aesthetics; Burke's theory of the sublime; and the eighteenth-century Gothic novel. Byron's Satanic Romanticism touched all European culture from America to Russia, and, as mentioned in the Introduction, he initiated the characterization of the Byronic man as vampire, and the vampire as satanic archangel. The satanic is the movement from order to disorder—and it flourished as an elitist secret religion in fashionable and wealthy circles in the late nineteenth century because it is the religion of an entropic, absolutely disordered universe. Conventional forms of modern Christianity are anti-entropic faiths despite their contrary origins in decadent-era Rome. Taking this into account it hardly
seems strange that the Black Mass—which is the disordering of the Christian Roman Catholic Mass—was constantly appearing in the literature of late Romanticism, and invariably accompanied by some kind of spiritual and/or physical (either sanguinal or seminal) vampirism.

The several influences contributing to E. A. Poe's aesthetics have been admirably delineated in G. R. Thompson's *Poe's Fiction: Romantic Irony in the Gothic Tales* and other studies. Some influences Poe shares with Gautier. There is no evidence to indicate that Poe ever read any of Gautier's writings. He could read French with some fluency, even if he could not write it coherently, yet it does seem improbable that Poe would have read Gautier but never once have alluded to him in his writing. It is regrettable, as Poe would have been in general agreement with Gautier's interpretation of their mutual influences and zeitgeist. Certainly Poe's "The Philosophy of Composition" is an "art for art's sake" piece, a Parnassian method, as is arguably all of his writing on aesthetics from theories of fiction to interior decoration.

Gautier, born two years after Poe and outliving him by several years, did know and admire Poe's tales. In the *Moniteur Universel*, Gautier praises Poe's works as "ces
histoires si bien qualifiées d'extraordinaires! Ce fantastique fait par des procédés d'algèbre et entremêlé de science . . . ." As well, he referred to Poe in his essay on Baudelaire in 1868. Andriano suggests that Gautier had introduced Poe's writings to Baudelaire though there seems no source for the identity of the one, if such a one existed, through whose help Baudelaire found his own affinity to Poe when he read one of the first French translations of a Poe tale, probably "The Black Cat," translated by Isabelle Meunier, published in *La Démocratie pacifique*, in 27 January 1847 (Quinn 71). It does seem probable that someone brought Poe to Baudelaire's attention, as it is unlikely that he would have habitually read this socialist journal, and it would have been apt if it was Gautier, who had known him since 1843 and would have understood how well Poe's view of perversity as expounded in "The Black Cat" would have resonated with his developing concept of the satanic in poetry. That is to say, if it was not Gautier who introduced Poe to Baudelaire, it ought to have been.

But to return to Poe, as we read his scientific "prosepoem" *Eureka* we understand how he interpreted the evolving laws of energy transformation during the revolutionary movement from the first to the second law of thermodynamics into something beyond the earlier Romantic
ideas of interchanging and indestructable transformations of energy. In the following pages of this chapter we will study the aesthetic of Eureka—the aesthetic of a universe transforming into nothingness through the perverse mechanics of disorder, by a statement of negative faith divesting the first law of thermodynamics of its Romantic idealism, and presupposing the entropic second law which would characterize the fin-de-siècle with its hallmark nihilism and negativism. First, however, we will show the negativist disordering characteristics of Poe's stories predating Eureka (and indeed Eureka, written in 1848, was a late work)—tales that would have a most significant influence on French literature from Baudelaire to Valéry and beyond. These tales, "Berenice," "Ligeia," "Morella," and "The Fall of the House of Usher," have characteristics that will be revealed to be vampiric, and, significantly, vampiric characteristics of women: the feminine principle representing the disordering elements to the unconscious as well as the aesthetic. We will see how Poe represents the aesthetic as vampiric and entropic. This will lead us into the following chapter, a study of the profound influence of Poe's tales and Eureka on Baudelaire, Poe's most eminent translator, both literally and figuratively.

Fragmentation, division, and disintegration—and suggestions of vampiric consequences—are recurring
motives throughout Poe's tales. Perhaps the most extreme
depiction of these characteristics in nineteenth-century
fiction is in "Berenice," which has the reputation of also
being one of the most disagreeable of Poe's tales.
Egaeus, the narrator of this story, cannot see unities at
all: he is obsessed with fragmentary surfaces and cannot
see the whole even to the horrible conclusion, though he
acts out of a maniacal desire for unity. It is given to
the reader to make a unity of the story. The horror of
this story--its perverse rationale--is not only in what
the narrator does to the lady Berenice, but in the overall
fictional perspective of the multiplicity of reality, its
division and disintegration. The first two sentences of
the story proper are: "Misery is manifold. The
wretchedness of earth is multiformal. This introduces us
to Egaeus' strangely fragmented vision, which he explains
as the result of a peculiar monomania (227). His
consciousness is wholly fragmented--a fascination with the
surface parts, the minutiae, and a blindness to unities in
a consciousness where all parts are potentially equal:

In my case the primary object was
invariably frivolous, although assuming,
through the medium of my distempered
vision, a refracted and unreal
importance. Few deductions, if any,
were made; and those few pertinaciously
returning in upon the original object as
centre. The meditations were never
pleasure; and, at the termination of a
reverie, the first cause, so far from
being out of sight, had obtained that
supernaturally exaggerated interest which was the prevailing feature of the disease. (228)

These original objects, he explains, are minutae—parts of a whole that obsess him to the detriment of any progressive, useful activity, and are even less fruitful than a daydreamer's fantasies: "the powers of mind more particularly exercised were, with me, as I have said before, the attentive, and are, with the daydreamer, the speculative" (228).

An interesting example given by Egaeus concerns a "paradoxical sentence" in Tertullian's de Carne Christi which had occupied his time "for many weeks of laborious and fruitless investigation": "Mortuus est Dei filius; credibile est quia ineptum est; et sepultus resurrexit, certum est quia impossibile est . . . ," which translates as: "The son of God is dead—which is absurd and therefore believable; and he rose from the tomb—which is impossible and therefore must be so." This paradox fragments further his multiplicitous consciousness. The division is aesthetic as well as intellectual. He, the narrator, is suspended in a reverie where only the absurd is worthy of faith and the impossible is certain. This is a curious rendering of the aesthetic irony of Gautier, and prefigures by two generations Des Esseintes in Huysmans' A Rebours, who is certainly the spiritual heir of Poe's.
grotesque tale heroes such as Egaeus and Roderick Usher. In Egaeus's obsession with these lines of Tertullian we can see the aesthetic of Eureka: division, disintegration, stress, perversity, negative possibility, and nihilism at the heart of his vision, "the possibility that beyond the elaborate art of the game there is nothing" as Thompson writes (191). And, of course, Christ's rising from the dead foreshadows the fate of the entombed Berenice.

In as much as Egaeus's consciousness can center, his narrative of doubling and division focuses on his cousin Berenice:

We grew up together in my paternal halls. Yet differently we grew--I ill of health and buried in gloom--she agile, graceful, and overflowing with energy--hers the ramble on the hillside--mine the studies of the cloister--I living within my own heart, and addicted body and soul to the most intense and powerful meditation--she roaming carelessly through life . . . (226)

They begin life as complementary beings, perhaps as the two halves of a duality in dark and light. But "a fatal disease . . . pervading her mind, her habits, and her character" changes Berenice completely (226). She develops "a species of epilepsy not unfrequently terminating in trance itself" (227). At the same time, his malady worsens and gains such ascendancy over him that he is not merely immersed in paradox, but brought to the excess of division where he was given to "repeat
monotonously some common word, until the sound, by dint of frequent repetition, ceased to convey any idea whatever to the mind" (227). This is one among what Egaeus calls "a few of the most common and least pernicious vagaries" brought on by his condition (227). He begins to see Berenice "as a thing to analyze,—not as an object of love, but as the theme of the most abstruse although desultory speculation " (229). He begins to quite fear her. The duality has collapsed, the couple (affianced "in an evil moment") has instead become joined in a curious and unelaborated relationship of ambiguous, mutual vampirism. As the narrator's condition of fragmented consciousness worsens, so equally suffers the vitality of Berenice. His own vision objectivizes, "revels," "in the less important but more startling changes wrought in the physical frame of Berenice--in the singular and most appalling distortion of her personal identity" (229).

Certainly studies such as Thompson's and H. Craig's concerning the ironic use of the unreliable narrator in "Berenice" are well founded for literal readings, and Freudian and Jungian interpretations offer insights into fear of castration and rejection of the suppressed anima respectively, but one factor that most forcibly intrudes upon all readings of "Berenice" is the element of inner division. No reader can escape the trap Poe set: the
reader's consciousness is fragmented with Egaeus's, and led into the horrible conclusion where he is left to piece the fragments of a disintegrating consciousness into a grotesque unity. But in the dance of disintegration between Berenice and Egaeus it is impossible to say that one is vampirizing the other, one a parasite and the other a victim. The overall impression is one of dissolution of twinned and mirroring but fragmented consciousnesses, as seen also in "The Fall of the House of Usher" (and not just Madeline and Roderick Usher, but the House and the narrator/author also). In "Berenice" the center that will not hold is the union between Egaeus and Berenice. Their relationship is entropic, as narrated by the fragmentary vision/consciousness of Egaeus. His very aesthetic is entropic: and vampirical, as it moves to disorder through a mirroring system, completely non-hierarchical, immersing the reader into a value-valueless arabesque of disintegrating body and spirit.

Berenice is transformed: emaciated, pale, her locks of hair turned "vivid yellow" from their once jetty color, "jarring discordantly, in their fantastic character, with the reigning melancholy of the continence" (230). Her eyes are zombie-like, pupilless and lifeless, but the most disturbing feature of her transformation to Egaeus is inside her "thin and shrunken lips":

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They parted; and in a smile of peculiar meaning, the teeth of the changed Berenice disclosed themselves slowly to my view. Would to God that I had never beheld them, or that having done so, I had died! (230)

Her teeth become the obsession of his monomania, "the white and ghastly spectrum of the teeth" (230). This occurring just before the time of their wedding can also be read as a vagina dentata, as suggested by Marie Bonaparte, given as it is in context of his abhorrence of the "shrunken" (shrinking) lips of his bride-to-be.

Again, the tales we are here examining are all characterized by Poe as arabesques, and we will profit most by following David Ketterer's admonition and directions:

The meaning of an arabesque tale can only be tentatively fixed within certain limits. Almost all of them can be genuinely interpreted in a variety of ways, whether literal, parodic, psychological, or supernatural. It is a mistake to attempt to rank those elements as "levels" of meaning. A complete interpretation involves the ability to maintain these varying approaches and possibilities in a state of omnidimensional fusion. Consequently, the surface of an arabesque tale becomes as convoluted and fluid as an arabesque tapestry; the distinction between the literal narrative surface and the symbolic meaning disappears. Thus, the tales identified . . . as arabesques exhibit not only a concern with mind-expanding technique, or structure that seeks to approximate the arabesque condition. (182)
And at the core of this arabesque condition is the movement to disorder: heterogeneity, multiplicity, paradox, fragmentary mirroring, and decentering. Ketterer expands upon the above cited passage with a citation from the E. Arthur Robinson PMLA article we will discuss later in this chapter: "The point is that the peculiar quality of Poe's horror stories stems in part from a fusion of commonly disparate elements, the union of haunting mood with rational form and style" (182). True to the arabesque, the "disparate elements" are themselves disordered further while the "fusion"—perhaps a more appropriate word than unity or whole since the disparate elements are often inherently incongruous or even inimical—forms a space of full, intricate sensual tension where multiplicities of meaning cancel each other out into nothingness. This arabesque quality is echoed many years later in W. Somerset Maugham's Of Human Bondage by the character of Cronshaw, an aging survivor from the fin-de-siècle:

Have you ever been to the Cluny, the museum? There you will see Persian carpets of the most exquisite hue and of a pattern the beautiful intricacy of which delights and amazes the eye. In them you will see the mystery and the sensual beauty of the East, the roses of Hafiz and the wine-cup of Omar; but presently you will see more. You were asking just now what was the meaning of life. Go and look at those Persian
Egaeus declares, "In the multiplied objects of the external world I had no thoughts but for the teeth" (231). He believes that the teeth are a connecting rationale, "and therefore it was that I coveted them so madly. I felt that their possession could alone ever restore me to peace, in giving me back my reason" (231). And a few days later--days given up by Egaeus to his obsession with Berenice's teeth--Berenice seemingly dies in one of her epileptic fits, and is promptly laid to rest in the family vault. There is a hiatus in the text, then the disturbing conclusion. Egaeus sits at midnight ruminating in his library the night after the morning of Berenice's internment:

But of that dreary period which intervened I had no positive--at least no definite comprehension. Yet its memory was replete with horror--horror more horrible from being vague, and terror more terrible from ambiguity. It was a fearful page in the record of my existence, written all over with dim, and hideous, and unintelligible recollections. (232)

As Egaeus tries to collect the fragments of "unintelligible recollections" the reader becomes horribly enlightened by the several clues: the memory of a "piercing shriek of a female voice;" the vague assertion that some unremembered deed had been done; a small
physician's box; an underscored line by Ebn Zaiat, the same line as the story's epigraph, translated as: "My companions told me that if I were to go to my beloved's sepulchre there might be some abatement of my agony" (1392). When Egaeus reads these lines his hair stands on end and his blood congeals in his veins. A servant "pale as the tenant of a tomb" enters and "wild with terror" tells Egaeus that the household had been awakened:

He told of a wild cry disturbing the silence of the night—of the gathering together of the household—of a search in the direction of the sound;—and then his tones grew thrillingly distinct as he whispered me of a violated grave—of a disfigured body enshrouded, yet still breathing, still palpitating, still alive! (232)

The servant points at Egaeus's muddy garments and takes his hand "indented with the impress of human nails" (233). He directs his master's attention, and ours, of course, "to some object against the wall." The object occupies the fragmented Egaeus's attention "for some minutes" before he recognizes it and guesses its connection to the several other clues to the puzzle that he earlier described as "a fearful page in the record of my existence, written all over with dim, and hideous, and unintelligible recollections" (232). The narrative strategy Poe uses here simulates the character of real experience and effectively engages the reader in the
fragmentary narrative consciousness of Egaeus. The undoubted value in this strategy is in the analogous experience of the reader to Egaeus and the consequent disordering of the reader’s perception. Also, there is further disordering to the reader in Poe’s refusal to make a conclusion or clarify the mystery in an outright manner. The reader conjectures what meaning the several clues may make in the puzzle of what had happened since Berenice’s burial, and conjectures through the disordered perspective of Egaeus. Poe’s use of this strategy is so successful that readings of "Berenice" (and all of his other arabesque tales, for that matter) have been open to more fanciful readings. The worthy novelist Julian Symons, author of the subtly-layered Poe homage The Name of Annabel Lee, in his study of mystery fiction, Bloody Murder: From the Detective Story to the Crime Novel, asserts:

Poe was always driving to perverse sexual themes with which he could not deal directly because of the limitations imposed by his society. The result can often be grotesque, as in "Berenice," where the narrator is driven by some unspecified guilt not only to murder his epileptic cousin, but after she has been buried alive during a fit, to fulfill his obsession with her teeth by digging the living body out of the grave . . .

(30)

But if Egaeus has "murdered" Berenice it might have been later, after her interment, a victim of his crude and
violent dentistry, but by no usual method. Symons himself is confused: was she dead (murdered) or undead (narcoleptically or epileptically entranced)? Symons is only one of many readers who would want to see "Berenice" solved like a who-done-it, with a Columbo or Hercule Poirot (or Poe's own Dupin) to arrive on the scene and piece together the fragments in order to make sense of disorder. Equally fruitless are speculative critical readings making the pith of the tale the unreliability of Egaeus as narrator. If we read Egaeus as an hallucinatory reader of too much of the Gothic fiction in his library (as Thompson would have us) who cannot understand the medical effects of leadpoisoning from his ancient plumbing on himself and his fiancée, we are also trying to make the wrong kind of sense out of "Berenice."

The spade brings the disordered impressions and several physical clues together for the narrator (and the reader) and with a shriek of self revelation he tries to pry open the small box, but it falls to the floor and breaks open, revealing its contents, "some dental instruments intermingled with thirty-two small white and ivory-looking substances . . ." (233). This is the paradoxically unifying moment in this fragmentary story, paradoxical because the box, an object of enclosure, fixation, and formal coherence, contains the tools and
objects of extraction, division, multiplicity, and disintegration—a fine metaphor for the universe he would later expound in *Eureka*, as we will see. Earlier Egaeus had said, "I felt that their possession could alone ever restore me to peace, in giving me back my reason" (231). We can see how his fragmented, obsessed consciousness would focus on objects of multiplicity and feel a compulsion to bring them together into a form. In the same paragraph he has almost comically distorted a phrase attributed to Sallé ("que tous ses pas etaient des sentiments") to refer to Berenice, revising it to "que tous ses dents etaient des idées" (231). "That all her teeth were ideas!" These thirty-two teeth represent a multiplicity of ideas to Egaeus, and correspondingly the idea of multiplicity itself. These "ideas" promise a revelation of meaning in unity, but individually are divided as fragments of meaning, and meaning in fragments. And when he has wrested them from their entropic context and "boxed" them into fixed unity, they fall apart as he attempts to see/understand and manipulate them. That the reader may not understand how or why the narrator should think of the teeth as ideas to be unified actually furthers the strategy of the story, which is a nightmare excursion into the disorder of all things and the inevitable falling apart of totalizing thought: our teeth
are usually the first part of our bodies to suffer the
decay to which our whole bodies eventually succumb. Even
children's teeth fall out.

The primary interest of the story is its fragmentary
nature. The quasi-death and death of Berenice is more
bizarre than pitiable, her burial alive and mutilation
more disgusting and abhorrent than fear inspiring or
terrifying in itself, because the terror is in the divided
nature of consciousness. The fear is the fear the reader
experiences as he or she step-by-step discovers the
revolting details that Egaeus discovers as he makes
meaning from the cypher of his library and his ideas and
how it parallels the reader's own mechanisms for making
reality a unity in disunity.

It is interesting that Egaeus has attacked Berenice's
mouth, violently silenced her mouth, as a feminist reader
might point out quite rightly, and taken her "ideas" and
appropriated, censored, and abused them. A gender reading
is one helpful vein to bring us to the complex heart of
the tale, but one may go further still by reading gender
in "Berenice" as a metaphor. As in many of Poe's tales,
as in Gautier's La Morte amoureuse and in much of the
subsequent literature of disorder in the nineteenth
century, the female represents the principle of disorder,
the heterogeneous and mimetic, while the male struggles
for unifying coherence, particular and universal. The feminine as movement to disorder in fin-de-siècle culture has been widely explored by scholars from Mario Praz's groundbreaking *The Romantic Agony* to contemporary critics of such diverse camps as Bram Dijkstra (*Idols of Perversity*), Joseph Andriano (*Our Ladies of Darkness*), and Ewa Kuryluk (*Salome and Judas in the Cave of Sex*). The female is the gender of "negative possibility" in Poe, although typically it is the male-gendered protagonist (and usually narrator) that suffers the effects and influences of disorder. Certainly this reflects the values of a misogynist society by its attribution of metaphor, but it is a metaphor and not merely a literary statement of misogyny. Of course, it also tells us something about the disordering nature of sexuality and sexual desire.

But how does Berenice fit into a study of the vampire as nineteenth-century metaphor for disorder? Though Berenice is not literally a vampire, we can readily see how she is a figurative one. Obviously her prominent teeth and wraith-like presence give a vampiric impression, but more important is her "un-dead" trance state in the tomb. Also she has, partly through the narrator's distorted vision but also through some anticipations of the reader's, a vampirical effect on the energy of Egeaeus.
First, through the inspiration to disorder she gives to Egaeus's obsession; second, through her coming nuptials to Egaeus when she would become the extractor of the reluctant narrator's semen. Semen and blood have a deeprooted association in the psyche, and in the vampire myth—as in ceremonial magic—one is readily substituted for the other in a symbolically equivalent relationship to vitality, inspiration, generation, and individuation. It may even be arguable that our culture's focus on the female's lack of semen as such is responsible for the millenial belief that has caused the exclusion of women from these stereotypically male qualities up to our own time. Though Berenice is not literally a vampire, her figurative presence in the story is in large part vampiric.

Among the arabesque tales we are investigating in this chapter, "Berenice" is chronologically the first (Ketterer 181). The two stories that predate "Berenice," "Metzengerstein" and "The Assignation," certainly have the disordering elements essential to the arabesque (the metempsychosis of transferred identity in "Metzengerstein" and the mirroring in "The Assignation") but they have fewer pronounced vampire elements than the four stories that follow them: "Berenice," "Morella," "Ligeia," and "The Fall of the House of Usher."
"Morella," like "Berenice," represents the female as the principle of negative possibility, only to a hesitant and then resistant narrator whose consciousness seems freer than Egaeus's of perceptual abnormalities. Less open to an unreliable narrator interpretation/rationale fallacy (see the obtuse gumshoeing of C. Jordan et al.) for that reason, "Morella," though arguably a less effective tale of terror, has many similarities to "Berenice," and yet more to the better known arabesque that follows "Morella": "Ligeia." As with both tales, "Morella" is narrated by a male with morbid susceptibilities affected by a female who wastes from an illness and returns living from the tomb (literally in "Berenice," figuratively or occultly in "Morella" and "Ligeia") in a manner that confounds and/or maddens the narrator. In a more complex way this is also quite true for "The Fall of the House of Usher." But this reductive paint-by-numbers is in itself less useful than seeing how these similarities work toward a multiplicity of variations, a mirroring of theme and variations, and, in a yet larger view, a progressive entropic disordering and reordering among themselves.

As Berenice is to Egaeus, Morella is the mirroring female entity to the unnamed narrator, her husband. The Freudian Marie Bonaparte found this study indicative of a
"mother-transference" ("no clearer description of what is known as transference could be imagined") and repetition-compulsion"; a Jungian reading of "Morella" as repressed anima returning as avenging archetype would certainly be defensible though almost as reductive as Bonaparte's Freudian psychoanalytic analysis; a feminist reading of "Morella" as the attempt by the narrator to silence and censor the feminine, and misogynistic repulsion at the idea of the irrepressible voice and name of female incarnation, has as much validity. It may be possible to accommodate all of these readings within the larger context of Morella as disordered agent, a demon/angel of the perverse.

Of the four Poe arabesque stories studied in this chapter, "Morella" is the simplest and shortest. With "Ligeia" it is the one most commonly cited as a vampire story (cf. Twitchell and Praz), though the vampirism is spiritual and occult-supernatural. Briefly, the narrator tells how he met and married the erudite Morella, though "the fires were not of Eros" which gave intensity to the relationship. She had a German metaphysical "Presburg education" and introduced the narrator to "a number of those mystical writings which are usually considered the mere dross of the early German literature" (234). Such esoteric and occult writings are her obsession, and one
that the narrator by "effective influence of habit and example" participates in, though only passively—not by practice, thought, or conviction. Morella, however, draws him into darker arcana, and he enters into them but "then, when poring over forbidden pages," her cold hand placed over his, he "felt a forbidden spirit enkindling within" (234). Morella would "rake up from the ashes of a dead philosophy some low, singular words, whose strange meaning burned themselves in upon my memory" (234-35). Soon these uncanny tutorials cause his affection for his wife to change from adoration to horror. The narrator then describes the general nature of these readings, and it is significant (and a little surprising considering his extreme reaction) that the particular subject that fascinates Morella (and equally though adversely the narrator) is the principium individuationis, that is, the principle of division of the general into the irreversibly individual, "thereby distinguishing us from other beings that think, and giving us our personal identity" (235). Because of these studies he withdraws from Morella—a feminist reader might suggest because of his fear of Morella attaining full and separate female identity; a Freudian might suggest alienation fear; a Jungian fear of an usurping feminine principle in his dividing psyche—all of these things, however, may be included in a larger
reading of the narrator's fear in the movement to division, fragmentation, and disorder as represented by Morella.

A cultural conviction probably shared by almost all male (and possibly most female) late Romantics coupled muse worship/inspiration to the disordering hidden places in the psyche. Jung's female archetype is equally the wellspring of inspiration. From the Symbolist/Modernist theories of psychoanalysis to the fashionable salon magicians of the fin-de-siècle occult circles to the Naturalist pulp press misogynistic journalism of late nineteenth-century mass culture, the movement to disorder is characteristically female. With Nietszche the counter-Apollonian is essentially a female principle through the intercession of Dionysus, who is the inspirer and leader of disordering, dismembering maenads. From Wagner in music, Nietszche in philosophy, Freud in psychology, Klimt in painting, and practically any male artist or writer, between 1860 to 1915, the examples are too many to enumerate. Some later decadents (most notably Peladan and Beardsley) went yet further in their representations of disorder by finding in the androgyne the ultimate muse of disorder, disordering even the female. This is a reasonable stretch of the dialectic, for the feminization
of the male would be then the male disordered. In fact, there is a definite androgynous quality to Poe's arabesque women.

Morella's husband withdraws his affection and admiration and "yet was she a woman, and pined away daily" (235). She declines slowly into consumption, as the narrator's abhorrence of her increases. On her last day, "one autumn evening," she calls him to her bedside. Outside of her window is a rainbow, which not only represents hope of survival of the spirit, as suggested by Ketterer (188), but also the symbology and physics of diffusion and division. She tells the narrator, "I am dying, yet shall I live," and "her whom in life thou didst abhor, in death thou shalt adore" (236). She also announces that she is about to give birth to their child, and that her husband's "days shall be days of sorrow" as he bears "his shroud on earth, as do the Moslemim at Mecca" (237). And as she dies she gives birth to a daughter:

And she grew strangely in stature and intellect, and was the perfect resemblance of her who had departed, and I loved her with a love more fervant than I had believed it possible to feel for any denizen on earth. (237)

And this strange daughter, who sprung from her mother more like an idea (or curse) than a full term baby, grows physically and intellectually with a prodigious, uncanny
speed. This causes her father to hide her away, and he watches as she grows more and more like her mother, "the melancholy and the dead" (237). He begins to shudder at the "too perfect identity":

For that her smile was like her mother's I could bear; but then I shuddered at its too perfect identity—that her eyes were like Morella's I could endure; but then they too often looked down into the depths of my soul with Morella's own intense and bewildering meaning. And in the contour of the high forehead, and in the ringlets of the silken hair, and in the wan fingers that buried themselves therein; and in the sad musical tones of her speech, and above all—oh, above all—in the phrases and expressions of the dead on the lips of the loved and the living, I found food for consuming thought and horror—for a worm that would not die. (238)

Indeed, for the worm that will not die is the worm that devours all—the satanic and perverse—the worm we will later encounter in the verses of "The Conqueror Worm" in "Ligeia"—the disordering movement in a universe made whole only in annihilation. Thus also the physics/poetry of the universe expounded by Poe in Eureka.

After "two lustra"—ten years—the child, though prodigiously grown, has yet to be christened, so her father brings her to the baptismal font. There the narrator, prompted by the spirit of the dead and the perverse, christens her "Morella," and the child responds uncannily:
What more than fiend convulsed the features of my child, and overspread them with hues of death, as starting at that scarcely audible sound, she turned her glassy eyes from earth to heaven, and, falling prostrate on the black slabs of our ancestral vault, responded—"I am here!" (238)

Thus Morella's curse overshadows his life with death, "the hemlock cypress overshadowed me night and day" (239). He has fallen into an abyss of disorder, as Ketterer notes:

Morella, like Berenice, represents an ideal arabesque state. The narrator, looking into her eyes, "became giddy with a giddiness of one who gazes downward into some dreary and unfathomable abyss." (188)

The daughter dies after an unspecified period of time. The narrator "with a long and bitter laugh" finds the tomb of his wife Morella empty, so he inters the daughter therein (239). This end to the story is a further step in the overall disorder of the narrative. From the perspective of sense through narrative it is not even necessary to the conclusion, but it is a fine arabesque flourish for a psychic vampire tale. One may read this as final evidence that Morella has become a vampire, or, as Twitchell suggests, that Morella had always been a vampire, and the daughter is the fruit of her bloodletting of her husband:

With no previous mention of her being pregnant, we are now told that she miraculously delivers forth a posthumous
female child. Here Freudians should have a field day, for if blood is metaphorical semen, and if the narrator's relationship has been vampiric, then the displaced result of their union should be the same as if they had had a sexual relationship.

(61-62)

An interesting premise, this, that the narrator has wasted and destroyed Morella through vampirizing her, and that Morella returns as an avenging vampire—a formula Twitchell also proposes for "Berenice"—but more an ancilliary reading pleasurable in its symmetry than the best or freest or least exclusive reading. "Morella" is a story that works effectively on the reader because of its irresolvability. Twitchell is "left here, as elsewhere, unsure of resolution, wondering if indeed a page had been left out" (62).

It is an entropic story. On the surface, it is the simplest of stories: man and woman marry, procreate, and die; but from the start the story is disordered and disordering—certainly in a manner that mirrors the author’s own disordering marriage to Virginia Clemm—an arabesque unwinding perversely into nihility. Morella is indeed a vampire in that she vampirizes the unconscious of the narrator, for the daughter Morella is also the narrator's unconscious (or id or anima), and Morella the mother, with her impress of negative possibility, the cosmic perverse, drains the narrator's being as her
identity increases. Yes, she is a vampire--a psychic
vampire--but the larger metaphorical significance of
"Morella" is the elaborate disordering suffered by the
narrator: the falling apart of the simplest idyll of the
human psyche into the nightmare of mirroring
disintegration. It parallels one of the oldest stories of
disorder, Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Like Eve,
Morella takes forbidden knowledge from the angel of
perversity, and the reluctant narrator, like Adam, follows
his female counterpart (modeled on the first woman as
disordering agent) out of the idyll and into death and
misery and disorder. Certainly Poe must have thought at
times of Eden as a metaphor for the original unity, a
unity whose disorder he spent his life puzzling over--a
part of everything he ever wrote--culminating in his late
work Eureka, whose general proposition is, "In the
original Unity of the First Thing lies the Secondary Cause
of all Things, with the germ of their Inevitable
Annihilation." Could the "First Thing" be mother, the
mother Poe saw die at an early age of consumption, which
tragic event was said to be his first memory? And how
like consumption, which is tuberculosis, is the tableau of
the un-dead. There were three women whom Poe loved that
died from consumption: his mother, the mother of a friend
on whom he had a deep adolescent crush, and his wife
Virginia. Day by day they had all become weaker and weaker, getting significantly worse at night, blood on their mouths, and finally, pale and wraithlike, lingering near death for days.

"Morella" is such a disordering story that we can just as easily see the child Morella as the personification of the narrator's disintegrating psyche, a creation/child of the mother/wife Morella, and miserably, with his own self-fulfilling prophecy, the narrator brought by his own hand to the charnel of his psyche where the female side is disorder. The entropic character of "Morella" is such that the more one looks at it the more it falls apart and the less "useful" it is: the usefulness of the Eden story and the story of marriage, procreation, and motherhood suffer heat death. There is no "moral" to be drawn from "Morella." One could say the same for "Berenice," just as one could easily read Berenice as the embodiment of the spirit of disorder, defanged by Egaeus but still invincible to his feeble attempts at comprehensive unity.

And thus also for "Ligeia." "Ligeia" has much in common with "Morella," but the differences between the stories are of some consequence. As mentioned above, both are told by a disordered male narrator who is attached to a strong, uncanny, and disordering female who wastes from illness and returns after death by occult means, usurping
the identity of another by supernatural—implicitly malign—exercise of will from beyond the grave. Ligeia is a more sophisticated character, perhaps more thoroughly delineated, than Morella. She is described in an interesting manner—Poe's unnamed narrator tells us that "She came and departed as a shadow" (263). Her features are described as "not of that regular mould which we have been falsely taught to worship in the classical labors of the heathen" (263). In other words, hers are features that disorder, features of "strangeness" coupled with movements of uncanny doubling (shadowing). The description of her face is truly arabesque. The narrator begins at the top of her head, progresses down to her chin, and then centers on her eyes, from where he believes the strangeness emanates—eyes "fuller than the fullest of the gazelle eyes of the tribe of the valley of Nourjahad" (264). These weird eyes are only quite noticeable in moments of intense excitement. It is implicitly suggested then for the reader to picture this in her moments of intense desire (and sexual excitement) and the effect certainly is uncanny and strange. But, says the narrator, "the 'strangeness' . . . which I found in the eyes, was of a nature distinct from the formation, or the color, or the brilliancy of the features, and must, after all, be referred to the expression" (264).
Like Egaeus, the narrator has fragmented the being of his female counterpart and concentrated his consciousness on one part which in ordinary totalizing consciousness is seen as but one element of a beautiful unity:

The expression of the eyes of Ligeia!
How for long hours have I pondered on it! How have I, through the whole of a midsummer night struggled to fathom it! What was it—that something more profound than the well of Democritus—which lay far within the pupils of my beloved? What was it? I was possessed with a passion to discover. Those eyes! those large, those shining, those divine orbs! They became to me twin stars of Leda, and I to them devoutest of astrologers. (264)

The narrator seems to share Egaeus's fragmented consciousness and obsession with parts (specifically Ligeia's eyes) and their ability to impart knowledge withheld by the complete whole. He makes several analogies to the "full knowledge of their expression," many of them fragmentary, such as the developmental phases of a butterfly or a moth, and "one or two stars in heaven (one especially, a star of the sixth magnitude, double and changeable, to be found near the large star in Lyra) in a telescopic scrutiny" (264). All in all, the analogies give an impression of fragmentary insights to knowledge, occasionally felt and only partly understood. The narrator tells us that the sentiment was invariably inspired by a passage in a volume of Joseph Glanvill:
And the will therein lieth, which dieth not. Who knoweth the mysteries of the will, with its vigor? For God is but a great will pervading all things by nature of its intentness. Man doth not yield him to the angels, nor unto death utterly, save only through the weakness of his feeble will. (265)

This will, fragmented to the individual from the unity of God, is the will of the perverse. In a universe destined for annihilation, to resist annihilation is to resist God and the universe, sharing with Lucifer the perversity inherent in revolt against the cosmic will. If we also consider that the Luciferian is light-giving (Lucifer means "light-giver"), Promethean, and the divine will is eternal annihilation, we see a cosmic disorder in operation—one certainly intended by Poe—a perverseness in the cosmos itself that is at the heart of Poe's greatest work.

Ligeia's eyes are mesmeric. They draw in the narrator's identity. These are vampiric eyes—eyes of "the most brilliant black" that absorb all energy and light wherever they fix their gaze, like the black holes of late twentieth-century physics prefigured by Poe's Eureka. Ligeia will be of the un-dead, and she will act as a metaphorical challenge to an entropic universe and divine will as she drains the lifeforce of the narrator and then Rowena. Her will is the satanic revolt/willfulness against the cosmic will that
annihilates—the supreme movement to disorder, of course—so that she disorders all, absolutely. She is arabesque to one degree beyond ultimate disorder. Through her the narrator seeks to comprehend disorder—"that something more profound than the will of Democritus" (264). "Ligeia" is the narrative of his journey into the heart of disorder through the Satanic will of Ligeia, through the disordering of his own senses, and finally the disordering of his own psyche, completely invaded by Ligeia, personification of the cosmic arabesque.

Ligeia is a woman of exceptional learning. The narrator recognizes her superiority in all learning, but especially in the cosmic, and resigns himself "with a childlike confidence, to her guidance through the chaotic world of metaphysical investigation" (1266). But Ligeia, like Morella, begins to waste away, but unlike the narrator of "Morella" this narrator/husband suffers an agony of loss as she dies, and rather than cursing him, Ligeia directs her love with "the overflowing of a heart whose more than passionate devotion amounted to idolatry" (267). She yearns to live—we are given to understand because of her all-consuming love for the narrator—but also "this eager vehemence of desire for life—"but for life—that I have no power to portray—no utterance capable of expressing" (267-68).
At the midnight of the night she dies, she has the narrator/husband recite "certain verses composed by herself not many days before" (268). These five stanzas in ballad meter, sometimes published separately as "The Conqueror Worm," make an allegory of the cosmic annihilation, with the supreme annihilating Divine Will represented as a vampirical worm:

A blood-red thing that writhes from out
The scenic solitude!
It writhes!—it writhes! with mortal pangs
The mimes become its food,
And the seraphs sob at vermin fangs
In human gore imbued. (269)

At the end of the recitation Ligeia exclaims meaningfully, "O God! O Divine Father!--shall these things be undeviatingly so?--shall this Conqueror be not once conquered? Are we not part and parcel in thee? Who--who knoweth the mysteries of the will with its vigor?" (269). She then quotes the passage by Glanvill used both as epigraph to the story by Poe and used by the narrator in the context mentioned above: "Man doth not yield him to the angels, nor unto death utterly, save only through the weakness of his feeble will" (269). On these words Ligeia dies. The narrator leaves the Rhineland and travels to "one of the wildest and least frequented portions of fair England" (269). There he takes residence in "the gloomy and dreary grandeur" of an ancient, ruined abbey very like Lord Byron's Newstead Abbey, often represented in
illustrations of the time, and probably also inspired by Coleridge's *Christabel*. As Twitchell points out in his discussion of Ligeia as Lawrencian vampire/vampire victim, the name "Lady Rowena Trevanian of Tremaine" (who is soon to figure in the story) is quite similar as a name to "Lord Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine," the father of "the first English lamia," Coleridge's Geraldine (64).

The narrator, as if to make an arabesque setting with which to coax to himself the spirit of the dead Ligeia, indulges himself in the most incredibly chaotic interior decoration. As Retterer notes, "the effect of Poe's arabesque settings is dizzying. Their function is to disorient man's sense of reality" (42). The interior decor aesthetic of Poe mirrors his general aesthetic, and the abiding genius of his chambers has a "dreamy and incoherent grandeur" like the very materialization of an imaginary or conceptualization of a world culture in chaos and disorder. The turret pentagonal "bridal chamber" is the brain inside of the head of this sprawling gothic manor/abbey. Among its myriad "Bedlam" furnishings there are draperies covering the massive walls which are stirred "by the artificial introduction of a strong continual current of wind behind" (271). The draperies have a curious arabesque doubling quality through the figures woven on them:
But these figures partook of the true color of the arabesque only when regarded from a single point of view. By a contrivance now common, and indeed traceable to a very remote period of antiquity, they were made changable in aspect. To one entering the room, they bore the appearance of simple monstrosities; but upon a further advance, this appearance gradually departed; and step by step, as the visitor moved his station in the chamber, he saw himself surrounded by an endless succession of the ghastly forms which belong to the superstition of the Norman, or arise in the guilty slumbers of the monk. (271)

The room is a trap, an occult trap to ensnare a living female body for the Luciferian will of Ligeia. The pentagon is the prescribed shape for occult operations, disordered the square of fixity and order, whose spiritual symbol is the cross, with the five pointed star of Lucifer and Venus (or Astarte). As Ketterer points out, "he arranges the arabesque decor in order to obliterate the distinction between life and death and to facilitate the reappearance of Ligeia" (191). The first steps inside the chamber do not expose the ghastly arabesque phantoms to the visitor. Only once inside the pentagon, at the center of the ritual pentagram, do the darker creatures of the disordered universe appear to her. We have the impression of a vampire's den, where Ligeia
waits for a victim to facilitate her anti-annihilating undead return as the stupefied, opium-crazed narrator looks on.

This occult landing-stage (echoed later in Lovecraft's several landing stages for outer-space monstrosities) for the supernatural will of Ligeia, manifested through the thought and desire of the narrator, perhaps implanted by her hypnotic gaze, succeeds in its purpose. After a month of loveless marriage to the narrator, the Lady Rowena falls suddenly ill. She complains of sounds in the turret chamber, and then, as her condition worsens from "a second more violent disorder" she becomes fearful, complaining more frequently about the sounds and also of "unusual motions among the tapestries" (272). In true occult tradition, her resistance to occult invasion is lowered (typically by illness, or drugs or alcohol) and Ligeia enters from the phantom world to the periphery of the pentagram, and then attacks. She puts an end to Rowena's vital identity through the agent "of a brilliant and ruby colored fluid" introduced into a goblet of wine by her invisible hand (273). "A rapid change for the worse took place in the disorder of my wife," states the narrator (274). He watches in his opium stupor, his nerves disordered, "with unquiet eye upon the sarcophagi in the
angles of the room, upon the varying figures of the drapery, and upon the writhing of the parti-colored fires in the censer overhead" (274).

At around midnight, the nadir of the day and zenith of the night, the point of greatest diurnal disorder, Rowena's spirit leaves her body in death, leaves her body vacant for the psychic vampirism of Ligeia. An hour elapses, occupied by the narrator with memories of Ligeia, and the body begins to resume some of the characteristic signs of life, only to succumb again to death. "And again I sunk into visions of Ligeia--and again (what marvel that I shudder while I write?) again there reached my ears a low sob from the region of the ebony bed," the narrator tells us (276). And again the body returns to a corpse state, and so several more times over the course of the night as if Ligeia is fighting to animate the corpse of Rowena, fortified in her attack by the sympathetic thought of the narrator. Finally, what appears to be Rowena's body seems to be completely revitalized:

The corpse . . . stirred, and now more vigorously than before. The hues of life flushed up with unwonted energy into the countenance--the limbs relaxed--and, save that the eyelids were yet pressed heavily together and that the bandages and draperies of the grave still impart their charnel character to the figure, I might have dreamed that Rowena had shaken off, utterly the fetters of Death. (276)
The narrator stares in dismay at the Lazarethian figure. "There was a mad disorder in my thoughts--a tumult unappeasable" (277). Disordered thoughts come from a disordering factor observable to the narrator. Rowena, if it be she, has grown noticeably taller. Her face is still partially masked by bandages and her hair is hidden to view, and the narrator wonders "had she then grown taller since her malady?" (277). He leaps up and falls at her feet, and she shrinks from his touch; as she does so the grave clothes fall from her, revealing "huge masses of long, disheveled hair . . . blacker than the wings of midnight" (277). In a rush of manic dactyls he confirms what the reader, prepared by "Morella," has suspected: the body of Rowena has been literally transformed into the animated, vital body of Ligeia, revealed by the closing image of her hypnotic eyes:

And now slowly opened the eyes of the figure which stood before me. "Here then, at least," I shrieked aloud, "can I never--can I never be mistaken--these are the full, and the black, and the wild eyes--of my lost love--of the lady--of the lady LIGEIA!" (277)

It is interesting to read this ending in the context of the era's interpretation of the first law of thermodynamics: the law that stipulates that energy can be neither created nor destroyed. The second law, entropy, the law that says transformation inevitably degrades
energy to some degree from useful to useless, though
intuited had not yet been formulated at the time Poe wrote
"Ligeia," though certain characteristics in "Ligeia"—and
in all of Poe's arabesque tales—indicate that Poe shared
many of his scientifically literate contemporaries'
interests in how energy becomes transformed, what is lost,
and what cosmic conclusions could be drawn from the
disorder of transformation. As Arnheim writes succinctly
in *Art and Entropy*:

> The first law of thermodynamics referred
to the conservation of energy. It
stated that energy maybe changed from
one form to another but it is neither
created nor destroyed. This could sound
unpleasant if one took it to mean that
"the law of conservation excludes both
creation and annihilation." Commonly,
however, a more positive interpretation
prevailed. The law seemed to assure
conservative minds that in spite of all
violent upsets everything could be
expected to stay the same in the end.
The image of "a world of law, order and
timeless permanence" served theologians
as a confirmation of "God's presence and
action." (8)

In "Morella" Poe read the "law of conservation" in a
different way, a way that prefigures the second law, the
law of "creation and annihilation." With "Ligeia" the
negative possibility of transformation leads to disorder
and annihilation, and prefaces the ideas of universal
nihilism made explicit in *Eureka*. In "Morella," as in
Gautier's *La Morte amoureuse* and *Avatar*, the transference
of energy has balance and symmetry despite the context of disorder. In "Ligeia" the negative—the heat loss, if you like—is evidently absolute, and so is the ultimate disorder. While "Morella" is a tale of disorder, it is disorder in unity as the epigraph from Plato's Symposium implies. It is the story of disordered identity, rejoining and reforming vampirically in the mold of an unnamed child, flesh of the mother's flesh, and conceivably as a trope of the narrator's unconscious, as opposed to the vampirism of Ligeia. Rowena is lost to Ligeia's vampirism, physically and psychically.

To reiterate Frost's definition, "a vampire is fundamentally a parasitic force of being, malevolent and self-seeking by nature, whose paramount desire is to absorb the life force or ingest the vital fluids of a living organism in order to sate its perverse hunger and perpetuate its unnatural existence" (27). Certainly this is true of both Morella and Ligeia, and both vampires are rather androgynous women equally interpretively open to psychological readings as the repressed feminine returning to the vital psyche. However, Ligeia invades and destroys, and one may even read the narrator as merely the facilitator of Ligeia to the crime of psychic invasion rather than the ego or consciousness attacked by the invading, repressed anima of the female impress of the
unconscious. One could also read the narrator and Ligeia as the male and female duality of one androgynous vampire being. In any event, the life is drained from Rowena to make her a negative space for the vital energy of the one mirrored being, Ligeia. The cosmic perversity, division, and disintegration in "Ligeia" is carried by Poe one step further in Poe's arabesque progress in "The Fall of the House of Usher."

Before a consideration of Poe's arabesque masterpiece, it may be useful to consider for a moment the cosmic perverse, the disordering of disorder. In a universe such as the narrator of "Ligeia" inhabits, there is no escape from annihilation but the will to the perverse which further disorders the natural cosmic movement to dissolution. This double-negative does not become a positive, as in grammatical English, but becomes doubly negative like the "un-dead"—a cosmic double-negative perversity. It is natural that the vampire should represent this cosmic perversity, since the vampire is the aesthetic of nothingness, nihility, and void—the personification of the entropic nature of the work of art, the imagination, the female impress of the unconscious: the "negative possibility."

Against the "something that is always lost" the artist, like Ligeia (critics have read both her and
Morello as tropes of inspiration lost and regained) disorders and orders in the same act, negating the natural movement of transformation loss by the will of creative ordering. Thus literature is spontaneously both a movement to order (through concretization, plot, and characterization) and a movement to disorder (since whatever is drawn from life and/or other literature inherently suffers entropic loss in mirroring, multiplication, division, and (re)representation). Perversely, the vampire is anti-entropic in an entropic universe, and also completely entropic—in fact, a trope of the entropic universe, a personified black hole sucking energy into its insatiable and eternal maw. The artist attempts to make the ephemeral eternal, but by struggling to make eternal the real is vampirized. Thus the perversity of art and the vampire. Both are tropes of the universe and the tension between the eternal permanence and the clinging to the mutable world of flesh and light. All literature is vampiric, in the broadest sense, as is the universe.

The House of Usher, "house" literal and figurative, is this vampire universe. The house itself seems like a box of fixity as it appears to the narrator in his approach at the opening of the story. He is a tourist in the disintegration of this universe, though he also has
vampire characteristics in that his first act in encountering the house is to disorder it in the tarn by deliberately looking at the reflection of the house in the water, prefiguring the final fall of the House of Usher. This sympathetic magic, if you like, which is perverse in that the narrator supposes he does the mental disordering in an attempt to dispel the oppression of the house's impression in his first approach, is not such a farfetched assertion if one considers that for Poe all reality had a mental origin. Also, the narrator conspires with Poe's aesthetics and Roderick's fate, as Beverly R. Voloshin points out in the article "Explanation in 'The Fall of the House of Usher'":

If we focus on the narrator's role as observer of the drama of Madeline and Roderick and hence as the consciousness which contains the phantom, then the tale as psychological allegory shows the workings of the artistic imagination. Usher the artist seems to represent Poe or part of Poe, seething down his soul to create art works from his terrible dreams. Though Usher is destroyed by his creations, the narrator escapes, representing that part of the Romantic artist which can survive and re-create the imagined world. (423)

As noted by many critics, "The Fall of the House of Usher" is a world unto itself, a world of multiple reflections, doubling, fissure, and universal sentience. As stated by Voloshin, "everything of the House of Usher expresses or reflects everything else" (423). This
universe is precisely the universe Poe theorizes in *Eureka*, as Voloshin recognizes:

... the pervasive language of effect, affect, infection, and influence in the tale conjoins ordinarily distinct entities and makes them similar. This language and the many sets of doubles—one thing forming and conforming to another—convert the empirical notion of discrete cause and effect, virtually making the Usher world into that perfect plot of the Monistic universe of Poe's *Eureka*, a plot in which everything is simultaneously cause and effect of everything else. (427)

And thus everybody and everything becomes a vampire in "The Fall of the House of Usher," including the very writer of the tale. As Thompson convincingly asserts, the house itself is the head of Usher, and, as Daniel Hoffman perceptively writes, the head of Roderick Usher mirrors the physiognomy of the head of Poe. And Roderick Usher and the narrator are two sides of one intelligence. The song "The Haunted Palace" explicitly allegorizes the house as a head in disorder, moving towards arabesque dissolution. The cosmic head must inevitably sink into the abysmal pool of nihility, the negative inversion, but the arabesque aesthetic unity it self-conceives is everything: the cosmic deity seated in the imagination of Poe, and humankind, destined to fulfill its god-head in its own disorder and annihilation.
"The Vampire Motif in 'The Fall of the House of Usher'" by Lyle H. Kendall, Jr. and "What Happens in 'The Fall of the House of Usher'" by J. O. Bailey are two insightful studies of this famous arabesque tale as a vampire story. The former, much briefer study is perhaps more open to the criticism leveled at both studies by I. M. Walker in his article "The 'Legitimate' Sources of Terror in 'The Fall of the House of Usher.'" Walker believes that a vampire reading of the tale violates Poe's own assertion in his Preface to Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque that, as Poe states, "There is no one of these stories in which the scholar should recognize the distinctive features of that species of pseudo-horror we are taught to call Germanic," an appellation with which "The Fall of the House of Usher" was rejected by a prominent magazine editor (129). Kendall's reading of the vampire motif in the tale is rather literal and openly Gothic (now the term preferred to "Germanic"). He suggests that Madeline Usher is an actual physical as well as psychic vampire, reversing D. H. Lawrence's assertion that Roderick Usher is the psychic vampire of the story and Madeline his victim:

The exquisitely sensitive Roderick, vibrating without resistance with his sister Madeline, more and more exquisitely, and gradually devouring her, sucking her life like a vampire in
his anguish of extreme love. And she was asking to be sucked. (Lawrence 123)

Madeline Usher, asserts Kendall, has been a vampire for some duration of time before the arrival of the narrator. In fact, Kendall believes that Madeline's undead condition is the cause of Roderick's summons of his friend to Usher. His argument for a Gothic vampire interpretation has many worthwhile points, though some of his reading relies more on imagination than scholarship. Sadly, the Vigiliae Mortuorum secundum Chorum Ecclesiae Moguntinae has nothing to do with the "Black Mass" as he imagines, though Poe's description of it as a "wild ritual" certainly implies that the author wished to make us believe it was something of the kind. According to Bailey, who has seen this rare book, "it contains precisely the modern Roman Office of the Dead, with a few exceptions that do not basically alter its structure and substance" (458). Also, Kendall associates Madeline's cataleptic state with necromantic witch lore in a manner really unnecessary if Madeline is a vampire as he believes. It seems somewhat imaginative to suggest that Roderick has been trying throughout the narrator's visit to make him aware (evidently with too much delicacy) that his sister is a vampire, and has summoned him to fortify him in his plan to stake her, so that only at the
conclusion of the tale has the narrator realized the truth about Madeline and the ruin of the Usher family, causing him to flee in terror.

Bailey's study of the tale as a vampire story is far subtler, appropriately incorporating the house and Madeline as cooperative psychic vampires in an un-Gothic manner. Bailey opens his essay with an assertion that Poe's adaptation of the vampire motif is "of the soul" and "of the mind" (445). And it is also illustrative of Poe's belief that, as Bailey writes, adapting Poe's own words, "tales of terror are made into excellent stories by 'the singular heightened into the strange and mystical'" (445). Bailey then proceeds in a fascinating analysis of "The Fall of the House of Usher" in the context of traditional vampire lore drawn from authorities including Montague Summers, John Polidori, Bram Stoker, Augustin Calmet, and others. His avowed intention, as summed up in his conclusion, is "that Poe made use of vampire lore, skillfully concealed and refined from the usual gore to the strange and mystical . . ." and that Bailey finds such lore essential to "answer the questions that arise if we try to make sense of the story in terms of the narrator's explanations" (465).

Of particular interest is the attention Bailey gives the sentient, inorganic, vegetable, and human, and the
vampiric characteristics this sentience gives the fungi
covering the house, the house itself, and the fungi-like
hair of Roderick. Especially notable is his depiction of
the returning Madeline as "the white and bloodstained
tooth poised to plunge" of the vampire-spirit cursed House
of Usher (464). In this reading, Roderick himself dies
innocent of vampirism:

But as Roderick dies, Madeline and the
house die, for their source of vitality
is cut off. Does Roderick continue un-dead, a vampire by pollution, as "he had
anticipated"? When a vampire is
destroyed, it squeals or screams
horribly. As the fragments of the House
sink into the tarn, there is a "shouting
sound like the voices of a thousand
waters." Perhaps, as both Madeline and
the House die in the instant of
Roderick's death, the curse is
fulfilled, and Roderick's soul is, after
all, saved by the finally innocuous
water. (465)

This reading disallows any vampire characteristics to
Roderick, which would surprise most readers. Certainly we
have to see some justification for D. H. Lawrence's
accusation of Roderick of erotic, psychic vampirism. Both
Bailey and Kendall study the tale in the tradition of
supernatural vampire literature that clearly distinguishes
a vampire and a victim. In "The Fall of the House of
Usher" Poe depicts an entire vampire universe where a
simple vampire versus victim formula is inadequate. Here
even the dark water of the tarn, the ancient pool of life’s primeval emergence, sucks in the damned House of Usher like a vampiric cosmic black hole.

E. Arthur Robinson in "Order and Sentience in 'The Fall of the House of Usher,'" studies this arabesque tale as a rigorously rational narrative of order and disorder. He divides the structure of the narrative into three independent organizational entities, or "lines of action": the actual house, Roderick Usher, and Madeline Usher (69). Although one might question the usefulness of "reclassifying" the tale as "rationate" instead of arabesque, as Robinson suggests, he makes several worthwhile observations in the context of his formalist argument. As we below briefly study the linear/anti-linear movement of the tale to complete disorder, frequent allusions to Robinson's study will be noted.

As mentioned above, the first disordering action is perpetrated by the narrator as he turns the house by reflection upside down in the tarn. Like the vampire, he disorders what is already disordered, the actual House of Usher, the figurative House (that is, the family), and Roderick Usher (as noted above, because of the eye-like windows of the house, the hair-like fungi on the house, and the use of the poem "The Haunted Palace," there is a special sentience and resemblance between Usher and the
house of that name, as Robinson demonstrates convincingly enough, 70-71). Within the structure of the story, as it linearly unfolds, it follows that the narrator has disordered the universe represented by the house. As Robinson states, "there is prepared a connection between order in the house of Usher and in [Roderick's] psychic being" (70). I would extend this connection even to the very beginning of the story, and furthermore, concur with recent critics in identifying the narrator and Roderick Usher as two halves of one imagination, as the perverse, negative, and tensioned aesthetic of the author, ordering and disordering in one moment. The narrator, ordering, reasonable, scientific, materialist-positivist "madman" (Roderick's word for him); Roderick Usher, sentient, imaginative, disordering, hallucinatory, supersensitive, and anti-materialistic madman. Although I do not mean literally to identify the narrator as the tale's conventional antagonist, it is true that his first act as voice/authority of the ordering imagination is to make the house (and Usher) into a "negative," possibly an unconscious nod by Poe to the new science/art of photography. And like the vampire--and the vampire as artist--he disorders disorder.

The narrator then enters into the universe of the House of Usher, and the next level of disorder is
encountered. Roderick Usher is a thoroughly disordered person, with his attunement to the house and his extreme sensitivity to sensation, and inner intensity akin to monomania, he is of a similar mold as Egaeus and the other arabesque narrators we have encountered. The disordering is again multiplied by the spectral appearance of Usher's twin sister, his female double: "sympathies of a scarcely intelligible nature had always existed between them" (329). Although she is reported dead in the first days of the narrator's visit, she is occultly present like a repressed "disorder" through the remainder of the story until her dramatic, explosive reappearance at the conclusion. It seems appropriate that she is entombed in "a place of deposit for powder, or some other highly combustable substance" (329). Also, that her body should be held temporarily in a coffin's four-sided fixity "at a great depth" in a dungeon, in the darkest recesses of the Poe/Roderick head-like House of Usher.

Into this disorder gyres a storm, emanating up from the great cosmic sentience of the tarn. Bailey would have us see this storm as supernaturally initiated by the vampire Madeline, in large part to facilitate her rise from the exceptionally secure tomb with the assistance of the vampiric house (461). Certainly everything in the House of Usher works together in a way that prefigures
Eureka. Just as the house and Roderick are negatives of the narrator, Madeline is a negative of her brother, and all correspond in a movement, accelerated by the gale's violence, to annihilating disorder. Like Poe's other vampire women--Berenice, Morella, and Ligeia--Madeline is the feminine disordering principle, the Other, the principle of ultimate negative possibility. A "combustable" buried in a locked recess of profundest depth, she will be the harbinger-soul of the Usher House fissure's split and division. When the House of Usher sinks into the tarn, it falls into the miasma of the cosmos.

It might be argued that since the narrator escapes and observes the annihilation from the outside Poe did not intend for us to read such an absolute and cosmic annihilation. But then common sense argues that the narrative strategy of the arabesque demands the survival of the narrator. Also, since the narrator is only a positive of the negative of the House of Usher, his "survival" is only figurative, that is, akin to the celestial intelligence of the eternal in Eureka which is the celestial intelligence of nothingness. The quizical, materialist manner with which the narrator confronts (immediately to negate) the House of Usher, and the final appellation of "madman" with which Roderick christens him,
leads us to wonder if the narrator vampire is not actually the unifying celestial vampire of *Eureka*. In a universe that he himself initially precipitates into disorder, his is the order that survives all.

Might this also have some aesthetic importance? While we must agree that Roderick is the "aesthete" of the tale, and the narrator represents a more materialistic and conventionally ordering consciousness, it should be clear that Roderick cannot live to tell the tale, to order as the aesthetic orders by structure, development, and closure. The tale must order and disorder in the same moment by the double aesthetics of Roderick (negative) and the narrator (positive); while the tale orders by structure, design, and plot it disorders us through the arabesque. The narrator is a heterogeneous part of this disordered whole—a part of Roderick, the house, and Madeline—the part that materializes, analyzes, makes sense, orders into a tale the disorder, and plays an essential part as a detached, ordering, surviving spirit in the cosmic universe expounded by Poe in *Eureka*. And this is done in service of the Usher universe: this is why he was sent for, why he was evolved. As Robinson remarks:

*Usher's heterogeneity is approaching a degree where it may be supposed that his senses, each individually acute, cannot be held together as an intelligently directed unit. The order, whether of cosmic nebulae or of the physical and spiritual elements composing Roderick*
Usher, has reached "infinite individuations" in "pain-intermingled pleasures" (the wording is from Eureka but the application could be to Usher), and can maintain itself no longer. (74)

In Eureka Poe explores a universe prefigured in the fiction of "The Fall of the House of Usher." In his cosmic "Prose Poem" he wrote, "it is merely . . . through heterogeneity, that particular masses of Matter become animate--sensitive--and in the ratio of their heterogeneity; some reaching a degree of sensitiveness involving what we call Thought, and thus attaining obviously Conscious Intelligence." Of course, Poe means to include all of human kind here, but in the metaphorical fabric of his arabesque tale the part of the Usher universe that applies to the above as the "Conscious Intelligence" is the narrator, who gives catastrophe ultimate structure and makes greater meaning out of the disunity of the heterogeneous. Because he embraces disorder as he is embraced by Madeline, Roderick Usher is sensitive to the extreme. The narrator is the "positive" of the Usher intelligence, the part that Usher has evoked to tell his tale. It is interesting to note that in the previous arabesques we have studied, the disintegrating intelligence and the narrative ordering intelligence have been the same, but in Poe's most sophisticated arabesque
he has separated them in order to achieve the most successful aesthetic effect as well as the ultimate cosmic fable of division and entropic disintegration.

"The Fall of the House of Usher" is a tale about disintegration into "chaotic precipitation," as in Eureka, where "God—the material and spiritual God—now exists solely in the diffused Matter and Spirit of the Universe." But part of this God is the "Conscious Intelligence" that orders art with the superrationale of the maker of the arabesque tale and poems like "The Raven" with the consciousness to write about them in essays like "The Philosophy of Composition" and "The Poetic Principle." That this divine "unit of matter" (it seems Poe would have invited this name) has a vampiric element is explainable and defensible in the context of Eureka's clearly expressed proposition of an entropic aesthetic: "In the Original Unity of the First Thing lies the Secondary Cause of All Things, with the germ of their Inevitable Annihilation" (1261).

Although it may be too much to assert that Poe's main proposition above—the central idea of Eureka—is a paraphrase of the second law of thermodynamics, predating its explicit publication by its "discoverer" Rudolf Clausius in Berlin in 1850 by one year, the questions and speculations about the entropic annihilation of energy
posed by earlier scientists position Poe's *Eureka* right at the cutting edge of the new Post-Newtonian physics. *Eureka* is in the middle of the zeitgeist of Clausiaus et al. One might say that by his *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque* and *Eureka* (and almost everything else he wrote) Poe is the Clausius of the law of aesthetic entropy: any aesthetically ordered work goes through a series of imaginary entropic stages, seeing disorder/loss from the very ordering of the conceptional imagination of the author; to disorder by the theme and variations of the original imagination on a tradition or genre or form; to disorder by what is lost in imitation—and what the artist of imagination puts in often by accident and sometimes by design; to disorder by the collapse of a work of art into itself; to disorder by reading, no matter how skilled or doctrinal, profound or aware the reader; to disorder by the way new works influenced by an earlier work change, (dis)illumine and particularize it to its future readers. In part this is the "rationale of deception" Ketterer ascribes to Poe in the book of that title, carried beyond Poe the fantasist and poet to Poe the cosmic physicist and true originator of deconstruction in American criticism, for what is deconstruction but the analysis of how a text is simultaneously ordered and disordered, inevitably collapsing in upon itself like the House of Usher?
Through their growing disintegration all of Poe's arabesques reach a level of disorder that corresponds to the un-dead: the ultimate state of disorder is vampirical: the living dead, the very contagion of contradiction and perversity.

As Susan Manning writes in her article "Poe's Eureka and American Creative Nihilism":

One gets nowhere with Eureka by extracting its doctrines neatly from its poses; it was a constant principle of composition for Poe that "meaning" as a separate construct is irrelevant and nonsensical. The "moral" of a poem, or a story—or The Universe—is self-contained, self-expressive and self-justifying. (237)

Indeed, an analysis of meaning in Eureka would be pointless, but as Manning continues, "It is 'as a poem only' that Poe wished Eureka to be judged; its meaning—the meaning of the Universe, that ultimate affective plot—is inseparable from its literary processes" (237). Manning continues in the next paragraph, "This is partly because Poe relied largely on 'illimitable intuition' at the expense of logic, a position only recently made respectable in physics; only in a poem was intuition respectable in 1849. This is very inconvenient... Eureka will not yield to paraphrase or summary..." (257). Certainly true, but the mechanics of Eureka can be
easily summarized, and the way they reflect on the studies of the aesthetic of Poe's arabesque drawn in this chapter are significant.

Thompson is particularly insightful in his reading of Eureka:

The birth, death, and resurrection of the universe as stated in Eureka has a further (aesthetic) twist ignored by Poe's readers. The specific design that Poe sees is a melancholy symmetry of nothingness. According to Poe, the present material universe is an expression of God's original "nihility." When God's present expansiveness concentrates again into primal "unity," the universe will sink into that nothingness which, to all Finite Perception, Unity must be--into that "Material Nihility" from which it was evoked. What will then remain will be God in his original state: nothingness.

Certainly this evokes the pure arabesque aesthetic, and equally it evokes the second law of thermodynamics, and most particularly the way that entropy was understood even to its profoundest consequences by the scientifically literate public of the second half of the nineteenth century. Indeed, as stated in the introduction, this "melancholy symmetry" is still the cosmic law, if we believe (like Poe and H. Adams) in a closed system universe. It is interesting that Poe did not find this a cause for black despair, but seemed, at least in Eureka, to find in "melancholy symmetry" an overall cosmic beauty.
The correspondences between the spiritual and material, which we will discuss more fully in the following chapter on Baudelaire, gave all reality a God/Satan possessed intensity within its meaningless arabesque. As Thompson also points out, there is not the radiance of Transcendentalism, despite the very loose connection one could make between Eureka and the Transcendentalist movement:

... [although] final nothingness is a return to the original state of the universe, the "end" of the universe is not a finite end. The grand aesthetic design to existence, then, is this cycle of nothingness. The origin of the universe lies in nothingness... and its final end is the reconstitution of nothingness. It is in such a universe, rather than that informed by the conventionally benign oversoul of the Transcendentalists (or unconventionally as interpreted by Moldehauer as "blissful" aesthetic unity) that all sentient being finds itself buried alive!" (191)

Poe finds living-death a cosmic aesthetic of intricate, sinuous and perverse arabesque, everything sentiently corresponding trope by trope through processes of mirroring division and heterogenous disorder. All of this is in the text of the "Prose Poem" Eureka, and thus it should hardly surprise us that Baudelaire made a particular effort to translate it in its entirety into French—a work that in its land and language of origin has been read by only a few and dismissed as a hoax (or proof
of madness) by almost everyone (and especially those who have never read it). Perhaps the American reader almost invariably had trouble with it because of its reliance on intuition? Is it not more likely that the general argument of the work offends our heritage of Anglo-Saxon positivism? As Thompson writes, "only with some view of aesthetic design does the 'evil manifest in the universe become intelligible and endurable.'" We have always been dismissive of such "art for art's sake" aesthetics, but fortunately Poe found sympathetic readers across the ocean in France.

Paul Valéry wrote a long preface to Baudelaire's translation of *Eureka* when it was reprinted in 1921, testifying to its great influence on his ideas and art at the verge of the fin-de-siècle. A letter of Valéry's to Gide (June 13, 1892) from this period in his life shows his clear understanding of Poe's aesthetic objective, how giving synthèse to disorder, and specifically vertige, makes poetry out of entropy. If it is true, and it can hardly be doubted, that Poe was a major influence on the literature (and all arts) of the French Decadence, it is because his grand original aesthetic cosmogony was closely attuned to the physics, aesthetics, and psychology of that era. It need then hardly be surprising that the literary vampire should become so unprecedentedly popular in the
years that followed Poe's premature death only a few months after writing *Eureka*, for the physics, aesthetics, and psychology of Poe's tales and poetry, as also for the Decadents, are implicitly vampiric.
Chapter 3
Baudelaire and His Followers: The Muse Un-Dead

In the previous chapter we studied the relationship between some of Edgar Allan Poe's arabesque stories and the ideas concerning physics and energy propounded by Poe himself in *Eureka* and other nineteenth-century theorists in physics, foreshadowing the clear statement as natural law of the second law of thermodynamics, otherwise known as entropy. In this chapter we will examine several poems which are explicitly or implicitly concerned with vampires (often vampire as woman) and their use as tropes for cosmic disordering vampirism. We will begin with a study of Baudelaire's vampire poems from *Les Fleurs du mal* and a consideration of a structural identity between these poems and the arabesques by Poe we have considered in the previous chapter. Then we will examine some poems by Decadent era poets writing in English, French, and Italian, mostly inspired by the Baudelairian vampire mode.

It is the intention of this chapter to illustrate a type of vampire poetry that thrived in the Decadent period, with origins in Baudelaire's poems, and initially inspired by the vampire aesthetics of Edgar Allan Poe. While it may be agreed that some of the productions of Baudelaire's imitators may be negligible beside Baudelaire's poems, much can be learned by analyses of these poems, illustrating topoi that were resonant in all
arts in their own time, and whose influences can still be perceived in the popular and high culture of today.

The woman-as-disorder structure in Poe's arabesques can be overamplified into a formula, and this will be avoided as much as possible. However, it does seem worthwhile to look for corresponding tensions of structure in Baudelaire, and later in those poets clearly influenced by Baudelaire such as Gabriele D'Annunzio, Maurice Rollinat, Paul Valéry, and Arthur Symons.

First it is necessary to clearly state that Decadence (literary movement or period with antecedents in Gautièr's "art for art's sake," Poe's macabre, and Nerval's occultist hallucinatory, ur-symbolism) is a literature of "falling"—a fall like the decadence of the Roman model applies, certainly, but a fall also like Lucifer's and Napoleon's and also a fall like Biblical Adam's. In Decadence a sense of loss, of grief in grievance, and a sense of fall like that of haunting memories in autumnal twilight is in contrast to the ever rising light of material positivism. Thus, Mr. Hyde to Dr. Jekyll. In this way it behooves the reader of the writers of this Decadent mode to allow a loose kinship between them and writers of earlier and later generations usually not seen as "Decadent." No one will argue that Villiers or Beardsley, for instance, are not Decadents; but some will
take umbrage at the categorizations of M.R. James's ghost stories or T.S. Eliot's "The Waste Land," or Yeats' "Second Coming," or even Auden's "Musée des Beaux Arts" as "Decadent" works, yet they are arguably so. It is possible also to consider Poe, LeFanu, and Baudelaire as proto-Decadents if not actual Decadents because of their "falling" characteristics. The writers of the late nineteenth century embraced the term with such an understanding, and it seems still quite pertinent. Of course, the entropic, disordering relationship to "falling" is evident. Throughout this chapter, and the rest of this dissertation, the intimate correspondence between the entropic and disordering on the one hand, and between decadence and fall(ing) on the other, will be often a point of discussion.

Although it may seem unusual to include a chapter on poetry in a study that focuses predominantly on prose fiction, it will be seen that the vampire motif has a strikingly similar effect on poetry as on prose. Its thematic elements of reflection, multiplicity, and collapse are well suited to the concentrated structural tensions of poetry, especially the sonnet form. Vampires (most particularly women as vampires) are frequently found, implicitly or explicitly, in the poetry of the second half of the nineteenth century. Their thematic
importance to the satanic Romanticism of Baudelaire and his followers is especially evident. We will start with Baudelaire and then consider the vampires of some of his disciples.

Before we consider the first vampire poem from Les Fleurs du mal, "Le Vampire," No. XXXI, we will look above it on the page to "De Profundis clamavi," No. XXX. These poems were both together in the 1857 incarnation of Les Fleurs du mal, and appeared side by side also in the 1861 edition. The first poem is not explicitly about vampirism, but it is certainly about entropy. The second law of thermodynamics was formulated by Clausius in 1850. Poe's Eureka was published in 1848, and although Baudelaire's translation of Eureka did not appear until 1860 he was reading and translating it throughout the 1850s; it must have impressed on him a sense of universal nihility. Reading "De Profundis clamavi" (originally titled "Le Spleen") together with "Le Vampire" puts the reader in the vampire entropic universe of "The Fall of the House of Usher." We find division, disintegration, tension, negative possibility, and nihilism are as much at the heart of Baudelaire's vision as of Poe's.

The first thing we notice about "De Profundis clamavi" is that it is a sonnet, a formal structure, highly ordered and fixed, like Egaeus's box in "Berenice": an object of
fixation, enclosure, and formal coherence with which to order multiplicity and counter disintegration. The persona of the poem begs for pity from his vampire muse:
"J'implore ta pitié, Toi, l'unique que j'aime,/ Du fond du gouffre obscur où mon coeur est tombé" (1-2). His heart, his being, has fallen to the bottom of a dark abyss, disordered as if in a maelstrom. The being to whom the poet addresses himself is the spirit of the abyss, the disorderer of his being, and simultaneously, true to the tradition of Petrarch, the being he loves. But the lovers are in the haunted space of perversity, and the Death in Life of Petrarch's famous sonnet "Pace non Trovo et non ò da far guerra"--powerful with the tensions of peace and war, fire and ice, hope and fear--seems healthful by comparison: "C'est un univers morne à l'horizon plombé, / Où nagent dans la nuit l'horrure et le blasphème," horror and blasphemy swim in this cosmic sea dismal with leaden horizons (3-4). "Un Soleil sans chaleur" is above for six months, a possible allusion to the heat death threatened by the physics of entropy, as are the following three lines completing the second quatrains:

Et les six autres mois la nuit couvre la terre;
C'est un pays plus nu que la terre polaire;
--Ni bêtes, ni ruisseaux, ni verdure, ni bois!
(5-8)

This is the "melancholy symmetry of nothingness" Thompson notes in Eureka (191). The sun and night are in an icy
dance of disintegration. More barren than the arctic wastes, the heart of the poet is overcome by the absolute desolation. The first three lines after the volta are even more explicitly entropic;

Or il n'est pas d'horreur au monde qui surpasse
La froide cruaute de ce soleil de glace
Et cette immense nuit semblable au vieux Chaos.

(9-11)

The universe has returned to its primordial nothingness as in Eureka with its proposed cycles of creation and annihilation leading to ultimate void. It would be probable also that Baudelaire's vision of universal heat death would be inspired by the early speculations of the scientific and literary communities on the meaning of the law of entropy.

In the final tercet, the poet wishes he could be as insensible as "le sort des plus vils animaux" who can plunge their sensibilities into stupefying sleep and thus escape this spiritual horror of disorder to ultimate void. "Tant l'écheveau du temps lentement se dévide!" (14).

Time is unwinding itself, disintegrating into the "froide cruauté" of entropy. And with this last line the poem's precise structure is complete. The totalizing and unifying movement to order of the poem's aesthetic is held at a perfect tension by its statement of negative faith in
the transformation to the ultimate (dis)order of nothingness in its night "au vieux Chaos." Order serves chaos, mankind relives the fall.

Following immediately "De Profundis clamavi" is the first explicit vampire poem of Les Fleurs du mal, "Le Vampire." The poem again addresses the being of disorder, the spirit of the abyss, lover in void, the occult familiar "Toi qui . . ." enters his "coeur plaintif" "comme un coup de couteau" (1). The poem is again in boxes of order, quatrains, lined down the page in regimented blocks, but inside this regimentation is the tension of cyclical disintegration. The poem's persona is locked into the eternal damnation of order/disorder opposition that the vampire represents "forte comme un troupeau / De démons, vins, folle et parée . . ." (3-4). The vampire has made a bed and a domain inside his "esprit humilié," this being humbled by his sense of purposelessness in a universe of nothingness (5). The void of "De Profundis clamavi" is a permanent part of the poet's spirit, chained to him like a ball and chain binds a felon:

Comme au jeu le joueur têtu,
Comme à la bouteille l'ivrogne,
Comme aux vermines la charogne,
--Maudite, maudite, sois-tu! (9-12)

The poet proclaims he has begged the "glaive rapid" to "conquérir ma liberté" and has told poison to save him

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from cowardice, but these deny him their help: "Tu n'es pas digne qu'on t'enlève / A ton esclavage maudit . . . ." (13-20). Death's instruments know that the vampire would then be resuscitated by his own vampire kiss, as the cycle of disorder expands into entropy. The sword and poison tell him:

"Imbécile!--de son empire
Si nos efforts te délivraient
Tes baisers ressusciteraient
Le cadavre de ton vampire!" (21-24)

This vampire is his own satanic aesthetic as demon/angel, the aesthetic of a universe transforming into nothingness through the law of perverse physics where every cycle of being into the sublime collapses again into void.

There are scores of other poems in Les Fleurs du mal which express subtler characteristics of vampirism and entropy, but we will focus on one of the banned poems, "Les Métamorphoses du vampire." This is Baudelaire's great vampire poem. Here the satanic aesthetic of corruption in tension with desire is as effectively sustained as in any of his poems. While some critics have found in it a unique treatment of the ravages of syphilis (reputedly transmitted to Baudelaire by Jeanne Duval, the supposed vampire of the poem) it might be suggested that syphilis itself was such a potent force for disorder in the nineteenth century that it works as a double metaphor. Indeed, venereal disease deprived Baudelaire of his
health, sanity, and, finally, his life. It is natural that this "love-disease theme" would inspire his most intense poetry (Carter 79). The poem is divided into two stanzas. The first is powerfully sensual for all of its sixteen lines. A woman, mysterious and supernatural, occupies this coffin-box space outside of time. Her body is a coil of serpentine tension as she addresses the poet. Her mouth is berry red. She kneads her breasts against "le fer de son busc" and her words are impregnated with the smell of musk (1-4). She tells him:

"--Moi, j'ai la lèvre humide, et je sais la science
De perdre au fond d'un lit l'antique conscience.
Je sèche tous les pleurs sur mes seins triomphants,
Et fais rire les vieux du rire des enfants.
Je remplace, pour qui me voit nue et sans voiles,
La lune, le soleil, le ciel et les étoiles!"
(5-10)

Her lovers are totally disordered by her lovemaking and replace the systems of cosmic order with her own cycles of meaning. Their release of old systems of meaning on her breasts devouring their tears (feeding on the lovers rather than nourishing them in their new infancy) is not only the overflowing of emotion of grateful lovers, but the ironic laughter and tears of perversity. Her embrace is death, and her new disordering order is the Dionysian ecstasy. She continues:

"Je suis, mon cher savant, si docte aux voluptés,
Lorsque j'étouffe un homme en mes bras redoutés,
Où lorsque j'abandonne aux morsures mon buste,
She is so powerful in her voluptuous arts of disorder that she hints that she was the disorderer even of Lucifer and inspired the angels' revolt in heaven. She can smother a man to death in her arms or drive him to bite her breast in a vampirism that parodies motherhood, and drive him to damn himself in her complexity of disintegration. The last two lines of the first stanza might also be read as the first two lines of the second half of a double sonnet where the second sonnet reflects in negativity on the first. Indeed, the poem is twenty-eight lines long and the last two lines of the first stanza make an interesting volta, although it is reasonable that they belong to the first stanza since they are spoken by the vampire in her sensual defense.

With the second stanza we return to the persona of the poem: he has been vampirized to the marrow of his being:

\[
\text{Quand elle eut de mes os sucé toute la moelle,} \\
\text{Et que languissamment je me tournai vers elle} \\
\text{Pour lui rendre un baiser d'amour, je ne vis plus!} \\
\text{Qu'une outre aux flans gluants, toute pleine de pus!}
\]

He has damned himself to the state of desolation of the poet in *De Profundis clamavi*. The chaos of her embrace leads him into a new clear vision of a cosmos of
nothingness. His marrow is transformed in her body, now "une outre aux flancs gluante," to diseased pus. She is the cosmic machine of corruption, metamorphosing him as well as herself. In the lines that follow he sees she is transforming finally into nothingness. He closes his eyes. A Freudian might read this as an effort to prevent castration, but one might also propose that by closing his eyes he is clarifying and reordering the disorder of her metamorphosis into an aesthetic system:

Je fermai les deux yeux, dans ma froide épouvante,
Et quand je les rouvris à la clarté vivante,
À mes côtés, au lieu de mannequin puissant
Qui semblait avoir fait provision de sang,
Tremblaient confusément des débris de squelette.

(21-25)

Her voluptuousness, his damnation, his life blood and marrow, her corrupting pus, all have disintegrated into the confused pile of skeleton bones, and these bones speak the language of aesthetic. They transform into the weathervane or sign pivoting with the icy wind of eternal winter:

Qui d'eux-mêmes rendaient le cri d'une girouette
Ou d'une enseigne, au bout d'un tringle de fer,
Que balance le vent pendant les nuits d'hiver.

(26-28)

In this occult disintegration we are left in these final lines with only the reality of the poem, the aesthetic posted by the disintegrated poet as squealing, clattering sign on an iron spike. This is Eureka's
symmetry of nothingness. The aesthetic in Poe and Baudelaire is the meaningful system of complex reordering that makes all of this nothingness matter. It is what materializes, analyzes, makes meaning, orders disorder into poetry, and survives essentially as a detached spirit in cosmic nothingness, embracing disorder as it is embraced. To the satanic Baudelaire the symmetry of nothingness has cosmic beauty, and it is meaningful that this absolute disorder should be represented by Baudelaire through the metaphor of the vampire: the reordering of order through its contagion to contradiction and perversity. The correspondences between the aesthetic integration and the vampiric disintegration give the poem such an arabesque intensity that it seems to work structurally as an additional metaphor: its formal character ordering into symmetry at the same moment it reaches maximum disorder by its entropic symbolism of arabesque mirroring and collapse.

The following generation of Decadents and Symbolists were deeply influenced by Baudelaire, and the vampire as entropic angel of the satanic aesthetic was explored with varying degrees of originality by many of them. For example, we find similar images and metaphors in the following Italian sonnet by Gabriele D'Annunzio (1863-
1938). The second sonnet in a short sequence called *Sed Non Satiatus*, from his 1884 collection *Intermezzo di rime*, it is untitled:

O bei corpi di femmine attorcenti 
con le anella di un serpe agile e bianco 
pure io non so da’ vostri allacciamenti 
ancora sazio liberare il fianco. 

Bei seni da la punta erta fiorentì 
su cui mi cade a l'alba il capo stanco 
allor che ne' supremi abbattimenti 
del piacere io m'irrigidisco e manco;

reni feline pe' cui solchi ascendo 
in ritmo con le mie musiche dita 
come su nervi di falcate lire 
denti a' cui morsi facile mi arrendo, 
bocche sanguigne più di una ferita, 
pur m'è dolce per voi così sfiorire.

D'Annunzio's early poems were written under Baudelaire’s influence, as is plainly evident. The poem above shares the same sort of eroticism and aesthetic of disorder of many of the poems of *Les Fleurs du mal*. The coiled bodies of the women in snakelike rings fasten on the lover/victim and he cannot extricate himself. Sensuality rather than cosmic philosophy is emphasized: the Decadent spiraling fall inside the sonnet-serpent coil ends in the post-coital "sfiorire" rather than the icy wind of void. The Decadent poet employs almost an overabundance of animal imagery to describe the voraciousness of these *femmes fatales*. The "bocche sanguigne," wounds making wounds, enervating the poet into a withering, fading universe, make this an explicit
vampire poem. The precise Petrarchan sonnet from octave through sinuous sestet beautifully structures this spiral into a sigh of sexual collapse and entropy.

A much later Modernist example of this kind of Baudelairian vampire poem is Paul Valéry's "La Fausse Morte" from Charmes (1922). This is a work a decade removed from his Symbolist period, but contrasts with D'Annunzio's Decadent poem above with that hard, clear surface of music and language that some scholars have termed the "Valérian shift." This shift directly informs Imagism and Modernism. Valéry himself explains:

Il faudrait faire voir que le langage contient de ressources émoticves mêlée à ses propriétés pratiques et directement significatives. Le devoir, le travail, la fonction du poète sont de mettre en évidence et en action ces puissances de mouvement et d'enchantement, ces excitants de la vie affective et de la sensibilité intellectuelle, qui sont confondus dans le langage usuel avec les signes et les moyens de communication de la vie ordinaire et superficielle. Le poète se consacre et se consume donc à définir et à construire un langage dans le langage; et son opération, qui est longue, difficile, délicate, qui demande les qualités les plus diverses de l'esprit, et qui jamais n'est achevée comme jamais elle n'est exactement possible, tend à constituer le discours d'un être plus pur, plus puissant et plus profond dans ses pensées, plus intense dans sa vie, plus élegant et plus heureux dans sa parole que n'importe quelle personne réelle. Cette parole extraordinaire se fait connaître et reconnaître par le rythme et les harmonies qui la soutiennent et qui doivent être si intimement, et même si
mystérieusement liés à sa génération,
que le son ne se puissent plus séparer
et se répondent indéfiniment dans la
mémoire. (611)

The poem's title evokes the Undead state of the
vampire:

La Fausse Morte

Humblement, tendrement, sur le tombeau charmant
Sur l'insensible monument,
Que d'ombres, d'abandons, et d'amour prodigué
Forme ta grâce fatiguée,
Je meurs, je meurs sur toi, je tombe et je
m'abats,

Mais à peine abattu sur le sépulcre bas,
Dont la close étendue aux cendres me convie,
Cette morte apparente, en qui revient la vie,
Frémît, rouvre les yeux, m'illumine et me morde,
Et m'arrache toujours une nouvelle mort.
Plus précieuse que la vie.

Collapse and renewal on the sepulcre of the undead is here
a positive system of order in disorder. Cycles of new
becomings eternally fed by semen and blood in the ashes of
the grave are structured into a system of reordering where
death is always unreal because it is dearer than life.
The almost sado-masochistic sexual imagery is here
abstracted into a Modernist totalizing surface where
violence is only implied, where vampirism is turned into a
trope of renewal, and the positive complexity of language
has usurped the negative complexity of entropy physics.
However, the poem is clearly resonant with the preceeding
poems by Baudelaire and D'Annunzio.

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All of these poems use the metaphor of falling. Do they represent a system of reflection, disorder, and fall that originates in the entropic physics of disintegration in Poe's vampire arabesques? Certainly we have in these vampires the same demons, transforming order into chaos in a manner corresponding to Poe's disorderers. All of the poems end in collapse through fall. In Baudelaire's three poems we have three implicit falls. "De Profundis clamavi" and "Le Vampire" re-enact the Fall from Eden and further suggest a falling by clear references such as "Du fond du gouffre obscur où mon coeur est tombé" in "De Profundis clamavi" and "Tu n'es pas digne qu'on t'enlève" in "Le Vampire." The more explicit fall in "Les Metamorphoses du Vampire" is a metaphorical one, not only from grace by satanic temptation, but into the monstrous machinery of corruption, ruin, and entropy. The conditional fall of angels in the line "Les anges impuissants se damneraient pour moi" (16) recalls not only the war in Heaven but Edenic Gnostic and Neo-Platonic stories of fall from harmony and perfection to the despondency of the earth-bound laws of corruption and death. The fall of the poet into the vampire mannequin's reflecting disorder takes place through his fragmentation ("Elle eut de mes os sucé toute la moelle") and her mirroring of his being as "une outre aux flancs gluants,
toute pleine de pus," as she disintegrates further into a pile of old bones clacking in "la clarté vivante." In the best way, "Les Métamorphoses du vampire" is a Decadent poem, thus "falling away" from voluptuous flesh to the fragmented skeleton in the mirroring coffin space of narcissistic desire.

The poems by D'Annunzio and Valéry, each a generation more removed from satanic Romanticism, function in similar ways. How they "fall" tells us something about the Decadent era and Modernism. D'Annunzio's "O bei corpi di femmine attorcenti" employs the woman as serpent trope very popular in the Decadence. As Bram Dijkstra demonstrates in his chapter "Connoisseurs and Bestiality and Serpentine Delights," in Idols of Perversity, "Eve and the serpent become coextensive" in fin-de-siècle art and literature (305). The poet reenacts the fall in Eden's garden, held in the coils of the women to rise and fall in their serpentine rhythms until the sweet exhaustion of spent desire prostrates him. His senses are completely disordered. Undoubtedly the poem was intended to shock its public. The twenty-one year old D'Annunzio was only recently arrived in Rome and hungry for reputation as a sensualist, a man worthy of being loved by beautiful women, and as a cosmopolitan poet, conversant with the new Baudelairian systems of meaning of Les Fleurs du mal. In
a way, D'Annunzio has vampirized Baudelaire. The book Intermezzo di rima is unashamedly derivative of the French poet, but also beautiful in the abundance of sensual imagery and melodic language. Baudelaire's intensity and genuine psychic terror are transformed, fallen, reordered into a new system, a coil that speaks with "bocche sanguine più di una ferita." This is the vampire physics of literary influence.

Valéry's poem "La Fausse morte" also falls, but now the falling, mirroring bodies have lost the voluptuousness of Baudelaire's vampires or the loveliness of D'Annunzio's serpentine women and become as cold and abstract as geometry. This is not to say that Valéry is not a superb poet or that "La Fausse morte" is not a beautiful lyric poem, but only to acknowledge its Modernism. With the First World War, satanic Romanticism and Decadent disorder had lost their aesthetic legitimacy. Global conflict, trenches, flame throwers, aerial bombing, and poison gas had strained the tropes of disorder beyond the thinkable, and it is perfectly understandable that the post-war aesthetic would be a totalizing, abstractly-ordered one. Thus in music the disordereding silence and thunder of Mahler gives way to Serialism and in painting Klimt's fragmented sensuality gives way to Cubism.
The poetic persona in "La Fausse morte" says he falls and dies on the "tombeau charmant," the enchanted and unfeeling monument/tomb, "que d'ombres, d'abandons, et d'amour prodiguée / Forme ta grace fatiguée" (1-5). He has fallen, and he cannot get up: "je tombe et je m'abats" (5). But scarcely has his fallen body touched the sepulchre "Dont la close entendue aux cendres me convie" but the dead beloved regains life, trembles, opens her eyes and illuminates him with her vampire bite, "m'illumine et me mord" (6-9). A new death ever waits "Plus précieuse que la vie" to disorder him. This is similar to the undead curse that threatens Baudelaire at the end of "Le Vampire" where "Tes baisers ressusciteraient / Le cadavre de ton vampire!" but in the case of Valéry's poem this curse is a blessing. The mirroring "insensible monument" on which the collapse takes place again and again accompanied by fragmentation and disorder is itself fixed, a petrified vampire lover outside of the cycles of entropic chaos. Disorder collapses into order, fragmentation into fixity, death is perpetually feigned. The vampire of "La Fausse morte" is a metaphor for the ordering aesthetic of the above mentioned Valéryan shift and Modernism generally. We see it demonstrated in Charmes in such poems as "L'Abeille" where:
J'ai grand besoin d'un prompt tourment:
Un mal vif et bien terminé
Vaut mieux qu'un supplice dormant! (9-11)

But the disordering bite is structured in a sonnet as hard and brilliant as enamel where "sens illuminé / Par cette infime alerte d'or" keeps love as alive and fixed as a Petrarchan sonnet. In "Le Vin perdu" the poet pours "Tout un peu de vin précieux" into the chaos of the ocean, "comme offrande au néant" (1-4). The precious wine is diluted, dissolved into the ocean. Pink vapor rises on the water's surface, but then the sea returns to its former transparency. The wine has disordered the ocean rather than dissolving as an "offrande au néant":

Perdu ce vin, ivres les ondes! . . .
J'ai vu boudir dans l'air amer
Les figures les plus profondes . . . (12-14)

"Profound figures" leaping on the waves of an ocean in response to the poet's offering to nothingness make a beautiful metaphor for Valéry's Modernist aesthetic. The potent wine of his imagination orders the universe, conjures profound figures (images and words) on its bright surface of chaos. Collapse, dispersion, and transmutation create new orders of significance, and art remains forever.

The Decadent or Symbolist Movement arrived in England later than on the continent, and though it was a rich period in British poetry it has received relatively little
academic attention. British Decadent prose has been more fortunate with studies on Wilde, Stoker, and Pater now appearing frequently. It is to be hoped that the poetry of Arthur Symons, Lionel Johnson, Ernest Dowson, and John Barlas will appear with more frequency in times to come, and that Yeats's poetry of the fin-de-siècle will be re-evaluated in its Decadent era context. Even Oscar Wilde's poetry has received less attention than it deserves.

Of all these poets, Arthur Symons was the most accomplished in the Baudelairian style, after Swinburne, and the main source for most English-speaking readers for information on the French Decadence with his study *The Decadent Movement in Literature*, first published in 1893. He also produced the first worthy English translation of *Les Fleurs du mal*. He was a lively writer of letters and memoirs as well as criticism, and these have lately received more attention than his poetry.

A significant number of his poems use the motives of the Decadence we have discussed earlier in this chapter. True to the Decadent ideal, the women of his poems are often evil, cruel, and vampirical. These fantasies of evil embodied by women combine the tension of the erotic and aesthetic in an identifiably Decadent mode well established by such poets as Maurice Rollinat. Women as personifications of evil were frequently represented in
poems with mythological themes, such as Paterne Berrichon's "Sphinx" or Rollinat's "A la Circé moderne," but the female vampire was especially popular. As an example here is Rollinat's "Le Succube" from his 1885 collection Les Nevroses:

Toute nue, onduleuse et le torse vibrant,  
La fleur des lupanars, des tripots et des bouges  
Bouclair nonchalamment ses jarretières rouges  
Sur de très longs bas noirs d'un tissu transparent,

Quand soudain sa victime eut ce cri déchirent:  
Je suis dans un brouillard qui bourdonne et qui bouge!  
Mon oeil tourne et s'éteint! où donc es-tu ma gouge?  
Viens! tout mon corps tari te convoite en mourant!

A ces mots, la sangsue exulta d'ironie:  
Si tu veux jusqu'au bout râler ton agonie,  
Je t'engage, dit-elle, à ménager ta voix!

Et froide, elle accueillit, raillant l'affreux martyr,  
Ses suprêmes adieux par un geste narquois  
Et son dernier hoquet par un éclat de rire.

The ironic laughter of a satanic, perverse entropic universe is what awaits desire's victims. Rollinat sang his poems to improvised piano accompaniment to great acclaim in the famous cabaret the Chat Noir:

When he stepped out in front of the curtain of the Chat Noir, the poet-musician seemed a phantom, a spector of neurosis, a demon of metaphysical anxiety. A disciple of Poe and Baudelaire, for whose poems he composed musical settings, Rollinat was able to unnerve audiences with his hallucinatory gestures and demented voice, by twisting his mouth into a hideous grin and
convulsing his face in horror. His nightmarish evocations of madness, evil, and death sent spectators into paroxysms of fright and made their spines tingle with horrified delight. Putrefying corpses, vampires, suicide, diabolism, and inexpressible anguish—these delirious products of his own sick brain he daringly revealed on stage.

(Gerould 179).

Barbey d'Aurevilly, among others, proclaimed Rollinat the true heir and successor to Poe and Baudelaire, and, in a review of Les Nevrosés, he wrote that they had in common:

la poésie du spleen, des nerfs, et du frisson, dans une vieille civilisation matérieliste et dépravée . . . qui est à ses derniers râles et à ses dernières pâmoisons . . . Poésie gâtée dans sa source, physique, maladive, empoisonnée, mauvaise, décomposée par toutes les influences morbides de la fin d'un monde qui expire. (324)

This is why it seems there is a zeitgeist in the second half of the nineteenth century encompassing physics of entropy and the literature of Décadence. Rollinat is almost forgotten, but his macabre performance art must have expressed a time, an aesthetic moment, "decomposée par toutes les influences morbides de la fin d'un monde qui expire." It is again and again reenacted in this century, the fin-de-millénaire, with a continuing Decadent underground; sometimes the echo seems to have faded
completely, sometimes it seems replenished with fresh blood, newly and fully un-dead. The physics remain and so do the aesthetics of dissolution.

Arthur Symons was a devotee of the music hall and cabaret (much to the dismay of his close friend W.B. Yeats) and traveled to France in the late 1880s to meet the leading Symbolists and attend performances at the Chat Noir. During his trips to Paris he understood that his personal mission was to bring the French Symbolists to Britain (literally in the case of Verlaine) and to adapt the Decadent mode to English verse. He abandoned the Robert Browning style he had affected in his *Days and Nights* and wrote seven volumes of verses in the Decadent style. He was editor of *The Savoy*. An important example of his poetry for our study is "The Vampire" from the collection *Lesbia* (1920). The poem was written in 1896, a year before *Dracula* was published:

Intolerable woman, where's the name For your insane complexity of shame? Vampire! white bloodless creature of the night, Whose lust of blood has blanched her chill veins white, Veins fed with moonlight over dead men's tombs; Whose eyes remember many martyrdoms, So that their depths, whose depth cannot be found, Are shadowed pools in which a soul lies drowned; Who would fain have pity, but she may not rest Till she have sucked a man's heart from his breast, And drained his life-blood from him, vein by vein And seen his eyes grow brighter for the pain,
And his lips sigh her name with his last breath,
As the man swoons ecstatically on death.

The poem is a sonnet in rhyming couplets, and it is partly its form and partly its theme that makes it seem hackneyed and derivative. It is the decadence of the Decadent. The "fall" is figured by the very poem itself, one of Symons' least convincing verses. Its artificiality and melodrama is as far of a fall from Rollinat whose work may have seemed derivative ("où Baudelaire écrit vampire, Rollinat met sangsue," wrote critic Charles Maurras in the Gazette de France, November 1st, 1903 at the time of the poet's death in a lunatic asylum), but still it had morbid vitality (179). The convention of the overt vampire poem had become bloodless, and the poem itself says as much.

She, the vampire, is "white bloodless creature of the night / Whose lust of blood has blanched her chill veins white . . .," and her bloodlessness makes her seem as vapid as the poem (3-4). The vampire who has fed as full as the proverbial tick, and is bloated with corrupted blood, has an entropic metaphorical voluptuousness which arouses desire and terror; however, common sense tells us that we should most fear pale and languid vampires. This poem is a hungry and bloodless vampire, so hungry it does not even have the bloody mouth of D'Annunzio's "O bei corpi . . ." or the bloody heart of Rollinat's "Le
Succube." The figure of the vampire in poetry had so exhausted its vitality that it was becoming a metaphor for poetic sterility and ennui.

There is another explicit vampire poem (of course most of the poems in the book are implicit vampire poems) in *Lesbia*, though placed much less prominently ("The Vampire" was the first poem in the book). She appears as a Lamia, a female vampire of classical rather than medieval-folklore type:

*Lamia*

She is the very Lamia of my soul
Does she not bite subtly? Yea, she leaves one whole
Red spot, here in my side, where most I feel
The snake untrodden by the woman's heel.
And she as Lamia veritably trod,
With snake's feet and snake's wings, the ground when God
Planted the Tree of Evil and of Good.
Is she not in the blood that feeds my blood?
Where did she bite most cruelly? Near the heart.
O Lamia, Lamia, will you never depart?

Again, the theme has been often treated better before, though the style is somewhat original. But we are lacking a metaphorical level of reorganization. The vampire is a uniquely appropriate metaphor for entropy because it cannot be fixed as a vampire. If a vampire is staked it automatically becomes something else. In the looking glass of the vampire there is no reflection. To the observer, the vampire may change into anything and even nothing. It is a monster of disorder. Entropy also
evades representation, except finally as patterns in a system of collapsed complexity, an order in disorder, that finds its analogy in the phantom un-dead state of the vampire empire. Symons' "The Vampire" and "Lamia" seem only literarily self-reflexive.

Symons' vampire poems are concerned with energy degeneration and disorder only in so far as it is sexual, and for that reason they are more about succubi than vampires. In one of his memoirs titled "My Planets," he describes his own encounter in Antwerp with a woman whom he believed to be such a monster:

The creature who to my horror kissed me and who caught hold of me with the bestial ferocity of a wild beast was insatiable: so that she reminds me of the immortal Hysteria, . . . I imagine that the creature was under the spell of some catelepsy; never in my life have I been so tormented and so furiously and ignobly attacked as by Flora; a vampire of the worst imaginable kind. She might even have been a succubus. (Symons, Memoirs, 142)

Symons then defines the succubus according to a church work on demonology, and this leads him to discuss the vampire-like Lamia and Keats's poem of that title:

... it is a passionate, almost morbid expression of the conflict between those antagonistic forces which fought their battle out continually within his breast: it is flame-like and its colors dazzle one's eyes with their brilliance. (142)
This is equally true for himself as it is for Keats. The "antagonist forces" at conflict, one supposes, have to do with pain and pleasure in love, the proverbial torment in desire. Symons expands:

Keats is a Decadent before Baudelaire: like him he is Neo-Latin in his insistence on the physical symptoms of his lovers, the bodily translations of emotion. All that trembling and swooning of his lovers would at all events be very much at home in modern French poetry, where love is again, as it was to Catullus and Propertius, a sickness, an exhausting madness, or a poisoning. (143)

As John Munro points out, Symons' later poetry has "the allurements of the flesh and the sinfulness of sexual desire" as its dominant theme, and this theme was the one which was his least successful in execution throughout his career as poet (115). He wrote many excellent poems in the manner of Verlaine where the physics of light and reflection fix a fine surface reality. Certainly there are vampiric consequences in these short lyrics of division, fragmentation, disruption, and disintegration. This is due in part to the entropic consequences of his fragmented images, fascination with surface, and a conscious disregard for unity in the heterogeneous equality of diverse minutiae.

One of his best poems of surface, reflection, and fragmented image was written after watching the celebrated
La Mélinite dance at the Moulin-Rouge in May 1892. The poem "La Mélinite: Moulin-Rouge" was published in the 1895 collection London Nights, which contains many of his better poems about dancers, music halls, and dancing as disorder. The poem is in six stanzas. The first stanza is a lovely symbolist surface of analogy between music and a dancing shower of rose petals:

Olivier Metra's Waltz of Roses
Sheds in a rhythmic shower
The very petals of the flower;
And all is roses,
The rouge of petals in a shower. (1-5)

Symons extends the symbolism into a metaphor for the harmonious order of a complex system in movement:

Down the long hall the dance returning,
Rounds the full circle, rounds
The perfect rose of lights and sounds,
The rose returning,
Into the circle of its rounds. (6-10)

The mystical closed system of the rose is a symbol of perfect unity in the hermetic tradition with which Symons had become associated through Yeats as early as 1891. It specifically signifies the planetary system in harmonious perfection.

The third stanza shifts to the outside margin of this system where a single dancer occupies an alternate space:

Alone, apart, one dancer watches
Her mirrored, morbid grace;
Before the mirror, face to face,
Alone she watches
Her morbid, vague, ambiguous grace. (11-15)
In her self contemplation, she creates a narcissistic system of reflection and disorder. The system is "morbid," Symons tells us twice, and therefore disintegrating. Outside of the aesthetic harmony of the rose, she creates a morbid, mirroring system which subverts and decenters perfect order with its suggestions of duality and satanic parody by shadow:

Before the mirror's dance of shadows
She dances in a dream,
And she and they together seem
A dance of shadows,
Alike the shadows of a dream. (16-20)

She is like the heat loss in a system in entropy. Not only is she transformed into shadow, but her reflective morbidity has degraded the perfect rose into a "dance of shadows." The dance increases the energy and heat of the system of the rose:

The orange-rosy lamps are trembling
Between the robes that turn;
In ruddy flowers of flame that burn
The lights are trembling:
The shadows and the dancers turn. (21-25)

The final stanza ends in a sensuous disintegration of dance and darkness into "mysterious night":

And, enigmatically smiling,
In the mysterious night,
She dances for her own delight,
A shadow smiling
Back to a shadow in the night. (26-30)

The disintegration into entropy that takes place is more truly vampiric (not to mention poetic) than in the
explicit vampire poems. Also, it is a meaningful statement about the physics of aesthetic creation, the mirroring entropy of representation. At its most effective, Symons's Decadent universe is a surface of fragmentary images which flare up and dissolve into shadow, loss, or memory. This sometimes leads to new systems of meaning, especially in his best book Silhouettes (1892), but often not in his later work. The short poem "Pastel" from Silhouettes illustrates Symons at his most figuratively reflective:

The light of our cigarettes
Went and came in the gloom:
It was dark in the little room.

Dark, and then, in the dark,
Sudden, a flash, a glow,
And a hand and a ring I know.

And then, through the dark, a flush
Ruddy and vague, the grace
(A rose!) of her lyric face.

In the closed space of darkness a sporadic glow and flash illumines beauty in a moment of hallucinatory revelation, and then it is but memory in the aesthetic "little room" of growing darkness.

By the 1890s, the vampire had lost meaning as a metaphorical figure in poetry, but its un-dead existence was about to reach new levels of artistic achievement and popularity in prose fiction. Vampires of all kinds—plants, houses, places, animals, and art works—were
appearing as instruments of disorder in the periodicals and magazines published in unprecedented numbers to meet the needs of a literate bourgeois public. In 1897 a complete novel would sustain the vampire theme with unprecedented length and complexity. Dracula was about to take his throne as vampire king of a vampire universe.
Chapter 4

Dracula and Entropy: "On Moonlight Rays as Elemental Dust"

Irishman Bram Stoker's Dracula is one of the most significant novels of the late 19th century Decadence written in English. In the past twenty years its reputation has flourished, in small part due to the reemergence of the vampire into our own fin-de-siècle beginning with the novels of Ann Rice and the BBC TV version of Dracula with Louis Jourdan, but mostly on the merit of its own fascinating, extraordinary content, and its consequent capacity to engage readers of considerable critical range. Ordinary readers love it. If the significance of a text can be measured by the variety of critical approaches applied to it by critics of reputation, then Dracula is certainly significant. In itself it has a vampirical capacity for Protean multiplicity.

Published in 1897 to a mixed critical reception but with great public and commercial success, Stoker himself began the vulgarization of book and vampire with his publication of a six pence abridged paperback in 1901. After his death, his widow, Florence Stoker, published "Dracula's Guest," a posthumously published inferior fragmentary short story that may or may not have originally been written for (and then excised from) Dracula. It is one of the first of many Dracula spinoffs.
From the brilliantined menace of Bella Lugosi through the antics of *Dracula Meets Billy the Kid* to a chocolate cereal for children, and the hybrid genre of vampire soft porn, *Dracula* has enigmatically reemerged to mirror every consumable popular desire. Jennifer Wicke’s assertion that it is "the first great modern novel in British literature" has more advocates every year (467). *Dracula* promises to be one of the most talked about novels for the long term future, whereas the commercial and public culture popularity of the vampire genre *Dracula* inspired seems unending.

This study of *Dracula* will show that the novel is about multiplicity and disorder brought about by the vampirizing of the women of the novel—notably Lucy and Mina—by the cosmic satanic disorderer Dracula, and the consequent attempt to contain and then more completely reorder this vampiric disorder by the men of the novel. It is this writer’s opinion that Mina Murry is the central character of the novel. Dracula himself is more a great amorphous power than a character. He is a "deity," a personification of a cosmos of disorder, avatar of the universal spirit of entropy. The references to him as Satan in the book are significant. He is a being whose existence transcends time and space. He is a propagator of multiplicity and disorder, and is so even after his
supposed "death," as he is reborn again and again in countless new Draculas. However, Mina is the organizing intelligence of this narrative of disorder. Her typewriter with its "manifold" multiplying feature transcribes Harker's shorthand, Seward's phonograph recordings, and the longhand and print artifacts of the several participants/authors into a narrative whole. The result is a novel which the reader may imagine to be more real for its multiplicity controlled by the disordering editorial intelligence of a schoolteacher with technology: the antithesis of the fin-de-siècle imaginary vamp.

But this school teacher with a Remington "Manifold" typewriter is much more than she seems. The admirable Francis Ford Coppola film was near the mark in its representation of Mina as preordained salvation and reincarnated spouse of the great Lord of Disorder than might appear at first viewing. Dracula's Whitby and London strategy leads to Mina, and it is Mina who leads her Victorian pillars of manhood into the Carpathian disorder: right into the portals of Satan's hell. And she leads us too, and teaches us, creates a vampire of a narrative that now consumes us, and vampirically multiplies us to vampirize others. Ken Gelder perceptively writes in his book Reading the Vampire:

Few other novels have been read so industriously as Bram Stoker's Dracula. Indeed, a veritable "academic industry"
has built itself around this novel, growing exponentially in recent years and, in effect, canonising a popular novel which might otherwise have been dismissed as merely "sensationalist."

To enable its canonisation . . . Dracula has become a highly productive piece of writing: or rather, it has become productive through its consumption. To read this novel is to consume the object itself, Dracula, and, at the same time, to produce new knowledge, interpretations, different Draculas.

In this way not only critics are vampires (not an original thought of course) but the history of imaginative literature is a vampirical construct. Writers disorder other writers by acts of vampirism (usually creative) and writers disorder readers, making more writers. Thus all our texts are so many vampires.

Dracula says "Your girls that you all love are mine."

They are satanic. Mina's typewriter transcribes all of the artifacts from the singular to the multiple by her "manifold" function according to the logic of her narrative design, and this design is made by her vampiric desire and undeath--her movement to disorder from day to night and back to day. The men try to save her from Satanic physics, but do they succeed? Instead, has she and her supernatural master disordered them? Have the survivors self-organized into increased complexity?

By being the very personification of disorder--a satanic king vampire with an avowed imperialistic vampire
agenda, self-smuggled from the wild margins into the vortex of the 19th century center of civilization, the largest, richest, and busiest metropolis in the world, to be the lord of a disordering nation of the undead, exponentially growing to total disorder—he is capable of many apparent identities of otherness. As Judith Halberstam writes:

In the context of this novel, Dracula is otherness itself, a distilled version of all others produced by and within fictional texts, sexual science, and psychopathology. He is monster and man, feminine and powerful, parasitical and wealthy; he is repulsive and fascinating, he exerts the consummate gaze but is scrutinized in all things, he lives forever but can be killed. Dracula is indeed not simply a monster, but a technology of monstrosity. (334)

Contemporary critics identify him as capitalist, Jew, Oriental cosmopolitan, ancien régime feudalist, and homosexual. Perhaps he can be all of these (and their opposites).

An important insight to the origins of Dracula is offered to us by referring to Stoker's "Foundation Notes" as presented in Christopher Frayling's Vampyres: From Lord Byron to Count Dracula. The first inspiration for the novel originated in a dream of Stoker's (a similar origin to Frankenstein 74 years earlier) in which as Stoker notes, a "young man goes out—sees girls one tries—to kiss him not on the lips but throat. Old Count
interferes--rage and fury diabolical. This man belongs to me I want him" (Frayling 301). While it is probably true that his dream can be perceived as having a homoerotic content, the striking element to this reader is the super-ego nature of the "old count." And also the parallel between the "old count" of the dream and Sérapion, super-ego abbé of La Morte amoureuse. From that March night in 1890 on, Stoker built a structure of narrative that would make this scene a realization in fiction to touch the dreams of millions. Many readers would no doubt agree that the passage in Chapter Three unquestionably directly inspired by the dream is the most powerful, erotic, and disturbing passage in the entire novel. Certainly it is one of the greatest passages in English language Decadent fiction. In a way it is one of the most central passages in the book. Coming as early as it does, it sets in the reader's imagination the chaos potential in the soul of the vampire wives. These vampire women pose a question that the rest of the novel attempts to resolve--a question about disorder and womankind and desire and Satanism under the surface of our Western world consciousness. How incompatible the notion of super-ego to Dracula as king vampire may be (one might argue that it is irrelevent to continue the super-ego psychoanalysis into the creative play which would cohere later as Dracula, or one may even
argue that Dracula is a counter super-ego making new laws, new physics, in his reorganization into chaos), one certainly sees the consistency with which Stoker draws on his original dream vampire woman as id and disordering agent. It may be noted here that no male character (even Renfield) is actually turned into a vampire in the course of the book. One must imagine that Dracula preferred a status of vampire Lord without other male competition. In fact we may even wonder if Dracula's proposed legion of un-dead is to be almost entirely female. A real ladies' man, Dracula has a special sympathetic relationship with them.

The vampire wives of Chapter Three stand as models of what Lucy can (and does) become and what may be Mina's fate. At the end Mina, nearly a vampire, will become just like them if the band of ordering conventionality composed of Dr. Seward, Professor Van Helsing, Quincey Morris, Arthur Holmswood (soon to be Lord Godalming) and Jonathan Harker do not succeed in destroying Dracula, or as it says in the last words of the novel, if they do not "dare much for her sake" (374). With Mina's "salvation" and Dracula's destruction the men can realize a reordering out of the chaos: a positive progeny of Victorian conventionality mirroring the negative progeny empire of Dracula. They marry non-vampire women and have children—
significantly a boy in the case of Mina and Jonathan Harker, for the female is the capacity for negative disorder as in Gautier and Poe. A daughter would open the potential for the return of the vampire, but with a son there is an appearance of identity by patronymic/patronymy stasis of equilibrium, or cosmic reorder, without which there would be no conventional closure.

The novel proper (that is, after the author's dedication to novelist Hall Caine "Hommy-Beg") begins with a statement claiming the veracity of the novel's events as being incontrovertible because of the way they have been edited or arranged to correspond with the contemporaneous narrative aims of the editor or compiler, namely Mina. This narrative "sequence will be made clear in the writing of them" (xxx). Later in the novel it is made clear that this transcription and collation was Mina's work. In this way also Dracula is Mina's text. As Martin Tropp writes in Images of Fear, "By controlling the source [of language and narrative] Mina gains control over the events and men around her" (160). Can we trust her as controller of the text? Is this text resolved or only repressed? In the patchwork-like construction of Dracula, in a novel of a length inappropriate, according to the best previous authorities on the prose literature of the macabre and fantastic, Gautier and Poe, the story's linearity is
deceiving. Early on we see Dracula's women in their decadent erotic splendor—the most compelling passage in an unusually compelling book—and the rest of the book—before (keeping in mind its dream conception) and after—spin on their axis. The overt tension lies in whether or not disorder will possess the women of the story. The occult tension lies in whether or not their progeny will be monsters in a monstrous universe.

The first articles of evidence in this narrative are entries in the travel journal of Jonathan Harker, erstwhile solicitor's clerk only just passed his exams, risen to the status of solicitor in the office of Peter Hawkins of Exeter in Dorset. He writes shorthand, the first of many new innovations/technologies which play a part in the narrative, working as an ordering technology to counter the disordering machinations of Dracula. Because the journal is encoded in shorthand it may have been saved from destruction at the hands of the Count. Accordingly, it is arcane, an occult disordered language that disrupts the Lord of Disorder, master of a different occultism. We can see how its cypher outrages him in Chapter Four when he intercepts a letter from Jonathan to Mina in shorthand (42). It is an occult technology of a new arcana, one to which Dracula is yet an outsider. It "is a vile thing," says Dracula, "an outrage
upon friendship and hospitality" (42). As Jennifer Wicke writes in "Vampire Typewriting: Dracula and its Media":

The modern office is very far afield from Transylvania, the doomed castle, and the ghostly doings Jonathan experiences there, but shorthand is utterly material to the ramifications of vampirism. Vampirism springs up, or takes command, at the behest of shorthand. Although the pages we open to start our reading of the book look like any printed pages, there is a crucial sense in which we are inducted into Count Dracula lore by the insinuation of this invisible, or translated, stenography. This submerged writing is the modern, or mass cultural, cryptogram. (47)

Wicke notes the ways that contemporaneous technologies (photography, wireless telegraphy, the phonograph, blood transfusion, shorthand) seem to act in the novel as positive-to-negatives to Dracula's negative occult universe.

Consider all the media technologies the novel so incessantly displays and names: the telegraph that figures so largely in the communicative strategies that allow the band to defeat Dracula is an equivalent to the telepathic, telekinetic communication Dracula is able to have with Mina after sealing her into his race with her enforced drinking of his blood. The phonographic records Dr. Seward uses are the reproduction of a voice, of a being, without anybody needing to be present, just as Dracula can insinuate himself as a voice into the heads of his followers, or call them from afar. The Kodak camera captures an image and then allows it to be moved elsewhere, freezing a moment of temporality and sending it across space, in a parallel to Dracula's
insubstantiality and his vitiation of temporality. Like such images he continues to circulate even when separated from his source. (475)

It may be that the new technologies do not signify so much triumph of science over the supernatural as new increasingly complex systems of occult organization, for after all, if Dracula is indeed destroyed at the end—a matter of conjecture—it is in conjunction with older supernatural methods such as staking, beheading, religious accessories, and garlic. The same may be said for the new sciences in Dracula: Darwinism, theories of physiognomy, hypnosis, and psychoanalysis. And, of course, thermodynamics—just as the whole nature of vampirism, of un-dead, is entropic, so entropy is vampirical. Although entropy is not specifically mentioned in the text, the novel is the most entropic of literary forms, and the artifact novel the most entropic of novels. This structural entropy was an aesthetic brain storm by the author, a means to most effectively disorder the reader by apparently "true" evidence, and a structural analogue to vampirism and entropy. What is vampiric about entropy? The universe by transformation/transference has energy degraded from itself—theoretically into black holes of useless heat—and this energy (in accord with the first law of thermodynamics) is not destroyed but continues in a state of decadent or negative energy like the un-dead
survival of the vampire in its darkness, its sinister physics of continuity, its freedom from laws of time and matter. And the heat death of the universe is the final vampirization of the universe. It is nihilism, perhaps; or it is even a photographic-like negative of the universe into something completely perverse and satanic: undeadness. It is thus not living, since neither vital (or useful), nor dead (since energy cannot be destroyed according to the first law of thermodynamics).

How is a vampire like entropy? A vampire degrades and disorders the essence of energy: he, she, or it takes life energy and turns it into something irrecoverably negative. Blood putrefies in the vampire to disease and taints any who drink it, with the result that they become vampires. It is satanic. The vampire is the opposite of Christ just as the heat death universe is the opposite of Christian heaven. The Christian heaven reorders everything into purity, light, and harmony; the entropic final state is totally disordered into darkness, meaninglessness, and the arbitrary perversion of order into the orderliness of complete and absolute disorder. Vampires are aligned with darkness, and degrade light as most directly evident in their inability to be properly captured or reflected by photographs or mirrors. Unquestionably entropy is the physics of disorder and of vampirism. As we continue in
our analysis of Dracula special attention will be given to
instances of the vampire as disorder in symbol, narrative,
and trope.

Jonathan Harker's shorthand journal, transcribed by
Mina into regular typewritten copies as we find out later,
begins in early May (1893, according to Stoker's notes),
the first entry written in Bistritz (Bistrita) after
travelling by train from Munich through Budapest to
Transylvania. In the earliest pages we are following
Harker, Mina's fiance and one of the pillars of convention
and order, into disorder. He has travelled from the
domestic modernity of Exeter in Devon--an easy journey by
train from London, the most populous and modern city of
the age--to "one of the wildest and least known portions
of Europe" (1). Harker adds that he cannot even pinpoint
the precise position of his destination since he "was not
able to light on any map or work giving the exact locality
of the Castle Dracula, as there are no maps of this
country as yet to compare with our own Ordinance Survey
Maps" (2). He has left the orderly world of science,
convention, and measured boundaries to enter the wildest
area of Europe, an area that may be equated with the
unconscious mind or the scientific unknown or the realms
of death. Appropriately for all these analogies Harker
adds, "that every known superstition in the world is
gathered into the horseshoe of the Carpathians, as if it were the centre of some sort of imaginative whirlpool" (2). Even Harker's body is quite disordered by the peppery foods, inspiring "queer dreams" in him and, prefiguring the excessive thirst-appetite of Dracula, causing him "to drink up all the water in my carafe" (2). And he is still thirsty. Harker ends this journal entry with his twilight arrival in Transylvania. At the hotel at Bistritz--at "the frontier . . . for the Borgo pass leads from it into Bukovina"--a letter is waiting for Harker from the Count, giving him precise instructions for his conveyance to the Castle Dracula (3).

The entry for May 4th is brief since it is hastily composed just before boarding the 3 o'clock coach for Bukovina that will drop him off at the Borgo Pass to meet Dracula's carriage. It gives us the literary precedent to the everpopular scene in the inn when the laconic and fearful peasant presses a crucifix on the astonished Western European Protestant outsider journeying vampire-ward. The crucifix is a symbol of cosmic order to battle disorder. Its cross has the four cardinal points fixing the axis of the Earth in the cosmos, as man-made-God is fixed to these points against movement and entropy, oriented on a plane out of time where divine and human meet. Also, the old lady at the hotel (not a peasant in a
quaint inn as usual in the colorful cinema portrayals of this scene) tells him not to travel that night because "It is the Eve of St. George's Day. Do you know that tonight, when the clock strikes midnight, all the evil things in the world will have full sway?" (4). According to older superstitions certain dates in different cultures coincide with earlier pagan festivals when deities or spirits of chaos and evil took temporary control, and Stoker (as we see from his notes) drew on Romanian folklore, setting Harker's descent into disorder on such an occasion.

Stoker, by the way, is rumored to have been a member of the Golden Dawn, contemporaneously with Yeats and Crowley, and would have an appreciation of the occult importance of particular power points on the calendar (Belford 213). Perhaps also Stoker may have considered St. George's Day to be an appropriate date for Harker to enter the world of Dracula, since St. George is reputed to have destroyed a woman-eating dragon (and Dracula means son of a dragon), and in the process saved a noble maid and converted a Libyan town to Christianity. Also, St. George is patron saint of England, and Harker and his companions do no less than save England from reverse colonization by Transylvanian vampirism. In any event, St. George's Eve is such a point in time of cosmic disorder, and symbolizes Harker's movement out of
conventional time as his wild night journey progresses in a manner similar to Romuald's night journey in Gautier's *La Morte amoureuse*.

Stoker's researches into Romanian folklore contributed another interesting device for this chapter. After his coach journey to the Borgo Pass, at first lovely and picturesque and then increasingly "weird and solemn," Harker is met by Dracula's calèche (8). The wild night journey commences. The spectral coachman (later revealed to be Dracula himself) takes advantage of the occasion to run in disorienting circles into the disordering midnight accompanied by the fearfully dismaying howling of wolves through the mountain pass. In this high elevation even the seasons become disordered as "It grew colder and colder still, and fine powdery snow began to fall, so that soon we and all around us were covered with a white blanket" (12). In this snowy midnight Harker describes "a faint flickering blue flame" off the roadside (12). This is the blue flame that Romanian folklore says appears on St. George's Eve to reveal locations of hidden treasure. The coachman/Dracula stops (to Harker's distress) and marks these stashes of abandoned gold with mounds of stones, probably to dig up the treasure at his leisure. Dracula is a hoarder of gold. His relationship to gold coins is notably curious. He has a pile of gold in his
room. Later in the novel he even "bleeds" gold coins (302). Judith Halberstam writes, "Dracula is (rather than represents) gold, his body bleeds gold, it stinks of corruption, and it circulates within many discourses as a currency of monstrosity" (349). Of course Halberstam writes in the context of a Marxist reading, and Marx himself effectively used the vampire as a metaphor for the economics of capital, but the point is valid in the context of entropy, for gold is by nature currency, figurative wealth. It is vampirical, as Marx asserts. Itself it is not subject to degeneration through use, but each use as representative currency degrades what it represents. Also, by removing gold from currency of the living for the use of the dead or supernatural beings (e.g. leprechauns, niebelungen, mummies, trolls) drains its vitality from the living. Hording is non-entropic, but when the horder is outside the currency of the living then the result is completely entropic, similar to energy in a cosmic black hole.

Harker describes a particularly disturbing scene at the final halt for the blue flame treasure:

At last there came a time when the driver went further afield than he had yet done, and during his absence the horses began to tremble worse than ever and to snort and scream with fright. I could not see any cause for it, for the howling of the wolves had ceased altogether; but just then the moon, sailing through the black clouds,
appeared beyond the jagged crest of a beetling, pineclad rock, and by its light I saw around us a ring of wolves, with white teeth and lolling red tongues, with long sinewy limbs and shaggy hair. They were a hundred times more terrible in the grim silence which held them than even when they howled. (12-13)

Harker is frozen in "a sort of paralysis of fear" (13). The structure of the scene—its geometry—is most effective. The silent circle of still, savage predators ringed around a small calèche more appropriate to the suburbs of a European city than the frontiers of superstition seems to prefigure the supernatural cosmic threat of Dracula, god of disorder, to protagonists of the novel. Harker is surrounded by ravenousness. He is at the center of an immobilizing closed system waiting to devour. Above, the celestial breaks into this closed system, but only to contribute negatively with the entropic light of the cold, eerie moon. The closed entropic system of the circle of wolves is then broken horizontally by Dracula (in garb of coachman) penetrating the circle:

How he came there, I know not, but I heard his voice raised in a tone of imperious command, and looking towards the sound, saw him stand in the roadway. As he swept his long arms, as though brushing aside some impalpable obstacle, the wolves fell back and back further still. (13)
Thus, Dracula enters the circle of static fear just like a satanic creator, disordering stasis with his infusion of negative energy parodising the Christian refutation of entropy which places an eternal positive creator outside the universe. And thus, the moon—the sun of the vampire negative universe—completes the satanic parody.

And Harker, the calèche, and coachman move on, ascending up to "the courtyard of a vast ruined castle, from whose tall black windows came no ray of light" (13). We again approach an entropic house like the House of Usher: a structure that devours light and the living into the entropic un-dead. It is the classic castle of the supernatural—living things enter but are seen no more.

Chapter two continues Harker's narrative, his journal written in shorthand, with an entry for the fifth of May. There are several passages in his description of Dracula's castle and Dracula himself which suggest disorder and entropy. Harker writes "In the gloom the courtyard looked of considerable size, and as several dark ways led from it under great round arches it perhaps seemed bigger than it really is" (14). The courtyard is like the mouth of an entropic machine and the dark ways through the round arches are like ducts to swallow spent energy. Meaningfully, Harker adds, "I have not yet been able to see it by daylight" (14). Through what light there is he
noticed a massively carved great door and stone doorway. He comments that the carving "had been much worn by time and weather" (15). Harker waits at the door. There is no bell or knocker, so Harker waits as if in "a horrible nightmare" (15). Finally, the door swings back after a great racket of rattling chains and clanking bolts, and Dracula stands in the doorway "clad in black from head to foot, without a single speck of colour about him anywhere" (15). Black absorbs all light. Even his clothes are symbolic of entropy.

Some of Dracula's physical features are feral-like: his palms are hairy, his nails "long and fine, cut to a sharp point," his ears "pale and at the tops extremely pointed" (17). These wild animal features indicate a "residuum" of degeneracy, according to nineteenth-century physiognomy, as Laura Sagolla Croley points out in her essay "The Rhetoric of Reform in Stoker's Dracula: Depravity, Decline, and the Fin-de-Siècle 'Residuum.'" Ernest Fontana, in "Lombroso's Criminal Man and Stoker's Dracula," also discusses the atavistic decadent characteristics of Dracula as in accordance with the late nineteenth-century pseudoscience of recognized degenerate criminal types. The critical perception that Dracula is representative of nineteenth-century stereotypes of people of Jewish antecedents seems fanciful, perhaps suggested
more by some cinematic treatments of the vampire than Stoker's. But then the speculations suggesting a connection between Dracula's hording of gold, his cosmopolitanism, and his desire to infiltrate and conquer western Europe with ideas widely circulating among anti-semites in the 1890s are not without interest. Possibly Stoker made some unconscious associations, though one might as easily make the case for these characteristics as being associated with London-based Scots or expatriate Indian princes. Nonetheless, these critical approaches can often help illuminate the cultural context of the author.

Harker provides Dracula with his services as solicitor to take possession of Carfax, an estate at Purfleet in East London. Carfax has all of the attributes of an entropic vampire house. Harker had made notes about the house for Dracula:

> It is surrounded by a high wall, of ancient structure, built of heavy stones, and has not been repaired for a large number of years. The closed gates were of heavy old oak and iron, all eaten with rust. (22)

The house has been added to "all periods back" "in a very straggling way" over centuries since its earliest medieval incarnation. It has "a deep, dark looking pond or small lake." Dracula has found his new castle, a headquarters for his foreign incursion into the fin-de-siècle and the
new century beyond. More important to the novel's plot (and, through Renfield and Seward, Dracula's London strategy) than the reader (or Harker) can know at that time is its entropy picturesque proximity to "a very large house only recently added to and formed into a private lunatic asylum" (23).

Over the days (or, rather, nights, as most of their interaction is at night: a disordering factor that puts Harker at a disadvantage) Dracula uses Harker for conversational practice in the English language. Soon Harker realizes he is actually a prisoner in the castle. Gradually he understands that Dracula means him permanent harm. These journal entries are fascinating for the subtle way that Dracula's sinister intentions are revealed. In the entry to May 8 we find the memorable occurrence with the shaving mirror: one of the most famous instances involving the physics of light and vampires. Harker realizes Dracula has no reflection, an example of his uncanny entropic nature. He cannot reflect light because he is himself a trope for its physics in decadence.

In chapter 3 Harker's helplessness increases. Under pressure from the Count, he writes letters to England indicating he will remain at Castle Dracula another month. The sinister world of Dracula holds him prisoner. A
haunting image particularly disorders Harker. He observes Dracula leaving lizard-like from his chamber:

As I leaned from the window my eye was caught by something moving a storey below me . . . What I saw was the Count's head coming out from the window . . . I was at first interested and somewhat amused, . . . but my very feelings changed to repulsion and terror when I saw the whole man slowly emerge from the window and begin to crawl down the castle wall over that dreadful abyss, face down, with his cloak spreading out around him like great wings. (33-34)

The disordering character of this sight is almost enough to make him mad.

In the entry from May 15, Harker sees Dracula leave the castle again in the above manner and he searches for a way to escape. He wanders through the castle seeking an escape from its confines. The doors are locked that would offer most hope, so he searches for Dracula's own room where he hopes to find keys.

One or two small rooms near the hall were open, but there was nothing to see in them except old furniture, dusty with age and moth-eaten. At last, however, I found one door at the top of a stairway, which, though it seemed to be locked, gave a little under pressure . . . This was evidently the portion of the castle occupied in bygone days for the furniture had more air of comfort than any I had seen. The windows were curtainless, and the yellow moonlight, flooding in through the diamond panes, enabled me to see even colours, whilst it softened the wealth of dust which lay

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over all and disguised in some measures
the ravages of time and the moth. (35)

He finds comfort in this change from his own rooms with
their immediate associations to Dracula's threats and
sinister authority. He makes himself comfortable:

Here I am, sitting at a little oak table
where in old times possibly some fair
lady sat to pen . . . her ill-spelt love
letter, and writing in my diary in
shorthand all that has happened since I
closed it last. It is nineteenth
century up-to-date with a vengeance. And
yet, unless my senses deceive me, the
old centuries had, and have powers of
their own which mere 'modernity' cannot
kill. (35)

With these sentences meaningfully positioning the feminine
with ancient powers and the inadequacy of the
technological organization of the modern, Harker dozes in
the strange chamber despite Dracula's injunction against
his sleeping in any room of the castle but his own. The
scene is set for the extraordinary passage of the vampire
women aforementioned. The next entry of Harker's contains
this first of the three most significant episodes
concerning women and vampirism and decadence/disorder, the
prologue to the struggle for Lucy and Mina's souls with
the lord of disorder.

It is interesting to note that the chamber seems
evidently a lady's chamber, and through the dust and decay
Harker's encounter with woman as vampire is set in the
mouldering scene "where of old ladies had sat and sung and
lived sweet lives whilst their gentle breasts were sad for their menfolk away in the midst of remorseless wars" (36). Indeed, such a plight as Mina experiences in her late nineteenth-century context, although she herself is oblivious to what remorseless war her fiancé is fighting. We are given then to perceive the once living and sweet occupants of the room as being like Mina. But now Harker is to encounter them on a different plane of reality, transformed by degrees into monsters:

I suppose I must have fallen asleep; I hope so, but I fear, for all that followed was startlingly real—so real that now, sitting here in the broad, full sunlight of the morning, I cannot in the least believe that it was all sleep. (36)

In this dreamy un-dream, somewhat akin to a hypnotic trance, Harker encounters these "ladies" whose chamber he has entered, and through his eyes we see them progress from Mina-like respecters of ladylike proprieties to sensual women or girls to sexual animals to feral predators to perverse devourers of children. As mentioned previously, this foreshadows the doom of Lucy and the threatened doom of Mina, and also displays the way their decadence disorders the male consciousness to madness, and cosmic order to chaos. In a way, the scene presents the very essence of the novel.
In his trance, Harker realizes that he is not alone. The room has gained an added luminosity suggested to the reader by Harker's description of "brilliant moonlight, my own footsteps marked where I had disturbed the long accumulation of dust" (36). There follows the memorable description of the vampire women:

In the moonlight opposite me were three young women, ladies by their dress and manner. I thought at the time that I must be dreaming when I saw them, for, though the moonlight was behind them, they threw no shadow on the floor. They came close to me and looked at me for some time and then whispered together. Two were dark, and had high aquiline noses, like the Count's, and great, dark, piercing eyes, that seemed to be almost red when contrasted with the pale yellow moon. (37)

These two vampire women would seem to be near relations by blood (in the conventional sense) of Count Dracula. Some psychoanalytic critics have suggested that Stoker unconsciously has thus added incest into the growing hodgepodge of repressed sexual content. Certainly Stoker has consciously evoked the aristocratic marriage of near relatives especially common in central and eastern Europe and brought into public focus by the inherited inbred characteristics of such families as the Hapsburgs, Romanovs and Bavarian Wittelsbachs. But it is the blonde vampire that particularly disturbs and arouses Harker:

The other was fair, as fair can be, with great, wavy masses of golden hair and eyes like pale sapphires. I seemed
somehow to know her face, and to know it in connection with some dreamy fear, but I could not recollect at the moment how or where. (37)

As Gail B. Griffin points out in "'Your Girls That You All Love Are Mine': Dracula and the Victorian Male Sexual Imagination," the reader is here only brought into the dark, personal demons of Harker's psyche as he "recognizes the blonde vampire 'in connection with some dreamy fear.' This is a fairly significant line, as it is virtually the only one in the novel which acknowledges the link between the female vampires and some part of the hero's psychology" (138).

There then follows an evocative passage describing their otherworldly vampire characteristics:

All three had brilliant white teeth, that shone like pearls against the ruby of their voluptuous lips. There was something about them that made me uneasy, some longing and at the same time some deadly fear. I felt in my heart a wicked, burning desire that they would kiss me with those red lips. (37)

As Griffin notes, "For the first time vampirism is linked with stifled obsessive sexuality, all the more urgent because forbidden; and this sexuality is represented as female" (139). Harker's senses are disordered with desire, the male impetus to organization and reason is falling apart, dissolving, decentering in voluptuousness. The vampire women's seductive laughter sounds like a glass
harmonica, a cold, ethereal sound which will be suggested in later encounters with female vampires:

They whispered together, and then they all three laughed--such a silvery, musical laugh, but as hard as though the sound never could have come through the softness of human lips. It was like the intolerable, tingling sweetness of waterglasses when played on by a cunning hand. (37)

The blonde vampire is given precedence for some undisclosed reason. From that of "ladies" their behavior becomes more like young women or even girls. The coy way the blonde is urged on by her dark haired sisters, the coquettish, laughing approach she makes to the entranced Jonathan, seems almost as innocent as a flirtation at a country fair. But from girl she quickly becomes sensual seductress:

The fair girl shook her head coquettishly, and the other two urged her on. One said:-- "Go on! You are first, and we shall follow; yours is the right to begin." The other added:-- "He is young and strong; there are kisses for us all!"

I lay quiet, looking out under my eyelashes in an agony of delightful anticipation. The fair girl advanced and bent over me till I could feel the movement of her breath upon me.

And at this time the fair girl regresses to predatory animal, as first described by the smell of her breath:

Sweet it was in one sense, honey-sweet, and sent the same tingling through the nerves as her voice, but with a bitter underlying the sweet, a bitter offensiveness, as one smells in blood.
I was afraid to raise my eyelids, but
looked out and saw perfectly under the
lashes. The fair girl went on her knees
and bent over me, fairly gloating.
There was a deliberate voluptuousness
which was both thrilling and repulsive,
and as she arched her neck she actually
licked her lips like an animal, till I
could see in the moonlight the moisture
shining on the scarlet lips and on the
red tongue as it lapped the white sharp
teeth. Lower and lower went her head as
the lips went below the range of my
mouth and chin and seemed about to
fasten on my throat. (38)

In his "agony of delightful anticipation," Harker thrills
masochistically to this assault of a predatory, sexually
aggressive female. This scene was inspired directly by
Stoker's germinal dream mentioned earlier, and vibrantly
depicts a major figure in all the arts of the Decadence:
the sadistic, sexually aggressive, predatory female. And
as we have discussed before, this figure is a trope, a
correspondance, for a cosmic disordering of psyche and
universe. This figure as vampire is amplified even more,
pregnant with the sexual, entropic, and satanically
perverse, a complex chord resonating through the writings
of Baudelaire, Symons, D'Annunzio, Wilde, Swinburne, and
scores of other Decadents. Exquisitely, the predatory
sexual animal turns vampire:

Then she paused, and I could hear the
churning sound of her tongue as it
licked her teeth and lips, and could
feel the hot breath on my neck. Then
the skin of my throat began to tingle as
one's flesh does when the hand that is
to tickle it approaches nearer--nearer.
I could feel the soft, shivering touch of the lips on the supersensitive skin of my throat, and the hard dents of two sharp teeth, just touching and pausing there. I closed my eyes in a languorous ecstasy and waited—waited with a beating heart. (38)

At that moment Count Dracula as perverse satanic super-ego intrudes, and as he stops the blonde's attack she becomes completely bestial:

As my eyes opened involuntarily I saw his strong hand grasp the slender neck of the fair woman and with giant's power draw it back, the blue eyes transformed with fury, the white teeth champing with rage, and the fair cheeks blazing red with passion. (38)

Just as in the dream in which Dracula has its origins, the Count claims Harker as off limits to the vampire women until he is "done with him" (38-39). The Count even uses the words from Stoker's dream, "This man belongs to me!" (38).

The sexual character of Harker's encounter with the vampire women is unmistakable. Certainly it shows the fascination coupled with fear that Victorian males felt toward female sexuality. The transformations of the blonde from pretty coquette to sexual aggressor to predator to champing fury indicate the way a misogynistic society may have perceived the freely sexual woman. The tension of desire and fear she elicits is also a strong metaphor for the threat of disordered society,
particularly of changing gender roles. The New Woman, mentioned several times in the novel, might seem to have some elements of the perverse. However, the perversity of the vampire women is more disordering than the simply social and sexual perverse. Beyond this undoubted metaphor is a cosmic perversity. These women represent the disorder of a universe destined to entropy symbolized by the final horror in Chapter Three that totally disorders Harker's consciousness.

After Dracula throws the women back from their intended victim the blonde vampire is transformed again into a flirtatious woman, perversely arch after her earlier animal fury:

The fair girl, with a laugh of ribald coquetry, turned to answer him:-- "You yourself never loved; you never love!"
On this the other women joined, and such a mirthless, hard soulless laughter rang through the room that it almost made me faint to hear; it seemed like the pleasure of fiends. Then the Count turned, after looking at my face attentively, and said in a soft whisper:-- "Yes, I too can love; you yourselves can tell it from the past. Is it not so? Well, now I promise you that when I am done with him, you shall kiss him at your will." (39)

There is a suggestion of homoerotic desire in this passage, especially in the context of Dracula's fury and violence to the vampire women, accompanying his
pronouncement: "This man belongs to me!" Critics have theorized that the vampire's oral desire for blood is an oral sadism where the unconscious substitutes blood for semen. This was first suggested by Ernest Jones in his chapter on the vampire in his 1931 monograph On the Vampire. Jones stated that the vampire myth "yields plain indications of most kinds of sexual perversions" (398). He was also the first to suggest the blood-semen equivalence within the vampire legend (411). Jones's psychoanalytic exploration of the vampire also offers an additional insight into vampirism and regression:

When the more normal aspects of sexuality are in a state of repression there is a tendency to regress towards less developed forms. Sadism is one of the chief of these, and it is the earliest form of this—known as oral sadism—that plays such an important part in the vampire belief. (411-12)

It seems plausible to suggest a bisexuality to Dracula's vampirism until one discovers that he does not bite Harker or any other male. Appropriately, the female vampires (including Lucy Westenra) only bite males. It would seem reasonable to suggest that Dracula's assertion that he "too can love" refers to his seduction and pollution of the vampire women. This is a case of linguistic entropy. The word "love" falls apart and degenerates in its multiplicity. The surprising inappropriateness of its use in this scene by the blonde
vampire accompanied by the "mirthless, hard, soulless laughter" of the other vampire women, implies a degeneration of language. The "love" of Dracula carries this linguistic inadequacy into a kind of oral sadism itself. The mouth pollutes life and language. Beauty and perversity are combined in these pages into a marvelous satanic tension. The bestial and ethereal are combined in the blonde vampire as a cosmic trope of desire in an entropic vampire universe.

This trope is further developed in the conclusion of the scene in a manner that disorders Harker's psyche to the annihilation of consciousness. One of the female vampires asks "Are we to have nothing tonight?" (39). She points to a bag Dracula "had thrown upon the floor, and which moved as though there were some living thing within it" (39). Dracula nods, and the vampire women become completely the perversion of the Victorian ideal. Instead of nurturers of infants, they are devourers of infants:

One of the women jumped forward and opened it. If my ears did not deceive me there was a gasp and a low wail, as of a half-smothered child. The women closed round, whilst I was aghast with horror; but as I looked they disappeared, and with them the dreadful bag. (39)

There is something suitably entropic in the way they disappear with their dinner into the darkness:

There was no door near them, and they could not have passed me without my
noticing. They simply seemed to fade into the rays of the moonlight and pass out through the window, for I could see outside the dim, shadowy forms for a moment before they entirely faded away. (39)

These vampires come and go as fragmented specks of dust (52) dancing in moonlight, gathering into "phantom" shapes or dissolving into nothing. Dracula himself sometimes appears in the form of phosphorescent sparks, and "on moon-light rays as elemental dust"--an excellent image of degraded or fragmented energy (236).

In Chapter Four Harker is frustrated again in his attempts to escape. Dracula forces him to write postdated letters as though sent on his proposed route for home. Harker is in despair. "I know now the span of my life. God help me!" he writes in his journal, aware that the postdated letters are a ruse to absolve the Count from suspicion after his disappearance. He tries to send a letter to Mina in shorthand by the gypsies encamped in the courtyard, but Dracula intercepts it. Slovaks come with great leiter-waggons to collect the Count's boxes of earth. Then on the last days of June Harker realizes he has been left alone in the castle with the vampire women and makes his desperate and perilous escape.

With Chapter Five the novel leaves Harker's journal for the time being and the scene shifts to England and the world of Mina Murry, Lucy Westenra, Dr. Jack Seward,
Quincey Morris, and Arthur Holmwood. Eventually Professor Van Helsing of Amsterdam joins these characters to help them fight the blight of vampirism brought by the Count's immigration to England. The narrative structure is more successful and sophisticated than is usually found in horror or gothic fiction, largely due to the innovative use of technology in the plot by Stoker. His use of artifact and technology was a strategy to give the narrative an up-to-date credibility. Curiously, it was Dracula's contemporaneity and narrative innovation to which Stoker's harsher critics took exception in the Athenaeum and the Spectator (Senf 59-61). It is only recently that Stoker's strategies have received adequate appreciation and analysis, particularly in David Seed's "The Narrative Method of Dracula" and Jennifer Wicke's "Vampiric Typewriting: Dracula and its Media."

The English events in the novel are chronicled by letters, journals, phonographic recordings, newspaper articles, and telegrams. The plot is fragmented into the several experiences, observations, and opinions of the main characters. One might suppose that Stoker would have even incorporated snapshots of Carfax if the publishing technology of the 1890s had permitted. Kodak amateur photography is mentioned in the text. With the multiplicity of narrative voices and technologies, edited
and typed into a unified text by Mina, the novel's structure is analogous to the subject matter, the disordering fragmentation of the non-vampiric characters in their struggle with a vampire cosmos that will require them to reorder into new complex systems.

The second scene of great importance in the novel, one of the most memorable in horror literature, is the destruction of the vampire which Lucy Westenra has become in her crypt on Hampstead Heath. Her descent into the state of vampirism and the state of sexualized woman as un-dead is the principal matter of chapters Five through Sixteen. As Lucy is vampirized by Dracula she becomes more grotesque, and yet more sexualized. Once she joins the un-dead she is transformed into the phantom "bloofer lady" of Hampstead Heath, feeding on children just like the three vampire women in the Castle. The women of Dracula are the completely sexualized vampires/females. In the presence of such women, men are absorbed to enervation. Their masculine vitality is put into jeopardy. The satanic aspect of the vampire woman is centered in her sexuality and its capacity to disorder and waste the psyche and fluids, as in the ancient tradition of the succubus.

Leading up to the scene of destruction in Lucy's tomb is the scene in which Quincey Morris, Arthur Holmwood, and
Dr. Seward are brought by Professor Van Helsing to witness Lucy's wandering from her tomb. Gail B. Griffin believes that this is the climax of the novel "structurally and emotionally." She suggests that the scene is "a mock-Resurrection, where Lucy's apostles find an empty tomb and meet with their risen beloved, as the moon emerges from the clouds" (141). This is appropriate to the idea of Dracula as a force of satanic creation rather than a mere "character." The climax of the novel, however, would more likely be the destruction of Lucy. The reconnoissance of Lucy's tomb by Van Helsing and Lucy's lovers seems a prelude to this famous scene which mirrors so effectively the scene of Harker with the vampire women.

Van Helsing is a mirror positive to the entropic negative of Dracula. He is also a super-ego type, and his laws and rules are meant to reorganize what has been disordered into new systems of meaning. Like Dracula he takes blood, but instead of entropically polluting it like a vampire, he gives temporary recovery to the victim of vampirism by blood transfusion. He is a scientific anti-vampire, restoring blood and life. Like Dracula, he can hypnotize people into trances. He has an encyclopedic grasp of history and occult lore, the result of his tireless scholarship, while Dracula's vision of history and knowledge of occultism are products of his violent and
predatory experiences both alive and un-dead. Van Helsing is Dracula's greatest enemy, his nemesis, and his positive mirroring double. His Catholicism is instrumental in checking Dracula at every turn, and he is the representative of that anti-entropic doctrine which believes in a final state of the universe made whole, perfect, and harmonious. Van Helsing is even credited by Renfield to have "revolutionized therapeutics by his discovery of the continuous evolution of brain-matter . . . ," certainly an anti-entropic pseudo-discovery (241). While it is Jonathan Harker who "kills" Dracula, a fitting Victorian conclusion since he is the outraged husband of Mina, it is Van Helsing who makes the event possible. Without Van Helsing, London would have become a city blighted by vampirism, a fictional possibility effectively explored in Kim Newman's *Anno Dracula*. Newman's novel takes as its premise that the invasion scene at Carfax in Chapter Nineteen leads to the rout of Dracula's enemies and his victorious pollution of Britain by his vampire progeny.

In Chapter Fifteen Van Helsing tries to convince Lucy Westenra's fiance and admirers that she has become a vampire, that since her burial she has joined the un-dead, and that since they love her more than anyone it is their manly obligation to end her perverse, unnatural, loathsome
hunger for the blood of young male children. The three men, Lucy's fiance Arthur (now Lord Godalming), Jack Seward, and Quincey Morris, form a trinity which mirrors the trinity of vampire women in Castle Dracula. They are appalled by Van Helsing's proposal to behead and stake the vampire Lucy, but reluctantly agree to follow him into the tomb because of his sincerity and past love of Lucy.

Chapter Sixteen is composed of two entries in Dr. Seward's phonographic diary. The first entry is the perverse resurrection scene mentioned above, the second is the determined destruction of Lucy by her lovers. Because all of the men (even Van Helsing) gave Lucy blood through transfusion before her joining the un-dead, they are like her husbands. That blood transfusion is analogous to marriage is suggested twice in the book; that Dracula's blood drinking is a kind of marriage is implied in his psychic bonding with Mina and Lucy during their victimization. On an unconscious level it is easy to see how blood transfusion and vampirism could be equated with marriage and its "mixing blood" by procreation. Perhaps an analogy can also be found in the mixing of fluids in the sex act. Lucy herself forecasts her "marriage" to three suitors in a letter to Mina on the occasion of her betrothal to Arthur Holmwood: "Why can't they let a girl marry three men, or as many as want her, and save all this
trouble?" (58). Lucy becomes more sexualized, she absorbs more energy through her transfusions, and acquires, as Christopher Bentley states, "a freedom and promiscuity that could not possibly be described in actual terms, especially when the central figure is as chaste and respectable as that of her friend Mina" (27-28). By Chapter Sixteen and the negative resurrection, Lucy Westenra ("Light of the West") has been totally transformed from a young upperclass debutant to a trope of absolute perversity of entropic disorder--the vampire woman as satanic parody of wife, daughter, and mother. It would be shortsighted to consider this merely a misogynistic fantasy: as discussed in previous chapters this vampire woman is a trope (in a misogynistic society, of course) of an entropic and nihilistic disordering universe. Thus her lovers see decadent Lucy at her tomb at midnight as described by Seward in his phonographic journal:

My own heart grew cold as ice, and I could hear the gasp of Arthur as we recognized the features of Lucy Westenra, but yet how changed. The sweetness was turned to adamantine, heartless cruelty, and the purity to voluptuous wantonness . . . Van Helsing raised his lantern and drew the slide; by the concentrated light that fell on Lucy's face we could see that the lips were crimson with fresh blood, and that the stream had trickled over her chin and stained the purity of her lawn death-robe. (208)
Like the blonde vampire woman in Dracula's Castle, Lucy has become potentially feral and animal-like as well as lasciviously voluptuous:

When Lucy . . . saw us she drew back with an angry snarl, such as a cat gives when taken unawares; then her eyes ranged over us. Lucy's eyes in form and colour; but Lucy's eyes unclean and full of hell-fire, instead of the pure, gentle orbs we knew . . . . As she looked her eyes blazed with unholy light and the face became wreathed with a voluptuous smile. Oh, God, how it made me shudder to see it! With a careless motion, she flung to the ground, callous as a devil, the child that up to now she had clutched strenuously to her breast, growling over it as a dog growls over a bone. (208)

Lucy has been caught in the process of devouring the blood of a small child, just as we see through Harker's eyes the vampire women in the Castle take a child as victim. Lucy and the vampire women in the Castle are negative, entropic mothers. As Griffen writes, "she has become a demonic mother-parody, taking nourishment from children instead of giving it, as do the three women at the castle" (143). And the "children" she would make would be monsters.

Another resonance to Harker's encounter with the vampire women at the Castle comes with the sound of Lucy's voice as she attempts "with a languorous, voluptuous grace" to draw Arthur to her arms: "There was something diabolically sweet in her tones--something of the tingling
of glass when struck—which rang through the brains even of us who heard the words addressed to another" (209).

Arthur "under a spell" opens his arms to the vampire Lucy, but Van Helsing springs forward and wards her off with a crucifix. She makes a dash for the tomb from which Van Helsing has sealed her with pieces of the sacramental Host. She feels the invisible power of the bread made flesh:

Never did I see such baffled malice on a face; and never, I trust, shall such ever be seen again by mortal eyes. The beautiful colour became livid, the eyes seemed to throw out sparks of hell-fire, the brows were wrinkled as though the folds of flesh were the coils of Medusa's snakes, and the lovely, bloodstained mouth grew to an open square, as in the passion masks of the Greeks and Japanese. (208)

It is as if the full wrath of pagan evil (to the Victorian imagination) had erupted in her lovely being, checked from escape between Van Helsing's "little golden crucifix" and the sacred Host. The Host is part of Christian communion, of course, which is the positive mirroring of vampirism (or, it may be argued, vampirism is the negative mirroring of Christian communion, though it would seem vampirism has a more ancient tradition). For the Catholic Van Helsing, ingestion of the blood and body of Christ washes away the taint of mortality and holds the promise of eternal life, a state that mirrors the un-dead of the vampire, but in a
positive anti-entropic system of reorganized perfection. The blood and body is Jesus incarnate, God made man, the one God whose trinity is the secret of absolute unity and cosmic order. The vampire survives on the blood of humankind and animalkind, and the ingestion of mortality which brings a disorganization, pollution, decadence, and multiplicity that mirrors transcendent unity. As mentioned above, the cross is an ancient symbol of fixity and order, both in its most ancient figure as swastika, representing the axis of the poles and the cardinal points of a solar wheel (Cirlot 323) and Egyptian Ankh, as well as the Platonic sutures with which the Demiurge joins up the "broken parts of the world-soul" (Cirlot 70). In Christianity it is the great symbol of life beyond death with a benign creator, of which the state of un-dead Lucy with the king vampire Dracula is a satanic parody.

At this dramatic moment Van Helsing asks Arthur's permission to destroy the vampire Lucy has become. With his consent, Van Helsing traps Lucy in her tomb:

We could hear the click of the closing lantern as Van Helsing held it down; coming close to the tomb, he began to remove from the chinks some of the sacred emblem which he had placed there. We all looked on in horrified amazement as we saw, when he stood back, the woman, with a corporeal body as real at the moment as our own, pass in through the interstice where scarce a knife-blade could have gone. We all felt a glad sense of relief when we saw the
Professor calmly restoring the strings of putty to the edges of the door.
(209-210)

The second part of Chapter Sixteen consists of the "29 September, night" journal entry of Jack Seward (210). At noon the trinity of suitors and their leader, Van Helsing, return to the cemetery and enter Lucy's tomb. Van Helsing lifts the lid off the coffin and they look at the "death-beauty" of her body, Arthur—her fiance—"trembling like an aspen" (211). It is the sexualized vampire Lucy they see. "Is this really Lucy's body, or only a demon in her shape?" Arthur asks (211). They set out to destroy this "nightmare of Lucy" with "operating knives" and "a round wooden stake, some two and a half or three inches thick and about three feet long" (211). The stake is unmistakably phallic: "One end of it was hardened by charring in the fire, and was sharpened to a fine point" (211). Van Helsing has illuminated the tomb like a surgery with "a small oil lamp, which gave out, when lit in a corner of the tomb, gas which burned at a fierce heart with a blue flame" and he lays out his "operating knives" at hand as if for a medical operation (211). Vampirism is often treated in the novel as if it was a communicable disease, and it is notable how the science and superstition are combined without irony by Van Helsing, as in his discussion with Seward about "possible
impossibilities" in Chapter 14 (188-190). It is impossible not to reflect on the way that the epidemic problem of venereal disease (at that time incurable) must have contributed to the potency of the myth of the vampire in the nineteenth century, particularly knowing that a significant number of writers of vampire literature died of the effects of syphilis, including Bram Stoker. It is believed that he was first infected with syphilis in the 1890s while writing Dracula (xxii).

Science and superstition are joined together in Van Helsing as a character, and this synthesis seems very appropriate to a novel about order and disorder. John L. Greenway and Rosemary Jann have each studied the novel as a subtle critique of science and Victorian materialism. Jann's "Saved by Science? The Mixed Messages of Stoker's Dracula" concludes that "Stoker may suggest that the reality of the supernatural exposes the limitations of materialist science, but he ultimately lines up on the side of this science's truth-finding methods" (283). John L. Greenway comes to a different conclusion in "Seward's Polly: Dracula as a Critique of 'Normal Science'" stating that Victorian science is a form of "structured ignorance" (230). These essays convincingly present the undeniable collision between science and faith in the Victorian age, but seem to overlook the importance of Van Helsing's
reconciliation of these by his effective, anti-reductive, determined openmindedness and his intellectual imagination which allow him to lead the others to new systems of order in their disorder.

This is what is happening in Lucy's tomb. The situation is decidedly occult, the means are superstitious, the manner is scientific, and the overall atmosphere is charged with sexuality. Lucy is about to have her career as a disordering agent checked forever into a multiplicity of new systems of meaning. Before Van Helsing begins the operation of Lucy's destruction, he gives them a lecture on vampires and how they spread their contagion. Vampires are ultimately entropic because of the way they totally disorder by parodying the Christian eternity of universal order and blessed afterlife:

When they become such, there comes with the change the curse of immortality; they cannot die, but must go on age after age adding new victims and multiplying the evils of the world; for all that die from the preying of the Un-Dead become themselves Un-Dead, and prey on their kind. (211)

The Christian doctrine of the second coming is a reorganization of the universe into a divine stasis. It is the defeat of a vampire universe--of entropy and degeneration--by eternal life. God is orderer of disordered energy--appropriately patriarchal--and giver of everlasting life through communion by blood drinking and
flesh eating. Dracula's vampirism and Renfield's zoophagy parody this communion with the everlasting. Thus it is the ultimate disorder through multiplicity and the perfect trope for the entropic universe of the Second Law of Thermodynamics. The remedy for Lucy's condition, her eternal curse as agent of multiplicity of disorder and degeneration, is to "die in truth":

Instead of working wickedness by night and growing more debased in the assimilation of it by day, she shall take her place with the other Angels. So that, my friend, it will be a blessed hand for her that shall strike the blow that sets her free. (212)

Arthur agrees to be the one to strike this blow. Under Van Helsing's direction, he takes up the stake and hammer and drives the point into Lucy's body while Van Helsing reads from his missal. As noted above, Lucy has been objectified and organized as a patient, and now she is a sexual object, as "the phallic symbolism in this process is evident, and Lucy's reactions are described in terms reminiscent of sexual intercourse and orgasm, and especially the painful deflowering of a virgin, which Lucy still is . . ." (Bentley 30). As Arthur strikes "with all his might":

The thing in the coffin writhed, and a hideous, bloodcurling screech came from the opened red lips. The body shook and quivered and twisted in wild contortions; the sharp white teeth champed together till the lips were cut

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and the mouth was smeared with crimson foam. But Arthur never faltered. (213)

And with this scene there is undeniably the fear of the female's sexuality and the urgent need to contain and conquer it with the "mercy-bearing stake":

His face was set, and high duty seemed to shine through it; the sight of it gave us courage, so that our voices seemed to ring through the little vault. And then the writhing and quivering of the body became less, and the teeth seemed to champ, and the face to quiver. Finally it lay still. The terrible task was over. (213)

The use of the pronoun "it" is significant: Lucy has been objectified, reorganized as patient to be cured and sex object to be satiated. Now she can be suspended into the anti-entropic realm of angels. Van Helsing tells Arthur to kiss "the dead in truth" Lucy, "For she is not a grinning devil now—not anymore a foul thing for all eternity. No longer she is the devil's Un-Dead. She is God's true dead, whose soul is with him!" (214).

Seward and Van Helsing saw the top off the stake so that the point is forever in the body, then they cut off her head, fill her mouth with garlic, and resolder her lead coffin closed. Van Helsing's crew have reordered disorder and "Outside the air was sweet, the sun shone, and the birds sang, and it seemed as if all nature were tuned to a different pitch" (214). And this "pitch" is the heroes' heavenlike paradigm of anti-entropic eternity.
They have won a battle but not the war. The momentary restoration of order is soon to collapse into a yet more appalling chaos. To a large extent, the chaos is the consequence of their arrogance in believing that their new reordering against dissolution is stable and impervious to disorder. Despite the near proximity of Carfax to Seward's lunatic asylum and the cryptic but unmistakable connection of Renfield to Dracula, the men leave Mina in the asylum unprotected and ignorant of developments as they make their new offensive against Dracula. All of them have bonded in meaningful ways with Mina. She has become their "star and . . . hope" (239). Harker, now her husband, has been accepted into their group project to destroy the Count by invading and extra-sanctifying his lairs and leaving him no place to rest and thus making him vulnerable to the hunters. Mina is their center, and the center will not hold as Dracula, invited into the asylum by Renfield, takes her in her sleep and begins the new disorder. Mina is the perfect being. She orders their universe--literally--as she types, collates and edits the several narratives into a unity which permits a new system of order. Van Helsing, as enamoured of her as any of the men, refers to her as "wonderful Madam Mina! She has man's brain--a brain that a man should have were he much gifted--and woman's heart" (232).
If Mina can be polluted with the disease of vampirism and be seduced by Dracula into becoming his "companion and helper" (285), then decadence and dissolution must be the physics of the universe. Satanic irony finds its perfect trope in such a horrible pollution. A universe that allows for such an ambiguity as a vampire Mina is a universe ultimately disordered. In the various scenes with her mortal heroes she is ideal mother, sister, wife, or daughter, and because of their best efforts and intentions she is in the process of becoming the helpmate of the Lord of Disorder. She is a personification of spirit, and spirit as idealized human energy; for her to be degraded is to completely degrade into entropic disorder their new complex system of order. Harker probably speaks for all of them when he swears he will himself become a vampire if that is Mina's fate. The enlightenment universe is then doomed to become the vampire's universe; as Van Helsing says:

But to fail here is not mere life or death. It is that we become as him; that we henceforth become foul things of the night like him—without heart or conscience, preying on the bodies and the souls of those we love best. To us forever are the gates of heaven shut; for who shall open them to us again? (234)

In Mina's journal there is a new despondancy and listlessness. She awakes tired, troubled, and pale. "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" (254). This is uncharacteristic of Mina. Later in the same journal entry she speaks of everything as being "grim and fixed as death or fate" (255). Mina is now tainted by the disorder moving in through her window, across the floor, and up to her bed as mist, cloud, or fog--symbols of dissolution (Cirlot 370).

Dracula's victimization of Mina leads us to the third significant episode concerning women, vampirism, and decadence. Although shorter than the first two, it is no less dramatic. It is again represented as narrated by Dr. Seward in his phonographic journal. Three days have passed since Van Helsing's group, reorganized with the inclusion of Jonathan Harker and Mina and by the valuable "manifold" copies of typescript, have sworn to destroy Dracula and made their first offensive invasions of Carfax. Twice Mina has been attacked by the Count in her sleep. It is late at night on the second of October and Seward is interrupted in his room in the asylum while he is making a recording for his diary by the attendant left on duty in the corridor outside of Renfield's room. The attendant reports "that Renfield had somehow met with some
accident. He had heard him yell; and when he went to him
found him lying on his face on the floor, all covered with
blood" (271). Seward goes to Renfield's room and finds
"he had received some terrible injuries; there seemed none
of that unity of purpose between the parts of the body
which marks even lethargic sanity" (272). Physical
violence has disordered Renfield in a very real way.

Then Van Helsing is sent for. He intuits the hand of
Dracula in Renfield's attack and performs a trephine
operation to bring the zoophagous lunatic to
consciousness. Arthur and Quincey, roused by the
activity, join them. Renfield's emergency operation
succeeds in bringing him to consciousness long enough for
him to confess how Dracula had coaxed him into inviting
him into the asylum. (Stoker adheres to the widely held
tradition that vampires and other evil spirits can only
enter a house for the first time by invitation. This
tradition appears earlier in literature in Coleridge's
Christabel.) Although Dracula has promised Renfield an
ever of living creatures to absorb by eating, he sends
him nothing, "not even a blow-fly," and Renfield becomes
angry. It is interesting that in this passage of Mina's
typewriter transcription of Seward's recording the third
person pronouns used for Dracula are capitalized as one
does for God:
When the moon got up I was pretty angry with Him. When He slid in through the window, though it was shut, and did not even knock, I got mad with Him. He sneered at me, and His white face looked out of the mist with His red eyes gleaming, and He went on as though He owned the whole place, and I was no one. He didn't even smell the same as He went by me. I couldn't hold Him. I thought that, somehow, Mrs. Harker had come into the room. (277)

Already Dracula and Mina's essences are being joined in vampire marriage. Renfield can smell Mina's blood in the Count's presence. He could also sense the loss of blood in Mina when she had visited him that day: "she wasn't the same; it was like the tea after the teapot had been watered . . . . I don't care for the pale people, I like them with lots of blood in them, and hers had all seemed to have run out" (277). It infuriated Renfield that Dracula had attacked Mina and he had attempted to wrestle with him on that evening's entrance by Dracula to the asylum, sustaining the mortal injuries with which Seward had found him.

The heroes arm themselves with Host and crucifix and rush to Mina's bedroom. The door is locked so they break it down, and witness in the moonlight what can be only described as a vampire oral rape scene so appalling that no cinematic treatment has dared to literally transfer it to film. Even the otherwise graphic Francis Ford Coppola Dracula reduced its violence by portraying it as a sensual
act between mutually consenting adults. It is even more
appalling that Jonathan is present, lying in a helpless
stupor next to his violated wife:

On the bed beside the window lay
Jonathan Harker, his face flushed, and
breathing heavily as though in a stupor.
Kneeling on the near edge of the bed
facing outwards was the white-clad
figure of his wife. By her side stood a
tall, thin man, clad in black. His face
was turned from us, but the instant we
saw it we all recognized the Count—in
every way, even to the scar on his
forehead. With his left hand he held
both Mrs. Harker's hands, keeping them
away with her arms at full tension; his
right hand gripped her by the back of
the neck, forcing her face down on his
bosom. Her white nightdress was smeared
with blood, and a thin stream trickled
down the man's bare breast, which was
shown by his torn-open dress. The
attitude of the two had a terrible
resemblance to a child forcing a
kitten's nose into a saucer of milk to
compel it to drink. (279)

Mina, "star and . . . hope" of the forces of order is
undergoing a satanic baptism of blood. The polluted,
multitudinous blood of the King Vampire is entering her
body and transforming her unifying essence to the
disordering, degraded essence of the vampire. As she says
later, she is "unclean," tainted with the disease of
darkness and chaos. They drive out the Count who throws
"his victim back upon the bed as though hurled from a
height . . . " (279). Van Helsing and his men move to
Mina:
. . . who by this time had drawn her breath and with it had given a scream so wild, so ear-piercing, so despairing that it seems to me now that it will ring in my ears till my dying day. For a few seconds she lay in her helpless attitude and disarray. Her face was ghostly, with a pallor which was accentuated by the blood which smeared her lips and cheeks and chin; from her throat trickled a thin stream of blood. Her eyes were mad with terror. Then she put before her face her poor crushed hands, which bore on their whiteness the red mark of the Count's terrible grip, and from behind them came a low desolate wail which made the terrible scream seem only the quick expression of an endless grief. Van Helsing stepped forward and drew the coverlet gently over her body, whilst Art, after looking at her face for an instant despairingly, ran out of the room. (279-280)

Van Helsing wakes Jonathan from his stupor. Critics, especially Leonard Wolf in his annotations to The Annotated Dracula, have noted that Harker becomes "increasingly passive, supine, or enfeebled" into the second half of the novel (Wolf 249). This may be because Mina must be meaningfully attached to all of the men in the novel, and most particularly Dracula. Like Lucy, she has become a polyandrist. Still, Harker's married relationship can be seen as important to the structure of meaning in the novel: Mina and Jonathan can be coupled as one fictional ego seduced into the disordering unconscious, symbolized for Harker by the vampire women in the castle and for Mina by the Count. By this Freudian
reading Mina is the fragmented part of an ego drawn by disordering desire into the boundaries of the id to mirror the vampire women: chaos, the forbidden, the infantile oral; Harker is a part of this ego empowered by masculine experience and method which has skimmed below the surface into the chaos of the senses and struggled out. He attempts to save the Mina half from disintegration and perversity by the law and rule of the super-ego Van Helsing. It is Harker that actually "kills" Dracula in the conclusion by beheading, which is usually read by Freudians as castration. But as stated in the previous chapters, such reductive readings are only useful in a larger context of multiplicity and disorder.

With Harker awake and furious, Mina in a state of almost mad despair, Seward aghast, Arthur and Quincey running around with guns and crucifix through the asylum and its grounds, Dracula has succeeded in quickly reducing Van Helsing's new order into total disorder. The Count has even attacked their systematic organization of knowledge. In the study, the original manuscript and phonograph recordings have been burned. He is again, however, stymied by the new order of technology: there is one of Mina's manifold copies in the asylum safe. New arcane systems of organization foil his disordering strategies.
Mina is now married to Dracula by exchange of blood as much as she is Harker's wife by church sacrament and contract of civil law. Mina recounts how Dracula said, "And you, their best beloved one, are now to me flesh of my flesh; blood of my blood; kin of my kin; my bountiful wine-press for awhile; and shall be later on my companion and my helper" (285). He then makes her drink blood from his breast. As Ann McWhir writes in "Pollution and Redemption in Dracula," this is clearly . . . a parody of marriage and communion. Unlike the pelican of the bestiaries, rending her breast to feed her young and thus the type of a loving Redeemer, Dracula rends his breast in order to pollute his victim: his act is a rape of blood that desecrates her marriage vows and pollutes her flesh. (38)

The pollution and desecration is then to continue through Mina to those who love her. "You shall be avenged in turn; for not one of them but shall minister to your needs," Dracula promises her (285). Mina, "their best beloved one," will be cursed to be their unholy mother, giving them re-births as monsters of cosmic disorder. Dracula will be revenged on them all as their monstrous father, his vampire pollution working on them through the woman they idolize, making them part of his plan to colonize Britain into a nation of vampires through their monstrous progeny. Just as Mina would be mother so would
she be a polyandrist wife, sharing a deep, unconscious bond with each of them. Already Mina and Dracula have a telepathic connection. She can be hypnotized by Van Helsing to reveal clues of Dracula's whereabouts; Dracula can use Mina as an unwilling conduit to his enemies' strategies. Mina has suddenly become the perfect type of the fin-de-siècle "idol of perversity": the decadent *femme fatale*, whore/madonna, instrument of Satan, polluter of flesh and soul.

As if to emblemize this transformation, Van Helsing brands her on her forehead with a piece of the Host: "As he placed the wafer on Mina's forehead, it had seared it—had burned into the flesh as though it had been a piece of white-hot metal" (293). A parody of the mark of the chosen of God, with this brand Van Helsing has classified and organized Mina. When she is clean again the visible symbol of her pollution will disappear, but until that time she must wear her brand like Hester Prynne must wear her "scarlet letter."

Van Helsing must restore order and battle "the father or furtherer of a new order of beings, whose road must lead through death, not life" (299). They must find his one remaining box of earth, destroy its use to the Count by resanctifying it, and attack and destroy the Count between sun-up and sun-down either at rest or abroad. In
the middle of a war council in Dracula's Picadilly house, the Count confronts them. He taunts them:

You think to baffle me . . . You think you have left me without a place to rest; but I have more. My revenge is just begun! I spread it over centuries, and time is on my side. Your girls that you all love are mine--my creatures, to do my bidding and to be my jackals when I want to feed. Bah! (303)

Disintegration, decadence, and decay have all time to do their work. Van Helsing and his men have only the length of their mortal years to fight the entropic monster, and they are doomed to fail, for any new complex system of order they can impose must only hasten the disorder as those systems respond to physics.

The last four chapters of the novel describe the pursuit of Dracula from London's docks to the gates of his castle in Transylvania through the journals, memoranda, and telegraphs of his pursuers. The conclusion comes quickly, and it is arguably the weakest part of the book. Stoker has so effectively convinced the reader of Dracula's metaphysical grandeur and metaphorical absoluteness that his quick death by Jonathan's hacking and Morris's stabbing seems inconclusive. There is even a hint in the text that all may not be concluded for Dracula. His eyes see the sinking sun "and the look of hate in them turned to triumph" (372). Just then Harker
slashes at his throat with a huge Gurkha Kukri knife and Morris stabs him to the heart with a bowie knife. Mina writes:

> It was like a miracle; but before our very eyes, and almost in the drawing of a breath, the whole body crumbled into dust and passed from our sight. I shall be glad as long as I live that even in that moment of final dissolution there was in the face a look of peace, such as I never could have imagined might have rested there. (372)

In this photo finish dissolution has Dracula accomplished another trick of disorder? Is it not earlier given by Van Helsing that from sunset to sunup the Count can assume any form or fragmentation of form (specks, dust, sparks, etc.) he pleases? What would finally give a personification of dissolution and corruption "a look of peace"? If he is "dead in truth" like Lucy, why does he not appear like Lucy as a corpse? While the novel gives the heroes a supernatural sign of his destruction in the disappearance of Mina's brand, the reader is left with no such assurances. The band of heroes reorganize themselves, reorder themselves around the monogamous matrimony and family of Mina and Jonathan. Mina has a son by Harker whose "bundle of names links all our little band of men together . . ." (373). Through this child who unifies the identities of Mina's champions who "did dare
much for her sake" and "so loved her" a reorder into light, progress, and oneness has been achieved.

But while the characters of the novel have destroyed their vampire and reordered themselves in unity, light, and optimism with young Quincey John Abraham Arthur Jonathan Harker, the reader knows that Dracula has risen from the grave. The multiplicity of Draculas is unavoidable and omnipresent, and countless millions know he must be staked again and again, for the un-dead spread their disease forever.
Chapter 5

Art of Entropy: "This is Indeed Life Itself"

Although the first four chapters of this study on vampirism and literature have been mostly concerned with women as vampires and instruments of disorder, this final chapter will concentrate on literature where works of art act as vampires. It is proposed that fin-de-siècle aestheticism is a disordering aesthetics, and that literary works which use works of art as vampirical supernatural elements doubly reflect disorder as the work of art disorders the literary characters and plot elements of the story or novel, and then the story disorders the reader. The reader experiences the uncanny work of art at a double aesthetic distance, and additionally experiences the story with the aesthetic tension of disordered response.

There are parallels between women as vampires and works of art as vampires in the Decadent era imagery. The relationship between the unconscious and works of art of all kinds was being considered by Freud at this time, and he also speculated on the essential nature of the unconscious as being feminine. The male-dominated culture of the fin-de-siècle envisioned both women and art as dionysian, narcistic, and perverse. Both were highly fetishized. It would be too much to assert that art works were gendered as feminine in the general public.
imagination, but it is not difficult to accept the generalization that art works were reflections of desire (mostly male in origin) and that they were objectivized in analogous ways. However, our entropy aesthetic does not depend on this analogy, but on elements of multiplicity, fragmentation, and disorder, and we may leave it as "coincidental" that art and women similarly affected Decadent artists and writers, but it is here suggested that the relationship is not completely arbitrary.

A work of art is a manner of ordering, and this ordering invites disorder in the same moment through the perceptual complexity of artist and audience. Imagination takes unity and disintegrates it with deviance in inexhaustible ways, just as there is an equal contrary impulse by imagination to take the disordered elements and impose unity. Making a work of art is a process of ordering and disordering simultaneously, in which our natural compulsion to perceptually organize is disordered by self. As Merleau-Ponty explains, "It is a self through confusion, narcissism, through inherence of the one who sees in that which he sees, and through inherence of sensing in the sensed—a self, therefore, that is caught up in things, that has a front and a back, a past and a future . . ." (284). Painting is a way of making being, and at the same time challenges what we know of the unity
of the visible. As Heidegger said most succinctly, "It is due to art's poetic nature that, in the midst of what is, art breaks open an open place in whose openness everything is other than usual" (278). For Heidegger this is the opening light of all encircling truth, for Merleau-Ponty the "occult operations" of "metamorphosis of being" through mirroring. In the aesthetics of Edward Bullough, a theorist more contemporary to the Decadence, it is the peculiar character of aesthetic distance, a distance that demands the tension of all the oppositions of order and disorder, the real and unreal, which make the "peculiar character" of aesthetic experience (461). In the fiction studied in this chapter, we find art works where occult operations have been at work literally, where open potent truths of the impossible to a nihilistic universe, and where an irresolvable tension between real and unreal is left to resonate always.

The theory of the uncanny or unheimlich in literature of Freud relies on the supposition that the principle reason for the effectiveness of stories of the fantastic is "emotional affect . . . transformed by repression into morbid anxiety" (228). Freud admits that there is always something else besides that "has doubtless long since been fully taken into account by professors of aesthetics" (250). Actually these aesthetic questions were only then
receiving attention from phenomenologists and, later, existentialists such as those mentioned above. Of course, these owe great debts to the speculations on distance, sublimity, and the terrible of Kant and Burke. This "something else besides" in literature of the fantastic can be only disorder, or, as Tzvetan Todorov terms it, the movement from equilibrium to disequilibrium and back to final equilibrium (164-165). Often the final equilibrium is death, an analogous physics to that of the real entropic universe. In the vampire tale, Freudian unheimlich repression is usually evident as we have seen, but equally important is this disorder, the disequilibrium/equilibrium of a satanic, nihilistic universe: a non-reductive trope that mirrors the aesthetics of fin-de-siècle art. The supernatural in literature (and all arts) reveals itself (in a manner that is itself uncanny) to be an unplumbable well of potent significance because of disorder. No matter how many elements we can list and identify from a story which contribute to its uncanniness, there is always something more besides to disorder the reader, and "something more" always is disorder infinitum. This is the unresolvable tension of the supernatural.

This chapter will examine four short stories, each a minor masterpiece of the genre, which feature works of art
as the principal instruments by which they accomplish their disordering effects. These four stories are "The Oval Portrait" by Edgar Allan Poe, "The Vampire" by Jan Neruda, and two stories by M.R. James: "Canon Alberic's Scrap-book" and "The Mezzotint." All four are reknowned for their evocation of the uncanny; all have enjoyed popularity for ninety years or more, achieving almost classic status despite their origination as periodical literature. Finally, we will briefly look at Oscar Wilde's The Picture of Dorian Gray, a famous novel of the Decadent uncanny, and consider its original use of the aesthetics of disorder.

First we will return to Edgar Allan Poe, the subject of our study in Chapter Two, and consider his short story "The Oval Portrait." This story is an anecdote told by a traveler in the Appennines. The narrator makes mention of Ann Radcliffe, the Gothic novelist, in the first sentence, immediately establishing its relationship to the narratives of disorder for which she was famous. It is also immediately established that he is "desperately wounded" and that his valet had made a forcible entry into the "abandoned" chateau where he is to spend the night. The story immediately establishes a classic setting for disorder: a lost and/or injured traveler, forced to take shelter in a house or castle with the ghostly "commingled
gloom and grandeur" of ruin, disorder, and dissolution. By entering such a house as a stranger one transposes as well as imposes oneself onto the ghostly entropic remains of its previous inhabitants. It is a house haunted by loss, and thus a domicile of a psychic vampire ghost.

The remote turret has tattered and antique furnishings that once were rich. On the walls alongside "manifold and multiform armorial trophies" are "a unusually great number of very spirited modern paintings in frames of rich golden arabesque" (382). He is sheltered for the night in a turret art gallery where paintings seem half hidden in "very many nooks which the bizarre architecture of the chateau rendered necessary" (382). The narrator experiences an "incipient delirium" that causes him to order his valet to shutter the windows and light the many candles on a tall candelabrum by the bed so that he can "throw open far and wide the fringed curtains of black velvet which enveloped the bed itself" (382). He creates a psychic space around himself, closes the room's boundaries and expands his parameters to make a closed system of mirroring reflection and arabesque tensions. For this "night gallery" (no doubt the story at least indirectly inspired the thematic frame for Rod Serling's TV series of the 1970s) the narrator even has a catalog
which he has found on his pillow: "a small volume . . .
which purported to criticise and describe" the pictures in
the room (382).

At "the deep midnight"—the time of night of greatest
disorder—he reaches for the candelabra and
reorders/disorders the room with light:

But the action produced an effect
altogether unanticipated. The rays of
the numerous candles . . . fell within a
niche of the room which had hitherto
been thrown into deep shade by one of
the bedposts. I thus saw in vivid light
a picture all unnoticed before. (382)

He glances hurriedly at the oval "portrait of a young girl
just ripening into girlhood" and unaccountably tightly
shuts his eyes. Here, of course, are all the elements of
vulgar Freudianism: candles, bedpost (indeed, why else a
bedpost?) and eyes closed (both to prevent and to simulate
castration), and the feeling of uncanniness from the
repression of the infantile fear of castration. Yes,
there is all this, and then perhaps also "the uncanny
effect . . . often and easily produced by effacing the
distinction between imagination and reality" (Freud 398).
That is, the narrator suffers the childlike confusion
(after all, he is desperately wounded) between the image
of a young woman and a real young woman, namely his mother
as familiar object become uncanny as well as object of
oedipal repression. There can be no doubt that such
elements as Freud identified as belonging to the uncanny are readily evident in "The Oval Portrait," but these are not enough, as Freud would be the first to admit. If they were, Poe's fine creative faculties (all unconsciously, since Poe predated Freud) would have shut down there, calling it the end to a proverbial dark and stormy night, leaving us with no more than an atmospheric arabesque fragment. But as always there is something more. The aesthetics of disorder take over, symbolized by the narrator's moving the candles, disordering the room, erasing the bedpost, exposing the arcane to his occult view. Looking at the picture causes him such profound disorder that he has to close his eyes "to calm and subdue" his mind (382).

When he opens his eyes he looks at the picture "fixedly." He is fixed by the picture, but he is also fixing it in the physical and psychic frame, described as "oval, richly gilded and filigreed in Moresque" (383). The effect of this portrait of the young woman is startling. For half an hour he stares in astonishment at the "absolute life-likeness of expression which, at first startling, finally confounded, subdued and appalled" his senses to disorder (383). In order to reorganize his thoughts he reorders the room by moving the candelabrum back and erasing the picture, and with "the cause of deep
agitation being thus shut from view" he consults "the volume which discussed the paintings and their histories" (383). The "vague and quaint words" in the book narrate the remainder of the tale. In this way, the story by Poe becomes a kind of double to the portrait, as both are framed "richly . . . and filigreed in Moresque," the portrait by its oval frame and the tale by the Gothic narrative frame.

The book tells the story of the subject of the portrait, a lovely and vivacious young woman who marries a painter who is obsessed with his art. She, "hating only the art that was her rival" (the narrative states her husband had "already a bride in his art"), lets him paint her "in a dark high turret-chamber where the light dripped upon the pale canvas only from overhead" (383). This is, we assume, the very turret-chamber where the narrator is reading the tale in his disordered state. It is another one of Poe's arabesque spaces of psychic disintegration, discussed earlier in Chapter Two, where reflection and collapse occur. The husband paints "with a fervid and burning pleasure," the wife wastes and pales. Her husband "would not see that the light which fell so ghastly in that lone turret withered the health and the spirits of his bride, who pined visibly to all but him" (383). There is something entropic about this chamber, almost as if
heaven were sucking out energy rather than infusing it into its confines. The portrait is esteemed "a mighty marvel" by those who view its progress, but as he becomes "wild with the ardor of his work" he shuts out visitors. "And," continues the catalog narrative, "he would not see the tints which he spread upon the canvas were drawn from the cheeks of her that sate beside him" (384). The story has become uncanny in a way that cannot be explained by "what has been repressed or what has been surmounted" (Freud 404). Its effect of uncanniness comes from a deeper feeling of the weirdness and horror of what the husband has wrought on the canvas and the woman. He has erased her in a way that might easily invite a feminist interpretation, but also certainly it is an instance of life energy vampirism. His is a vampire's work. He has taken her life essence from her. He has possessed her life energy, framed it in his art, and made it his own:

And when many weeks had passed, and but little remained to do, save one brush upon the mouth and one tint upon the eye, the spirit of the lady again flickered up as the flame within the socket of the lamp. And then the brush was given, and then the tint was placed; and, for one moment, the painter stood entranced before the work which he had wrought; but in the next, while he yet gazed, he grew tremulous, and very pallid and aghast, and crying with a loud voice, "This is indeed Life itself!" turned suddenly to regard his beloved:—She was dead! (384)
The total effect is more disturbing than the sum of the Freudian parts, including consideration of the element of the inanimate sharing properties of the animate, which Freud discusses in the beginning of his study of the Unheimlich in context of the surmounted "animistic conception of the universe" (Freud 219-224). That fetishistic element is hardly irrelevent to any story where an inanimate object is magically, supernaturally endowed by the life essence of an animate object. Such were certainly among the first stories of the human race, and probably for the very reason Freud proposes, to help humankind's totalizing, ordering consciousness "withstand the inexorable laws of reality" (224).

In "The Oval Portrait" the painter as creator destroys in an entropic process by which his model is robbed of heat and youth as the vitality is transfered to the canvas and the spirit is dissolved in the dimness of the turret chamber. The disordering vampire nature of the uncanny portrait is a mirror to the disordered psyche of the traveler who has looked into the vivid oval of the frame and become "confounded, subdued, and appalled . . ." (383). It is especially appalling that her husband should play the part of the vampire. In this psychic space, the same reestablished by the wounded traveler, where the "dripping" light of heaven destroys rather than enlivens,
the artist transfers the life of one bride to the vitality of his other "bride," art, and she is lost forever, her spirit energy disordered into useless heat as her light energy becomes her portrait. But what of the wounded traveler at the end? The narrative frame is not closed, but left open at those final words in the tale within the tale: She was dead! (384). The vampire of art leaves the narrative in disorder and the readers themselves are left to close the arabesque book.

Is artistic representation always an entropic process? Does the process of transforming any reality, even the abstract and imaginary, to art necessarily mean a loss? Any work of art is a system of organized perception (even if incoherent, it must be organized incoherently) and reorders through the human imagination into what Hegel called Spirit, Heidegger called Truth and Merleau-Ponty called Being. But then all organized perception, all order, results from disorder. As Rudolf Arnheim writes in Art and Entropy, "'Disorder' is not the absence of all order but rather the clash of uncoordinated orders" (13). Certainly a painting of a pair of shoes is not useful in the same way as the actual shoes, but the Heideggeran "Truth at work" in the art work shoes has a new, reorganized Being and "Although it may have come about by dissolution, it is actually a kind of order" (Arnheim 13).
Of course, entropy is most helpful to aesthetic theory as a root metaphor, especially as Arnheim relates it to the eternal "struggle between Classical and Decadent . . . the opposite tendencies between the movement from order to disorder in entropy physics and the movement to order, harmony, stress reduction and simplicity . . ." (13). In the following stories with a Decadent aesthetic it is appropriate that works of art have this entropic dimension, since the aesthetic of the Decadence was one of complexity, individuality, and incongruity: art to shock, disturb, and arouse, like the drawings of Aubrey Beardsley or Felicien Rops, or the paintings of Gustave Moreau or Gustav Klimt.

The next story in our excursion into Decadent disorder and art is entitled "The Vampire," written in Czech by the Symbolist Jan Neruda (1834-1891). The narrator is a central European traveling in the company of a Polish family through the islands in the Sea of Marmora near Constantinople. The Polish family intend to spend the summer at the island of Prinkipo, as the daughter suffers from consumption and they are hopeful of her recovery. They are also accompanied by her fiancé, "a handsome young fellow, of direct and refined manners" (229). Among the few other passengers on the lake steamer is a young Greek whose "long black locks floated to his shoulders, his face
was pale, and his black eyes were deeply set in their sockets" (229). He is an artist, or so his fellow travelers surmise from the sketch-book he carries. The northern Europeans distrust him because he is too friendly. The travelers disembark at Prinkipo. The Poles and narrator take rooms at a hotel run by a Frenchman, recommended to them by the Greek. After lunching at the hotel, they walk up to a pine forest on the high ground of the island to enjoy the view. The Greek reappears, bows to the group, and sits at a small distance from them and begins to sketch in his pad. They seem to have an instinctive distrust of him, which is not unusual for Northern Europeans toward a Mediterranea in the nineteenth century. In contrast to Poe's Radcliffian Gothic scene, Neruda depicts an idyllic sun-drenched land- and sea-scape:

If I could live a month of my life there
I would be happy for the memory of it
for the rest of my days! I shall never
forget even that one day spent at Prinkipo.
The air was as clear as a diamond, so
soft, so caressing, that one's whole
soul swung out upon it into the
distance. At the right beyond the sea
projected the brown Asiatic summits; to
the left in the distance purpled the
steep coasts of Europe. (230)

Suddenly this pastoral darkens into vague uneasiness, and the timelessness of this scene between great continental boundaries takes on the eeriness of Limbo:
The neighboring Chalki, one of the nine islands of the "Prince's Archipelago," rose with its cypress forests into the peaceful heights like a sorrowful dream, crowned by a great structure—an asylum for those whose minds are sick. (230)

The descriptive passages are superbly written. The sense of timelessness between two continents, the dolphins in the water and the eagles "in the blue heaven," the jewel-like colors of the sea have the spare lyricism of a prose-poem. The narrator describes the influence of the scene on his fellow tourists:

The effect was enchanting. We all sat silent and steeped our souls completely in the picture of paradise. The young Polish girl lay on the grass with her head supported on the bosom of her lover. The pale oval of her delicate face was slightly tinged with soft color, and from her blue eyes tears suddenly gushed forth. The lover understood, bent down and kissed tear after tear. (231)

They are in a psychic space very different from "The Oval Portrait" and its turreted tower room. This is a point between great boundaries and full of clear light, opal spray, and milkwhite sea. Can it be merely a coincidence that the author writes of "the pale oval of her delicate face" so resonant with Poe's story? Possibly, but the two stories have enough in common to make it improbable. The differences between the stories, however, are as remarkable as the similarities. In this psychic space of pale light and jewel colors the observers of "the pale oval" are
moved with loving empathy. The world seems full of meaning and oneness to them all:

Her mother also was moved to tears, and I—even I—felt a strange twinge. "Here mind and body both must get well," whispered the girl. "How happy a land this is!"
"God knows I haven't any enemies, but if I had I would forgive them here!" said the father in a trembling voice.
And again we became silent. We were all in such a wonderful mood—so unspeakably sweet it all was! Each felt for himself a whole world of happiness and each one would have shared his happiness with the whole world. (231)

While the tourists rest in this Eden-like spell, the artist sketches stealthily for about an hour and then leaves. As evening is imminent, the Poles and narrator descend the hill to sit on the hotel veranda. They overhear an argument between the owner of the hotel and the artist. The landlord walks up the front steps to the veranda. The fiancé asks him if he knows the Greek's identity:

"Eh—who knows what the fellow's name is?" grumbled the hotel keeper, and he gazed venomously downward. "We call him the Vampire."
"An artist?"
"Fine trade! He sketches only corpses. Just as soon as someone in Constantinople or here in the neighborhood dies, that very day he has a picture of the dead one completed. That fellow paints them beforehand—and he never makes a mistake—just like a vulture!" (232)
The young girl suddenly collapses, "pale as chalk" (232). Her fiance runs down the veranda steps and attacks the Greek, at the same time grabbing his sketchbook. The two men fight and the sketchbook flies open as "the contents of the portfolio were scattered all about. On one sheet, sketched with a crayon, was the head of the young Polish girl, her eyes closed and a wreath of myrtle on her brow" (232).

The disordering effect caused by this story is surprisingly similar to that caused by "The Oval Portrait"—surprising because the two stories are different in setting and atmosphere. What they do have in common is a work of art, so, of course, they have the animistic quality which Freud associates with the uncanny as magical practice or fetish. Indeed, there is the sense that the pictures have caused something to happen. But there is something else besides: the vampire artists reorder the entropic process of representation into a new system of meaning which coheres at the actual death of the women signified in the portraits. Something is lost (within the metaphorical structure of the narrative) and that is human vitality, or spirit, or soul, represented by a young, beautiful woman. As Poe wrote in "The Philosophy of Composition," "the death then of a beautiful woman is unquestionably the most poetical topic in the world" and
"poetical" because it is such a powerful trope for the loss of promise, energy, unity, and beauty (982).

Perhaps the very process of signification is a kind of vampirism. It is possible that Walter Pater was trying to suggest this when he referred to the entropic, vampiric quality of Leonardo da Vinci's La Gioconda:

Hers is the head upon which all "the ends of the world are to come," and the eyelids are a little weary. It is a beauty wrought out from within upon the flesh, the deposit, little cell by cell, of strange thoughts and fantastic reveries and exquisite passions. Set it for a moment beside one of those white Greek goddesses or beautiful women of antiquity, and how would they be troubled by this beauty, into which the soul with all its maladies has passed? All the thoughts and experience of the world have etched and molded there, in that which they have power to refine and make expressive the outward form, the animalism of Greece, the lust of Rome, the reverie of the Middle Ages with its spiritual ambition and imaginative loves, the return of the pagan world, the sins of the Borgias. She is older than the rocks among which she sits; like the vampire, she has been dead many times, and learned the secrets of the grave, and has been a diver in deep seas, and keeps their fallen day about her; and trafficked for strange webs with Eastern merchants; and, as Leda, was the mother of Helen of Troy, and, as Saint Anne, the mother of Mary; and all has been to her but as the sound of lyres and flutes, and lives only in the delicacy with which it has molded the changing lineaments, and tinged the eyelids and the hands. (90)
In the middle of the process of representation, somewhere between signified and signifier, something is contorted in the presumed innocence of the process—something perverse and even sometimes malign can happen. These stories suggest this invisible malice, the vampire sucking light energy into the dark canvas in "The Oval Portrait" and into the absolute whiteness of the clear sky, milky sea, and white sketchpad of "The Vampire": the whiteness Melville and Poe considered a symbol of evil, nullity, and absolute entropy. They lead us to another difficult question. Is to create a work of art to vampirize? Do we emulate the undead as we take the essence from the animate and multiply or reflect it in the Truth or Spirit or Being of a work of art? It seems reasonable to suggest that the "Art for Art's Sake" movement, initiated by Gautier and attaining a dominant mode of aesthetic in Europe in the late nineteenth century, is vampirism by art. "Undead" representations exist outside the process whereby they are engaged by reality. They want breath, and take blood and essence from reflection of life to a "perfect" existence in timelessness outside the economy of the mundane.

It is as if these representations, these works of art, really have an uncanny non-arbitrary relationship with the persons they represent. Is this significantly different
from Freud's suggestion of the uncanny effect of animistic regression? This would be so mostly in that his positivistic prejudices could not allow him to see the greater, even universal, significance of the vampire on the psyche, how it effectively portrays the overwhelming sense of loss of vital spirit in heat and light: fire of Being that has gone somewhere else, Spirit that is no longer ours but has been sucked back into the universe. As discussed above, this not only means all aesthetic makes loss by entropy of signification—Spirit or Truth or Being disorders as much as reorders—but also that the metaphor of vampire art reminds us that signification has a vampirical element by reflection and multiplicity even where the representation attains Kantian Spirit. One is reminded of the risible old story of aboriginal people fearing the loss of vital force through having their photographs taken. Perhaps they intuit what we know through physics, that multiplicity is diffusion, and that there is a tension in reflection that disorders to the whiteness of nullity. And through our familiarity with technology we have lost our ability to see the photograph as a metaphor of entropy, while it is clearly (and technically) just that.

Our other two short stories about vampire pictures are by one writer, the English scholar and antiquarian, M.R.
James (1862-1936). His most famous vampire story is "Count Magus," but we will here examine the subtler vampirism of "Canon Alberic's Scrap-book" and "The Mezzotint." H.P. Lovecraft wrote in his *Supernatural Horror in Literature* that James was "gifted with an almost diabolic power of calling horror by gentle steps from the midst of prosaic daily life" (100). James believed that a ghost story should have a *heimlich* setting, and would have agreed with Freud that the uncanny is best produced by making the common and domestic a source of dread:

... many common objects may be made the vehicles of retribution, and, where retribution is not called for, of malice. Be careful how you handle the packet you pick up in the carriage-drive, particularly if it contains nail-parings and hair. Do not, in any case, bring it into the house. It may not be alone ... (James 342)

Although the everyday of Dr. M.R. James, the donnish antiquarian, is different from what is familiar to most of us, he succeeds admirably in giving the reader a sense of the rule (and unrule) of the everyday over the characters. As Lovecraft writes:

Creating the illusion of everyday events, he introduces his abnormal phenomena cautiously and gradually; relieved at every turn by touches of homely and prosaic detail, and sometimes spiced with a snatch or two of antiquarian scholarship. Conscious of the close relation between present weirdness and accumulated tradition, he
generally provides remote historical antecedents of his incidents . . . (101)

As in Dracula, the present is disordered by the stealthy, occult darkness lurking behind the relics of the past.

"Canon Alberic's Scrap-book," written in 1893, is an excellent example of the way ancient disorder infects the everyday present. The narrator of the story is a chatty, donnish type who tells the story, he says, much as it was recounted to him by the main character, a scholar from Cambridge called Dennistoun. For the most part, the story is set in St. Bertrand de Comminges in France, "a decayed town on the spurs of the Pyrenees" (1). Dennistoun has left his friends at nearby Toulouse, and has come to St. Bertrand de Comminges to describe and photograph the town's cathedral, "the site of a bishopric until the revolution" (1). The old sacristan, who guides Dennistoun through the church, is obviously troubled by the necessity of spending so much time there, and has "a curious furtive, or rather hunted and oppressed air . . . perpetually half-glancing behind him; the muscles of his back and shoulders seemed to be hunched in a continual nervous contraction, as if he were expecting every moment to find himself in the clutch of an enemy" (1). They hear muffled footfalls and distant voices where there could not possibly be any other visitors. The disturbingly uncanny atmosphere is masterfully developed:
"Once," Dennistoun said to me, "I could have sworn I heard a thin metallic voice laughing high up in the tower. I darted an inquiring glance at my sacristan. He was white to the lips. 'It is he—that is, it is no one: the door is locked' was all he said, and we looked at each other for a full minute." (3)

We feel a momentary sense of relief when Dennistoun and the sacristan leave the cathedral, but almost immediately our apprehension increases as Dennistoun is waylaid by the sacristan to look at "something that might interest him" if he is "amateur des vieux livres" (4).

At once all Dennistoun's cherished dreams of finding priceless manuscripts in untrodden corners of France flashed up, to die down again the next moment. It was probably a stupid missal of Plantin's printing, about 1580. Where was the likelihood that a place so near Toulouse would not have been ransacked long ago by collectors? However, it would be foolish not to go; he would reproach himself for ever after if he refused. (4)

Thus we see that his fondest wish is to find a priceless manuscript. Like a procurer for other desires, the sacristan can sense his interest. He takes him to his house where his daughter, "a handsome girl enough," lets them in (5). The narrator states that "a few remarks passed between father and daughter, of which Dennistoun only caught these words, said by the sacristan, 'He was laughing in the church,' words which were answered only by a look of terror by the girl" (5). The use of the pronoun
"he" is slightly ambiguous. Certainly the sacristan means the monster or ghost referred to above with "a thin metallic voice laughing high up in the tower," but "he" can also refer to Dennistoun, who, we are later told, has not much interest or time for religiosity (9). This doubling of the identities of Dennistoun and the ancient evil awaiting him is a structural tension that offers an interesting insight into the story. It makes it plausible that the sacristan offers the cursed scrapbook to Dennistoun and at such a symbolically small price. We may assume that the manifestations in the cathedral are not regularly so evident, or else the daughter would not be so distressed. It is as if Dennistoun has been "chosen" not only by the sacristan but by the ghost of the canon himself. Dennistoun has hopes of accomplishing the very crime which Canon Alberic had committed: plundering the chapter library's treasures. Canon Alberic and Dennistoun thus mirror each other, and the evil scrapbook of plundered art is the point of representation where desire is reflected and distorted by and between them into consuming monstrosity.

The book which the sacristan offers Dennistoun is a large scrapbook containing leaves from priceless illuminated manuscripts, about one hundred and fifty of them. The book itself is a reordering out of disorder, a
complex organization of evil produced by the cannibalized 
entropic disorder to the library's sacred texts, and this 
new system further reordered in its significance by the 
abomination of the Canon's final pages.

The sacristan urges Dennistoun to "turn to the end":

So monsieur turned on, meeting new 
treasures at every rise of a leaf; and 
at the end of the book he came upon two 
sheets of paper, of much more recent 
date than anything he had yet seen, 
which puzzled him considerably. They 
must be contemporary, he decided, with 
the unprincipled Canon Alberic, who had 
doubtlessly plundered the Chapter 
Library of St. Bertrand to form the 
priceless scrap-book. (6)

Dennistoun discerns it to be a treasure-hunter's plan of 
the cathedral. Again, plundering canon and photographer-
antiquary are mirrored at the point where the desires meet 
in representation. On the page following the treasure map 
is a drawing:

What he then saw impressed him . . . 
more than he could have conceived any 
drawing or picture capable of impressing 
him. And though the drawing he saw is 
no longer in existence, there is a 
photograph of it . . . which fully bears 
out Dennistoun's statement. The picture 
in question was a sepia drawing of the 
end of the seventeenth century, 
representing, one would say at first 
sight, a Biblical scene; for the 
arithmetic (the picture represented an 
interior) and the figures had that semi-
classical flavour about them which the 
artists of two hundred years ago thought 
appropriate to illustrations of the 
bible. (7)
Note that Dennistoun has photographed, multiplying the mirroring image, what Canon Alberic has drawn two hundred years before. Again, he doubles Canon Alberic, reflected light etched on the photographic plate mirroring desire leading to disorder.

The drawing depicts the court of King Solomon and a group of soldiers cringing at the sight of a horrible creature who has already killed horribly one of their company. Solomon himself is "bending forward with outstretched sceptre, in attitude of command: his face expressed horror and disgust, yet there was in it also the mark of imperious will and confident power" (7). This is phallic, certainly. However, the description of the monster is actually pubic:

At first you saw only a mass of coarse, matted black hair: presently it was seen that this covered a body of fearful thin-ness—almost a skeleton, but with the muscles standing out like wires. The hands were of a dusky pallor, covered like the body with long, coarse hairs, and hideously taloned . . . . Imagine one of the awful bird-catching spiders of South America translated into human form and endowed with intelligence just less than human, and you will have some faint conception of the terror inspired by this appalling effigy. (8)

It reads like a British nineteenth century public school boy's nightmare after a severe lecture on the adverse effects (as understood by Victorian physical science) of long-term masturbation: gaunt frame, hairy hands, and
imbecility. Onanism is waste of spirit and energy, an entropic (de)generation. The description of the monster also evokes the vagina dentata. Altogether, it is the devouring disorder of sex.

Almost immediately Dennistoun asks: "Is this book for sale?" (8). The sacristan says it is for sale, and for exactly two hundred and fifty francs. Dennistoun buys it. The daughter gives him a crucifix to wear around his neck. He retires to the inn. He is studying his newly purchased treasure when he takes the heavy crucifix off, laying it on the table:

. . . when his attention was caught by an object lying on the red cloth just by his right elbow. Two or three ideas of what it might be flitted through his brain with their own incalculable quickness. "A penwiper? No, no such thing in the house. A rat? No, too black. A large spider? I trust to goodness not: no. Good God! a hand like the hand in that picture!"

In another infinitesimal flash he had taken it in. Pale dusky skin covering nothing but bones and tendons of appalling strength; coarse black hairs, longer than ever grow on a human hand; nails rising from the ends of the fingers and curving sharply down and forward, grey, horny and wrinkled. (10)

The rest of the beast is then described as it rises to attack Dennistoun. The "most horrifying features of the whole vision," recounts the narrator, were "the eyes of fiery yellow against which the pupils showed black and intense, and the exulting hate and thirst to destroy life
which shone there" (11). It is a creature of
degeneration, a subhuman primate, the "missing link" of
Victorian Darwinism: "There was intelligence of a
kind . . ., intelligence beyond that of a beast, below
that of a man" (11). Dennistoun raises the crucifix,
symbolic of positive order and fixity and mutters words
though "he has never been quite certain what words he
said, though he knows that he spoke" (11). Again he is
doubling the Canon. The demon moves towards him, and
Dennistoun screams with the voice of an animal in pain.
Two "sturdy little serving men" rush into the room, and
the beastly demon rushes out. Dennistoun is found in a
swoon. His friends arrive from Toulouse the next day and
"his story found credence with them, though not until they
had seen the drawing and talked with the sacristan" (11).

At this time the narrator surfaces again. He tells of
later visiting Canon Alberic's tomb with Dennistoun, and
how the latter secured a Mass for the canon despite his
being a Presbyterian. The story closes with a typical
M.R. James note of scholarship: "The book is in the
Wentworth Collection at Cambridge. The drawing was
photographed and then burnt by Dennistoun on the day when
he left Comminges on the occasion of his first visit"
(13). Such academic details as he puts in his footnotes and frequently at the close of stories contribute to the overall uncanniness of the stories.

H.P. Lovecraft wrote, paraphrasing material from James's prefaces:

A ghost story, M.R. James believes, should have a familiar setting in the modern period, in order to approach closely the reader's sphere of experience. Its spectral phenomena, moreover, should be malevolent rather than beneficent; since fear is the emotion primarily to be excited. (101)

That fear should be the primary emotion a writer of ghost stories would wish to inspire is hardly surprising, but it is interesting to see what James exploited within his own imagination to make this story. Certainly there seems to be an unconscious, repressed fascination with sexuality, but we should take this a step further than the obvious conclusion that it is rechanneled, stunted desire which endangers Dennistoun. What endangers Dennistoun, and also Williams in "The Mezzotint," is the aesthetic or Hegelian Spirit perverted into the malign and horrible by an entropic universe. Spirit intrudes into the work of art not as the Idea of Beauty of the classic Hegelian Romantic paradigm, but as a stealthy, lurking invisible potential for terror, disintegration, and madness waiting to penetrate the aesthetic. The Hegelian Romantic spirit of Shelley's "Mont Blanc" and Wordsworth's "Ruined Cottage,"
conceived in the eternally renewing ideal of the first law of thermodynamics, becomes the spirit of nihilistic entropy, sealing into the energy physics of art its ruin and disorder.

Lovecraft understood this disordering energy, if not the physics, and was writing about M.R. James as well as himself when he wrote:

The true weird tale has something more than secret murder, bloody bones, or a sheeted form clanking chains according to rule. A certain atmosphere of breathless and unexplainable dread of outer, unknown forces must be present; and there must be a hint, expressed with a seriousness and portentousness becoming its subject, of that most terrible conception of the human brain--a malign and particular suspension or defeat of those fixed laws of Nature which are our only safeguard against the assaults of chaos and the daemons of unplumbed space. (15)

By this it seems fair to suggest Lovecraft meant Newtonian laws of Nature, especially his first law of thermodynamics, by emphasizing fixed as their important characteristic. The post-Newtonian law of increasing disorder seems well expressed metaphorically here as "assaults of chaos" and personified as "daemons of unplumbed space," and its spirit permeates Lovecraft's own fiction as extraterrestrial chaos: the perpetual vampire, that spirit of malice called the law of entropy. The process of immortalizing through art makes mortal, the
religious through an evil sleight of hand becomes
blasphemous, the meritorious becomes bestial. By the
perverse physics of disorder, desire becomes arbitrary and
dangerous, for as Lovecraft writes, "uncertainty and
danger are always closely allied; thus making any kind of
unknown world a world of peril and evil possibilities"
(14).

The fourth of our four short stories about uncanny
t vampire works of art is M.R. James's "The Mezzotint,"
written in the last months of 1899. The narrator is the
same persona as in "Count Alberic's Scrap-Book." He
directly refers to Dennistoun and his experience in the
Pyrenees in his relation of the uncanny experience of
another scholar, a man named Williams who had heard of
Dennistoun's brush with the spirit of the malevolent:

It was indeed somewhat consoling to him
to reflect that he was not expected to
acquire ancient MSS for his institution:
that was the business of the Shelburnian
Library. The authorities of that might
if they pleased ransack obscure corners
of the Continent for such matters: he
was glad to be obliged at the moment to
confine his attention to enlarging the
already unsurpassed collection of
English topographical drawings and
engravings possessed by his museum.
Yet, as it turned out, even a department
so homely and familiar as this may have
its dark corners, and to one of these
Mr. Williams was unexpectedly
introduced. (14).
Mr. Williams regularly receives catalogues from a London dealer "of a large and constantly changing stock of engravings, plans, and old sketches of mansions, churches, and towns in England and Wales" (14). The dealer specifically draws Williams's attention to a mezzotint, offering to send it on approval. The price seems high for a relatively unexciting engraving "978. Unknown. Interesting mezzotint. View of a manor-house: early part of the century. 15 by 10 inches; black frame" (15). Williams orders it on approval. When it arrives he discovers it to be:

a rather indifferent mezzotint, and an indifferent mezzotint is perhaps the worst form of engraving known. It presented a full-face view of a not very large manor house of the last century, with three rows of plain sashed windows with rusticated masonry about them, a parapet with balls or vases at the angles, and a small portico in the centre. On either side were trees, and in front a considerable expanse of lawn. (16)

It is an apparently very unexceptional amateur engraving. Williams believes his dealer must have made some misjudgement, and he intends to return it to him once he has made some superficial research into its origin. It is the weekend, and except for playing golf and whist Williams does not have too much to occupy him. However, over the course of the weekend he and his friend discover the picture changes: it appears to narrate a story. First
a muffled head appears in the foreground on the lawn, then later the figure is seen "crawling on all-fours towards the house, and . . . muffled in a strange black garment with a white cross on the back" (18). Williams finds these changes in the engraving unnerving, and he locks it in the drawer of a dresser, presumably to insure that he is not the victim of a practical joke, and signs a statement detailing the changes he had noted in the picture.

The next morning Williams and a company of friends note that the figure has disappeared from the lawn, that one of the ground floor windows of the house is open, and the position of the moon has changed. The phantom has gone into the house. They put together what few clues they have and find the location and history of the house, but not until they have seen the engraving change again: the figure, clothed in the traditional shroud of a hanged felon, is stepping across the lawn. It carries what appears to be a small child. Williams and his friends stare at it, but as the picture does not change they feel safe in leaving it while they "go to Hall." When they return, the figure has disappeared and "there was nothing for it but to spend the evening over gazetteers and guide-books" until they had learned the meaning of the mysterious changes (38).
Finally Williams finds this revealing entry in Murray's *Guide to Essex*:

16 1/2 miles, Anningley. The church has been an interesting building of Norman date but was extensively classicized in the last century. It contains the tombs of the family of Francis, whose mansion, Anningley Hall, a solid Queen Anne house, stands immediately beyond the churchyard in a park of about 80 acres. The family is now extinct, the last heir having disappeared mysteriously in infancy in the year 1802. The father, Mr. Arthur Francis, was locally known as a talented amateur engraver in mezzotint. After his son's disappearance he lived in complete retirement at the Hall and was found dead in his studio on the third anniversary of the disaster, having just completed an engraving of the house, impressions of which are of considerable rarity. (24)

A senior Fellow of the College who was bursar for several years for college land investments in Essex offers Williams more details: a tale of a poacher, last scion of an ancient family once lords of the estate, hanged after Arthur Francis's gamekeepers had caught him poaching on the estate. His execution had been avenged (by a friend, it was believed, since the poacher was the last of his family) by the mysterious disappearance of the son of Arthur Francis. James ends the story characteristically:

I have only to add that the picture is now in the Ashleian Museum; that it has been treated with a view to discovering whether sympathetic ink has been used in it but without effect; that Mr. Britnell [the London dealer] knew nothing of it save that he was sure it was uncommon;
and that, though carefully watched, it has never been known to change again.

Possibly the most disturbing element of this story is the way the picture represents, actually narrates, the story within the domestic artistry of "the worst form of engraving known." If this was to happen in a story to one of the fantastic compositions of Bosch or Goya we would be impressed in a different way: the effect would be macabre and aesthetic but not terrible. The commonplace nature of horror is even more effective than the overtly bizarre in that in our daily lives we are surrounded by structures of the commonplace which, we sense, are always on the verge of collapsing into nightmare. Every night in sleep, in our dreams, we meet this phenomenon: the unconscious mind and our deepest instincts produce disorderly narratives in such homely, common frames as the mezzotint in James's story. In dreams the logic of fear takes over, and "a vast residuum of powerful inherited associations clings round all the objects and processes that were once mysterious, however well they may now be explained" (Lovecraft 14). The malice that is re-enacted in the mezzotint has all the timeless energy of dream. It is as if the engraving depicts the eternal space of perversity where light energy has gone as spent heat.
The mezzotint plate is made "on copper or steel, in which the surface of the plate is first roughened uniformly, the lights and half-lights being then produced by scraping away the 'nap' thus formed, and the untouched parts giving the deepest shadows" (James 304). The plate acts with ink and paper as a negative to a positive with an almost unlimited potential for multiplicity. With the death of Francis, his dark and angry spirit would seem to have gone into the engravings. Through the multiplicity of the engraving process by which many copies are made from a "negative," light and spirit intrude to tell the story of abduction, loss, and murder again and again. The "inspiration" of Francis's terror has manifested its enigmatic language in the vulgar mezzotint, framed to be ordered and fixed (like the corpse of the hanged man in his shroud with crosses: hanged felons and suicides were buried thus to keep them from returning as vengeful revenants and vampires) though unsuccessfully in this instance. Inside the frame stalks uncanny disorder.

It would be negligent not to consider Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891) in this context of vampirical works of art, even if only briefly. The richness of its style, imaginative plotting, characterization, and general sense of Huysmans-like high Decadence make it nearly as interesting a work of Anglo-
Irish fin-de-siècle as *Dracula*. Like some other nineteenth-century works of supernatural fiction, it is more of a moral parable than a tale of terror and for that reason is examined here only in light of its occult aesthetics of representation.

Dorian Gray's portrait becomes gradually more hideous as its subject falls from childish grace to debauched crime. Gray is described as Narcissus, and the portrait's artist Basil Hallward even feels a mirroring disorder in the painting when he tells his friend Lord Henry Wotton he cannot exhibit it because he has put too much of himself into it (2). Gray is a monster of reflection—both because the desire he creates (both homosexual and heterosexual) disorders those who project their desire (thus Hallward's fear to exhibit) and because he is Narcissus, a lover of his own projected reflection and the hedonistic reflected desire of the fin-de-siècle, and is cursed accordingly to live within his mirrored representation, his portrait. Multiplicity disorders the novel from the very first pages (Lord Henry's misunderstanding of Hallward's ambiguously expressed fear to exhibit what the picture mirrors) to the (self) murder by Gray of the portrait and, supernaturally, himself in the final pages.
Wilde has made a double sleight of hand in terms of the supernatural disorder in art. By Dorian Gray's wish to remain young at the price of his soul while his portrait is perversely marked by the mortal effects of sin and aging, the work of art becomes the bearer of his inner reality, his true being, while its perennially beautiful reflected self pursues a course of selfishness, perversity, and conscienceless sin even to the ultimate crime of murder. The portrait, the "picture" of Dorian Gray's reflected inner self, his soul, is kept by him in a locked room on the topmost floor of his townhouse as soon as he has observed its capacity for reflective transformation. The whole novel revolves around the idea of reflection and art that Wilde presents in his fascinating and often misunderstood Preface:

All art is at once surface and symbol.
Those who go beneath the surface do so at their peril.
Those who read the symbol do so at their peril.
It is the spectator, and not life, that art really mirrors. (xxiv)

Art is dangerous because in its mirroring disorder the self is imperiled by the tropes of desire and self-knowledge. When Gray sees, by reflection, Sibyl Vane as reflected object of derision in the desire of Lord Henry, he no longer loves her but despises her and brings her death. Love and art, says Lord Henry, "are both simply
forms of imitation" (84). Adrian Singleton's ruin is the result of his mirroring imitation of Gray, as are the destruction of Gray's other friends, likewise poisoned by imitation to their souls, such as Henry Ashton, the young Duke of Perth, and Alan Campbell. Gray is a reflective monster. Others model themselves after him, order their reflections on his aesthete charisma—and endow him with victims for the physics of entropic representation to vampirize through him.

In the novel (and perhaps truly in Wilde's aesthetic) art has a soul, but man has not (to paraphrase one of Lord Henry Wotton's epigrams) (215). A work of art is capable of organizing spirit out of the chaos of the spectator's world. Dorian Gray is himself a work of art, a model and also object of mirroring desire to almost every character in the novel, and he acts as vampire to their lives. Wherever he goes he brings others to ruin, despair, and death. However, he has no soul himself: it abides in the portrait by Basil Hallward locked up in Gray's attic. It abides in art. Gray is like the hungry mouth of the portrait, feeding on the sorrow, despair, and shame of those whom he ruins. In this process of reflection Gray himself becomes art, as Lord Henry recognizes:

But now and then a complex personality took the place and assumed the office of art, was indeed, in its way, a real work
of art, Life having its elaborate masterpieces, just as poetry has, or sculpture, or painting. (57)

The obvious parable of the novel is that crime and evil committed in secret must pollute a hidden part of oneself—the soul—and eventually such hypocrisy will bring one to a miserable end. But are we really inside one of Wilde's more ingenious moral paradoxes? Lord Henry Wotten expresses it:

Soul and body, body and soul—how mysterious they were! There was animalism in the soul, and the body had its moments of spirituality. The senses could refine, and the intellect could degrade. Who could say where the fleshly impulse ceased, or the psychical impulse began . . . Was the soul a shadow seated in the house of sin? (58)

Only the work of art has soul (in the Wildean aesthete sense of the word, which is the only sort of soul of which Wilde had authoritative knowledge), only through art can we order the chaos of perceived experience into soul, and the soul abides in the work and is not possessed by its spectator. The spectator through reflection experiences his or her own soul, but only as long as he or she is in the aesthetic sphere, an idea with a clearly Platonic origin.

In order to claim a soul, one must be in the reflective aesthetic, ordering the chaos, remaking new systems of meaning, establishing the soul inside through
the purer experience of art. Throughout the novel everyone is seeing himself in something or someone else, including, to quote Shakespeare, "the most observed of all observers," Dorian Gray, whose reflection is his portrait, the uncanny work of art that (at the top of this food chain) swallows myriad souls. Aesthetic souls. "I see everything in him," says Basil Hallward after proclaiming Gray his new living "motive" of art (11). He reflects Hallward's aesthetic universe back to Hallward, and this eventually kills the painter. This leads Hallward and Gray to the attic room where the enigma of art waits for both of them with a knife. Soul only exists in multiplicity, distortion, and reflection—that is, it only exists in art—but the cost of soul is sorrow, ruin, and shame. This is, of course, a theme throughout Wilde's later work, in all genres, particularly The Ballad of Reading Gaol, A Woman of No Importance, and De Profundis. Hallward's portrait (pro)claims the soul of its subject, which then is Hallward's soul as well as Gray's. This is why Gray's murder of Hallward seems as heinous to the reader as it does.

Wilde gives readers a work of art in his novel in which the readers mirror themselves by the novel and gain the aesthetic substance of soul, molded and transferred by the aesthetic into Dorian Gray, a work of art, and through
him into his picture. They are disordered in this aesthetic coil. The cost of soul is sorrow, pain, and sin, but, to Wilde, soullessness is a curse far worse than these. What should we make of the final paradox (if we read this more as moral parable than aesthetic theory, it seems paradoxical) that while it is the soul, the portrait, that Gray has stabbed in the heart, it is the corpse of Gray, hideous flesh without art or soul, that is found stabbed in the heart on the floor of the attic room? It is art that is truth, says Wilde in his Preface to the novel, but those "that art really mirrors" read "Beneath the surface . . . at their peril" and "read the symbol . . . at their peril" (xxiv).

There were poisons so subtle that to know their properties one had to sicken of them. There were maladies so strange that one had to pass through them if one sought to understand their nature. And, yet, what a great reward one received! How wonderful the whole world became to one! To note the curious hard logic of passion, and the emotional coloured life of the intellect—to observe where they met, and where they separated, at what point they were in unison, and at what point they were in discord—there was delight in that! What matter what the cost was? One could never pay too high a price for any sensation. (57)

Art is vampirical. It represents a universal cosmic vision of Symbolist correspondence where beautiful things are dangerous cyphers of the eternal. "All art is quite useless," asserts Wilde in the Preface to the novel, and
by this he means highest praise. Art is outside the currency of usefulness, and therefore, according to Wilde, worthy of the highest investment of self. The Picture of Dorian Gray is a truthful mirror of Wilde himself, as G. Wilson Knight remarks:

Wilde's life is a drama, and seen in all its excess, its brilliance, its degradation and its tragedy, it has the form needed to correspond to the matters contained. His flamboyance, exhibitionism and heady enjoyment of success, these must be admitted . . . . But all must be judged in relation to the difficulties inherent in his life's central, Blakean, aim: to make of the senses elements of a new spirituality, to cure the soul by the senses and the senses by the soul. This aim he carried through with a daring consistency; it motivated alike his aestheticism, his anti-social acts and his perception of Christ. About his lowest engagements there was an element of the sacramental . . . he lived and acted in allegiance to the royalty of the crowned and diamonded Eros. His sin was total self-expression acted out in spontaneity "not wisely but too well"; and he took tragedy uncomplainingly in his stride.

The tension of distance between self and object, suffering and soul, disorder and order, symbol and transcendence is eternal, an ordering beyond dissolution only found in art. "Art never expresses anything but itself. All bad art comes from returning to life and nature," wrote Wilde. The implication is that all good art is essentially amoral, if not conventionally immoral, by its separation
from life and nature which by conventional values are essentially good. In this way "art for art's sake" is vampirical. It exists in a separate sphere from life and nature. It disorders to reorder into sorrow and soul, as Wilde writes in one of his letters:

I now see that sorrow, being the supreme emotion of which man is capable, is at once the type and test of all great Art. What the artist is always looking for is that mode of existence in which soul and body are one and indivisible: in which the outward is expressive of the inward: in which form reveals . . . Truth in Art is the unity of a thing with itself: the outward rendered expressive of the inward: the soul made incarnate: the body instinct with spirit. For this reason there is no truth comparable to Sorrow. There are times when Sorrow seems to me to be the only truth. Other things may be illusions of the eye or the appetite, made to blind the one and cloy the other, but out of Sorrow have the worlds been built, and at the birth of a child or a star there is pain.
(qtd. in Erickson 156)
Conclusion

Vampire fiction filled the pages of pulp magazines like *Weird Tales* (1923-1954) after World War One. Decadence had gone out of fashion in mainstream literary circles, and became a remnant-culture aesthetic, widely manifested in "Grade B" movies and pulp fiction. Some of the products of the Decadent vestigial aesthetic have found mainstream appreciation in our own time, H. P. Lovecraft's writings in particular. Seabury Quinn's stories and novels deserve to be likewise reappraised. Vampirism was a particularly favored theme of the *Weird Tales* writers. Stefan Dziemianowicz, in his Introduction to the anthology *Weird Vampire Tales*, writes that the periodical was:

... an important ... market for the vampire story. Though it published fantastic fiction of all sorts, vampires were the theme of about ninety stories, and thus appeared in the magazine on an average of once in every three of its 279 issues. Virtually every one of *Weird Tales* most distinguished contributors--H. P. Lovecraft, Clark Ashton Smith, Robert E. Howard, Robert Bloch, Henry Kuttner, C. L. Moore, Manly Wade Wellman--at some time wrote a vampire story for the magazine. (12)

While *Weird Tales* is the best known weird pulp of the era, there were several other magazines: *Strange Tales of Mystery and Terror* (1931-1933), *Horror Stories* (1935-1941), *Terror Tales* (1934-1941), *Unknown Worlds* (1939-...
1943), and others. They nursed the Decadent aesthetic through the Modernist era in their literary underground. That their fictions are the direct heirs of Gautier, Poe, Stoker, and M. R. James is obvious after only a quick perusal, though they are certainly the decadence of the Decadent. *Weird Tales* even frequently republished the stories of those four nineteenth-century fantasists. The poetry of H. P. Lovecraft and Clark Ashton Smith are Symbolist in style, metrically and themetically inspired by Poe and Baudelaire. A satanic, entropic Romantic literature lived on between the lurid covers of these magazines and in the horror films starring Bella Lugosi, Vincent Price, and Christopher Lee, to re-emerge in the immensely popular novels of Anne Rice.

In the 1942 black and white Republic Pictures thriller *The Corpse Vanishes*, Bela Lugosi portrays a mid-twentieth-century vampire straight out of the pages of pulp magazines like *Weird Tales*. Lugosi plays Dr. Lorenz, a sinister, leering professor and physician who drugs lovely young brides at the altar with a potent orchid of his own hybridization. The brides are seized by permanent catalepsy, their bodies stolen from the church in the midst of the confusion by the devious, brilliant Lorenz and his henchmen, and then secreted in a crypt under his house. He keeps them alive but unconscious, removing
secretions from their glands by hypodermic needle and syringe which he then injects into his wife. This herd of brides in morgue-like drawers provides the beautiful but cruel Countess Lorenz with almost perpetual youth. When the effects of the injection wears off she returns to her real age—seventy to eighty years old—and is seized with paroxysms of fear and pain. She craves the secretions like a morphine addict craves her drug. Watching Lugosi expertly fiddle with the syringe one remembers that he was by then deep into his own morphine addiction. It is significant that he is called doctor or professor rather than Count, a title the character should possess since his wife is Countess Lorenz, but here Lugosi is an up-to-date World War Two era vampire who must not be confused with the Count of Lugosi's Dracula fame. Such a vampire as Dr. Lorenz has appropriated the title and science of Professor Van Helsing, and has nothing to do with the bats, wooden stakes, and other superstitions of central Europe.

Dr. Lorenz and his wife and domestic household are central European, from some unnamed former province of the Hapsburgs' empire, one supposes. Lugosi, of course, sounds Hungarian, but his wife, played by Elizabeth Russell, sounds distinctly Polish and their housekeeper Romanian. They live in a remote location, behind high walls with a strong gate, in a house furnished with the
furniture, objects, and art of the fin-de-siècle. Countess Lorenz dresses like a Decadent beauty, and spends her happiest hours in a trance of art-inspired ecstasy as her husband plays music reminiscent of Saint-Saëns on the organ. Fagah, their housekeeper, dresses like a Victorian widow in a vast black dress. She looks peculiarly like Franz Liszt in his old age as an abbé. Her two sons are fin-de-siècle monsters. Toby is a sneering dwarf. Angel is a necrophilically inclined mute, a regressive quasi-hunchback, whose knuckles almost brush the floor as he wanders through the secret subterranean passages with a beatific smile. They all live to serve the vain, cruel, hedonistic, selfish, exotic, and beautiful Countess. Their life's purpose is to keep alive the fin-de-siècle in perpetuity as personified by the Countess, timelessly aesthetically beautiful yet sterile and sadistic. Like the Weird Tales pulp fiction, they are a Decadent underground, holding out against Modernism as personified by spunky, aggressive, determined, and sensible newspaper reporter Patricia Hunter.

Patricia Hunter, working the society beat for her newspaper, picks up one of Dr. Lorenz's orchids at the scene of one of the wedding abductions. She takes it to a specialist who identifies it as the rare hybrid of Lorenz's making and tells her of the doctor's nearby
residence in Brookdale. She goes to interview Dr. Lorenz and gets past the gate by hitching a ride with Dr. Foster, Lorenz's handsome and urbane colleague and collaborator on a new unspecified project. Foster, by the way, is played by an actor with the curiously suggestive name of Tris Coffin. When they enter the mysterious house they interrupt the Lorenz household in one of their fin-de-siècle aesthete musical soirées. The Countess marches up to Patricia and slaps her. "I do not like that girl. She is here for no good!" she hisses in her thick accent to her husband as he draws her away. Dr. Lorenz exudes unctuous, cosmopolitan, "old world" urbanity, but still barely conceals his menace, maybe even madness. He is a professor of evil, a scholar of disorder. His science creates an order of satanic perversity. Instead of his wife generating new lives, men and women begetting wholesome generations of promise for the future, the Lorenz household snares youthful women ripe with the promise of progeny and reverses the natural process by the elderly countess nursing herself to youth at the expense of their bodily secretions and, finally, of their lives. Throughout the film there is the recurring importance of brides. The Lorenzes only abduct brides. It seems to be essentially important, but it is never explained why. Also, the gland secretions are removed in the general
vicinity of the mammary glands. It is as if the women are
snatched at the very moment of saying their marriage vows
to force them into a parody of marriage and motherhood.
Through their marriage to the household and by nursing the
Decadent queen with their glands, the household lives on.
Without the Countess the Lorenz ménage would no doubt
cease to exist as an alternate and perverse world.

Patricia reluctantly agrees to spend the night. The
house disorders her with its secret doors and passageways
and skulking dwarf. A storm rages outside in the night.
The Countess appears suddenly in her room as if out of
nowhere. "Sometime you too will be a bride," she says,
leering madly, to Patricia, and then disappears as
suddenly as she appeared. There follows a night of
murder, mayhem, and narrow escapes. Patricia leaves the
house in the morning to return to the city and with Dr.
Foster's help convinces her editor and the police to help
her plot the capture of Lorenz by staging a fake wedding.
After some exciting plot twists the situation is resolved,
the Lorenz household is destroyed, and brides may once
again marry with expectations of anti-entropic
procreation.

In the twentieth-century fin-de-siècle, the vampire
theme is now as popular as it was one hundred years ago.
There are "Goth" bars in every larger city in the United
States where men and women wear black clothes, black lipstick and nail polish and white face paint, and listen to "Goth" bands. Some I know actually claim to drink blood habitually. There are several "chat room" sites on the internet where people role-play as vampires, calling themselves Kali, Vlad and Lestat as they share their individual hallucinations. The vampire has become the most potent figure of alienation and decadence in the twentieth century fin-de-siècle: hedonistic, perverse, satanic, sadistic, nocturnal, and sensual.

In the 1994 film The Addiction a young NYU philosophy doctoral candidate takes a Postmodern vampire journey through evil, guilt, appetite, nullity, and disorder. Throughout the black and white film there are still pictures and news footage of twentieth-century atrocities: Nazi death camp massacres, Vietnam War massacres, Bosnian massacres. The twentieth century is a century of massacre, atrocity, nihilism, and unbridled appetite for blood. It is a vampire century. At the beginning of the film, the student, Kathleen Conklin (played by Lili Taylor), is appalled by the lack of conscience and accountability in human history. It is beyond her comprehension. Over the course of the film she undergoes a course in cosmic evil leading to her deathbed reordering of nothingness into illumination.
The director, Abel Ferrara, sets this vampire story in the urban decay of New York City, with resonant images of drug addiction, street gangs, and homelessness. These are streets of chaos, full of anonymous crowds and arbitrary violence. Kathleen is attacked by a vampire, a twentieth-century fin-de-siècle vampire woman in a black-caiped gown who pulls her off the street and down into a back alley. She calls Kathleen "collaborator" and tells her "if you want to know what's going to happen just wait and see."

Kathleen goes to the hospital, is interviewed by the police, and then goes home to her apartment with a bandaged neck and some antibiotics. She is shocked and sickened. She attends a significant lecture on determinism, predestination and damnation, guilt and redemption given by her dissertation director, and then she undergoes her vampire transformation. Walking through the Holocaust Museum she experiences a revelation about human history:

I know clearly one half the truth . . . the old adage of Santayana--that those who don't learn from history are doomed to repeat it--is a lie. There is no history--everything we are is eternally with us. Our question is, therefore, what can save us from our crazy insistence on spreading the blight in ever-widening circles?

She sees disorder and evil expanding into ever greater disorder and then final nothingness. She begins to wear
only black, wears sunglasses, looks disheveled in the manner currently known as "heroin chic" in high fashion. Twenty minutes into the film she gets her first vampire fix. With a hypodermic syringe she draws blood from an unconscious addict in the street and then injects the blood into her arm in her bathroom. She collapses into hallucinations of childhood and art.

She meets with her dissertation director at a coffee house. Baroque art is on the walls, a cellist plays Vivaldi, a sad adagio, and they sit ill at ease. She invites him to her apartment, engages his sexual interest, injects him with heroin, and then vampirizes him. Her next victim is a naive young woman she picks up in the university library and lures back to her apartment. She has become a predator, but blames the victim. As the young woman sobs before the mirror, cleaning the wound on her neck, Kathleen is indifferent to her pain; she tells her, "it was your decision." Victim follows victim as she spreads the contagion of evil. She tells her one friend, a fellow philosophy student, "Guilt doesn't pass with time--it's eternal . . . the appetite is insatiable." And then she vampirizes her in the lecture hall women's room. She has become a part of eternal evil by joining the undead. She meets another vampire, older and more violent than herself. Peina, played by Christopher Walken, has
learned to survive as a vampire in the workaday world, controlling his addiction to blood by force of will. He has learned how to order his disorder so that he can function despite the void he perceives. He tells her:

The entire world is a graveyard and we are the birds of prey picking at the bones . . . we're the ones that let the dying know the hour has come. Do you think Nietzsche understood something? Mankind has striven to exist beyond good and evil from the beginning. You know what they found?—Me.

He gives her a lecture on nothingness: "You are nothing; you understand nothing; you are slave to what you are, and you are nothing."

She passes her dissertation defense, graduates, and invites her professors, family, and friends to a party to celebrate the successful completion of her studies. The party becomes a vampire orgy bloodbath. Her last victim is her own mother: she appears to feed at her breast in a parody of the nursing child. After this blood feast she becomes deathly ill. In the hospital she dies in grace, accepting communion, eating the body of Christ in antivampirism. She has reorganized chaos into unity through her suffering through evil and acceptance of guilt. "God forgive me," she says to the priest. At the end, we see her tombstone and hear her voice saying "to face what we are in the end, we stand before the light and our true
nature is revealed: self revelation is annihilation of self." The final image is of a cross, the symbol of a fixed, non-entropic cosmos.

In the fin-de-siècle of the twentieth-century, the end of a millennium, the same issues of nothingness, desire, aesthetic reordering and disorder, despair and redemption are as current as they were one hundred years ago. The entropic root metaphor is ever present in the feeling that something is irrecoverably lost or irredeemably disordered, and that feeling pervades this millennial fin-de-siècle. Decadence, the sense of falling away and falling apart, is the Postmodern condition. It pervades art and life. It never completely died out with the Great War or the turn of the century, but continued as an alternative aesthetic poised again to become mainstream and even dominant. The figure of the vampire again seems to be everywhere.
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Vita

Michael James Dennison was born in 1951 in Sioux City, Iowa. He grew up in Nebraska, Colorado, Texas, Virginia, and New York. As an adolescent and young adult he lived in London, England, graduating from London Central High School (affiliated with the U.S. Air Force) in 1969. He remained in London until age 21 when he moved to Dublin, Ireland. At 25 years of age he returned to the United States, residing in Colorado Springs, Colorado and Omaha, Nebraska. He attended the University of Nebraska at Omaha from 1982 to 1988 where he studied poetry writing under the direction of Arthur Homer and graduated with highest honors with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Creative Writing. From 1988 to 1991 he pursued graduate studies in poetry, fiction, and playwriting at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, attaining the degree of Master of Fine Arts. In 1991 he was accepted into the Graduate Program in Comparative Literature at Louisiana State University. On 20 December, 1996, Mr. Dennison attained his Doctor of Philosophy in Comparative Literature, with a concentration in the literatures of the English, French, and Italian languages.
DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: Michael James Dennison

Major Field: Comparative Literature

Title of Dissertation: "Delights of the Night and Pleasures of the Void": Vampirism and Entropy in Nineteenth-Century Literature

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