

BLOOD DISORDERS: A TRANSATLANTIC STUDY OF THE VAMPIRE AS
AN EXPRESSION OF IDEOLOGICAL, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC
TENSIONS IN LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY HISPANIC SHORT
FICTION

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores vampire logic in Hispanic short fiction of the last decade of the 19th century and first three decades of the 20th century, and is thus a comparative study; not simply between Spanish and Latin American literary production, but also between Hispanic and European literary traditions. As such, this study not only draws attention to how Hispanic authors employed traditional Gothic conventions—and by extension, how Hispanic nations produced “modern” literature—but also to how these authors adapted previous models and therefore deviated from and questioned the European Gothic tradition, and accordingly, established trends and traditions of their own.

This study does not pretend to be exhaustive. Even though I mention poetry, plays, and novels from the first appearance of the literary vampire in the mid-18th century through the *fin de siglo* and the first few decades of the 20th century, I focus on short fiction produced within and shortly thereafter the *fin de siglo*, as this time period saw a resurgence of the vampire figure on a global scale and the first legitimate appearance in Hispanic letters, being as it coincided with a rise in periodicals and short story production and represented developments and anxieties related to the physical and behavioral sciences, technological advances and urban development, waves of immigration and disease, and war. While Chapter 1 establishes a working theory of the vampire from a historical and materialist perspective, each of the following chapters explores a different trend in Hispanic vampire literature: Chapter 2 looks at how vampire narratives represent political and economic anxieties particular to Spain and Latin America; Chapter 3 studies newly married couples and how vampire logic leads to the death of the wife—and thus

the death of the “angel of the house” ideal—therefore challenging ideas surrounding marriage, the family, and the home; lastly, Chapter 4 explores courting couples and how disruptions in the makeup of the public/private divide influenced images of female monstrosity—complex, parodic ones in the Hispanic case.

One of the main conclusions this study reaches is that Hispanic authors were indeed producing Gothic images, but that these images deviated from the European Gothic vampire literary tradition and prevailing literary tendencies of the time through aesthetic and narrative experimentation and as a result of particular anxieties related to their histories, developments, and current realities. While Latin America and Spain produced few explicit, Dracula-like vampires, the vampire figures, metaphors, and allegories discussed in the chapters speak to Spain and Latin America’s political, economic, and ideological uncertainties, and as a result, their “place” within the modern global landscape. This dissertation ultimately suggests that Hispanic Gothic representations are unique because they were being produced within peripheral spaces, places considered “non-modern” because of their distinct histories of exploitation and development and their distinct cultural, religious, and racial compositions, therefore shifting perceptions of Otherness and turning the Gothic on its head. The vampire in the Hispanic context, I suggest, is a fusion of different literary currents, such as Romanticism, aesthetic movements, such as Decadence, and modes, such as the Gothic and the Fantastic, and is therefore different in many ways from its predecessors. These texts abound with complex representations that challenge the status quo, question dominant narratives, parody literary formulas, and break with tradition.

In loving memory of my brave and beautiful grandmother, Bertha Riera Luaces, who never doubted me, and who gave me many wonderful gifts, two of the most significant being her memories and her language.

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PROLOGUE

In the last two decades or so, the vampire figure has clearly made a comeback, in both mainstream and more obscure, independent cultural production. This reappearance, specific to a post-modern world that, while looking to the past for familiar representations of monstrosity, represents the figure in light of its own fears, anxieties, and struggles. Even though they share similar characteristics, these vampires are therefore quite different from the earliest literary vampires that appeared in German poetry of the mid to late 18th century. The vampire of 18th and early 19th century Gothic literature can be understood as a manifestation of the dark side of modernity, as a response to an ideological shift that was in the works for centuries—the slow transition from feudalism to mercantilism, and eventually to capitalism, which involved the evolution from a religious to a secular society, and the division between the public and private spheres. As such, this dissertation is grounded in the idea that the literary vampire not only emerged as a response to growing trends in medicine and science that began to explore both psychological and biological states and diseases, but also as a response to the consolidation of a private sphere that allowed for a morality (and thus amorality) to develop behind closed doors, within the framework of the newly established bourgeoisie family. An exploitative and seductive figure that attacked the nuclear family but ends in securing its power by maintaining the status quo, the vampire became a recurrent figure in popular (but peripheral) Gothic fiction, and a perfect representation of the familial, economic, and political anxieties of the time period.

Although this is arguably the condition within which the vampire emerged in early German and English Gothic fiction, how can its appearance be explained in countries

such as Spain, where the division between public and private was, although inevitable, initially resisted? Can we even speak of a Spanish vampire figure when the Gothic genre's existence in Spain has been disputed among scholars, and until recently almost entirely rejected? And where does this leave Spanish America, whose geographic location and colonial subjugation entailed not only a unique path to modernity, but also a series of literary responses to its own problems, such as foundational fictions? That is, in the Spanish-speaking literary world of the 19th century, is there enough evidence to speak of a vampire figure, either similar in characteristics to that of its European predecessor or different with respect to its own adaptations? This dissertation sustains that the vampire did indeed make an appearance in both Spanish and Latin American letters, and as such, rejects the argument that the Enlightenment and its dark side, and thus modernity, somehow missed these parts of the world. That said, the Hispanic vampire figure did not appear at the same time, at the same rate, nor in the same forms that it did in Europe, but this should not be viewed adversely. If anything, its particular emergence in the last decade of the 19th century, and which I suggest spans through the third decade of the 20th century, speaks to efforts on both sides of the Atlantic to define and situate themselves within modernity. Of course, Europe saw a reemergence of the vampire figure during this time of Decadence and *fin de siècle* despair, but its emergence in Hispanic letters is, as the chapters that follow will address, singular and important. In addition to its primary undertaking of a literary analysis, this dissertation therefore explores the historical, political, cultural, and economic processes and events particular to Spain and Latin America that shaped the 19th and early 20th century vampire.

This time period saw a reemergence of the vampire across European and American nations and literary genres—poetry, short stories, novels, and theater—but it was in the short story form where the vampire has proven to be most prolific in Hispanic literature. There are few exceptions to this trend, such as “Misterio: ven...,” “Visión,” and several other poems by Delmira Agustini, Ramón del Valle Inclán’s play *Ligazón*, and Froylán Turcios’s novel, *El vampiro*. An increase in periodicals, from 437 in 1867 to 1,347 in 1900 (McKenna 22-23), and a lack of publishing houses, at least in the Latin American case (González 8), can be considered contributing factors to this phenomenon. Another factor may also be Edgar Allan Poe’s influence on the goals and style of the short story, wherein a “unity of effect” should be achieved if the story is to be successful. Taking into account the important role of suspense within the Gothic tradition, it is therefore understandable that the Gothic vampire would find a suitable home in the short story format as well. This dissertation will only explore the short fiction for several reasons.¹ Firstly, I believe genres do not only have different forms, but usually different goals, techniques, and reading processes, so to maintain consistency among the analysis, it seemed important to stay within the scope of the short story. I also believe that readership and accessibility is an important factor to consider. These stories were not only being published with a different reader in mind than the sentimental novels or even foundational fictions of the time period, they were also published alongside political, economic, and cultural realities, thereby bridging the gap between fiction and non-fiction.

¹ All of the texts analyzed in the following chapters are short stories, with the exception of Carmen de Burgos’ novella, *La mujer fría*. Even though it is considered a novella, it is around the same number of pages as the other stories, and appeared in a literary magazine, not in a book, much like the other stories as well.

By extension, this allowed the vampire to encompass a plethora of equally-horrifying meanings in an accessible yet stylistically-experimental manner.

This study is therefore not exhaustive in terms of genre, nor is it exhaustive in terms of the short story itself. My research has led me to discover specific trends in Hispanic vampire literature that offer new perspectives on Latin American and Spanish turn-of-the-century literary production, and each chapter is devoted to one of these trends. I have therefore looked past some cases of vampire literature that do not fit into these larger themes, or where the vampire characters or vampire logic were secondary to the plot. Examples include, but are not limited to, Rubén Darío's "Thanathopia" (1893), Alejandro Cuevas' "El vampiro" (1911), Alfonso Hernández Catá's "Otro caso de vampirismo" (1907), Julio Calcaño's "Tristan Cataletto" (1893), Víctor Juan Guillot's "El vampiro" (1920), and on the Spanish side, Wenceslao Fernández Flórez's "El claro del bosque" (1922) and Alfonso Castelao's *Un ojo de vidrio: memorias de un esqueleto* (1922). The texts that I have selected for the corpus all challenge European models, speak to specific political, economic and/or ideological tensions in Spain and Latin America, and treat vampirism as a primary theme. Although the progression of the chapters is thematic and not chronological, the progression within the chapters is chronological in order to draw proper conclusions as to the reasons behind particular representations and the similarities and differences between Spain and Latin America, and what these may imply.

Chapter one delivers the ideological framework for this study. Since the idea of a Latin American or Spanish Gothic is a relatively new concept in scholarly criticism, it was paramount for me to explore not only the definitions, conventions, and literature of

the Gothic in Hispanic short fiction, but to also explore its emergence and evolution within the broader scope of these regions' particular modernities. In order to establish this, I go back to the "beginning." I first explore the Enlightenment as a concept, a reality, and the debates it produced that are relevant to this study, and then move into how the Enlightenment took shape in Spain and Latin America. I then proceed into a discussion on the Gothic in Europe, Spain, and Latin America, followed by a discussion on the vampire in the same way. Since both the Gothic and the vampire are responses to European ideological processes before they ever began to form in Hispanic regions, I think it is important to explore how and why these productions came to be, their significance, and their implications in order to understand when and how they were adopted and adapted by Hispanic authors. I define what I understand the Gothic in these regions to be, and provide a working theory of the vampire that serves as the foundation for this study. It is ultimately suggested that the Spanish and Latin American vampires—as the vampire is not uniform across these nations or authors—are responses to particular political, economic, and social developments at the turn of the 20th century, and not simply attempts to reproduce European literary forms.

Chapter two, "Blood Money: Vampire Logic as an Expression of Economic Exploitation and Political Anxiety," takes an allegorical approach to Emilia Pardo Bazán's "La exangüe" (1899) and Horacio Quiroga's "El vampiro" (1927). The chapter begins by defining allegory and exploring economic exploitation under capitalist modes of production, concepts which ground the analysis to differing degrees. It goes on to suggest that the vampire logic in the stories can be regarded as a series of metaphors that conceals stories related to colonial and post-colonial realities in Spain and Latin America.

To varying extremes, these stories communicate other stories altogether, ones of exploitation and competing entities in various struggles over autonomy and power during a time of economic change and political unrest. In the section on Pardo Bazán's "La exangüe," published the year following Spain's loss of the last of her colonies, I situate the text within the Gothic vampire tradition and explore historical events and attitudes surrounding the Spanish-American War and Spanish progress and modernity. I go on to propose that the blatant political allegory proposed by previous scholars actually suggests greater economic and ideological concerns surrounding the intersection of History, literature, exploitation, and gender. The section on Quiroga's "El vampiro" suggests that the story can also be read as an allegory, in this case one that communicates anxieties over U.S. hegemony in Latin America—cultural, political, and economic. In both cases, vampire logic functions as a subversive tool that expresses different levels of exploitation under the conditions of capitalism through the existence of realist economic and political concerns alongside supernatural processes.

Chapter three, "Blood Stains on the Linens: The Vampire as an Expression of the Vulnerability of the Private Sphere," shifts the focus directly onto the private sphere by exploring the unexpected and horrific events experienced by newly-married couples in Emilia Pardo Bazán's "Vampiro" (1901), Clemente Palma's "La granja blanca" (1904) and Horacio Quiroga's "El almohadón de plumas" (1917). The chapter proposes that both Spanish and Latin American authors employed vampire logic in order to question the stability of the private sphere through an assault on marriage, the home, and the nuclear family. Although neither of the three stories make use of a Dracula-like, explicit vampire figure, they all experiment with vampirism to varying degrees and in different ways, with

the theosophical, folkloric, and female vampires all making appearances alongside more implicit vampire symbolism. These stories employ numerous Gothic conventions, but they deviate from the traditional Gothic novel in that the husband, who was supposed to lay Gothic horror to rest, becomes the embodiment of horror. In all three cases, the husband either directly or indirectly facilitates the death of the wife, symbolically killing the “angel of the house,” and therefore disrupting the idea of home as a place of stability and comfort. In the section on Pardo Bazán’s “Vampiro,” I suggest that the implications of a young bride’s death at the hands of her mysterious and fatal husband range from a challenge to Spain’s religious and patriarchal configuration of the private sphere, to a questioning of the power structure implicit in the notion of gender, and how this structure is represented and at times reconfigured in female-authored literature. In Palma’s “La granja blanca,” arguably the most horrific story in this study, the psychological, emotional, and physical suffering experienced by the characters expose the symbolic cracks in the bourgeois marital and familial ideals. The story exposes concerns related to the growing sense of pessimism and isolation that mark social uneasiness and existential crisis in the early to mid-20th century, but it is the timeframe of the story (before and after the wedding), the destruction of the marital home, and the death of the wife and daughter that reveal anxieties related to marriage and the stability of the nuclear family in particular. Finally, in Quiroga’s “El almohadón de plumas,” a young wife appears to succumb to a strange illness, eventually discovered to be caused by a rare insect that sucked her blood while she slept. In this section, I suggest that an interesting and uniquely Latin American combination of marital and post-colonial anxieties ground the vampire symbolism in the text.

The fourth chapter, “My Bloody Valentine: The Parodic Female Vampire as an Expression of Female Autonomy and Literary Resistance,” focuses on two short stories, Leopoldo Lugones’ “La vampira” (1899) and Clemente Palma’s “Vampiras” (1906), and one novella, Carmen de Burgos’ *La mujer fría* (1922). The chapter first discusses the trajectory of the female vampire in mythology, folklore, and European poetry and fiction, and how the shifting public/private divide, the rise of the New Woman, and fear surrounding immigration and degeneration shaped depictions of women in European literature of the *fin de siècle*. Curiously, I found that this blood- and sex-hungry portrayal of vampiric *femme fatales* is much scarcer in Spanish and Latin American literature at the turn of the century. Instead, I discovered a particular trend of parodic, and at times even sympathetic, female vampires that departs from the European literary vampire tradition. In the section on Lugones, I consider “La vampira” in relation to two of the author’s essays on the woman question, “La educación de la mujer: lo que es y lo que debe ser” (1893) and “La cuestión feminista” (1897), suggesting that while the story initially appears to conform to European models, this representation is quickly turned on its head by the events that transpire and the sympathetic gaze towards the titular character. In the section on Palma’s “Vampiras,” I argue that, like “La vampira,” the story only appears to wholly conform to European models, given that Stanislas and Natalia’s marriage as a cure for Natalia’s sexual desires does not criticize female sexuality, but rather normalizes it through parody. As such, the story challenges bourgeois conventions of art and morality, and more specifically, the role of women in both Gothic literature and marriage. Finally, in an analysis of Burgos’ *La mujer fría*—the only female-authored and Spanish text in the chapter—I discuss how the novella adapts Gothic and Decadent aesthetics to

expose the problematic representations of women in *fin de siècle* cultural production. In doing so, the story suggests that neither women nor literature fit neatly into prescribed categories, while all three stories blur the line between victim and aggressor. This chapter therefore explores how the Gothic was both adopted and adapted by Spanish and Latin American authors to explore their own anxieties concerning modernity, authorship, sex, and gender in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The following chapters explore vampire figures and processes, but there are no Dracula-like, explicit vampire characters, as such depictions do not seem to have particularly interested Latin American or Spanish authors of the *fin de siglo* or the few decades that followed. These vampires are arguably more complex, challenging the boundaries between good and evil, victim and vampire, and morality and amorality through an experimentation with language and forms. There are direct and indirect references to their predecessors, but these texts break with the European Gothic vampire tradition, and in doing so, carve out a space for themselves as both distinctly modern and distinctly Hispanic, as the two are not mutually exclusive.

CHAPTER 1

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A comprehensive analysis of 19th and early 20th century Spanish and Latin American vampire literature requires that the vampire figure be historically contextualized. This chapter therefore traces the trajectory of the literary vampire: From its first appearances in 18th century German and English poetry to its resurgence in literature of the *fin de siècle*. Accordingly, the first part of the chapter focuses on the Enlightenment—its birth in Europe, its scope and implications, and its distinctive development in Spain and Latin America—and then transitions into a discussion on the Gothic genre and the persistence of the Gothic mode, both understood as cultural reactions to the uncertainties of the time period. This chapter suggests that, despite their exclusion from most literary studies on Romantic and Gothic expression, Spain and Latin America responded to particular social, political, and economic changes during the 19th century by producing their own Gothic forms. In doing so, this chapter addresses scholarly concerns on the emergence and development of modern thought in Spain and Latin America, refuting the idea that modernity missed these parts of the world, albeit acknowledging their differences from Europe and how these differences influenced Gothic representations, the vampire figure in particular.

The Enlightenment and its Dark Side

The 18th century Enlightenment has been historically recognized as the age of reason, logic, scientific and medical advancement, progress, urbanization, revolutionary thought, and independence movements. It was undoubtedly a time that questioned and attacked monarchy and feudal land laws, as manifested by the French Revolution (1789-

99), and that propagated democracy, secularization of state, liberal values, and equal rights. However, there were only so many explanations that reason and logic could provide, and only so much order that could be implemented before chaos arose from the shadows of illumination. According to José B. Monleón, “monstrosity was intrinsically attached to the principles of order; it belonged to the ‘self’” (*Specter* 60). Rather than suggesting that the Enlightenment itself was pure light, logic, reason, order, and so forth, Monleón suggests that order and monstrosity were intrinsically linked, like two sides to the same coin. This can be evidenced in the search for evolution and the break from feudal values, whereby the emerging bourgeoisie found that the only means to effect order through change was to revolt.

In a similar manner, Paul Ilie suggests that the Age of Enlightenment was actually the age of both reason and counter-rational reason. In *The Age of Minerva: Counter-Rational Reason in the Eighteenth Century—Goya and the Paradigm of Unreason in Western Europe*, Ilie exposes the discontinuities in the discourses surrounding literature, philosophy, art, social analysis, and biology in 18th century Spain, France and Great Britain, relating the century to the seemingly contradictory qualities of Minerva, the goddess of order and chaos. He begins by exploring Francisco de Goya’s *Capricho* 43 and he returns to it frequently, because for him, it represents the time period’s volatility towards reason. According to Ilie, the counter-rational was produced because reason depended solely on the observable, thus ignoring the imagination. Moreover, reason is governed by a linguistic system incapable of comprehending a transcendental reality and nature’s discontinuous, chaotic qualities (12-16). To propose, then, that the Age of Enlightenment was an age solely defined by reason, progress, light, etc., would be to

paint a partial picture of the era's complexities, discontinuities, and fundamental properties, given that light produces shadows just as reason produces doubt.

On his famous *Capricho 43*, Goya states, "The dream of reason produces monsters," a not-so-subtle reference to the idea that monstrosity is born of reason itself. In doing so, according to Monleón, "Goya did more than simply recognize the coexistence of opposites. He was in fact proposing that the bourgeois world actually produced its own menacing monsters. Goya's forms were not born out of nothing, out of madness, as Foucault claims. They were, rather, born out of reason, out of society" (*Spectre* 42). In this illustration, a man is hunched over his desk, apparently dreaming, with the background giving the viewer a chaotic glimpse into his nightmares. While Monleón suggests the man to be Goya himself, Ilie argues that the slumped over sleeper/dreamer is "an associate of all enlightened Spaniards," given that this sketch is a mirror-image of his portrait of Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos (81). Either way, in this *capricho* Goya seems to communicate that, like the rest of Europe, Spain was grappling with a radical uncertainty that could be interpreted in ideological, religious, colonial, and economic terms.

Spain, however, was not Europe, not with respect to its history nor with respect to the emerging bourgeoisie, revolutions, and advancements of the 18th century. According to Monleón, "By the eighteenth century, the 'backwardness' of Spanish society had become an irrefutable fact, and the Peninsula lay at the periphery of Europe, in the shadows of the northern economic powers. The consolidation of the bourgeois state and the formation of a hegemonic bourgeois ideology would occur much later, during the second half of the nineteenth century" (*Specter* 104). But why was Spain evolving



Capricho 43: El sueño de la razón produce monstruos
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differently than the rest of Europe? Was it due to its inability to create a strong national infrastructure during its conquests abroad? Was it the censorship of ideas on behalf of the Inquisition and the monarchy? Or, was its “backwardness” determined more so by racial and religious factors than an actual development gap? Some critics have gone so far as to suggest that there was no Enlightenment in Spain, while others try to validate Spain as an equally enlightened nation. Miriam Lopez Santos, for example, suggests that Spain did not experience a European-style Enlightenment due to the rejection of French ideas and the persistence of traditions and superstitions, but that there was a moral and nationalist Enlightenment that managed to form within the generally “anti-iluminista, anti-intelecualista y anti-laicista” Spanish society (22). Instead of attributing the Spanish delay to a “dark” and “traditional” past, Juan Carlos Rodríguez explores the slow transition from feudalism to mercantilism (and eventually to capitalism) to help explain the particular Spanish case.² In *Theory and History of Ideological Production*, he proposes that due to the nobility’s “dominance—not control—over the political terrain, it can certainly delay or block a tendential development of the private/public function so favorable towards the bourgeoisie (with even the threat of retreat to the old system)” (54). Therefore, it is not that the public/private divide did not emerge at or around the same

² Of course, the transition from feudalism to capitalism, in any case, is a gradual one. As Kyle Steenland observes in “Notes of Feudalism and Capitalism in Chile and Latin America,” this transition implies that there are two modes of production existing side by side, constantly confronting each other, unlike the abrupt transition from capitalism to socialism (55). He goes on to suggest, “In the case of the transition from feudalism to capitalism, the description of the economy as a whole depends upon which element is dominant. Clearly as soon as an average rate of profit is formed which governs investment of the majority of capital in the country, then a country as a whole may be described as capitalist” (55). In both the Spanish and Latin American cases, however, this transition is lengthier.

time in Spain as it did in Europe, but rather that it could not consolidate itself within the stronghold of the Spanish nobility masquerading as the newly established bourgeoisie.

While the Enlightenment seems to have evolved in Spain under different ideological coordinates and at a different pace than it did in the rest of Europe, can the same be observed in 18th century Latin America? Whereas Spain was not ready to leave its feudal past behind, what can be said of a conglomerate of colonies with a different kind of feudal past?³ Like its colonizer, criticism on the Enlightenment in Latin America has been biased and insufficient at best. In the mid 20th century, however, new trends in historical scholarship have allowed for a re-exploration of the topic and come to suggest that, in general, the Latin American Enlightenment did in fact exist, and was unlike its Spanish and European counterparts. An excellent resource on the topic is the collection of essays edited by Owen A. Aldridge, *The Ibero-American Enlightenment*, published in 1971. In Arthur P. Whitaker's essay, "Changing and Unchanging Interpretations of the Enlightenment in Spanish America," he explores the shifts in perspective on the Spanish American Enlightenment—from direct omission, to rejection, to consideration and support—from the revisionist trend evident in publications from 1942 onward. Although he does not take a direct stance on, for example, whether or not the independence movement promoted the Spanish American Enlightenment or whether there was a "Catholic Enlightenment," he does call for further revisionism and the general understanding that it was, in specific cases such as Latin America, "an unfolding

³ Because Spanish settlers did establish feudal-type economic structures in Latin America, such as the *encomienda* system, and because agricultural sectors in some countries continued to be dominated by feudal relations of production and feudal exploitation of the peasantry well into the 19th century, as Steenland observes, the case can be made for a Latin American feudal or semi-feudal past.

historical process” (55). Previous to this publication, Whitaker served as editor to another collection of essays on the subject, *Latin America and the Enlightenment*. In the chapter entitled, “The Reception of the Enlightenment in Latin America,” John Tate Lanning proposes that it is not that the Enlightenment did not exist in Latin America, nor that it lagged centuries behind Europe, but rather that it was only about a generation behind, with the Wars of Independence further hindering the dissemination of ideas, in addition to some economic limitations (71-93). For him, the Enlightenment did not come directly from Europe to Spanish America, but rather, by examining specific cases, professors, journals, etc., he successfully exposes a shift towards modern thought in the New World without the direct dependence of Enlightenment texts: “In reality, then, Americans did not so much receive the Enlightenment; they reproduced it from the sources upon which its exponents in Europe depended” (90).

Is it simply a question of whether or not the European Enlightenment appeared in Spain and Latin America? No, for that would be too simple. Their appearances, reproductions, causes, developments, and effects are obviously different, from both Europe and each other’s. Now taking this stance into consideration, how—when the origins and developments are different—is Gothic literature later produced in these areas? How do these countries produce an “Other”—a key aspect of Gothic fiction—when they themselves are seen as “Others” from a European and North American standpoint? With the monarchy and Catholic church’s strong grip on Spain’s public sphere and the New World’s History beginning *after* 1492—at least, from a then Occidental perspective—how will Gothic emerge without the necessary tensions to nourish it (i.e. castles in ruins, bourgeoisie revolutions, Catholicism viewed as an

“Other,” etc.)? The purpose of the next section is to address these and other concerns relating to the appearance and duration of Gothic narrative production in Spain and Latin America, but a clear definition and purpose of the Gothic, as well as recurring forms, figures, and themes should be explored before moving on.

The Gothic

According to Fred Botting, “Gothic narratives never escaped the concerns of their own times, despite the heavy historical trappings” (4). Against a backdrop of castles in ruins, damsels in distress, evil aristocrats, and an unruly natural environment, Gothic’s purpose can be considered two-fold: To express the wrongs of the present through fear and a strict moral code,⁴ and to encourage a divergence between the past and the present—or between civilized and barbaric forces, practices, nations, people, etc.⁵ Unlike the rationalist essays and moralist fables of earlier 18th century writings, “Gothic produced emotional effects on its readers rather than developing a rational or properly cultivated response” (Botting 4). Not only, then, were the themes distinctive in their representations of a not-so-distant feudal past, but this new trend in aesthetics based on emotions—based on elevating the reader’s senses to the point of experiencing sublime terror—was central to Gothic fiction. As Elizabeth Tedford Gehrig points out, “In a

⁴ In many earlier cases, not only express, but also correct these wrongs through death, marriage, reconciliation with one’s past, and other means. While earlier Gothic novels tended to restore justice and moral order, later Gothic authors, such as Mary Shelley, develop the mode “into a literary form capable of more radical interrogations of social contradictions, no longer simply making up for a society’s lacks” (Jackson 97).

⁵ According to Gehrig, “a core concern of the Gothic, in the time of the Goths and later, is the antagonism between what are seen as civilized and barbaric forces. The way these forces are defined and treated is subject to change as perspectives and politics also evolve” (2-3).

Gothic work, the explainability of an event or character is not as important as the effect or mood its presence creates” (32). Similarly, in *Ranges of Romanticism*, Harwell suggests that “The essential parts of the Gothic novel, without which no other parts are effective, are not those Gothic familiars *machinery*, *trapping*, and *atmosphere*, but *horror*, *suspense*, and *shock*” (119). Additionally, Allen Parker-Suarez Bertsche indicates that the primary function of the Gothic is to attack the rational and manipulate the senses (3). This interest in the human sensory experience was not specific to the Gothic but rather a continuation of the fascination on the subject that began to be explored in mid 18th century Enlightenment texts, such as Edmund Burke’s *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origins of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* and Emmanuel Kant’s *Critique of Judgment*. The Gothic, therefore, does not operate in opposition to these ideas on individualism, sensory experience, and the possibilities and limitations of science and nature, but rather, in accordance with them. In a secular society where reason and logic soon proved insufficient in explaining humankind’s many universal uncertainties, and where language proved insufficient in expressing the ineffable, Gothic made it possible to transcend the empirical reality by reconfiguring the individual and the rules by which s/he is governed.

Just as Enlightenment texts served as the theoretical underpinnings for early and late Gothic expression, so did the emerging 18th century bourgeoisie ideology serve as a threshold for the Gothic to take shape. According to Rosemary Jackson, “[Gothic] is a complex form situated on the edges of bourgeois culture, functioning in a dialogical relation to that culture. But it also conducts a dialogue *within itself*, as it acts out and defeats subversive desires” (Jackson 96). In this way, Gothic is born of, and a critical

reaction to, bourgeoisie ideology, but it also maintains the status quo by carving out a particular space for writers' and readers' subversive desires to play out. In this sense, it is both conventional *and* revolutionary.

In this subversive, peripheral space that reconfigures the individual by elevating the senses, "self" and "other" are not always mutually exclusive concepts. While early Gothic fiction served a didactic purpose, and the representation of nature produced a sense of terror that lead to the exaltation of the "self," later Gothic fiction tested the concepts of "self" and "other," often confusing them. The reasons for this shift are rooted in the many changes that industrialism and urbanization generated, given that, according to Jackson, the Gothic is a reaction to growth in these areas (96). Botting's analysis supports Jackson's by essentially dividing Gothic narratives where they differ in their descriptions of the environment. For him, whereas earlier Gothic forms represented a dead (or dying) feudal landscape, later Gothic forms represented a modern one. A fear of evil aristocrats and bandits gave way to a fear of mad scientists, criminals, evil husbands and fathers, and eventually doubles. A fear of haunted castles and an unruly natural environment gave way to a fear of dark and labyrinthine cities, thy neighbor and, ultimately, to a fear of oneself, or of the capabilities and limits of the human mind. In other words, fear of the *external* shifted to a fear of the *internal*. For Botting, what was once characterized by the esthetic of the sublime was later characterized by qualities of the uncanny, a disruption of the familiar, a change that reflected wider anxieties related to individual freedom and imagination: "Terror became secondary to horror, the sublime ceded to the uncanny, the latter an effect of uncertainty, of the irruption of fantasies, suppressed wishes and emotional and sexual conflicts" (11). Similarly, Kelly Hurley

argues, “the modernist era is the extended moment during which, perhaps, the genre known as Gothic metamorphoses into horror” (194). Bertsche also suggests that a shift occurred, but he seems to understand the concepts of “terror” and “horror” differently: “a shift from the ‘externally shocking’ to the ‘internally troubling’ emphasized the growing internalization of the fantastic, a sense that the problem might lie within the inadequacies of individual cognition, ratiocination and knowledge, or what Todorov refers to as the conflation of matter and mind” (43).

Meanwhile, Ann Radcliffe understands the concepts as a matter of aesthetic choice existing both within and outside the confines of what we have come to understand as the Gothic. In her famous distinction between “terror” and “horror,” “On the Supernatural in Poetry” (1826), Radcliffe, instead of delving into Gothic representations, defines the terms through a discussion between two characters on Shakespeare. In a recollection of the festival scene and the appearance of Banquo in *Macbeth*, Mr. W states, “There, through deep pity mingles with our surprise and horror, we experience a far less degree of interest, and that interest too of an inferior kind. The union of grandeur and obscurity, which Mr. Burke describes as a sort of tranquillity tinged with terror, and which causes the sublime, is to be found only in Hamlet; or in scenes where circumstances of the same kind prevail” (Radcliffe 149; *sic*). Mr. S responds by stating, “Terror and horror are so far opposite, that the first expands the soul, and awakens the faculties to a high degree of life; the other contracts, freezes, and nearly annihilates them. I apprehend, that neither Shakespeare nor Milton by their fictions, nor Mr. Burke by his reasoning, anywhere looked to positive horror as a source of the sublime, though they all agree that terror is a very high one” (149-150). For Radcliffe, it appears that terror is characterized by

uncertainty and obscurity, producing the delightful awe of sublimity in the reader, and therefore making it superior to horror. Of course, it is not always so black and white, especially as the Gothic has continued to evolve—terror and horror can exist within the same text, just as terror can be associated with both the sublime and the uncanny. Still, these definitions are important to observe, if only to allow us to see that the Gothic has continuously defied rigid categories of distinction.

In any case, an explanation for the transition from the external to the internal can be undeniably connected to the growing trends in psychology and criminology, as well as the consolidation of a secular society. As Jackson observes, “dialogue used to be conducted with ‘God,’ but is now internalized, so that an ‘intrinsic dualism and duplicity’ is our condition of being” (108). Fear *for* oneself therefore becomes a fear *of* oneself, a notion conceivable only in a secular world. Fear of the “self” as “other” can be observed in well-known Gothic characters such as Dorian Gray, who, according to Jackson, “comes to detest being trapped by his narcissism” (113), and Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde: “This exemplifies Freud’s theory of fantastic narrative as telling of a return of the repressed: Hyde is able to fulfil Jekyll’s desires to steal, love, be violent” (*sic* 114). The latter example, more specifically, is an example of how the double evolved into an object of terror. In *A Psychoanalytic Study of the Double in Literature*, Robert Rogers explains how “[t]he double was originally an insurance against the extinction of the self,” and that “it seems likely that the ‘immortal soul’ was the first double of the body” (142). During the 19th century, however, the double becomes “the uncanny harbinger of death” (142). In a now secular society, coupled with growing trends in psychology and criminology, humans began to fear the possibility of another self—a more primitive, savage, evil

self—lurking beneath the surface, and the Gothic provided the ideal backdrop to work these anxieties (and fantasies) out.

The general consensus among academics is that the Gothic was a particular genre of novels that spanned a sixty-or-so year period that began with the publication of Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* in 1764 and ended with the publication of Charles Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* in 1820.⁶ Such a classification, however, neglects the fact that Gothic tendencies can be observed both much earlier and later than this specific timeframe allows, in addition to glazing over the folkloric origins of these motifs. For instance, Botting suggests that the Gothic can first be observed in Graveyard poetry of the early 18th century, where English poets described shadows, darkness, melancholy, ghosts and other esthetic qualities that fell outside the "rational." His study also conveys the Gothic's ever-changing nature and appeal across three centuries, the 18th through the 20th. In Eve Sedgwick's *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions*, she studies English Gothic novels and their structures, focusing on, in her first chapter, the importance of the title, *mise en scene*, characters, narration, and themes in determining whether a text is Gothic or not. For her, particular to Gothic texts are oppressive ruins, a savage landscape, a feudal or catholic society, a male villain and a sequestered or suffering woman, a discontinuous or confusing narration that may include the finding of a lost manuscript, subterranean spaces, live burials, dreams, doubles, death, strange noises and silences, the effects of shame or guilt, the possibility of incest, and other themes and anxieties.

While Sedgwick limits her study to novels, as many critics do, others look outside the limits of narrative length to explore other possibilities of Gothic expression.

⁶ See Botting 15, Bertsche 1 and Gehrig 7,10.

Rosemary Jackson, for example, analyzes the short stories of Edgar Allan Poe. Additionally, she studies characters such as Dorian Gray and Dracula, who both appeared well past the 1820 mark, in 1891 and 1897 respectively. In this way, it can be suggested that while the Gothic could be considered a novel-based genre that died out after 1820, Gothic tendencies continued to be present in multiple genres. Referencing not only Spanish production, but 19th century narrative production in general, Bertsche notes, “the Gothic *style* or *mode* became an essential feature of later literary production” (1). He goes on to suggest that while particular to a genre are its formal features, the features of a mode consist of its mood and the effects it produces in the reader, adding that a text may be comprised of several modes in varying degrees (29-32). Similarly, Gehrig suggests, “Two defining elements in Gothic literature, fear and malevolence, help to differentiate the Gothic from other literary modes, including the Fantastic” (3). The Gothic mode, then, can lend itself to many genres and does not require feudal trappings, length, plotlines, narrative structure, or a specific time frame or place of publication to determine its presence. Instead, the effects produced in the reader can be considered the most important aspect. Still, as Hurley reasonably states, “The Gothic is rightly, if partially, understood as a cyclical genre that reemerges in times of cultural stress in order to negotiate anxieties for its readership by working through them in displaced (sometimes supernaturalized) form” (194). The Gothic can therefore be understood as a literature of nightmares, usually provoking an ambiguous sense of time and space as one of the ways it subverts logic and represents the concerns and tensions of the present (whatever present that may be), whether they are ideological, economic or political. Themes such as incest, guilt and repression, familial anxieties, death, darkness, nightmares and dream-like states

are common, as are frightening, albeit not essential, figures, such as vampires, ghosts, savage beasts, and haunted houses.

More specific to my dissertation is whether or not Spain produced Gothic literature. If so, does it follow the European model or deviate from it? And who, if the bourgeoisie had failed to consolidate itself against the Spanish aristocracy, at least at the political and ideological levels, was reading these narratives? While López Santos proposes that the readership in Spain consisted of the emerging bourgeoisie, given that “una verdadera aristocracia” did not exist (53), a more historically-appropriate observation could be the opposite; that, since the aristocracy was still very much in power, the Gothic novel, with its subversive subject matter and criticism of feudal values, was simply not in demand, at least not on the level that it was in Britain, France, or Germany. There was, however, interest in these new themes and esthetics on behalf of Spain’s readership. As López Santos explains, Spanish Gothic literature was produced in three stages. First, a precursor or subgenre to the later genre, consisting of Cadalso’s *Noches lúgubres* (1789) and Manuel José Quintana’s poetry, wherein the first manifestations of original Gothic tendencies are observed in an experimentation with the sublime esthetic (120-145). Second, in liberal translations of French, English, and German Gothic literature, whereby the authors⁷ could conform to the strict censorship by dropping much of the subversive content, saturating the scenes with religious images, and taking a moralizing turn. These novels were adaptations more so than translations, many times preceded by a prologue written by the Spanish author denouncing the supernatural as dangerous, while

⁷ It is important to note that these Spanish writers did not give themselves translating credit, but rather, author credit. This was possible, and legal, due to the fact that copyright infringement laws were still inexistent.

contradictorily insisting on the educative and moralizing purpose of the text. Examples of this second phase are Quintana's *El duque de Viseo* (1801), an adaptation of Matthew Lewis' *The Castle Spectre* (1797), and Agustín Pérez Zaragoza's *Galería fúnebre de historias trágicas, espectros y sombras ensangrentadas* (1831), an adaptation of J.P.R. Cuisin's *Les ombres sanglantes* (1820) (145-205). And lastly, the third stage consisted of novels written during the second and third decades of the 19th century that distanced themselves from the moralizing intent of previous novels to explore the perversions of the human condition. López Santos explains that these novels can be placed into two opposing but complementary currents: rationally-based novels, where the supernatural element is explained logically, an example being Pérez y Rodríguez's *La urna sangrienta o el panteón de Scianella* (1834), and irrationally-based novels, where the monstrous is human rather than supernatural (205-280). She therefore concludes that the Gothic genre did make an appearance in Spain, and that its fall was due to the arrival of Romanticism: "su época dorada tocaba a su fin cuando apenas había dado comienzo" (206).

While López Santos attributes the fall of one genre to the rise of another, essentially dividing the two, Bertsche suggests that the romantic and the Gothic can be co-present in the same text, attributing this to "the belated appearance of both modes on the peninsula" (5). (Now, Bertsche also differs from López Santos in referring to the Gothic as a mode, one that would apply to literary works outside the time frame that López Santos suggests.) Much contemporary analysis on the Spanish Gothic is aligned with Bertsche's suggestion that the Gothic can be co-present with other modes, and that Gothic conventions in Spain survived the fall of the traditional Gothic novel or genre. For example, Sylvia López uses the term "Gothic tradition" to explore Galdos' *La sombra*

(1870), noting such Gothic themes as the sequestered heroine, the story-within-a-story narration style, and the use of the double. She even considers Michelle A. Massé's concept of the "marital gothic" in her analysis of Galdós, a variant of the mode wherein the husband replaces the father as the figure that terrifies the female victim.⁸ Similarly, Francisco Fernández argues that Espronceda's *El estudiante de Salamanca* (1840), although influenced by Lewis' *The Monk* (1796), destabilizes the Gothic concepts of villain and victim: "Espronceda not only uses Gothic conventions when he creates a protagonist haunted by a ghost but also subverts them by giving his protagonist, don Félix, characteristics similar to those of a Gothic heroine" (5). Additionally, in *Gothic Terrors: Incarceration, Duplication, and Bloodlust in Spanish Narrative*, Abigail Lee Six suggests that since a middle-class readership did not develop until the 19th century in Spain, post-romantic and realist authors employed Gothic elements in a selective fashion in order to appeal to the public and escape censorship (12-15).

This tendency can be observed in Emilia Pardo Bazán's novels and short stories and Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer's *leyendas*. By breaking down the significance of space and place within the setting of *Los pazos de Ulloa*, for example, Steven M. Hart, suggests that the "gothic space" that Pardo Bazán creates in the novel is a feminine one. Gothic conventions can also be noted in a countless number of her almost six hundred stories. For instance, "Un destripador de antaño" employs the sublime aesthetic to excite terror, in addition to examples of abjection, such as cadavers and blood flow to incite horror, while both stories discussed in this dissertation, "La exangüe" and "Vampiro," employ

⁸ For more on the "marital gothic," see Chapter 3 of this study, or Massé's article "Gothic Repetition: Husbands, Horrors, and Things That Go Bump in the Night."

the traditional Gothic tropes of the suffering heroine, the male villain, death and death-like states, and enclosed and ambiguous spaces. Meanwhile, Bécquer, overwhelmingly understood by critics as a romantic author during a time when Romanticism had given way to Realism, leans heavily on Gothic trappings and aesthetics in his *leyendas* to convey both devotion and doubt towards the Catholic faith: the sublime, subversive characters, ghosts, death and death-like/dream-like states, blood and cadavers, suspension and/or ambiguity of time, spatial ambiguity, labyrinths, ruins, and of course, the juxtaposition between good and evil, conceived mostly in religious or spiritual terms, but also in racial terms, such as in “La rosa de pasión.” Bécquer’s *leyendas* are also inspired by folklore: “[tiene] sus raíces profundamente clavadas en las tradicionales leyendas de Castilla y en las canciones y relatos folklóricos de Toledo y Moncayo” (García-Viño 88). As such, folkloric characters, especially female characters, inhabit these fictional worlds. One story in particular, “Los ojos verdes,” where a young man falls in love with a water nymph, drowning as a result, is a perfect example of folkloric elements combined with Gothic style, a literary tendency that resurfaced in *fin de siècle* representations of the *femme fatale*.

The Gothic mode can also be noted in works that have not previously been considered romantic or post-romantic. According to Lee Six, the Gothic can also be found in naturalism, fantasy, and historical fiction, among other types of literature, because it is a disruptive form that questions genre borders (19). This can be noted in Clark Colahan and Alfred Rodríguez’s article “Lo ‘gótico’ como fórmula creativa de *Los pazos de Ulloa*,” where the author proposes that the Gothic and naturalism share the same fundamental philosophy: “la destacada percepción de las dimensiones primitivas

(brutales y horrorizantes) de la naturaleza humana, y la función, también horrorizante y terrible, de una naturaleza anti-idílica” (399). In light of what all these critics effectively argue, it can be concluded that Gothic tendencies—from the effects the atmosphere produces in the reader to its subversive qualities (both formal and thematic)—are present in Spanish texts that were previously believed to fall strictly into other literary genres or categories. Given that the Gothic genre that López Santos argues ended in 1833 precedes the corpus selected for this dissertation, the Spanish Gothic will be considered in a broad fashion as a mode employed to elicit terror in the reader by problematizing an “other” in such a way that questions existing dominant norms and values and negotiates anxieties. The environment can be rural or urban, and the villains can be pure evil (one dimensional) or psychologically more complex with ambiguous motives, thus representing a myriad of anxieties relating to the many changes Spain experienced during these years, most notably the consolidation of the bourgeoisie and the climax in its slow decline from a colonial empire with the loss of the last of their colonies in 1898.

Latin America did not experience feudalism the way Spain and the rest of Europe did, and therefore has no traditional Gothic novel, but as Monleón observes, 19th century horror narratives “did not require the appeal of a medieval world since it now found images of unreason that also alluded to a more immediate context” (*Specter* 66). In this way, Latin America could express its post-revolution uncertainties and the chaos of urbanization and modernization (or lack-there-of in many respects) in dark depictions of city streets, criminals, vampires, sexual deviants, ghosts, and other terrifying representations in the literature of the time. The dark side of modernity can be observed in such works as Eduardo Wilde’s “Alma callejera” (1882), where the spirit of a man

travels through the dark and lugubrious city streets to sneak into his loved one's sleeping body, and Eduardo Ladislao Holmberg's "Horacio Kalibang o los autómatas" (1879), where the protagonist finds it difficult to differentiate between automatons and real people. In this way, the Gothic can be observed in late 19th century Latin American literature, most notably in short stories, as a mode that did not need the literary or historical background found in Spain and Europe in order to appear and evolve.

Even though Latin America lacks a typical feudal past, it is not to say that its past was any less "barbaric." In addition to the representations of Latin America's savage peoples and landscapes in literature and chronicles of the conquest of the New World, their violent history has been depicted from both an external and internal perspective. With respect to the atrocities committed by the Spaniards against the indigenous peoples, one may think of, for instance, the horrors depicted by Bartolomé de las Casas in his infamous *Brevísima historia de la destrucción de las Indias* (1552). From an internal perspective, the narrative voice in José María Heredia's poem "En el teocalli de Cholula" ponders the glorious but brutal indigenous past, with its horrors expressed through the sublime aesthetic. In contemporary literature, Julio Cortázar's "La noche boca arriba" comes to mind, where a member of the Moteca tribe experiences a fantastic dream sequence before being sacrificed to the Aztec gods, as well as Augusto Monterroso's "El eclipse," which depicts a Spanish monk as less cunning and intelligent than the indigenous people who determine his fate. From an external gaze, Latin America is "barbaric" in the sense that it was illegible; too different to be understood, and thus needed to be conquered and rewritten. From an internal gaze, it acknowledges its barbarity in its reclaiming, and at times mythologizing, of its past. The pre-Columbian

world and the post-Columbian world are both wrought with violence and exploitation and could be a few of the reasons for which Gehrig suggests the following: “This region that strives toward lightness has had to first face its demons, figuratively and literally speaking, and has done so in literature of darkness, in the Gothic mode” (29).

While Gehrig argues the existence of a Latin American Gothic in her doctoral dissertation *Dark Spaces, Horrifying Places: Gothic Mode in 19th and Early 20th Century Latin American Literature*, few critical studies have preceded or proceeded hers. Besides Gehrig’s study, other attempts to articulate Gothic tendencies in Latin American literature include the chapter “The Fantastic and the Conventions of Gothic Romance” in Cynthia Duncan’s *Unraveling the Real: The Fantastic in Spanish-American ‘Ficciones’* and Julio Cortázar’s brief “Notas sobre lo gótico en el Río de la Plata.” While Duncan’s study focuses on María Luisa Bombal’s novella *La última niebla* (1935) and Carlos Fuentes’ *Aura* (1962), Cortázar’s notes are generally personal in subject matter. However, they both acknowledge the importance of the Gothic as a precursor to the more prolific literary mode of the fantastic in Latin America, as noted in Cortázar’s remark, “creo que sin *Ligeia*, sin *La caída de la casa de los Usher*, no se hubiera dado en mí esa disponibilidad a lo fantástico que me asalta en los momentos más inesperados y que me lleva a escribir como única manera posible de atravesar ciertos límites, de instalarme en el terreno de *lo otro*” (148). In addition to Duncan’s analysis, other critics have tended to limit the study of the Latin American Gothic in literature to Fuentes because, according to Ricardo Gutiérrez Mouat, “Carlos Fuentes is the most Gothic of all major Latin American

writers” (297).⁹ As the following chapters expose, however, the Gothic was alive and well decades before Bombál or Fuentes.

This gap in scholarship has begun to be addressed by studies on Latin American Gothic cultural production, such as *Latin American Gothic in Literature and Culture*, a collection of essays co-edited by Sandra Casanova-Vizcaíno and Inés Ordiz.¹⁰ In their introduction, the editors note how the lack of scholarly criticism on the Gothic in Latin American fiction can be partly attributed to its exclusion from the canon. In their influential *Antología de la literatura fantástica*, for example, Jorge Luis Borges, Adolfo Bioy Casares and Silvina Ocampo established the first definitions of the fantasy mode in Latin America, and by purposely excluding Gothic fiction, they reinforced the marginalization of the Gothic in comparison to the fantastic. As a result, “Latin American literary criticism [...] has been largely centered on the analysis of historical texts and, when focused on non-mimetic types of discourse, has favored fantastic literature and, unquestionably, magical realism” (3). In the context of discussing critical texts on the Gothic mode in Latin American literature and film, the editors state, “Within these parameters, the Gothic is explored alongside other modes and narrative forms, such as

⁹ Gutiérrez Mouat goes on to suggest, “If this is not a widely acknowledged truism it is because of the marginal status of the Gothic genre in Latin American literary studies” (297). But its marginality, as Mouat acknowledges, is not limited to Latin America, which helps explain the short duration of the traditional Gothic novel and the coexistence of the Gothic mode alongside other modes and across many genres.

¹⁰ Other recent studies on gothic cultural production in Latin America include *Negrótico* (2015) by Nadina Olmedo and Osvaldo di Paolo, *Tropical Gothic in Literature and Culture: The Americas* (2016), edited by Justin Edwards and Sandra Guardini Vasconcelos, *Horrorfilmico: aproximaciones al cine de terror en Latinoamérica y el Caribe* (2012) by Rosana Díaz-Zambrana and Patricia Tomé, and *From Amazons to Zombies: Monsters in Latin America* (2015) by Persephone Braham.

science fiction, the fantastic, the marvelous, and magical realism” (6). However, albeit for its contemporaneous resurgence alongside science fiction in Latin American literature, it is important to underline that the Gothic developed prior to these other modes, and shaped them in an important way; as Cortázar noted, there would be no fantastic without the Gothic. This dissertation therefore focuses on a specific few decades’ worth of literary production, not only in order to explore the Gothic alongside other forms of literary expression, but to confirm the idea that the Gothic emerges in specific times as a response to particular processes of modernization that incite change, foment instability or upset the status quo, or specific histories or historical events that continue to “haunt” a nation or demographic, thus providing an outlet to explore real and fantasy-based alternatives.

Due to its late appearance in Latin America, the Gothic tends to appear alongside parallel modes and literary currents. In most critical studies, however, this tendency can be overlooked. It was suggested above that Wilde’s “Alma callejera” is a Gothic short story, however there have been no explicit references to this story as Gothic in critical analysis. Bonnie Frederick, in “A State of Conviction, A State of Feeling: Scientific and Literary Discourses in the Works of Three Argentine Writers, 1879-1908,” describes a similar story of Wilde’s, “First Night,” where the narrator imagines his death and his first night as a corpse. While she uses terms like “horror” and “nightmarish” and references the possibility of Poe’s “The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar” as a literary influence, she never uses the term “Gothic” to address his style or themes, stating instead, “Wilde used the rich resources of *modernista* language to describe another kind of horror, that is, the silence and isolation of the cemetery at night” (58). Now, albeit a valid argument that

this story falls under the parameters of *modernismo*, it could also be considered Gothic, given that the two concepts are not mutually exclusive, as Gabriela Mora explores in her illuminating study, *Clemente Palma: el modernismo en su versión decadente y gótica* (2000). Here, the author suggests that there is a particular Gothic vein in Latin American *modernismo*, one that builds off the conventions of the past but also breaks from them, revealing an anti-bourgeois sentiment through an experimentation with language and traditional forms. In addition to *modernismo* and Decadence, the Gothic appears alongside romantic expression; as previously noted, this was also the case on the Spanish peninsula, where both modes experienced delayed appearances. For this reason, Juana Manuela Gorriti is more often than not associated with romantic tendencies or fantastic literature. According to Thomas C. Meehan:

[H]ay que recordar, sobre todo, que la Gorriti era una autora romántica y que dentro del romanticismo había una fuerte afinidad por mucho de lo que suele asociarse con la literatura fantástica: lo extraño y lo macabro; el miedo y el suspenso; fantasmas, espectros, aparecidos y almas en pena; la magia, la adivinación y los sueños premonitorios; lúgubres ambientes nocturnos como cementerios, manicomios, las ruinas de iglesias y conventos, y secretas cavernas subterráneas. (8)

Curiously enough, these themes and images also appear in Gothic literature, while the fear and suspense that Meehan notes are more typically associated with Gothic literature than fantastic, as Gehrig points out above.

These classifications can at times seem arbitrary, as literary currents and modes intersect and mix, and their motifs evolve and reemerge. To that end, to say that the stories discussed in the following chapters are purely Gothic would be to deny their many possibilities. Instead, it can be suggested that Latin American authors adopted and adapted Gothic motifs, and that the literary and tumultuous political climate at the turn of the nineteenth century allowed the Gothic to briefly reemerge in many forms and among

many authors. This reemergence is important to note, not simply in terms of the evolution of Latin American literature, but also in terms of the evolution of the Gothic on a global scale. Latin American Gothic made important contributions to the literary landscape, and its existence can no longer be ignored. As Casanova-Vizcaíno and Ordiz suggest, “In these regions, considerations concerning naming (of the mode), self-representation (of the nation), as well as the demands of the global market might have darkened the production of this mode. Nevertheless, the Gothic persisted” (5).

The Vampire

It is not surprising that the vampire has continued to reemerge and develop in literature over the last three centuries, given that the vampire itself is not a fixed being. For one, it is transitory, moving from place to place in search of prey; the fear it invokes, however, does not lie in this, but rather in the idea that it has settled, possibly just next door or down the street. Second, its form is not permanent. As Paul Ilie observes, the vampire produces an ontological problem given that it is neither man, nor bird, nor mouse, but partially all of these forms (106). In addition to its mobility and ambiguity, it is also capable of reproduction: “Vampire stories can also be read as replicant narratives, since the effect of a vampire’s attacks is to transform the victim into a vampire like him/herself” (Lee Six 63). Rosemary Jackson has also connected the vampire motif to that of the double. For her, “The ‘other’, the vampire, is a reflection of the self” (119). The vampire, then, is mobile in various senses of the word, as it moves across land, sea, and species, and blurs the borders between ‘self’ and ‘other,’ ‘dead’ and ‘undead.’ Its representation in literature, as well as who or what it attacks, literally and symbolically—

its attack is never without meaning(s)—is therefore constantly adapting to the concerns of the time period in which it is produced.

Vampire figures first emerged in mythology and folklore. From Lamia and her many interpretations, to the recently-deceased, resuscitated persons of folklore, these early vampires appeared in oral histories. According to Brian Frost, “Records left by the ancient Assyrians and Babylonians confirm that vampirish demons were a great menace to the people of those times” (5). One of the earliest female vampires on record, the snake-goddess Lilitu, appeared in ancient Babylonia; she was later adopted by the Hebrews and renamed Lilith, the most famous succubi (6). Frost goes on to explain, “In Hebrew mythology the succubi and their male counterparts, the incubi, were originally a band of fallen angels who had degenerated into lecherous night demons. The incubi appeared to the fair sex as demon lovers and the succubi similarly haunted the dreams of young men, magically undermining their vitality and draining their potency” (6). The Pagans and ancient Egyptians also had versions of their own, such as the serpent-bodied Lamia and Ekimmu, respectively, the latter being the evil spirit of a recently deceased person (6). Specifically regarding the female vampire, Nancy Schumann argues that there are two particular types of myths, both connected to fears surrounding childbirth. The first related to women who died during childbirth and who came back to haunt pregnant mothers, while the second related to women who survived childbirth but whose children passed away. Their grief was so great that they would suck the blood and life from other women’s babies. Both Spain and Latin America had a version of this vampire called a *bruja*, a living witch that could assume the form of various animals and attack infants

(*The Vampire Book: The Encyclopedia of the Undead* 80).¹¹ In Latin America specifically, there was also the legend of the vampire bat: “Deriving its name from feeding habits which closely resemble those of the vampire of European folklore, the vampire bat attacks cattle and other livestock, and has even been known to suck the blood of sleeping human beings, often infecting them with rabies” (Frost 19).¹²

In the 18th century, the vampire exceeded oral accounts by appearing in historical records during a territorial dispute. This vampire arose as an “other” that pertained to the East, between Asia and Europe, but most especially Serbia, where territorial disputes between the Ottoman and Hapsburg Empires were creating social tensions and violent conflicts. There began to be reports of Serbians who had seen vampires, which, according to Erik Butler, were the effects of terror projected onto the Ottomans, who hindered the Serbians’ development and self-government (38-39). One of the reports from Medvegia, Serbia in 1732 cited, “His fingernails and toenails had dropped off, as had his skin, and others had grown through in their place, from which it was concluded that he was an arch-vampire. So, according to the custom of those regions, a stake was driven through his heart” (Frayling 21). The fact that the term ‘vampire,’ whose origin has been disputed, began to appear in such records fomented a whole controversy as to whether or

¹¹ This is interesting, considering Goya’s painting *Vuelo de brujas*, which depicts three flying figures that appear to be sucking the blood of a young man while two others on the ground try to shield themselves from the awful sight. In the dark background is a donkey, Goya’s recurring symbol of ignorance.

¹² The first known mention of this bat is on page 31 of Carl Linnæus’ *Systema naturæ per regna tria naturæ, secundum classes, ordines, genera, species, cum characteribus, differentiis, synonymis, locis*, and it is not surprising that it was named when it was, as the vampire debate had just begun to stir Europe.



Vuelo de brujas
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not vampires actually existed. They became the topic of essays and books—most notably Dom Augustin Calmet’s classic study, *Dissertations sur les Apparitions des Anges, des Demons et des Esprits, et sur les Revenants et Vampires* (1746)—philosophical debates, and, in Spain, *tertulias*. Vampires were quickly seen, however, as an illusion that manifested the anxieties of uneducated people deprived of certain rights and in fear of those governing them. The vampire, a figure that arose in a time of collective panic, was therefore viewed satirically in intellectual circles, which prompted corresponding representations in poetry, such as Heinrich August Ossenfelder’s “Der Vampir” (1748) and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s “Die Braut von Korinth” (1797) (Butler 63-65).

According to Butler, whereas the vampire of the Enlightenment was figurative and satirical, and represented individuals that had power over others (i.e. bankers, politicians, and, in some cases, priests), the vampire of the romantic era became more literal, and taken much more seriously. That is, while the 18th century vampire was a blatant tool for social critique of the abuse of power, later representations, more aligned with the tendencies of the Gothic mode, began to psychologically explore the vampire. It was still a means of conveying tensions, anxieties and evil-doings, but it became representative of the tensions between new and old modes of production. Whether the vampire was a satanic feudal lord or a new member of the bourgeoisie desperately trying to be confused with an aristocrat, the 19th century literary vampire can be understood as a reaction to the shift from feudal to capitalist modes of production, and all that this entailed—the division between public and private, the newly established bourgeoisie family, the open market, new forms of government, etc. Examples of this vampire are John Polidori’s “The Vampyre” (1819) and Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* (1897). In the latter, Dracula is a feudal

lord whose lack of servants, both in his home and on his land, illustrates feudalism's decline, for his castle serves merely as a backdrop. As Rodríguez explains, Count Dracula is conceived within a bourgeois ideological framework, so while his castle is devoid of meaning, he must adhere to the new division between public and private:

[N]ecesita así su propio espacio *privado*, su propio *hogar*. Y como su vida es la muerte, resulta lógico que tal ideología burguesa no pueda concebir otra imagen, para tal espacio hogareño, que lo que ella misma concibe como el espacio máximo—y mínimo—de la privatización: *el ataúd* (y, por extensión, la ciudad de los ataúdes: *el cementerio*, siempre implícito en Dracula, y no ya como decorado externo, como el castillo, sino con un significado textual mucho más decisivo). (“Drink From Me” 73)

On the other hand, there is Lord Ruthven, Polidori's vampire, who according to Butler, is a lord in name only, given that he represents the middle classes that disguised as aristocrats. An ever-mobile figure, in this case the vampire conveys the aristocracy's fear of social ascent on behalf of the bourgeoisie (85-96). The literary vampire, therefore, evolved from a figure that essentially ridiculed the superstitions of foreign peoples to a figure that represented the very familiar terrors of ideological and economic domestic change.

This ideological shift influenced by emerging modes of production—for, according to Althusser, the economic level experiments the initial change that affects the political and ideological levels—required a modernization, so to speak, regarding our concept of Evil. Whereas under feudal relations of production Evil was external to the “self” in the form of the Devil, as bourgeoisie ideology forms in accordance with mercantile relations of production, Evil slowly becomes internalized, producing new representations of monstrosity that eventually confuse the once mutually exclusive concepts of “self” and “other.” Now, this notion of duality in a secular world has already been explored in the previous section, but the idea is especially interesting and relevant to this study when

considering the vampire as a representation of Evil particular to modern society.

Rodríguez explores this idea in Kantian terms, stating, “Si en esa sociedad regulada aparece el Mal no será por culpa de Dios o el Diablo, sino por alguna maldad humana: siempre concebible precisamente por la *animalidad* que existe en el hombre” (“Drink From Me” 62). That is, where Evil was once ascribed to the Devil, humans later became responsible for their own actions; blame was cast on their pre-human condition, on the animality within. Evil acts, then, could mimic repressed and/or primitive behaviors, which is where the vampire comes into play. According to Raymond T. McNally, “The human sucking instinct, of course, goes back to developments within the human fetus, and in this light can be seen as a kind of desire to return to the womb and infancy” (96). It can be, but it could also be seen as a desire to reject the symbolic, in Lacanian terms, or the rules by which we are governed. According to Jackson, “it could be claimed that the act of vampirism is the most violent and extreme attempt to negate, or reverse, the subject’s insertion into the symbolic” (120). By doing this—by reverting back to instincts and attacking ideological norms—the vampire leaves the symbolic and enters the real, a space where he or she is outside order and classification. In this way, the vampire’s attack conveys the idea that the primitive still lurks in a civilized society, that a civilized wo/man can regress to bestiality and be evil, and that within the paradigm of reason, chaos rules. As Jackson observes, “[Dracula’s] appearance means that chaos is come again, for he is *before* good or evil, outside human categorization” (119; *sic*). But if his appearance suggests that chaos has come again, what does his destruction suggest?

Just as the Gothic is a product of and a reaction to bourgeoisie ideology, the vampire also works in relation to it, but in its case it is more personal; at times, even

intimate. According to Monleón, “El vampiro [...] viene a asumir, dentro de las monstruosidades generales con las que la burguesía veía cercado su universo, el ataque concreto a la familia” (“Vampiros” 22). This attack is evident, most importantly, in its seduction of a member of the family by a vampire—more often than not, the seduction of a female victim by a male vampire—and in the time of the vampire’s attack, “on the eve of marriage” (Jackson 120), the night before the marriage is consummated and the possibility of expanding the family begins. Is it not, however, this new bourgeoisie order that produces its own chaos in the form of the vampire? As Rodríguez suggests, “cuando el vampiro deja aflorar sus colmillos, es precisamente cuando Stoker—y sus seguidores—dejan caer sobre él todo el peso bestial del moralismo burgués (desde donde, sin embargo, ha sido producido)” (“Drink From Me” 75). In this way, bourgeoisie morality produces its own amorality, but once the assault ends and the vampire is destroyed, bourgeoisie order, virtue, and goodness are restored.

This in no way means that its vulnerabilities (the ideological cracks) have not been revealed. Take, for example, the consolidation of the private sphere. Could it not be viewed as a contradiction that the public sphere was founded on the notion of equality (for now there are no servants *per se*, but paid workers, contracts, and exchanges between subjects) while the private sphere continued to subjugate women? For this reason, according to Monleón, the public and private spheres are two irreconcilable social structures (“Vampiros” 22). Consequently, “Esta contradicción entre esfera pública y esfera privada será precisamente fuente de tensiones y espacio vulnerable en el que podrán infiltrarse los vampiros y donjuanes” (22). Furthermore, was there really that much of a difference between new and old relations of production, or between feudal and

bourgeoisie ideologies? One could argue, for instance, that the “subject/subject” relationship under capitalist modes of production was simply a pretense to make the market seem equal, fair, and free; a masquerade, so to speak, for the old “Lord/serf” relationship under feudalism.

Moreover, the vampire’s thirst for blood is suggestive of feudal ideology’s attitude toward blood and kinship. According to Rodríguez, the foundation of blood mythology in vampirism is “a thematics of blue blood, of pure blood, of bad blood (Jewish, gypsy, etc.) and even the medical practice of bleeding” (“Walpurgis Night” 353). Under feudalism, blood was life. It was what determined one’s place in the world, for social mobility was inconceivable. Thus the depictions of counts and lords as vampires who, given that their literary appearance is only conceivable under capitalist modes of production, are able to move blood from their victims to themselves (i.e. possibilitating mobility, albeit a warning, criticism, or otherwise). Also, as Rodríguez observes, there was an importance placed on pure blood. As noted above, the vampire tends to attack on the eve of marriage, interrupting its consummation and taking the new virgin bride for himself; to suck her blood, and in all suggestiveness, take her innocence. This emphasis on virgin blood was important under feudalism as well, as McNally notes in his historical account of Countess Elizabeth Bathory, who infamously murdered at least 600 peasant girls during the 16th and early 17th centuries: “Virgin blood, supposedly so favored by Elizabeth Bathory and others, was historically considered special, since it was assumed to be ‘innocent’ blood” (108). Interestingly, no one seemed to care, and Bathory herself was not brought to justice, until she ran out of peasant girls and began to sequester, torture, and kill female nobles. In this way, the vampire could be understood as a modern monster that expresses

bourgeoisie ideology's inherent contradictions, and the fact that, beneath the surface, it is not completely dissimilar to feudalism, which makes it even more terrifying.

Which brings us back to the manifestation of terror under new modes of production. If Evil under feudalism was attributed to the Devil, then Evil in a secular society must have its counterpart, its *living* counterpart: “Y de ahí la primera legitimación ideológica de Drácula (del vampiro). Es decir, el Diablo concebido no ya como el que sabe mal sino como el que vive mal” (Rodríguez, “Drink From Me” 66). And live Evil he does; no longer as the Devil, but as an abstraction of the human body. Accordingly, just as the Devil is the inversion of God, Spirit to Spirit, Dracula is, according to Rodríguez, the inversion of Christ: “de cuerpo a cuerpo, de sangre a sangre” (94). This implies that, as an abstraction of the human figure, he is without form. There is, however, some debate about this in vampire theory. On one side of the argument is the idea that vampires have no souls, which is why they cannot be reflected in mirrors; on the other side, they are solely spirit, devoid of materiality, which is how they are able to morph into other shapes and why they cannot be reflected in mirrors. Butler would fall into the first category, whereas Rodríguez would fall into the second:

Pues en efecto, en el tema del vampiro se trata de un cuerpo que no es un cuerpo (como Dios) sino que es pues puro espíritu, pero puro espíritu carnal, corporal. Un cuerpo sin forma, la esencia de la carne, lo corporal en sí mismo, pura abstracción: he ahí el diablo. No el espíritu hecho carne sino la carne hecha espíritu: he ahí su fascinación, su magnetismo, su poder. Por eso no se refleja en el espejo. (“Drink From Me” 92-93)

Elton Honores Vásquez, on the other hand, proposes that the vampire is a “cuerpo vacío,” which can be understood as a body devoid of a spirit or a soul, but also as a body devoid of meaning; that is, a meaningless body until meaning is imposed upon it. In his study on the evolution of the vampire in Peruvian literature from the 19th through the 21st

centuries, *Los que moran en las sombras: asedios al vampiro en la narrativa peruana* (2010), Honores Vásquez suggests that the vampire can conceal different types of discourses because it is an abstract form superimposed with meaning, which is dependent on many factors. He attributes the staying power of the vampire to two possible explanations: erotic pleasure and, more importantly, the possibility (albeit only symbolically or fictionalized) of transcending the empirical world: “[...] ese cuerpo vacío de sentido, expresado en el vampiro, oculta ese deseo inconsciente sobre la trascendencia.” This would be the case for almost every representation of the vampire, but the representation of monstrosity is dependent not solely on universal desires or fears, or even its literary history, but also on its historical context. As the following chapters will confirm, political events, economic change, and ideological shifts at the turn of the 19th century helped shape the 19th and early 20th century vampire. These events and processes range from the Spanish-American War, American Imperialism, an evolving public/private divide, and feminist movements in Europe, Spain, and Latin America.

This particular vampire can come in many forms. According to Christopher Frayling, there are four major vampire archetypes relevant to the 19th century:

[T]he Satanic Lord (Polidori and derivatives,) the Fatal Woman (Tieck, Hoffmann, Gautier, Baudelaire, Swinburne and Le Fanu), the Unseen Force (O’Brien, de Maupassant) and the Folkloric Vampire (Mérimée, Gogol, Tolstoy, Turgenev, Linton and Burton). One might add also the ‘camp’ vampire (Stenbock, Viereck and perhaps Rymer), although he is parasitic—in a languid sort of way—on all the rest. The vampire as metaphor of the creative process (writing, painting or composing) also makes an occasional appearance. (62)

José Miguel Sardiñas, in his article on vampirism in modernist short stories, argues that these archetypes are suggestive of two modes of vampirism:

[E]l cruento o sangriento, que es el tradicional y más conocido (tipos 1, 2 y 4 de Frayling); y el sublimado, que acaba por producir el mismo efecto que el anterior

(la muerte por transferencia de la vitalidad a otro ser), pero en el que no siempre el medio por el que se absorbe la fuerza o energía vital es la sangre, con su fuerte carga de primitivismo (tipo 3 y la variante metafórica mencionada al final de la tipología de Frayling). (36)

Hence, the exploitative or vampiric act can be direct or indirect, blood related or not, literal or figurative. Looking past the idea that a vampire is simply a lord in a cape who sucks the blood from his unwilling yet (especially in the female case) participative victims, the parameters for which vampire fiction is traditionally understood can be expanded. The Satanic Lord and the folkloric vampire types have already been mentioned, but the Fatal Woman, Unseen Force, and the vampire as metaphor should be given some brief attention, as they are the other variants of the vampire and vampirism present in the stories discussed in the following chapters.¹³

According to James B. Twitchell, “While the male vampire story was a tale of domination, the female version was one of seduction” (39). Here, Twitchell provides insight into the parallels drawn between women and subversion, or more significantly, how the dominant ideas constituting one define and support ideas constituting the other. As Jackson explains, “The shadow on bourgeois culture is variously identified as black, mad, primitive, criminal, socially deprived, crippled, or (when sexually assertive)

¹³ Although Frayling’s archetypes are useful in helping us understand the many forms that vampirism can take, and although I do reference them throughout this dissertation, the following chapters will show that I have opted to, in many cases, collate these archetypes under the term “vampire logic” for one major reason: I am less concerned with the archetypal pattern they adhere to than with what these figures, metaphors, processes, etc. reveal about the narratives and their historical contexts; that is, I find it more relevant to discuss the *implications* of their usage, since both the Gothic and the vampire continuously evolve over time, and constantly break with and shift previous patterns. That said, I also find that Frayling’s archetypes and Sardiñas’ grouping of them into modes neglects how these archetypes can overlap, especially in the case of the Decadent and theosophical vampires that abound in the final decade of the 19th century, where female vampires, unseen forces, folklore, and metaphorical variants can intersect.

female” (121). As previously mentioned, the division between public and private allowed for a morality and amorality to develop outside the framework of the Bible, and while mothers and wives tended to operate almost exclusively within the private sphere, societal changes allowed single women to have limited access to opportunities in the public sphere: “Single women gained economic and educational opportunities, but married women (especially those with children) were still expected to devote themselves to their families” (Senf 155). But these changes were not without their critics, who crafted fictionalized literary responses to voice their concerns. According to Carol A. Senf, “the growing nineteenth-century interest in powerful women characters may have stemmed from its concern—even obsession—with women’s actual power, an obsession that increased as the century progressed” (154). And what better way to represent a concern (and obsession) with women’s ascent in the public sphere than to portray them as monsters? Thus the increasing representations of madwomen and *femme fatales* in literature produced by male authors of the 19th century.¹⁴

Of particular significance here is the vampiric *femme fatale*, who unlike other representations, uses her body to seduce and drain men, and oftentimes even kill them; clearly indicative of (the fear of) women’s active role in sexual relations. As such, if men fall prey to their sexual advances, it is because they have no choice, an idea that can be traced back as far as Adam and Eve, but that particular to the 19th century, is a reaction to women’s power or fight for equality within the public sphere, not purely their sexuality. These types of representations serve as a warning to keep women delegated to the private

¹⁴ This trend is apparent in Latin American and Spanish letters as well, with Rubén Darío’s “Thanatopía,” Leopoldo Lugones’ “La vampira,” and several of Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer’s *leyendas*, as previously mentioned, being prime examples.

sphere, and are therefore different from the female vampires that appear in 20th and 21st century literature: “While twentieth-century writers treat the eroticism of their vampires as a positive trait, their nineteenth-century counterparts definitely do not” (Senf 152). For example, “Lucy Westenra and the women in Dracula’s castle are murderers of children as well as violently sexual beings, who both seduce and terrify their male victims” (153). It is important to note here that Lucy, prior to becoming one of Dracula’s victims, was sexually promiscuous, or so it can be inferred through her letters to Mina. It can therefore be suggested that her victimization is a direct result of her actions; whereas Mina, who stayed devoted to Jonathan Harker, becomes a wife, and after surviving Dracula’s attack, a mother. This virgin/seductress dichotomy is not only evident in *Dracula*, but in many other vampire narratives, such as Sheridan Le Fanu’s *Carmilla* (1871), and as the following chapters will reveal, this dichotomy is present in Hispanic literary representations of the female vampire as well.

The vampire has also made various appearances in the form of an invisible force and as a metaphor for the creative process. The two are linked in Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Oval Portrait” (1842), where a man paints his wife and upon completion, looks up to discover her corpse. Similarly, in Latin American literature, painting as a form of vampirism can be observed in Clemente Palma’s “La granja blanca” (1904), only in this case it is the young bride’s act of painting that causes her own deterioration: “La descripción del efecto que provoca a Cordelia su dedicación a la pintura coincide con la de la víctima de un vampiro: sale pálida, agotada, melancólica” (Sardiñas 39). The vampire as metaphor for the suffering associated with love and marriage can also be found outside painting. A perfect example of this is Horacio Quiroga’s “El almohadón de

plumas” (1917), which narrates the tale of a recently married couple’s odd romance that may or may not result in the death of the wife.¹⁵ In this way, vampirism as metaphor in literature can be suggested to be primarily associated with marital woes, but it can also reference other social and political attitudes or events, in addition to economic processes or relations.

Literary critics have tended to disregard the vampire theme in Spanish and Latin American letters. Although such articles as “El vampirismo en la obra de Goya” (Alcalá Flecha) and “El vampirismo en relatos modernistas” (Sardiñas) are excellent resources on the subject, they are limited in scope, while *Los que moran en las sombras: asedios al vampiro en la literatura peruana* (Honores Vásquez), although incredibly insightful, is broad in scope and regrettably brief in terms of its critical analysis, given its purpose as an anthology. Even Rodríguez’s fascinating analysis of vampirism through the lens of tensions between feudal and bourgeoisie ideologies explores the vampire in general, and has no mention of the figure in Hispanic narrative (“Walpurgis Night” and “Drink From Me”).

In addition to these, however, are Owen A. Aldridge’s “The Vampire Theme in Latin America” and Graciela Aletta de Sylvas’ “Entre lo gótico y lo fantástico: una lectura del tema del vampiro en la literatura argentina.” In the former, Aldridge notes that

¹⁵ Critical scholarship has observed the potential influences of Edgar Allan Poe’s Gothic narrative production on both Palma and Quiroga’s vampire representations. While the following chapters go into as much detail as I believe this connection merits without deviating from the topic nor being redundant, it is worth mentioning here that these authors did have access to Poe’s works: “Como sabemos, en gran medida la herencia gótica de Poe se extendió en Hispanoamérica de forma indirecta, en especial gracias a las traducciones de Baudelaire, pues nuestros intelectuales de esa época acostumbraban a leer en francés y no en inglés” (Olea Franco 471).

the figure did not appear in Latin American literature until the publication of José María de Heredia's poem "La novia de Corinto," an adaptation of Goethe's poem where his greatest modification was "to omit explicit blood-sucking and to convey the impression that the lovers would be reunited in heaven. In this sense, Heredia's poem is not a vampire poem at all" (148). This drastic omission is particularly interesting when considering the scarcity of the traditional, cloaked and fanged vampire, and the propensity towards vampire metaphor and symbolism in Latin American literature. Examples of this vampire include, but are not limited to, Quiroga's "El almohadón de plumas" (1917) and "El vampiro" (1927), Palma's "La granja blanca" (1904), and Leopoldo Lugones' "La vampira" (1899). In a similar fashion to Honores Vásquez, Sylvas observes the evolution of the vampire theme in Latin America from the classic sense of the monster to later parodic representations: "Hay una degradación del tema, el vampiro ha dejado de ser monstruo, el muerto vivo, ya no produce miedo a nadie. Ha perdido la otredad y su condición de víctima lo ha aproximado al ser humano" (290). As the last chapter will prove, however, this parodic vampire seems to appear earlier than what Honores Vásquez and Aletta de Sylvas suggest.

In Spain, the vampire figure appeared slightly earlier than in Latin America, though not in greater numbers. As the introduction to the next chapter discusses, vampirism was a recurring theme in Francisco de Goya's etchings from the late 18th and early 19th centuries. In terms of literary production, Antonio García Gutiérrez translated M. Scribe's play, *Le vampire: comédie-vaudeville en un acte* (1820), from French to Spanish as *El*

vampiro: comedia en un acto (1839).¹⁶ The play is set in Hungary, and although it appears well into the 19th century, it clearly belongs to the earliest representations that poked fun at superstitious beliefs in far-away lands. A year later, Agustín Pérez Zaragoza published *Galería fúnebre de espectros y sombras ensangrentadas*, in which, according to Monleón, “hubo algún intento de vampirismo” (“Vampiros y donjuanes” 24). For the most part, the vampire retreats from Spanish cultural production for the next 60 years, only to reemerge at the end of the century.

The absence of vampire figures in the 19th century Spanish literary landscape can be attributed to several factors. For one, censorship may have played a role, considering the stronghold of the Church and the ghosts of the not-too-distant Spanish Inquisition. Another factor to consider is Spanish nationalism and the rejection of European literary styles. On the other hand, in “Vampiros y donjuanes: sobre la figura del seductor en el siglo XIX,” Monleón attributes this absence to Spain’s particular case of modernity: the inability to consolidate a strong capitalist economy or a bourgeois epistemology (24). But Spain had to have its own literary response to the inherent contradictions of the private sphere. For Monleón, that response was Don Juan. Just like the vampire, Don Juan questions patriarchal order through his relationship with women, his conduct destabilizes social equilibrium, he is nourished by his conquests, and without the repetition of his cruel act, he would not exist. And just like the vampire, he enters the private sphere upon an invitation by a female character: “El asalto del seductor a la estabilidad social se lleva a cabo a través de la invasión de la esfera privada, de ese núcleo representativo,

¹⁶ *El vampiro* premiered in the *Teatro de la Cruz* on October 10, 1834 (García Gutiérrez, *Obras*).

contradictorio y vulnerable de la nueva configuración socio-económica” (27-28). Don Juan is therefore a different, or even opposite, approach to the same problem, given that he pertains to a pre-capitalist world, whereas the vampire pertains to a capitalist world. While the vampire appears to repress feminine subjectivity, Don Juan emerges to reaffirm masculine subjectivity, considering the latter redeems himself and goes to heaven, gaining the reader’s sympathy (29).¹⁷

Monleón is arguably onto something, but that does not mean that the vampire did not appear in Spanish Gothic literature at all, either literally or figuratively. True, a vampire the likes of Dracula or Lord Ruthven never appeared in the 19th or early 20th centuries, but vampirism can be found in many forms. For example, Emilia Pardo Bazán’s “Vampiro” (1901), the tale of an exploitative relationship between newlyweds that ends in the death of the young bride, relates marriage to vampirism in the title while no act of literal blood-sucking occurs in the story. Additionally, Carmen de Burgos’ short novel *La mujer fría* (1922) has notes of vampirism, to the point where the protagonist could be interpreted as a vampire: she dresses in black, is seductive yet cold, does not appear to eat or drink, and has a mysterious past that includes several dead husbands. Vampires also appear as secondary characters in Wenceslao Fernández Flórez’s “El claro del bosque” (1922) and Alfonso Castelao’s *Un ojo de vidrio: memorias de un esqueleto*

¹⁷ Margo Glantz has also observed the similarities between the vampire and Don Juan: “Don Juan las priva de su honor y el vampiro de su sangre; la fama del Don Juan se determina por el número de víctimas deshonradas y la vida del vampiro se sostiene por la sangre de las vírgenes. Tanto el Don Juan como el vampiro aman a las doncellas débiles, a las virtuosas y pálidas mujeres que, hipnotizadas, se les entregan. El vampiro no sólo ha pactado con el diablo, es su imagen” (“La metamorfosis” 3). Thus Glantz connects the two myths by recounting their similarities, but she does not go into how and why these myths may have been adapted into romantic or gothic literary figures.

(1922). Ramón del Valle Inclán even wrote a short dramatic play, *Ligazón: auto para siluetas* (1926), where a young woman forms a blood pact with a knife-grinder to avoid being forced into a sexual relationship with another man.

While the purpose of the next chapters is to expose particular trends in Spanish and Latin American vampire literature at the turn of the 20th century, and accordingly, explore their greater implications, the purpose of this chapter was to establish a working theory of the vampire. This theory takes into account the origins of the vampire myth, the figure's emergence in European letters during the latter part of the 18th century, its Romantic and Gothic manifestations in the 19th century, and its reemergence in Spain and Latin America at the turn of the 20th century. As the next chapters will suggest, it is this latter vampire that marked an important turn in both Hispanic letters and the broader literary vampire tradition. This vampire was influenced by the German, French, and English Gothic literary traditions, but certainly not determined by them. In Spain, economic loss and ideological and political tensions shaped the figure into a tool for social critique, an oftentimes satirical one, reviving its 18th century roots. Curiously though, it was female authors who represented the figure, at least more in depth through their vampire protagonists, therefore gendering the social critique, and marking a stark contrast with cultural production in Europe and Latin America. Across the Atlantic, vampire logic did not operate exclusively outside the European and Spanish literary traditions, but it did explore political, social, and economic realities in ways that challenged traditional forms. It was typically male authors, on this end, who tended to favor the topic in symbolic and metaphorical terms. As the following chapters will prove, although Spanish and Latin American modernities may differ from those of Europe and the United States, these

nations produced interesting and unique responses to their particular political, economic, and social developments at the turn of the 20th century. The hope is that an analysis of these vampires and vampiric processes will prove that they deserve recognition within the Gothic literary tradition.

CHAPTER 2

BLOOD MONEY: VAMPIRE LOGIC AS AN EXPRESSION OF ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION AND POLITICAL ANXIETY

“but now misery has come home, and men appear to me as monsters thirsting for each other’s blood” (Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein or the Modern Prometheus* 82).

“The focus is no longer on whether ghosts exist, but whether man has the right to control life and death” (Cynthia Duncan, *Unraveling the Real: The Fantastic in Spanish-American “Ficciones”* 62).

“Capital is dead labour, that, vampire-like, only lives by sucking living labour, and lives the more, the more labour it sucks” (Karl Marx *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy* Vol. I 233).

Introduction

The expression of political and economic anxieties through vampire logic (i.e. vampire figures, processes, metaphors, and otherwise) is a common tendency in vampire literature, and predates even the earliest literary vampire representations. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the first modern depictions of the vampire appeared in historical documents: During territorial disputes between the Ottoman and Hapsburg empires in Serbia and surrounding regions, reports began to surface that Serbians had seen and killed vampires. Some critics have viewed these early reports in light of the changing political climate; as responses to, or manifestations of, Serbians’ fear of the Ottomans. As such, the vampires were essentially metaphors for the Ottomans, communicated in such a way that concealed blatant criticism, thus avoiding severe consequences. If these accounts are regarded as oral narratives, however, the vampires can be understood as pieces of a larger story, and can therefore be understood as allegorical figures.¹⁸ They communicated,

¹⁸ For allegory to be present, a narrative must conceal another story or meaning. According to *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, “To compose allegorically is to construct a work so that its apparent sense refers to an ‘other’ sense. To

subliminally, another story altogether, one of exploitation and competing entities in various struggles over autonomy and power during a time of economic change and political unrest.

As the 18th century progressed, and as more reports of vampire sightings, stakings, and burnings were released, the vampire became not only a popular topic to debate among intellectual circles, but also a popular trope for writers, philosophers and artists to turn to when criticizing political and economic institutions. This happened for the first time in 1764, when Voltaire dedicated an entry to vampires in *Dictionnaire philosophique*, ridiculing the superstition and claiming that true vampires were in fact real men: “I confess that in both these cities there were stock-jobbers, brokers, and men of business, who sucked the blood of the people in broad daylight; but they were not dead, though corrupted. These true suckers lived not in cemeteries, but in very agreeable palaces” (par. 2). He goes on to say, “the true vampires are the monks, who eat at the expense of both kings and people” (par. 12). Thus, Voltaire makes the explicit connection between vampires, political concerns, and economic exploitation: The Catholic and Christian Churches that influenced politics and policy, and the bankers and businessmen who grew wealthier at the expense of others. He also explains that in the early 18th century, the question was no longer whether vampires existed (as Antoine Augustin

interpret allegorically (‘allegoresis’) is to explain a work as if there were an ‘other’ sense to which it referred” (31). In *The Vitality of Allegory: Figural Narrative in Modern and Contemporary Fiction*, Gary Johnson defines allegory in the following way: “that class of works that fulfills its rhetorical purpose by means of the transformation of some phenomenon into a figural narrative” (9). As such, allegory is a trope, but it differs from similar figures such as synecdoche, metonymy, simile and, more importantly, metaphor, because it is no longer simply descriptive, but rather, narrative; it can be understood, in this sense, as a series of metaphors that produces the effect of a figural narrative.

Calmet suggested they did), but rather, “whether all these dead were raised by their own virtue, by the power of God, or by that of the devil” (par. 9).¹⁹ Though his stance was clearly satirical in terms of the supernatural vampire, his critical stance towards exploitative institutions through vampire metaphor would be continuously adopted throughout the next century; so much so, that by the 19th century, “La imagen de este ser parasitario que se alimenta de la sangre y la vida de sus víctimas vino a convertirse en una metáfora de la explotación” (Monleón, “Vampiros” 20).

A particularly relevant example of this can be observed in many of Francisco de Goya’s etchings from the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Goya’s experimentation with vampirism was a process that unfolded over decades, but the one thing that did not change was his tendency to employ the vampire as a metaphor to communicate the anxieties and concerns of Spanish society, and the institutions and processes that exploited, turned their backs on, and violated the lower classes and society’s most vulnerable. In *Sueño 16: Crecer después de morir* (1797-98), for example, a tall corpselike noble—gaunt, eyes shut, mouth open, and dressed in antiquated clothing—is being propped up by several smaller, struggling men. To the left of the men appear two

¹⁹ In 1811, Leandro Fernández de Moratín, under the pseudonym Ginés de Posadilla, takes a similar, satirical approach to the vampire debate by dedicating a note to the topic in *Auto de fe celebrado en la ciudad de Logroño en los días 7 y 8 de noviembre del año de 1610, siendo inquisidor general el cardenal arzobispo de Toledo don Bernardo de Sandoval y Rojas*. Here he flippantly refers to Calmet as “el reverendísimo padre don Agustín Calmet,” and mockingly raises the issue of the implications of such a debate altogether: “En toda la Alemania oriental no se hablaba de otra cosa desde el año de 1730 al de 35 que de los tales muertos chupadores. Los avizoraban, los perseguían, les arrancaban el corazón y los echaban al fuego sin misericordia; pero, a la manera que los antiguos mártires, cuantos más chupachiquillos quemaban, más chupachiquillos había.” The very act of debating the issue therefore raises the vampire from the dead, so to speak; the more we discuss it, the more we propagate the superstition, and the harder it is to kill.



Sueño 16: Crecer después de morir
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ecclesiastical figures, one possibly preaching while the other reads from a text. According to Roberto Alcalá Flecha, this scene contains a sharp criticism of both the nobility and the clergy, wherein the nobility and the clergy enjoy numerous privileges while the laboring classes are left to carry out all the back-breaking work (264). At the same time, this scene could be read as a commentary on a dying feudal order that Spain and its peoples continue to support through ideological and political institutions. Either way, the etching clearly draws attention to class struggle through the noble vampire and the struggling men.

The vampire is also a recurring figure in Goya's collection, *Desastres de la guerra*, a series of etchings created between 1810 and 1820 that reveal the horrors of political violence and economic injustices during that period in Spain. Particular to this study, it can be suggested that both *Desastres de la guerra 71* and *72* express concern over the exploitation of the Spanish people. According to Alcalá Flecha, *Desastre 71: Contra el bien general*, is a possible allusion to the reign of terror imposed by Ferdinand VII (266). Here, a vampire-like figure—complete with talons, a long nose, a bald head, and bat wings for ears—has his back turned to the pleading masses while he scribbles something down in a large book. He is also holding up a finger, a sign for the masses to be patient. The figure is perched on a hill, indicating, through his position in the image in relation to the masses, his power over them. He is also curiously cloaked in a white robe, which, when considering the collection as a whole, likens the figure more to a monk than the King. In either case, the etching depicts an oppressive scenario, one that challenges power structures and draws attention to human suffering through vampire imagery. In *Desastre 72: Las resultas*, an ambiguous figure lays on the ground surrounded by bats,



Desastre 71: Contra el bien general
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Desastre 72: Las resultas
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one sucking at its chest. Alcalá Flecha suggests this is a likely metaphor for the exhausted nation (267), but according to Elie Faure, both the title and the white robe are suggestive of the monk getting what was coming to him; that is, these are the consequences of his actions (12). In this scenario, the bats could represent the masses or the institution of the Catholic Church itself.

A few decades later, Karl Marx used the vampire to convey the economic and political tensions of the era, specifically criticizing capitalist modes of production: “Capital is dead labour, that, vampire-like, only lives by sucking living labour, and lives the more, the more labour it sucks” (233). What Marx does here, according to Mark Neocleous, is a far cry from 18th century philosophers’ use of the vampire as a form of ridiculing superstitious belief: “While [Marx] may not be suggesting that the vampire really exists, he uses it as a metaphor to capture something very real indeed, namely a particular relation between human beings” (676). Carol A. Senf, who is interested in the vampire as a literary device more so than its implications in economic theory, curiously adds, “Although Marx was writing a scientific analysis of economic conditions, his familiarity with the Gothic tales of E.T.A. Hoffman and Alexander Dumas gave him a graphic figure of supernatural evil by which he could characterize an ordinary human evil” (138). In this way, Senf is also shedding light on the vampire’s mobility between genres, or better yet, the influence one has on the other, in this case literature and economic theory.

There has been debate amongst Marxists as to whether, and to what extent, human beings are exploited under capitalism. In “Vampires, Werewolves, and Economic

Exploitation,” George E. Panichas analyzes the term “exploitation” itself, and questions whether, if human beings are exploited economically under capitalism, this exploitation is morally condemnatory. By examining Marx’s own words and providing convincing economic formulas, he concludes that human beings are in fact economically exploited under capitalism, and that this exploitation is morally condemnatory under certain conditions: “when, and only when, capital gains by intentionally taking an alterable or avoidable advantage of labor and in doing so inhibits or denies workers’ freedom” (239). He offers a formula to justify this determination: “some person or thing is exploited economically by another person, *P*, if, and only if, *P* takes advantage of *t* and the nature of this advantage is economic, that is, economic gain for *P*” (223-24). Given that this formula is a way of determining whether economic exploitation is occurring within capitalist relations of production, it is an interesting one to consider when undertaking an allegorical reading of vampire stories that convey political and economic anxieties. In neither one of the two stories examined here is the economic exploitation explicit, and in neither case does the vampire logic appear to address direct concerns over relations of production. However, both allegories do suggest anxieties towards the shifting global economy, directed specifically towards a greater capitalist and colonial system at work, oftentimes outside national borders.

Gothic fiction as a whole, whether directly or indirectly, tends to convey economic anxieties under capitalist modes of production. Take *Frankenstein*, for instance. The text may be read as a commentary on Man’s futility in creating “life” without Women from a feminist perspective, while from a Marxist perspective, Dr. Frankenstein’s monster can be read as the proletariat disfigured under the owners of the means of production,

represented in turn by the doctor himself. In her paramount study, *From Dickens to Dracula: Gothic, Economics, and Victorian Fiction*, Gail Turley Houston takes a historical approach to Victorian Gothic fiction, focusing not so much on the figuration of class struggle, but more so on public and private fears generated by the London banking crisis at the turn of the 19th century. Her approach is two-fold: She looks not only at the ways in which the banking crisis and financial panic are figured through supernatural means in Gothic fiction, but also how they are represented alongside realist economic concerns. In her chapter, “Bankerization panic and corporate personality in *Dracula*,” she argues that the novel is a figuration of two entities fighting for total control of circulation and consumption, but more specifically, that the story represents “a glorified fight to the death between emergent and residual banking systems” (126). Without resorting to the term “allegory,” as she prefers more subdued language such as “figure” and “parallel,” she effectively defends her position through a close reading of these realist economic concerns, which entail both sides’ (*Dracula* and Van Helsing’s) fiscal knowledge and obsessions, the economic nomenclature present in the text, and the explicit references to money. The idea that “the life-blood of the nation is money” is subliminally conveyed, for example, in the scene where Van Helsing and his crew catch up with *Dracula* at one of his estates, and, upon Harker’s attack, the Count gushes not blood but money. “Immediately after this,” Turley Houston continues, “the narrator describes how in the midst of fleeing his pursuers, the Count fumbles to retain his cash [...] Subdued by the need for cash itself, *Dracula* looks like a bumbling Keystone Cop rather than a supernatural genius, and this fiscal humiliation begins his unraveling” (120-21). Turley Houston’s study is relevant to my reading for several reasons, the most important being

the collation of Gothic tropes and realist economic concerns as grounds for a figurative, or allegorical, reading. We differ in many respects as well, such as scope. This chapter, for example, focuses on both economic exploitation and political concerns, as they oftentimes occur simultaneously. (As Panichas observes, economic relationships are usually enforced politically, such as the labor/capital relationship (230).) As such, Turley Houston's study serves as a point of departure for my reading of Emilia Pardo Bazán's "La exangüe" (1899) and Horacio Quiroga's "El vampiro" (1927) as allegories of particular historical events—or more accurately, processes—and the economic and political concerns they yielded.

There are several examples of this tendency that I have discovered during the course of my research that I do not explore in this chapter, mostly because the vampire characters are secondary or appear in passing, or the vampire logic as an expression of economic exploitation or political concerns is too weak to sustain an effective analysis. Examples of these include Mexican author Alejandro Cuevas' short story "El vampiro" (1911), where the narrator draws a parallel between a vampire-spider and a money-hungry villain, and Spanish author Alfonso Daniel Rodríguez Castelao's novella *Un ojo de vidrio: memorias de un esqueleto* (1922), where the narrator refers to his hatred of exploitation committed by both the living and the dead—the living associated with the New World, and the dead associated with a former cacique who he sees leave his tomb at night to feed off the living. In the analysis that follows, the vampire figures and processes are central to the plot, and they exist alongside realist concerns in such a way that, while producing a variety of results, as allegory tends to do, communicate very specific anxieties relating to imperialism and capitalism. In Emilia Pardo Bazán's short story "La

exangüe,” published the year following Spain’s loss of the last of her colonies, I argue that the blatant political allegory suggests greater economic and ideological concerns, while I propose that Horacio Quiroga’s short story “El vampiro” can also be read as an allegory that communicates anxieties over U.S. presence in Latin America—cultural, political, and economic.

A few final notes on allegory are needed before proceeding. In “Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism,” Fredric Jameson makes the controversial claim that “All third-world texts are necessarily... allegorical” (69). Gary Johnson, in his critical study, *The Vitality of Allegory: Figural Narrative in Modern and Contemporary Fiction*, supports aspects of Jameson’s approach, such as the idea that historical and materialist situations inform allegory (22), but by describing his claim as “sweeping,” Johnson clearly takes issue with the scope of his definition. This challenge is observed more explicitly, however, in Aijaz Ahmad’s article, “Jameson’s Rhetoric of Otherness and the ‘National Allegory’.” On a broad scale, Ahmad seeks to dismantle Jameson’s formulation of “a theory of the cognitive aesthetics of third-world literature,” arguing that such a formulation is an epistemological impossibility, and “simply cannot be resolved at this level of generality without an altogether positivist reductionism” (4); reductionist in the sense that the few texts that are valorized in the British/North American canon are understood to be representative of an entire people or nation’s experiences, or to a greater extreme, representative of the entire “third world,” a category Ahmad challenges for being defined in terms of its “experience” and not its mode of production, like the “first” and “second-world” are. More specifically, however, Ahmad questions the position mentioned above, that all third-world texts are national allegories:

“In context, therefore, one is doubly surprised at Jameson’s absolute insistence upon difference and the relation of otherness between the first world and the third, and his equally insistent idea that the ‘experience’ of the ‘third world’ could be contained and communicated within a single narrative form” (11). Of course, it is counter-productive and reductionist to label all texts from Africa, Asia, and Latin America (and even Spain, to an extent, as Jameson notes in his reading of Benito Pérez Galdós) as “third world,” and texts from these areas should not always, nor exclusively, be reduced to renditions of specific national histories.

For obvious reasons, I do not want my dissertation to fall into this category, wherein my analysis is understood in terms of a predetermined allegorical reading based on the authors’ native countries. I am aware that at the off-set, my approach may seem to conform to this line of thinking; that is, to this notion that the story of imperialism and colonialism is written in every narrative (or at least every “valuable” narrative) that is composed in a post-colonial setting. (Or in Emilia Pardo Bazán’s case, a post-imperialist/late-capitalist, and thus “semi-peripheral” setting, to borrow Jameson’s term). But this and the following chapters prove this to not be the case. What I have found is that when vampire logic appears alongside realist economic and political concerns, similar to (but not the same as) what Johnson has referred to as “textual phenomena,” these narratives can be understood to conceal subliminal meanings and anxieties relating to nationhood, national economies and modes of production, history, political developments, and relations between nations; these relations being, more often than not, exploitative. Thus, while the vampire logic that sustains these narratives may have far-ranging implications, even outside the political and economic spheres, I suggest they are

also national allegories; and in the case of Quiroga's "El vampiro" specifically, a trans-national allegory.

I am also aware of the fact that allegory has fallen out of favor in academia; it has been pronounced "dead," repeatedly. Still, as Johnson points out, it continues to be relevant because authors will keep finding new ways of manipulating it and incorporating it into their narratives (198). I could have relied on what I believe to be less accurate terms, such as metaphor, in my analysis of the following stories, but I think that an allegorical approach to these narratives is important because it not only informs a new, or expanded, reading of them, but also informs our understanding of their authors and the intersection of literature and history.

"La exangüe," Emilia Pardo Bazán

This section explores Emilia Pardo Bazán's short story "La exangüe" (1899), the tragic tale of a Spanish woman who experienced a horrific blood-letting in the Philippines at the hands of indigenous rebels. Expanding on previous criticism that has read the story as a political allegory, this section will attempt to situate the story within the Gothic vampire tradition and argue that the implications of reading the young woman's vampirism as allegory are not solely political, but also economic and ideological. That is, as much as it may be a commentary on Spain's great political loss of 1898, wherein Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Philippines were signed over to the United States in the Treaty of Paris, the story also conveys economic anxieties at the domestic level and, to an extent, represents the factors that contributed to this loss. In this way, the text can be understood as a historical reconciliation, so to speak, between what has been written as Spain's colonial history and other possible truths. In doing so, the

story questions the dominant, male voices that tell both Spain and the women's histories—as they are unified in this narrative through allegory—and, by extension, offers the possibility of a female-narrated history.

Emilia Pardo Bazán was born in La Coruña, Galicia on September 16th of 1851, and passed away in Madrid on May 12th of 1921. During her lifetime, she became a published writer of fiction and nonfiction, a journalist, traveler, wife and mother, and countess by appointment, when King Alfonso XIII awarded her the title on the basis of her literary achievements (Pattison, Pallejá-López). According to Joyce Tolliver, “She wrote works in every major genre: she began her writing career as a young poet, with her collection *Jaime*, and then went on to publish twenty novels, twenty-one novellas, seven plays, close to six hundred short stories, and sixteen volumes of nonfiction (including travel writing, history, literary criticism, hagiography, and two cookbooks)” (“Introduction” 13). She read French Naturalism for the first time when she traveled to France in 1880, which contributed to both her non-fiction, *La cuestión palpitante* (1882-83), and her fiction, most notably, *Los pazos de Ulloa* (1886) and its sequel *La madre naturaleza* (1887).

Although Pardo Bazán is widely known for her naturalist style, she is also recognized for her numerous social and political crusades. For example, she lobbied for a woman's right to an education and to hold an occupation outside of the home, which she repeatedly conveyed at lectures and in papers, such as “La educación del hombre y la mujer,” a cause which she continued to fight for until her death (Pattison 66). Tolliver also discusses Pardo Bazán's feminist concerns, highlighting her focus on “aspects of gender roles such as the sexual double standard, the limitation of women to the private

sphere, concepts of ‘honor’ that glorified what we now call spousal abuse, and the paltry education provided to girls, even those who enjoyed social and economic privileges” (“Introduction” 15). Although she was a devout Catholic, she challenged the institution that continuously undermined the roles, equality, and safety of women: “While women are expected to be devout, in contrast to the minimal religious participation expected of men, the church is a ‘women’s place’ only superficially, says Pardo Bazán; for it is only very rarely that women find refuge from domestic and societal injustices there” (“Introduction” 16). Now, as Susan McKenna discerns, Pardo Bazán’s “feminism” was quite selective: “Like many of her contemporaries, Pardo Bazán often ignored or negated the important factors of race and class” (7). McKenna also notes, “[s]he conformed and challenged, appropriated and rejected, complied and resisted” (9). Although this was most likely due to gender-constraints and the literary landscape of the times, it nevertheless made her a controversial figure in upper-class Spanish society. Additionally, she was very outspoken on the topic of the Spanish Army and the current political scene in Spain, condemning Spanish soldiers as unkempt and indifferent towards their profession, foreseeing the disastrous outcome of the Spanish-American War, and advocating for a union between the Carlists and Liberals, to which she received brutal criticism (Pattison 63-65). She spoke publicly about these matters, in addition to writing numerous open letters in newspapers, but she also addressed them in her fiction throughout the years, directly and indirectly, by means of a multi-faceted style that encompassed naturalist, Gothic, romantic, and Decadent conventions. Her literary production, therefore, tended to adapt and overlap literary tendencies to confront

particular social injustices, as well as convey certain political, religious, and economic concerns.

Pardo Bazán was not alone in this blending of styles, given that several late 19th and early 20th century Spanish authors adapted Gothic conventions to appeal to the reading public and avoid Church censorship. But for female authors, the subversiveness of the narrative was two-fold: “Spanish women writers had to elude not only this crusade against Gothic themes, but also the ideology of homemaking being natural for women, which went unquestioned in Spain for longer than in much of the Western world” (Pallejá-López 286). The idea of female authorship has been contested within male-centered literary circles, and has given rise to male- and female-authored texts that both confirm and subvert traditional gender roles, which is arguably a cornerstone of all Gothic fiction; the Other or Evil entity being, in many cases, feminine. As Susanne Becker observes, “it is my conviction that one of the secrets of the gothic’s persistent success is gender-related: it is so powerful because it is so feminine” (2). Whether women were being depicted as objects through the male gaze or taking the pen themselves, women and the feminine are particularly significant in Gothic fiction, and thus no study on the Gothic or vampirism would be complete or valid without delving into narrative production by female authors. That is not to say that any or all analysis will be or should be gender-centered; this chapter is, after all, devoted to exploring political and economic tensions expressed in vampire narratives. But there must be—and indeed this is what this section will argue—a particular and equally valid expression of certain political and economic realities through the female gaze.

“La exangüe” is set in both Spain and the Philippines, and almost immediately introduces the framed narrator, a doctor who relates the story of a curious case by either formally addressing a large public or simply engaging in a story-telling at a bar. (This aspect remains ambiguous.) After taking on a new patient, a young Spanish woman who lives in his apartment building, she entrusts him with her past and divulges how she came down with such a severe case of anemia. After losing both her parents, and finding it difficult for her and her brother to live off his modest salary, the siblings decided to make a better life for themselves in the Philippines, at that time still a Spanish colony, but which the narrator makes clear is no longer the case: “[...] se establecieron en uno de esos poblados barracas de bambú, perdidos en el océano de verdor del hermoso archipiélago que ya no nos pertenece” (Pardo Bazán, “La exangüe” 268). The brother found a job working for a local priest, but after an indigenous rebellion, the tribe captured them. After pleading for her brother’s life and asking for them to let her blood run instead of his, the leader agrees, and thus began her exsanguination process. While the tribe drained her blood, she experienced some delusions that evoke blatant metaphors.²⁰ After seven days, she was saved by a Spanish and Filipino fleet, only to find out that her brother had been hanged. The story should end here—*should* in the sense that the doctor is finished telling the young woman’s story, while the allegory for the loss of the colonies

²⁰ The first hallucination she experiences evokes the tragic loss of lives brought on by the war: “Tan pronto su alucinación le mostraba una bandada de tiburones, como un asalto de piraguas llenas de indígenas; ya exhalaba chillidos porque ardía el barco, ya oía silbar las balas de los cañones y veía que el gran trasatlántico, partido en dos, hundíase en el abismo” (Pardo Bazán, “La exangüe” 270). In the second, the text draws a clear parallel between *la exangüe* and her homeland: “[...] en un momento lúcido, o acaso de fiebre, se le apareció España, sus costas, su tierra amada, clemente; y creyendo besarla, pegó la boca al suelo de la cabaña, donde yacía sobre petates viejos, medio desnuda, agonizando, devorada por sed horrible, clamor de secas venas sin jugo” (270).

is already made apparent in her delusions—but instead it reverts back to the diegetic narrator, who describes how a modernist painter in attendance, particularly enthused by the woman's story, states he will make her the object of his next painting: "Voy a hacer un estudio de la cabeza de esa señora. La rodeo de claveles rojos y amarillos, le doy un fondo de incendio..., escribo debajo *La Exangüe* y así salimos de la sempiterna matrona con el inevitable león, que representa a España" (Pardo Bazán, "La exangüe" 270).

The overtness of the allegory is clear by the end of the story: The young woman represents Spain, and her exsanguination process tells the story of Spain's decline as a colonial power. However, the allegory becomes complicated by the way it is told, through a framed narration style. As Tolliver observes, "the simple dichotomies that might seem to structure this group of stories become increasingly fragile" ("Over Her Bloodless Body" 291). In particular, Tolliver argues that the framed narration style and the depiction of the female character suggest "[...] anxieties about race and gender were inherent not only in the failed 'colonial encounter' but also in that form of artistic representation that presented itself as purely 'simbólica'" ("Bloodless" 298). Additionally, it could be suggested that the connection between gender and the colonial encounter can be evidenced in the telling of the story itself, given that her story (i.e. Spain's story) is told by a man to (presumably) an audience full of men, and then her body is later dissected by a male artist. As such, *la exangüe* survives the blood-letting, but continues to be voiceless, while her body is stripped of any agency.

In *Over Her Dead Body: Death, Femininity and the Aesthetic*, Elisabeth Bronfen questions whether a culture that views death as conventionally feminine inevitably views survival as masculine (65). Tolliver considers this idea in relation to "La exangüe,"

suggesting that the bloodless girl “is simultaneously imaged as a survivor and *not* as a survivor, given that her story ends, in effect, at the moment of her collapse and prostration. The woman whom the painter labels ‘La Exangüe’ does not die, but the heart of the story is the prospect of her death” (“Over Her Bloodless Body” 297). But by engaging with this socially constructed dialectic of masculinity and femininity that surrounds death, what is the story suggesting of the colonial encounter on a broader level, and the Spanish-American War on a more direct level? The story is clearly engaging with the constructs of masculinity and femininity on a narratological and aesthetic level through the narration style and the pictorial representations of death and dying, respectively, but on a thematic level, is it suggesting that Spain’s economic and political realities have and continue to negate growth and progress, therefore incorporating the event into a more complex, ongoing process that relates to Spain’s particular case of modernity? For at the core, this is a story about economic loss, political exploitation and unrest, and the uncertain future of a nation that was once an empire, told through a series of (presumably, but not definitively) male narrators that invite a critical reading, one that undeniably questions the inner-workings and effects of power and representation within a Catholic, patriarchal society.

While the narration style may encourage a critical stance that aims to dismantle (or at least draw attention to) the racist and misogynistic rhetoric present in colonial discourse, what is of particular interest to this study is the seemingly straightforward allegory expressed through vampire logic, therefore situating the story within the literary vampire tradition. When the reader is first introduced to *la exangüe*, her physical description is as follows: “Lo que en ella me extrañó fue la palidez cadavérica de su

rostro. Para formarse idea de un color semejante, hay que recordar las historias de vampiros que cuentan Edgardo Poe y otros escritores de la época romántica y servirse de frases que pertenecen al lenguaje poético” (Pardo Bazán, “La exangüe” 268). While it is clear that this description elicits associations with the Decadent movement and Romanticism, as Tolliver suggests, it is also associating the story with a Gothic literary tradition that tends to symbolize, and at times allegorize, death by vampirism. But while Tolliver goes on to explain that an allegorized reading becomes undermined as soon as the modernist painter in the story directly draws attention to it, it could alternatively be suggested that its explicit mention makes it all the more undeniable, solidifying (and at the same time, complicating) the allegory to which the narration alludes since the beginning. But does this loss point to the subordinate position of the female in 19th and early 20th century Spain, either in broad terms (female public) or limited terms (Pardo Bazán herself as a female author), or does the author use the Decadent motif of the sick and dying woman and the Gothic trope of the suffering heroine as tools to comment on the decline of the Spanish empire? And, while the victim appears to represent Spain—either wholly or partially—who or what do the “vampires” represent?

A historical approach to this story requires some context. As the 19th century drew to a close, wars, losses, and a nationalism that was alienating the nation from the rest of Europe contributed to a pessimistic attitude that influenced the proceeding Spanish literary landscape. During this time, Pattison suggests, “[...] the allover tone of [Pardo Bazán’s] short stories is pessimistic. This can be illustrated by the characters who populate them. They represent a variety of ranks and professions, but most of them are immoral, brutal, or, if sympathetically portrayed, suffering from disease or injustice. If

the individual is not bad, the world he lives in is” (Pattison 96). The loss of the colonies undeniably influenced her literary tone and subject matter, as did realizations she soon had upon traveling abroad. In “Pardo Bazán’s Analysis of the Social Structure of Spain,” Ronald Hilton explains how when the author visited the Paris Exhibition in 1900, “[...] she found that all the nations of any importance were represented by good exhibits—except Spain, which had sent merely a glass case with some medals (not even of Spanish manufacture) and some uniforms” (14). This must have particularly bothered Pardo Bazán, given her public disdain for the Spanish army, which began even before the loss of the colonies. According to David Henn, “At the 1889 World’s Fair in Paris she commented on the strength and capabilities of the German Empire while noting the lacks and inabilities of the Spanish army, to which she added, ‘cualquier guerra pararía en el mayor desastre’” (415).

Even though Spain had one of the largest armies at that time, it was disorganized and ill-equipped for modern warfare, which, as Pardo Bazán foresaw, proved disastrous against the United States. As Kenneth E. Hendrickson Jr. notes, “To be sure, the Spanish army was much larger than the American force. Spain had 150,000 men in Cuba, 8,000 in Puerto Rico, 20,000 in the Philippines, and 150,000 at home, but they were poorly led; poorly trained; and, for the most part, poorly equipped” (9). Additionally, “America had five modern battleships, more than thirty cruisers, and many smaller vessels, whereas the ships of the Spanish navy were for the most part antique and decrepit” (9). As the years went by, Pardo Bazán continued to express her disapproval of the state of the Spanish military, and as Donald Fowler Brown observes, “[l]ike Zola, Pardo Bazán thought there could never be anything wrong with saying the truth about things, however painful it was

to hear; it was false patriotism to misrepresent; only through facing the truth could Spain pull herself out of the morass of ignorance, political corruption, and slothfulness into which she had fallen” (40). But does this hopefulness translate into her stories? In *la exangüe*’s case, she escaped her death, but she remains sick: “Todavía está descolorida; no creo que llegue nunca a preciarse de frescachona; pero ya no sugiere ideas de vampirismo...” (Pardo Bazán, “La exangüe” 269). In this way, the reader is left questioning whether or not the text conveys the possibility of Spain regaining the political and economic stability it once had.

Prior to the war, Filipinos experienced many abuses at the hands of the Spaniards, but due to Spain’s stronghold on the island, Filipino rebels were not able to effectively revolt against their colonizer until the last decade of the 19th century. In addition to the *encomienda* system and the blatant racism exhibited by the Church due to the Filipinos’ resemblance to the Moors, Spanish rule also greatly affected the Filipino trade economy by displacing theirs with a feudalistic production mode that “erod[ed] the traditional subsistence base and created a class of dispossessed peasants” (Nadeau 30). Over the years, however, cropping for sugar, tobacco, rubber, and other resources allowed for the emergence of a small entrepreneurial class of Filipinos and Chinese, from which the future leaders of the Philippine Independence Movement emerged (30-31). The Philippine Revolution officially began on August 26, 1896 and lasted until 1902, in hopes of later gaining autonomy from the United States after Spain relinquished possession of the island upon losing military control. Much of the rebels’ hostility during the early years was directed at Church presence on the island since Spanish friars in the Philippines, not wanting to lose their power, fought secularization from Spain, which in

turn angered the Filipinos who were hoping to gain more autonomy. Consequently, “The friars became the storm center of the gradually increasing Filipino demand for change; the revolution of 1896 was principally directed against them” (Nadeau 39).

Pardo Bazán addresses these tensions in “La exangüe” by having the rebels kill a friar during their rebellion, but her depiction does not seem to justify the rebel’s cause for freedom. Conversely, it appears to foment sympathy for the Spanish Church and empire: “Defendióse con valor de guerrillero el fraile párroco, refugiado en la iglesia, realizando proezas que no pasarán a la Historia; ayudóle como pudo el empleado; cedieron al número; quedó el fraile acuchillado allí mismo” (269). The most interesting aspect here is not just that the friar, a figure that represents the Spanish Catholic Church, dies, but that his last words will not be written in History. In this way, the story, in addition to being a confirmation of colonial decline and economic loss, asks the reader to question not only how and why things happen in History, but also the inevitable process of selection and manipulation that occurs when writing History. Although the author’s views on the Church shifted throughout the course of her lifetime, “La exangüe” can be understood as a call for a re-reading of how the war came to fruition and what the factors were in the Spanish downfall; curiously, a re-reading based on conventional racial stereotypes and determined by a female gaze at the same time.

Another important historical factor to consider in the loss of the Spanish colonies is the rise of American imperialism. A contested topic among 19th century North American policy-makers, Manifest Destiny not only called for the expansion of U.S. territories and values, given that they were the “greatest,” it also justified violence as a means of conquest and expansion. A relevant example is how Manifest Destiny influenced changes

in American political and economic attitudes towards Cuba, whose appeal was for a long time overlooked by most Americans, aside from the Southerners who wanted to incorporate the island as a slave state (Hendrickson 1-2). The United States eventually attempted to repeatedly purchase Cuba from Spain, to no avail, as Spain knew the loss of the last of her colonies would ensure economic devastation, as well as possibly lead to the collapse of the monarchy (2-6). The only way for the U.S. to incorporate Cuba into its territories was to take it by force. This became justified after the explosion and sinking of the USS Maine in February of 1898 was attributed to Spain (although the cause behind the explosion was never confirmed), igniting the Spanish-American War. On May 1st of the same year, The U.S. Navy's Asiatic Squadron defeated the Spanish Pacific Squadron, and on August 9th Spain accepted McKinley's terms of peace. In late November, Spain agreed to cede the Philippine islands, and on December 10th the Treaty of Paris officially ended the war, transferring Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines and Guam to the United States.

Pardo Bazán was outspoken about her disdain towards a country that was once an ally. According to Henn, Pardo Bazán became annoyed at the Paris exhibition when the French referred to things associated with the United States as "Américain," prompting her "to observe with some bitterness that there were two Americas: the one that Spain had discovered and colonized, and the other that, thanks to Spanish help, gained its independence, became strong and rich, and went on to seize Spain's last colonies. After this outpouring, she noted with some rancor: 'Así paga el diablo a quien le sirve'" (421). Curiously, Hilton observes that after the loss of the colonies, Pardo Bazán expressed colonial regret: "Pardo-Bazán's immediate reaction to the 1898 tragedy was to regret that

Spain had ever been mixed up in America and to feel that Spanish imperialism, at least in its American orientation, had been nothing but a tragic mistake” (“The Americas” 142). Henn argues that nowhere in the author’s stories is there a clear expression of lament for the Spanish conquests, and in “La exangüe,” there is no clear expression of resentment towards the United States either. In fact, there is no allusion to the United States at all, nor of their presence in the Philippines. Which begs the question: Who or what represents the United States in this (his)story? While the lack of textual evidence keeps this aspect ambiguous, the omission of a representation of the United States allows the text greater possibilities outside this particular allegorical framework.

One of these possibilities is a comment on Spain’s part in her own decline. To get to that point—and this is where the vampirism in the story transcends the literal blood-letting—a closer look at the Spanish doctor needs to be taken. From Dr. Heselius in Le Fanu’s *Carmilla* (1872) to Dr. Van Helsing in Stoker’s *Dracula* (1897), the doctor began to make appearances, both as primary and secondary characters, in late 19th century vampire literature. According to Mary Hallab, “Vampires are set off against, destroyed, or sometimes saved, by the solid, sensible, reliable presence of the doctor, whose job is to know about them and to tell what we can expect from them” (170). In the first line of “La exangüe,” Dr. Sánchez del Abrojo is introduced as “el eminente doctor” (Pardo Bazán 268), but the good doctor is not what the reader is at first led to believe. As previously mentioned, in his initial descriptions of *la exangüe*, Sánchez del Abrojo describes her in relation to literature, not science, conjuring up a sensation that his telling of the story may be more aligned with fiction than reality. After her caretaker begs him to take a look at her, he diagnoses her with anemia, but instead of using medical terminology, he refers to

her blood as a “licor precioso,” poeticizing her sickness and blood itself in mercantile terms. This reference therefore further presents him as an unreliable doctor and narrator, and gives him that oh-so-erie vampire impression.

In addition to his manners of expression, the doctor’s personality also likens him to a vampire. Even though he diagnoses and saves his patient, he asks from his listeners that they do not take him for a philanthropist, since his actions were actually self-serving:

“Me complazco en saber que gracias a mí andan por la calle más de un centenar de personas que ya tenían ganado el puesto en la sacramental. Ver a la pálida, y prometerme enriquecer con ella mi colección, fue todo uno” (Pardo Bazán, “La exangüe” 269).

According to Tolliver, “In this sense, the associations with vampirism become clear: while in some simple sense he returns to the woman her life’s blood, he also appropriates it, figuratively, for himself” (“Bloodless” 292). He is a collector, so to speak, of lives; but not only that, as Tolliver points out, for he also “[...] appropriates the story of her suffering for the delectation of his listeners” (295). In this way, the actions of the vampire-like doctor within the context of the framed narration style arguably ask the reader to question male-centered discourse. He not only breaks the Hippocratic Oath by divulging her case to his listening public, but he also tells her story (i.e. Spain’s story) through an outside, male perspective. But the fact that the narration draws attention to this, coupled with the fact that the reader is left in the dark about the gender of the diegetic narrator, could be suggestive of a re-appropriation of Spain’s story within the broader context of the loss of the colonies as written in History.

The doctor goes on to say, “[L]os que nacen para tenorios se desviven por ‘una más’ en la lista. ¿Se figuran ustedes que en el fondo hay gran diferencia? No tengo veta de

tenorio, pero soy otro como él, que reúne y archiva en la memoria emociones de un género dado. ¿Amor a la Humanidad? ¡Quia! Odio al sepulturero, ¡que no es lo mismo!...” (Pardo Bazán, “La exangüe” 269). While Tolliver suggests that this reference to Don Juan serves to sexualize the collector’s fetish, it could also be suggested that this reference only further perpetuates the vampire-like qualities of the character. As José B. Monleón suggests in his article, “Vampiros y donjuanes: sobre la figura del seductor en el siglo XIX”, the vampire and Don Juan are two different literary responses to the same ideological problem: social instability generated by a contradictory and vulnerable private sphere (27-28). Just like the vampire, “Don Juan se alimenta de sus conquistas, y sin la posibilidad de repetir su cruel rito, no existirá” (25). And just like Don Juan and the vampire, doctor Sánchez del Abrojo collects women’s lives; not to exist, per se, but to maintain his position as a doctor (i.e. to keep his job, which allows him to “exist” in economic terms, or within the public sphere). But what are the implications of these appropriations on an allegorical level? For is the doctor, by essentially liberating this woman from death only to later exploit her for his own desires, not performing the very act of colonial conquest? Within this allegorical framework, the young woman represents Spain after the loss of the colonies, but what the doctor’s nationality and behaviors suggest is the Spanish empire at its peak. As such, his collection of lives would be representative of Spain’s collection of colonies, acts of imperialism that the author herself regarded with regret, as they contributed to Spain’s (i.e. *la exangüe*’s) demise.

As a result of *la exangüe*’s “colonial encounter,” she becomes a medical experiment that disables any agency she had over her own body. This dynamic is typical

in vampire fiction, as Alexandra Warwick explains in “Vampires and the Empire: Fears and Fictions of the 1890s”:

The authority of the doctor means professional control over the women, and the presence of doctors is certainly over-determined, one in Marryat’s novel, two in *Dracula* and three in *Carmilla*. The doctors legitimate the actions that are carried out, so that the terrible treatment of Lucy’s corpse becomes a medical procedure, akin to invasive surgery that violates in order to cure. (209-10)

Even though *la exangüe* does not become a vampire in the way that *Dracula*’s Lucy does, her body does become a medical procedure; three times over, actually. First, by the rebel, who although not a doctor, does initiate the experiment that drains her body of blood; second, by the doctor himself, as he diagnoses her body and then treats it; and third, albeit only in symbolic reference, by the modernist painter that declares, “Voy a hacer un estudio de la cabeza de esa señora” (Pardo Bazán, “La exangüe” 270). While the more obvious interpretation of “estudio” is a completed work of art, something tangible and legible, the word also suggests the pseudo-medical practice of phrenology, wherein the size and shape of the cranium was believed to be an indicator of an individual’s characteristics and mental abilities. If the reader is to accept the second interpretation as equally valid, then the text would be questioning the validity and effectiveness of doctors and medical practices. But as Asunción Doménech Montagut observes, while different types of doctors appear in Pardo Bazán’s fiction over the years, they generally appear as secondary characters whose practice is necessary and important: “[...] aparecen más como un estereotipo destinado a reforzar la importancia de lo patológico, por su intervención necesaria para interpretar y tratar de paliar la enfermedad, que como

personajes de primer nivel” (29-30).²¹ So perhaps the more adequate reading would be to understand the doctor’s defects in purely allegorical terms: Not as a portrayal of the actual medical profession, but as a representation of a process wherein male-centered discourse “collects” and appropriates the female voice, and at the same time, as a representation of actual political and economic exploiters during a specific historical timeframe.

The doctor’s character aside, there exists the possibility of one other vampire figure in the text: *la exangüe* herself. Tolliver suggests that while the connection between the young woman and Spain is clearly made, whether or not she is a vampire or a victim of one is not (“Bloodless” 291). The trend from the earliest of vampire tales to the most recent representations in popular culture is that the victim slowly takes on characteristics of its abuser or exploiter: pallor, frailty, sickness, subversive desires, and/or dream-like states. In the story, *la exangüe* is pale and sickly yet intriguing, frail yet a survivor, and delusional under the strains of her captivity and torture. And while she showed no explicit signs of subversive desires, the doctor hints that she was romantically interested in him: “Fue necesario, para que me la refiriese, todo el agradecimiento que la pobrecilla me cobró, no sé por qué, acompañándolo de una veneración y una confianza sin límites” (Pardo Bazán, “La exangüe” 269). Now of course, the reader cannot completely trust the doctor, but if the young woman were also to be read as a vampire, based on all of the

²¹ While Montagu does not refer specifically to vampirism as an illness in his study, *Medicina y enfermedad en las novelas de Emilia Pardo Bazán*, he pulls descriptions of sick female bodies from her large body of work that are curiously suggestive of vampirism. For example, when discussing the portrayal of typhus, he uses the following example from *Un viaje de novios* (1881): “La toca blanca hacía resaltar la verdosa palidez de su *rostro chupado*” (98; emphasis mine).

other aspects mentioned above, then how is the reader to understand her in allegorical terms? It seems that, yet again, the text is communicating that there are two Spanish nations: The Spain that the lion represents, and the decaying Spanish society at the turn of the 20th century. In this way, both the disease (vampirism; or in allegorical terms, exploitation) and its symptoms (blood-loss, frailty, etc.; or in allegorical terms, decadence) are domestic. The fact that the doctor is Madrid-based supports this reading. Whereas most vampires, vampire-like characters, or vampire accomplices (such as the doctor in Pardo Bazán's "Vampiro") tend to be foreign, fomenting the idea that "otherness" is not born within national borders, the doctor and patient's nationality suggests that the vampiric disease is domestic, and therefore a national problem.

On the surface, "La exangüe" may read as a blatant allegory with a pessimistic tone, but it is actually a complex allegory rich in possibilities, one that asks the reader to think critically not just about gender or politics, but about both, encouraging a multi-faceted approach to the text. Whereas Tolliver cogently suggests that through the narrative structure, "[Pardo Bazán] foregrounds anxieties about gender and sexuality as inextricable from representations of the colonial situation as pathology" ("Bloodless" 290), this analysis has suggested that the text not only offers the possibility of accepting the allegory for what it is, but that approaching the text historically allows for greater possibilities. And here the discussion inevitably returns to Bronfen, who addresses the importance of "reading" a body: "In other words, what is plainly visible—the beautiful feminine corpse—also stands in for something else. In so doing it fades from our sight and what we see, whenever an aesthetic representation asks us to read tropically, is what is in fact not visible there" (xi). Based on the allegorical figures conveyed through dream

sequences and hallucinations, and the introduction of the modernist painter who was “a caza de asuntos simbólicos” (“La exangüe” 270), it can be suggested that the text is calling for a figurative reading, therefore making the plainly visible (woman’s head) an aesthetic representation of something else (Spain). This is exactly why it is impossible to simply look past an allegorical reading; the woman’s “dead” body demands it.

In closing, in the same way that the Spanish girl’s veins lack that vital energy, Pardo Bazán’s “La exangüe” repeatedly makes allusions to the loss of the Philippines, therefore encouraging a political reading of the story. The narrative structure cannot, however, be ignored, as it is yet another tool Pardo Bazán employs to engage with (and even conform to) traditional representations in order to address her concerns over Spain’s current political state and the concept of female authorship. Perhaps at the end of the story, in that epilogue-style paragraph that introduces the painter and complicates the allegory, the text is conveying that while some would like to “aesthetisize” history and move on, others are still struggling with the past and how it affects the present and future. While Pardo Bazán’s story arguably explores certain factors that caused the fall of the Spanish empire while explicitly ignoring others, her story seems to address more than just the destructiveness of past political policies and strategies. By questioning the perpetuation of power in male discourse, it addresses larger-scale injustices in Spanish patriarchal society. The explicit allegory in the story calls for alternative, more complex readings that encompass political, religious, economic *and* gender concerns, the latter of which center specifically around female authorship and female-narrated historical events, albeit fictionalized ones.

“El vampiro,” Horacio Quiroga

Horacio Quiroga’s short story “El vampiro” (1927) has received much critical attention, with focuses ranging from the influences of Edgar Allan Poe (Glantz) to the story’s alignment with the Gothic (Aletta de Sylvas) and the Fantastic (Aletta de Sylvas, Duncan). Critics have also explored the connections between Quiroga’s interest in film and the story’s cinematic elements (Braham, Amato, Hernández, Speratti-Piñero, etc.), but what concerns me here is the vampire logic in the exploitation of film itself, and that of the actress more directly. This section therefore expands on previous scholarship by exploring how the treatment of technology and the cinema star in “El vampiro” represent anxieties not only over modernity and authenticity, but also over the exploitative nature of capitalism and an encroaching northern imperialism, both of which continue a trajectory of systemic abuse and violence in Latin America.

The civilization/barbarity dialectic is a common element of Quiroguian literature. By extension, his works promote the idea of a hostile Latin American landscape and a brutal history, wherein nature tends to prevail over humankind. In this story, however, the juxtaposition between civilization and barbarity is not set against the backdrop of a savage landscape, but a modern, urban one (at least for the most part). And the brutal element is not a serpent or insect (as explored in the following chapter), but the foolishness of men who exploit modern resources they do not fully comprehend to pursue greater knowledge and power at the expense of others. The vampires are, in both cases, foreign. On a broad level, this points to the idea that subversion and monstrosity are external—to the delight of both Latin American readers and critics alike—but on an allegorical level, it points to the monstrosity of foreign powers asserting dominance in

Latin America. The geographical settings are limited to Latin America and the United States—Buenos Aires and a surrounding rural area, and Hollywood, more specifically, the latter being the medium through which the rest of the world absorbs American culture. As such, this section proposes a new reading of “El vampiro,” one that considers the relationship between the imperialist power and the post-colonial nations of Latin America, given that the story’s setting, characters, and plot development suggest this relationship cannot be ignored. Accordingly, Rosales will be examined not solely as a character reminiscent of Dracula, as previous critics have done, but also as a symbol of imperialism—of foreign economic interests in Latin America that continue to determine its value and status, even more so after these nations achieved political independence from their colonizers.

Latin America, from its “discovery” in 1492 to its political and economic development over the centuries, has had an integral role in shaping global modernity. The conquest of the Americas significantly altered the international landscape—the market, the slave trade, trade routes, relations between nations, etc.—and also consolidated Spain’s place as the world’s most powerful empire. However, due to several (debated) factors, Spain’s power, wealth, and reputation would soon decline.²² In *The Inverted*

²² In “Against the Black Legend,” Roberto Fernández Retamar argues that Spain’s decline can be attributed to the conquest itself, given that Spain placed most of its interests in its colonies and not into building its national infrastructure. Meanwhile, the money that did come into the country after being traded for gold was spent unwisely. He goes on to suggest that the defeat of the bourgeoisie and the persistence of feudal structures “[...] set the power of the Counter Reformation against the process of bourgeois modernization, causing thus in Spain the retardation or regression of scientific development, essential for a bourgeois but not for a feudal society” (27). Spain’s negative reputation, he proposes, was a direct result of a global conspiracy to hide other colonial powers’ atrocities: “It was the nascent bourgeoisie of these other metropoli who created

Conquest: The Myth of Modernity and the Transatlantic Onset of Modernism, Alejandro Mejías-López argues that modernization began with the colonization of the Americas in 1492, while its second stage began with the Enlightenment (18); this second stage eradicating the importance of the first, thus erasing Spain and Latin America's roles in the process of modernity:

In the mid-eighteenth century, however, northern European discourse began to monopolize the concept of the modern, writing that date as its origin and erasing more than two centuries of modernity and coloniality. As a result, Hispanic history and cultural intellectual production were excluded from the 'modern' archive, despite having made that archive possible; as a consequence, Spanish ceased to be considered a language of knowledge and scholarship. (11)

To say that Latin America was peripheral to modernity would be to reiterate a grand Western narrative, but this narrative ignores the complexity of its nations'

(heterogeneous) developments, and their unique contributions to modernization. As Mejías-López goes on to suggest, "[T]he Latin American revolutionary wars and the liberal projects that ensued were an integral part of 'Western modernity'" (8).

Economically, some post-colonial nations, like Argentina and Cuba, experienced such vast growth that they became ideal places to emigrate to from Europe. Much of this growth, however, was not built on domestic investments or stable infrastructure, two factors that contributed to Latin America's vulnerability and continued state of exploitation by foreign markets.

Latin America has never quite been able to escape its colonial status, because after the revolutionary wars its nations were dependent on foreign capital and investments to enter the global economy; interestingly, this dependence was not, however, on Spain

the Black Legend, naturally not for the benefit of those peoples martyred by the Spanish conquest but rather to cover up their own rapacity" (19; *sic*).

(Mejías López 7). Its proximity to the United States and the United States government's imperialistic tactics throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries created a somewhat dependent, and oftentimes exploitative, relationship with its northern neighbor.²³ Another factor that contributed to its vulnerable status, and what Francis Fukuyama has deemed its "development gap" in comparison to the United States, is the differing colonial legacies that produced distinct institutions: "where Europeans went to settle in large numbers (as in British America), they brought with them their own institutions of property rights and self-government; where they ended up ruling over large indigenous slave populations (as in Spanish America), they left no similar enduring institutions for the great mass of citizens within the society" (241). Although Fukuyama argues that property rights, participation in the political system, and investments in education and infrastructure are the most crucial factors to development, and that U.S. influence was not a major contributing factor to the gap (242-44), many Latin American intellectuals at the turn of the twentieth century denounced American imperialism for the way it was shaping the political, economic, and cultural landscapes.

In part of the era of *modernismo*, which spanned from the 1880s to the late 1920s (Mejías-López 3, González 1), writers such as José Martí, José Enrique Rodó, Rubén Darío, and Horacio Quiroga criticized American culture and imperialism through various forms of narrative. Martí through poetry and essays, Darío through poetry and short

²³ In his study, "U.S. Imperialism/Hegemony and Latin American Resistance," Alan Knight suggests that because American imperialism has tended to function informally, its imperial nature has been denied, and terms such as "hegemony" have been used instead (25). He goes on to argue, "U.S. economic hegemony in Latin America has, despite fluctuations, remained relatively secure; like British hegemony in the nineteenth century, it is largely voluntaristic and noncoercive, and this makes it more durable, though no less unequal" (37).

stories, Rodó through his essay *Ariel*, and Quiroga through various articles. In “Horacio Quiroga’s Heroic Paradigm,” Todd S. Garth discusses how a compendium of articles titled *Los heroismos*, originally published in 1927, draws attention to Quiroga’s plight for a national, transcendental heroism in the face of imperialist powers and bourgeois society. He argues that, as was the case throughout Latin America, “the preponderance of Argentina’s cultural voices were far more concerned with the consolidation of national character in the face of an opposing imperialism, that of the United States” (465). But Quiroga’s critical stance towards the United States may not be exclusive to his essays, as a discussion of his short story “El vampiro” will suggest; published, coincidentally, the same year as *Los heroismos*.

More so than for his essays and political attitudes, Horacio Quiroga is recognized for his contributions to the Latin American literary canon, in addition to the tragedies that marked his personal life. He was born on December 31st, 1878 in Salto, Uruguay, to a well-off and well-known family; his father was vice-consul to Argentina, and Facundo Quiroga was an ancestor (Masotta and Lafforgue 13). His father died the following year by an accidental, self-inflicted gun-shot wound, and after his mother remarried, his beloved step-father suffered a cerebral hemorrhage, and later committed suicide by a gunshot wound to the head (13). Quiroga was an avid reader, and began to ingrain himself in literary circles, collaborating in literary journalism under the pseudonym Guillermo Eynhardt (14-15). He later became a photographer with his own laboratory, and accompanied his friend and mentor Leopoldo Lugones to Misiones in the capacity of his photographer (Sarlo 22). Still, Quiroga continued to experience tragedy after tragedy in his adult life: two of his siblings died from illnesses, he accidentally shot the brother of

a friend, killing him instantly, and his first wife and mother to his children, Ana María, died from poisoning herself (Masotta and Lafforgue 19-29).

Quiroga published articles, novels, plays and short stories, and although it is difficult to find a common thread between his early and later writings, it is clear that his works are marked by death. According to Noe Jitrik, “De numerosos cuentos de Quiroga se desprende que hay temor, un cierto miedo a las cosas, y, sobre todo, un sentimiento de vulnerabilidad que lo lleva a pintarse no vulnerable sino vulnerado, no luchando con la muerte sino muerto” (99). His works are also marked by isolation and exile: “El destierro señorea por la obra de Quiroga tanto como por su vida” (Jitrik 112). After years of writing and serving as a consul himself, he was diagnosed with stomach cancer, and in response, committed suicide by cyanide poisoning on February 19th, 1937 (Masotta and Lafforgue 44-45). In life, he was supposedly a difficult man who preferred isolation to company, and a simple and rural environment to a luxurious and modern one, but he was also taken by modern innovations and found new modes of artistic representation to be incredibly important (Masotta and Lafforgue 33). According to Beatriz Sarlo, well before film became a topic of the intellectual elites, Quiroga felt the pull of cinema from two domains, technology and the imagination: “Motion pictures offered a new setting for the literature of the fantastic; where Quiroga’s poetics was concerned, cinema allowed still unknown creative possibilities to be grounded in technological developments” (18). Although his literary characters are still marked by death and isolation later in his life, this fascination with film offered other possibilities, forms, and recurring motifs in his later works, such as the subject of this section.

“El vampiro” tells the story of a love triangle between two pseudoscientists and the specter of an actress one of them extracts from a film.²⁴ The narrator, Guillermo Grant, is a self-proclaimed “vago diletante de las ciencias” (Quiroga, “El vampiro” 21), who narrates the horrific events that haunt him from an insane asylum as he nears the end of his life: “Son estas líneas las últimas que escribo” (19). From this asylum, situated in the traditional Gothic landscape of “[aislamiento] en medio del campo” (19), Grant relays his encounters with don Guillén de Orzúa y Rosales, who initially contacts Grant via mail to inquire about an article Grant published on N¹ rays. It is not until they finally meet in person that Grant understands exactly what Rosales wants from him: To know whether or not the human imagination is capable of reproducing an image in a tangible form. Grant acknowledges the possibility, but insists that he has a sick imagination, and Rosales says the same, a clear foreshadowing of what was to come. Still, Rosales urges Grant to participate in this study based on his article, and Grant concedes.

It is upon a later invitation to Rosales’ home, an urban mansion with (at times absent) servants, where Grant meets Rosales’ first attempt at this project, a reproduction of a famous Hollywood actress: “No era una mujer, era un fantasma; el espectro sonriente, escotado y traslúcido de una mujer” (Quiroga, “El vampiro” 30). Grant is shaken at first, but Rosales’ attitude that everything was normal prompts him to act as if everything were normal. After the specter turns in for the night, Rosales explains his scientific method and his past failed attempts: “Por un desvío de la imaginación, posiblemente, corporicé algo sin nombre... De esas cosas que deben quedar para siempre

²⁴ “El vampiro” was originally published in 1927, then later appeared in the collection *Más allá* in 1935, and should not be confused with Quiroga’s 1911 story of the same title, a different story entirely.

del otro lado de la tumba [...] Era un desvarío de la imaginación. No volverá más” (33).

Later in the story, however, after Rosales is struck with the idea of killing the real actress in Hollywood in order to fully materialize the specter, there are more unexpected events and failed scientific experiments: “Arranqué la vida a la otra para animar su fantasma y ella, por toda substanciación, pone en mis manos su esqueleto” (40). At this point in the story, there are two of her—the now invisible specter and the skeleton he extracted upon his return—but soon there are three, when after Rosales figures out that if his experiments are motivated by love and not just by curiosity, he creates what he has been trying to. This of course backfires when the final version of the actress kills him, as Grant predicted she would: “¡Es un vampiro, y no tiene nada que entregarle!” (44). The servants believe Rosales’ death was due to the projector catching fire, which prompted cardiac arrest, but Grant’s impression was another: “Pero estoy seguro de que en lo más hondo de las venas no le quedaba una gota de sangre” (45).

This story, like the others in this dissertation, adheres to the Gothic mode. Typical Gothic conventions employed here include a mansion to which only a select few have access, dream-like and death-like states, murder, fire, an insane asylum²⁵ located in a rural landscape, doubles, vampires, ghosts, a villain and a suffering heroine, the sublime esthetic, a story-within-a-story narration style, and ambiguity of time and space. Still, critics tend to discuss this story in relation to *modernismo*, as if *modernismo* and Latin American Gothic production are not at all related. According to Aníbal González, “The *modernistas* were particularly interested in Poe’s psychological approach to the short

²⁵ For more on asylums in Quiroga’s literature, see *Spaces of Madness: Insane Asylums in Argentine Narrative* by Eunice Rojas.

story, in his exploration of subjectivity” (54). For them, Poe had reinvented the short story, and *modernistas* “gravitated towards whatever was perceived as new or modern” (53). It cannot be forgotten, however, that Edgar Allan Poe was a Gothic writer, and that much of the influences critics see in Quiroga’s literature are actually Gothic themes and styles, such as the double and a psychological approach to death. Clearly, Quiroga’s interest in modernity can be observed in “El vampiro” through the treatment of film, science, and quick trans-continental travel, but these themes intersect with—and are arguably sustained by—those of the Gothic mode. As Gabriela Mora suggests, there is a Gothic and Decadent vein within Latin American *modernismo*,²⁶ and it can be suggested that “El vampiro” belongs to this particular vein, principally based on the treatment of vampirism.²⁷

As critics have observed, Grant’s impression leads the reader to assume that the specter of the actress is a vampire.²⁸ While José Miguel Sardiñas proposes that “[a]quí el vampiro es una seductora diabólica” (42), Anna Reid suggests, “[l]a vampira de Quiroga

²⁶ For more on this, see the discussions on Clemente Palma in the next two chapters.

²⁷ This story can also be considered fantastic, mostly because of the use of an unreliable narrator. For one, Grant narrates from an insane asylum, suggesting he is insane at the time he narrates the story. Additionally, there are discrepancies throughout his recollection of events, and at times he even suggests that he may not be remembering things correctly. There are also, as Cynthia Duncan explains, two possible explanations for Rosales’ death at the end of the story: a fire that made him go into cardiac arrest, and death by vampirism (71).

²⁸ Even though a female vampire is present, this story is better suited to this chapter than the one specifically on the female vampire for two major reasons. Firstly, the vampirism in this story is not associated with a married or courting couple, and therefore does not seem to overtly address concerns over women’s “place” in the private or public spheres. Second, the story has less to do with the relationship between men and women than it does with, I suggest, the relationship between the foreign and the domestic.

[...] no tiene vida propia pero se mantiene al vivir de la vida de los demás” (5). These views are mostly grounded in the fact that Grant calls her a vampire outright, and goes on to support this with his take on Rosales’ death. Besides this, however, Reid has the only convincing argument that she is a vampire: “Una vez hecha su creación Don Guillén [de Orzúa y Rosales] ya no puede controlar a la vampira; ella lo controla mediante la sensualidad que emana por su mirada y él cae bajo su hechizo mortal” (3). As vampire tales have developed over time, one of the many characteristics a vampire tends to have is the ability to put a spell on his or her victims, rendering them incapable of exercising their free will to shun the vampire’s advances. But besides her allure and Grant’s account of Rosales’ death, she does not fit into the typical mold of the female vampire of the late 19th and early 20th centuries: She is not mysterious, but rather a version of a well-known actress, nor a widow or cold to the touch. Additionally, she does not act in a seductive manner, nor is she likened to the overlapping images of female monstrosity of the time, such as the serpent-woman. Important to note is that she does nothing but obey and conform to Rosales’ desires, and that it is not until Rosales attempts to extract her with love, and not simply curiosity as his motivator, that she reveals any kind of sexual (and therefore subversive) desire.

Although the specter of the actress is the character Grant associates with vampirism, Rosales is arguably the true vampire of the story. This reading is sustained in part by the fact that if the specter of the actress has some vampiric qualities, her creator must also be a vampire. Like Dr. Frankenstein, “él propone dar vida a algo inerte, de transgredir los límites entre la vida y la muerte, en fin, desafiar a Dios” (Reid 2). Reid goes on to state that Rosales is eventually destroyed by his creation, just like Dr.

Frankenstein,²⁹ but does not make the connection between him as a creator and thus as a vampire. Some critics have explored this interpretation of the story, citing his likeness to Count Dracula or the male vampire in general. For example, while Margo Glantz acknowledges that Rosales is also a vampire (“La metamorfosis” 8), Emma Susana Speratti-Piñero argues that there are clear suggestions to Murnau’s 1921 film, *Nosferatu* (1246). Likewise, Persephone Braham states that Rosales has much in common with Dracula (“Los vampiros” 132), but none of these critics explore this connection in detail, or what the greater implications of this association may be.

The association between Rosales and Dracula begins implicitly, upon Grant’s first perceptions of him: “Peinaba su cabello negrísimo con exacta raya al costado, y su mirada tranquila y casi fría expresaba la misma seguridad de sí y la misma medida de su calmo continente” (Quiroga “El vampiro” 22). Grant’s curiosity peaks, and he goes on to ask him if he is Spanish, noting his lack of a Spanish or Latin American accent, to which Rosales replies no (22). That said, his Spanish is reminiscent of an old dialect: “sin ser español porfiaba en usar giros hidalgos de lenguaje” (30). He is therefore foreign, but attempting to present himself as Hispanic.³⁰ His lack of an accent and his use of old Castilian is interesting when considering Dracula as a symbol of a bygone feudal era. As Juan Carlos Rodríguez argues, Dracula’s castle lacks servants because it is “fantasmal”

²⁹ This comes at no surprise, considering “[t]he Frankenstein pattern, in which the dream of the mad scientist produces monsters, is an unailing formula for catastrophe” (Brantlinger 34).

³⁰ At one point, the text suggests that Rosales is not his real name. When Grant sees him at the theater one day, he says, “tuve que nombrarlo dos veces para que me oyera” (26). This reference to him not recognizing his name being shouted in public is significant because it further suggests Rosales’ foreignness, and therefore makes him suspect.

("Drink From Me" 70); he has no servants because what he represents no longer exists. The association between Rosales and Dracula is therefore consolidated when he makes several allusions to his service, or lack thereof. When he extends the first dinner invitation to Grant, he warns, "Yo tenia un cocinero excelente, pero está enfermo... Pudiera también ser que faltara parte de mi servicio" (Quiroga, "El vampiro" 28). A few days later, he explains why he had stood Grant up: "¿Recuerda usted lo que le había dicho de mi servicio? Pues esta vez fui yo el enfermo" (29). This does not go unnoticed by Grant: "De nuevo el asunto del servicio" (29), he says to himself, sounding both irritated and curious.

He may be mysterious and, like Dracula, a relic of feudalism in a capitalist era, but the ways he spends his wealth is likened to the bourgeoisie of the time, and what Quiroga and various other *modernistas* despised about them. According to Garth, "As Martul Tobío and March point out, in his fiction, Quiroga consistently equates bourgeois ease, wealth and pragmatism with the abandonment of 'spiritual ideals,' 'sincerity' and 'original purity'" (457). In "El vampiro," Rosales is described as "vieux-riche," or of "old money," but his materialism and frivolous spending habits equate him more so with the bourgeoisie than the aristocracy. He states, for example, that his fortune allowed him to build a top-of-the-line laboratory, one which far exceeded his scientific capabilities (Quiroga "El vampiro" 22). Likewise, he is excessive in his décor and his cuisine: "Lo segundo que noté fué el tamaño del lujosísimo comedor, tan grande que la mesa, aun colocada en el tercio anterior del salon, parecía hallarse al fondo de éste. La mesa estaba cubierta de manjares, pero solo había tres cubiertos" (30; *sic*). While Rosales is therefore likened to Dracula, strengthening the argument that he is a vampire, he is also equated

with the Latin American elite that was buying into American cultural values, such as materialism.³¹

The effect Rosales has on both Grant and the specter of the actress also suggest he is a vampire. As previously mentioned, Reid proposes that it is Rosales who falls under the specter's spell (3), but it can alternatively be suggested that both her and Grant fall under his. In the specter's case, while she seemed more like a vacant-minded silhouette when she was born only of his curiosity, his love as the motivation behind her extraction allows her a gaze, at times even stronger than his. But this power she holds over him is grounded in his own actions, for he was the one who created her in this way. She, therefore, expresses feelings towards him that he, ultimately, wanted her to feel. He created her to love him, no matter what he may imply his true motives to be, and she is therefore under his control; until her emotions drive her to excess (or revenge?). In Grant's case, he begins to understand that he is living a double life, one in which he has no control.³² During the day, he believes he goes about his previous life's activities, but at night, he finds himself at Rosales' door, keeping company with him and the specter till sunrise: "Durante un mes continuo he acudido fielmente a cenar allá, *sin que mi voluntad haya intervenido para nada en ello*" (Quiroga, "El vampiro" 35; emphasis mine). In the

³¹ Despite his disdain for particular aspects of American culture, his views on American cinema were ambivalent: "Por una parte, reconoce su valor artístico, la creación de un lenguaje, y se fascina con las divas del star system; y, por otra, rechaza los filmes más comerciales y mediocres, la tipificación de los buenos actores, en los que ve el germen de una crisis del cine como nuevo arte" (Dámaso Martínez 16).

³² Reid has already noted the similarity between Grant and the priest seduced by the titular character in Gautier's *Clarimonde* (4), who lives one life during the day and another at night.

beginning, Rosales would invite Grant over for dinner, but now it seems that an invitation is no longer required, as he is programmed to arrive at his home at the same time every night. Another way in which both Grant and the specter seem to be under Rosales' spell is their ability to "see" where he is and what he is doing when he travels to Hollywood to kill the actress. She, for example, says to Grant, "Ha salido ya de San Diego," and later, "Está en Santa Mónica" (38). Grant's character seems even more connected to Rosales: "Cerré los ojos y vi entonces, en una visión brusca como una llamarada, un hombre que levantaba un puñal sobre una mujer dormida [...] ¡Rosales!—murmuré aterrado. Con un nuevo fulgor de centella el puñal asesino se hundió" (39). By being under Rosales' control and having his gaze dominate their own, both characters thus seem to be under his spell, and not vice versa.³³

The inspiration behind this murder is a combination of curiosity, divine destiny, and sympathy. Clearly, Rosales' drive to realize the fundamental idea behind Grant's article on N¹ rays prompts him to effectuate the actress' murder. His curiosity led him to manipulate film through processes he did not quite understand, but now faced with the fact that he had only partially realized his goal, his curiosity prompts him to cross more significant ethical (and national) borders. Rosales' scientific curiosity, however, is grounded in an acknowledgement of the divine. In justifying the crime, he says to Grant of his invention, "Responde a una finalidad casi divina, y si la frustro, ella será mi condenación ante las tumultuosas divinidades donde no cabe ningún dios pagano"

³³ As such, the relationship between Rosales and his victims is similar to that of Dracula and his victims; although in *Dracula*'s case, this works against the vampire, as Mina is able to see that Dracula is aboard a ship, therefore helping the others identify his whereabouts (333-35).

(Quiroga, “El vampiro” 37). According to Duncan, “For him, murder is a small price to pay in the name of scientific achievement, and he justifies the crime by claiming that his inspiration is divine” (70). This idea of divine inspiration, of justifying a crime by claiming it is divine, is reminiscent of political leaders’ rationales behind financially-based acts of hostility and violence towards vulnerable entities and peoples. It could even be suggested, because of the timeframe in which the story was written and Quiroga’s stance towards the United States, that this reference is evocative of the United States’ nineteenth-century expansionist attitude, Manifest Destiny. As Alan Knight explains, “Even aggressive ambitions were justified in moral terms. A U.S takeover of Central America, it was stated in 1859, would lead to immigration and development; war, ignorance, superstition, and anarchy would be replaced by ‘peace, knowledge, Christianity, and our heaven-born institutions’” (40). Rosales, like the United States, justifies the various ways in which he has violated borders between life and death, free will and coercion, and the exploitation of a vulnerable Other through religious terms. While the United States has exploited land, people, and other resources through such a justification, Rosales employs these terms to justify crossing a national border to murder a famous Hollywood actress; a symbol, ironically, of American culture.³⁴

Besides the characters themselves, vampirism can also be observed in this story in the various processes that create and motivate the characters. Take, for example, the

³⁴ Of course, this association between the vampire and the United States is not explicitly stated in the story, but rather implied through his crossing of national borders, his foreignness, his wealth and materialism, and the justification of his actions as divine. There is room for interpretation, but at the very least, it can be suggested that this story communicates anxieties surrounding the foreign and the domestic, and more specifically, anxieties surrounding the presence of foreign powers and exploitation, and how these are connected.

“love” between Rosales and the specter, which can be understood as a process that defies logic and results in a state of suffering or death, *a la* Poe. As previously mentioned, Rosales believes that creating without love was what doomed his previous versions of the actress, and he feels the same way about killing without love: “El amor no hace falta en la vida; pero es indispensable para golpear ante las puertas de la muerte. Si por amor yo hubiera matado, mi criatura palpitaría hoy de vida en el diván. Maté para crear, sin amor” (Quiroga, “El vampiro” 42). The result is not what Rosales anticipated, however. By creating her with love, she also loves him back, and this is, as Grant suggests, what will (and did) kill him: “¡Rosales!—exclamé en cuanto estuvimos un momento solos—. ¡Si conserva usted un resto de amor a la vida, destruya eso! ¡Lo va a matar a usted!” (43). Love therefore gives Rosales what he thinks he wants, but ends up destroying him in the process. The story makes a reference to Poe’s “The Oval Portrait” (27) with respect to the life that an image can potentially hold, but it can be suggested that both stories point to love being a vampiric process that leaves one of the two people involved with the life sucked out of them, metaphorically speaking.

Glantz has observed how Quiroga represents love in a similar way to Poe through the repetition of love triangles (“Poe en Quiroga” 110), but in an allegorical reading, this love triangle seems to point at a toxic political and economic relationship. If Rosales is Grant’s double, as Hernández and Glantz suggest, then Grant must also pay the price of Rosales’ actions. This could explain why he is narrating from an asylum: “Grant sucumbe también porque es el doble del ‘otro’ y participa soslayada, diluadamente, de la pasión de Rosales” (Glantz 109). Additionally, while one imagines the events, the other executes them. For example, whereas Grant poses the idea serving as the theoretical grounds to the

experiment, Rosales executes the experiment; whereas Grant dreams of killing the actress, Rosales kills her. From a political perspective, the relationship between Rosales and Grant, how they parallel each other and how they are both punished for their strange admiration and exploitation of the actress, could be suggestive of a negative stance towards both the United States and the Latin American bourgeoisie, arguably represented by Rosales and Grant, respectively. That is, while Rosales invades and exploits, Grant's complicity renders him a guilty accomplice, and he therefore faces the consequences. As such, the story can almost be read as a warning to the Argentine bourgeoisie: Foreign empires are enemies, not partners.³⁵

Besides love, viewing and extracting life from a film are the most obvious, and most critically studied, vampiric processes in the story. Quiroga's interest in cinema is evident in some of his other stories,³⁶ and in the approximately 60 film reviews he wrote during the 1920s and very early 30s, where he explores topics ranging from the typifying of film stars and film's reception among the Argentine elite, to the state of national cinema.³⁷ He also offers his opinions on how to properly view a film, and the significance and implications of film production. In "El cinematógrafo," published in *La nación* on

³⁵ As Knight suggests, Latin American economic sectors' collaboration with the United States is more common than its resistance: "True, there have been some egregious cases wherein the U.S. economic presence has excited vocal opposition: the Mexican oil expropriation of 1938 (oil being something of a special case); Arbenz's threat to United Fruit; Allende's nationalization of IT&T. Relative to the scale of U.S. interests in Latin America, however, these cases are hardly numerous or typical" (43). He goes on to argue that resistance is more readily provoked by military and political interventions, not by economic or cultural penetrations (44).

³⁶ Quiroga wrote three other short stories where film was central to the plot: "Miss Dorothy Phillips, mi esposa" (1921), "El espectro" (1921), and "El puritano" (1926). The first two, like "El vampiro," are narrated by Guillermo Grant.

³⁷ For his complete film reviews, see *Cine y literatura*.

August 2nd, 1931, he writes, “El cinematógrafo reproduce la vida en acción: por ello, se llama cinematógrafo o biógrafo, que quiere decir en griego retrato del movimiento o retrato de la vida, respectivamente” (Quiroga, *Cine* 344). The camera itself as a modern object capable of reproducing life, and of robbing souls, is an idea that Walter Benjamin explores in “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction.” In this process, he suggests that the *aura* of the original object becomes displaced. In Mariana Amato’s article, “The Art of Naturalness: Film and Its Specters in Quiroga’s Literature,” she explores Benjamin’s idea that the cinematographic aura, which belongs somewhere in between the actor (original) and her image displayed on the screen (copy), is a zone of indistinction, suggesting the following: “It is this zone of indistinction what fascinates Rosales, and the object of his obsessive research. His allusion to Poe’s ‘Oval Portrait’ points exactly to this aura constituted by the piercing of the frame that separates and unites the living world and the represented one” (85). By extension, it can be suggested that the specter Rosales extracts from the filmic image of the actress incarnates this zone between the living world and the represented one; it is a version of her that is not the original, but not yet a true copy. The specter belongs to the represented world by still being connected to her onscreen presence. When she first meets Grant, she says, “Yo lo hubiera reconocido a usted en seguida [...] Lo he visto muchas veces” (Quiroga, “El vampiro” 31). By alluding to the times Grant had watched her film in the theater—and that she had, in the process, flipped the voyeuristic gaze—she displays a possession of knowledge belonging to her former self. (That is, the filmic representation, not the film star, who would be the original.) The specter also belongs to the living world, as she interacts with Grant, Rosales, and the environment around her. But these interactions are

grounded in her commodification, for she is valuable to these male characters because she is beautiful and entertaining. She is an exotic Other—an American, ironically—whose independence and whose every move has been controlled.

In being reduced to this through Rosales' actions, she has become an occupied territory. She is the vulnerable entity that, once autonomous, became a specter of herself at the hands of a foreign entity. Curiously, the zone of indistinction she incarnates can be suggested to represent Latin America's place within the modern, global landscape. Just like how Rosales' success is dependent on his creation and commodification of the specter, modernity is dependent on Latin America's existence; yet, it is not a modern place. Latin America is the zone that separates and unites the old world and the new, the feudal and the capitalist, antiquity and the modern; essentially, the real world—where global capitalism has only been able to operate at the expense of “third world” countries, their resources, and their peoples—and the imagined one—where a capitalist society is projected as a means to freedom, progress, and equality. Although it cannot be stated that the actress represents Latin America within this political allegory, for there are no explicit references to this, it can at the very least be suggested that she conveys greater anxieties relating to the exploitative relationship between foreign and domestic powers. This is justified by the manipulation of film, which speaks to the unequal and easily manipulated process of control in a capitalist market. That is, while the actress is arguably the victim of a foreign entity (an increasingly hostile northern empire?), cinema itself would therefore be indicative of the greater global system at work allowing this exploitation to occur (capitalism). The fact that the victims in this vampiric process are an American film star and her various images only heightens the irony of the story.

In conclusion, this section has argued that the vampire logic in Horacio Quiroga's short story "El vampiro" not only conveys anxieties over modernity and authenticity, but also over capitalism and foreign presence in Latin America. The vampirism is multi-faceted, appearing in characters and the processes that either create or motivate them, such as the manipulation of film, murder, and love. In particular, it has been suggested that Rosales is indicative of economic and political exploitation, most especially that which relates to capitalism and imperialism, given his foreignness, power, wealth, divine inspiration to expand his "territory," and his exploitation of an exotic Other. The actress, on the other hand, ironically a symbol of American culture and its mainstreaming, is exploited at the hands of this foreigner. She inevitably escapes, leaving destruction and death in her path, reversing a colonial and imperial legacy that, at the time, was threatening what *modernistas* believed to be a pure Latin American spirit. As Duncan observes, "Modernism was certainly not a direct call for political action, but neither did modernist writers feel obliged to prop up the ruling class and their agenda of order and progress" (72).³⁸ Similarly, Mejías López argues, "In the battle of racial discourses, the Iberian-American countries were considered backward, lacking in material resources and economic development; as we will see, Spanish American *modernistas* retorted by writing of their northern neighbors as overtly materialistic, a culture of consumers rather than thinkers, and ultimately the antithesis of the true modern spirit" (48). Rosales is the ultimate consumer, a vampire that uses his wealth and the capital at his disposal to exploit foreign resources; most notably, a foreign body, and Grant is complicit in this. The fact

³⁸ Important to note, as it is not clear from this quote: "When I speak about modernism here, I am of course referring to the Spanish American movement" (Duncan 240).

that this body is female merits acknowledging. Garth argues that women in Quiroguian narratives are “[...] almost uniformly representatives of bourgeois values and, therefore, are denied the status of heroine. Quiroga portrays women as either weak, dependent and passive, or as primarily interested in material comforts” (454). By the end of this story, this female character proves to be an exception: She is neither weak or passive, nor is she interested in material comforts; she had them, and she burned them down. She may be a figuration of how Latin America has accepted U.S. cultural penetration—including the objectification of women in film—but she may also be a symbol of Latin American history turned on its head. It could even be suggested that, to borrow Mejías López’s term, this final vampiric process, that of Rosales’ death, is an inverted conquest; one where, although evocative of Latin America’s colonial and neocolonial struggles, also imagines an appropriation of autonomy.

Conclusions

This chapter has attempted to establish that both Emilia Pardo Bazán’s short story “La exangüe” (1899) and Horacio Quiroga’s short story “El vampiro” (1927) can be read as allegorical narratives. My approach has focused on a combination of authorial intention and textual phenomena. The former, according to Johnson, cannot be definitively known to a reader, but it “becomes knowable through the details of the text and its construction” (10). Additionally, author intention can be determined by taking into account what an author has said about a particular text, or his or her views on specific ideas, events, etc., which can inform a reading of the text. (Of course, authorial intention, even if explicit, should not always inform an analytical reading, as any statement the author may give on a text’s intention or underlying message may not be

accurate or suggestive of an exclusively correct reading.) Textual phenomena, on the other hand, shifts the focus to the text itself. Examples of textual phenomena are language, characterization, plot, point of view, and themes. This is what I believe to be the most important aspect of an allegorical reading, and what I have focused on primarily.

While “La exangüe” fits into what Johnson has described as a “strong allegory,” where the entire work conveys a clear message to be gleaned, “El vampiro” can be considered a “weak allegory,” which “involves transforming some phenomenon ‘poorly’ or distractedly, or with some or much irrelevance and indeterminacy, into a narrative structure. The result is a narrative that *evokes* allegory while at the same time withholding commitment to it and undermining confidence in it” (54). As this section has proven, “La exangüe” clearly engenders an allegory on the loss of the last of Spain’s colonies. Through vampire logic, the story communicates a rich imperial history and its decline, resulting in a huge economic and political loss that, subliminally, the text foresees as difficult for the (sick) nation to overcome. “El vampiro,” however, evokes a less historically-specific allegory. While “La exangüe” makes clear references to the loss of the colonies and draws an obvious parallel between the young woman and the Spanish nation, “El vampiro” does not directly reference the conquest, Latin America’s peripheral status, nor U.S. hegemony in Latin America. It does, however, communicate that foreign presence has a vampiric quality, and it invites a parallel between Rosales, modernity, capitalism, the United States, and exploitation.

A figurative or allegorical reading in both cases is further supported through the realist economic and political concerns that exist alongside the vampire figures and processes. In addition to the explicit mention of the loss of the colonies, “La exangüe”

conveys its message through other means. For example, Spain's unstable economy is expressed through the young woman's brother being unable to find a job that supports the pair financially. In "El vampiro," on the other hand, these concerns are represented via Rosales' foreignness and Grant's initial skepticism towards him for this reason, suggesting Rosales is a fictional rendition of foreign economic exploitation in Latin America, and also through Rosales' crossing of ethical and national borders in order to satisfy his curiosity, desires, and "divine" destiny. Both stories convey economic and political concerns, but the degrees to which they do this, the scope of their concerns, and the implications of their messages, of course, differ. Even exploitation itself, which in the Marxist sense refers to exploitation occurring within relations of production, is conveyed in various ways, and to varying degrees. Neither of the two stories adhere directly to Paniches' model, but they also do not exist completely outside of it, as the vampirism in both stories (either partially or wholly) is facilitated by conditions of capitalism. That said, the vampirism is also facilitated by colonial and imperial legacies that continue to affect all aspects of the social structure, but the economic and political levels more directly.

CHAPTER 3

BLOOD STAIN ON THE LINENS: THE VAMPIRE AS AN EXPRESSION OF THE VULNERABILITY OF THE PRIVATE SPHERE

“the death, then, of a beautiful woman is, unquestionably, the most poetical topic in the world” (Edgar Allan Poe, “The Philosophy of Composition” 19).

“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*” (Edgar Allan Poe, “The Oval Portrait” 437).

“There was a sort of scratching or flapping at the window, but I did not mind it, and as I remember no more, I suppose I must have fallen asleep” (Bram Stoker, *Dracula* 106).

Introduction

The division between public and private is the foundation of bourgeois ideology, and while the free market is the nucleus of the public sphere, the home is the symbol of the private sphere. The stability of the public sphere is dependent upon the contractual exchange of goods and services, while the stability of the private sphere is dependent upon the idea that marriage, reproduction, and the division of gender roles will ensure progress and avoid the collapse of society under capitalist modes of production. The division between the spheres should create a complimentary balance, but as José B. Monleón argues, they are two irreconcilable social structures grounded in contradiction (“Vampiros” 22). How can the public sphere, for example, be founded on the notion of equality (for now there are no servants *per se*, but paid workers, contracts, and exchanges between subjects) while the private sphere has been delegated as the feminine space which, alternatively, continues to subjugate women and define them based on male standards? For Monleón, this contradiction between the spheres is precisely what constitutes its tensions and allows for a vulnerable space to be created through which the

vampire and Don Juan can infiltrate (22). Both of these subversive tropes are different responses to the same ideological tensions. Just like the vampire, Don Juan questions patriarchal order through his relationship with women, his conduct destabilizes social equilibrium, he is nourished by his conquests, without the repetition of his cruel act he would not exist, and he enters the private sphere upon invitation by a female: “El asalto del seductor a la estabilidad social se lleva a cabo a través de la invasión de la esfera privada, de ese núcleo representativo, contradictorio y vulnerable de la nueva configuración socio-económica” (27-28). And while Monleón argues that Don Juan is Spain’s particular response to these tensions because it was not able to consolidate a strong capitalist economy or bourgeois epistemology as early on as other European nations—arguably, the same holds true for early-forming nations of Latin America—this chapter’s purpose is to insist that both Spain and Latin America employed vampire logic in order to question the stability of the private sphere through an assault on marriage, the home, and the nuclear family. Although neither of the three stories make use of a Dracula-like, explicit vampire figure, they all experiment with vampirism in a way that suggests that the marital home is not a stable, comforting place, but a place of horrors. As Amanda Raye De Wees argues, “Nineteenth-century vampire literature recast the vampire as an unhomelike force that threatened to destroy the home and all it meant. The vampire is a figure of horror because it is the Antihome” (242).

The use of vampire logic in the three stories discussed in this chapter is suggestive not only of the *fin de siècle* “mood” that expresses a disillusionment with social structures, but in particular, a disillusionment with the marital ideal, the home as a place of stability and comfort, and sexual and gender relations as fixed ideological entities. An

analysis of Emilia Pardo Bazán's "Vampiro" (1901) sheds light on both the implicit and explicit gender concerns of the text, the reconfiguration of the vampire figure within the male and female literary traditions, and the social and legal injustices with which the story dialogues. Through the manipulation of Gothic form and content, the story challenges 19th and early 20th century conceptions of power and hierarchy, the public/private divide, the law, and marriage, particularly those involving economically-vulnerable young women. Whereas this story can be suggested to function as a space where potential policy changes and alternative perceptions on the private sphere can play out, the pessimistic tone and extreme ambiguity of Clemente Palma's "La granja blanca" (1904) challenges social norms without proposing alternatives. In comparison to the other two stories discussed in this chapter, this story makes use of the vampire as a metaphor for the creative process (*a la* Poe), but it also employs the female vampire and other sexual and cultural taboos such as murder and incest to effectively challenge marital and parental ideals. Finally, a discussion into Horacio Quiroga's "El almohadón de plumas" (1917) will expose how a combination of marital and post-colonial anxieties are conveyed through the use of blood and vampire symbolism. At the heart of Gothic fiction is the antagonism between civilized and barbaric forces, but these stories' manipulation of vampire logic problematizes this and other dialectics that perpetuate the conceptualization of morality and amorality in bourgeoisie patriarchal society.

While these stories employ numerous Gothic conventions, they deviate from their predecessor, the traditional Gothic novel, by exposing a shift in the perception of the private sphere, particularly in regards to marriage. Although monstrosity and "perversity" are explored in the traditional Gothic novel, the status quo is typically maintained through

the death of the villain and the prospect of marriage for a beautiful (and presumably fertile) young couple. These stories begin where their predecessor ended, setting the plot around the marriage ceremony and/or the early stages of married life. In this way, the stories form part of what Michelle A. Massé has coined “the marital gothic:” “a later form of the genre where the husband is present at the beginning rather than the end of the story and ‘repeats’ the role of the father. The trope of the husband allows us to consider how and why the figure who was supposed to lay horror to rest has himself become the avatar of horror who strips voice, movement, property, and identity itself from the heroine” (682). She goes on to explain that, “[the wives’] social contract tenders their passivity and disavowal of public power in exchange for the love that will let them reign in the interpersonal and domestic sphere” (688). But as these stories show, neither love nor marriage live up to their expectations, and while the husbands suffer to an extent in most cases, the wives bear the brunt of the fear, sickness, and violence. In fact, all of the wives die (at least once). This is an important trend because, as Monleón suggests, the woman is the most vulnerable member of the private sphere (“Vampiros” 22). By killing her, the vampire represents a direct attack on the family, and thus exposes the cracks in the façade of these particular ideological constructions, from marriage and the nuclear family to sexual and gender relations within the private sphere.

“Vampiro,” Emilia Pardo Bazán

Like the three other stories discussed in this chapter, “Vampiro” deals with marital expectations gone awry due to a vampire-like act, although it is unique in that the relationship lacks love. Hence, the suffering experienced by the victim is not elicited by emotional turmoil, but rather by external factors. True to the Gothic tradition that

undoubtedly influenced it, “Vampiro” is a cautionary tale that serves a moral purpose, but in this case the laws of the time period in which the story was written and takes place have not quite caught up with evolving notions of morality. One of the main arguments in this section is that through the use of metaphor and ambiguous narration—or “unmarked narrative voice,” to borrow Maryellen Bieder’s practical term (140)—the text calls on society to take action in such a way that it serves as a space for potential policy changes to play out. A key factor that underlies this argument is the role that the author’s gender plays in the implicit reader’s understanding of the vampire metaphor, in addition to the influence of both the male and female literary traditions and the 19th century feminist wave, and the variety of implications these may have.

The significance and extent to which the gender and history impact the interpretation of a text has been an important topic of consideration among literary scholars. According to Joyce Tolliver, “although Pardo Bazán, like Virginia Woolf, insists on the complete irrelevance of an author’s sex to the proper evaluation of a work of fiction, many of her stories insist on the crucial importance of gender in the dynamics of narrative and culture, and in the formation of textual ideology” (“Introduction” 174). Certainly, the influence of gender in the proper evaluation of a text within the literary tradition and the influence of gender on the dynamics of narrative and culture are quite different. In this same vein, Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar argue in *No Man’s Land: The Place of the Woman Writer in the Twentieth Century* that “both women and men engendered words and works which continually sought to come to terms with, and find terms for, an ongoing battle of the sexes that was set in motion by the late nineteenth-century rise of feminism and the fall of Victorian concepts of ‘femininity’” (xiii). For this

reason, the authors go on to argue that history and gender cannot be separated from the text, and that challenging the influences and effects of history and authorship on literature “ultimately erase[s] the reality of gendered human experience” (xiv). This idea of a “gendered human experience” can be suggested as what allowed for the conceptualization of a female literary tradition outside that of the main, male-dominated literary tradition; a tradition where women’s literature was understood and validated outside the limits that the male tradition imposed upon it.

In *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*, Gilbert and Gubar express that this tradition is, however, not completely isolated from the male tradition, given that “[...] it defines itself *in relation to* the ‘main,’ male-dominated, literary culture—a distinctive history” (50). Because of this dynamic, it can be suggested that the implied division between the two is arbitrary, and that the adoption and adaptation of male discursive practices occurs as a means of literary merit, survival, and most interestingly, in many cases, coercion and subversion. As Gilbert and Gubar suggest, “That literary texts are coercive (or at least compellingly persuasive) has been one of our major observations, for just as women have been repeatedly defined by male authors, they seem in reaction to have found it necessary to act out male metaphors in their own texts, as if trying to understand their implications” (*Madwoman* xii). The adoption of male-authored metaphors by female authors clearly has tremendous implications, the most significant possibly being an alternative reality to dominant discourse, or the idea that there are numerous realities, and that male discourse and male-authored literature is therefore incredibly limited (and limiting). Moreover, when it comes to monstrous literary figures that represent society’s fears, ideological

contradictions, and vulnerabilities, the act of playing out a male-authored metaphor can be considered a double act of subversion. That is, this adoption/adaptation dynamic is suggestive of a significant power hierarchy inversion that becomes even more challenging and controversial when the metaphor consists of a figure that terrorizes the status quo.

According to Elaine Showalter, “gender is not only a question of *difference*, which assumes that the sexes are separate and equal; but of *power*, since in looking at the history of gender relations, we find sexual asymmetry, inequality, and male dominance in every known society” (4). While gender relations may be symptomatic of an unequal division of power, an important question to consider is how this power structure is represented, and at times reconfigured, in female-authored literature. If the established gender hierarchy influences the market, politics, marriage, and the law, how do female authors offer alternative possibilities to these systems and institutions? One could argue that by simply taking the pen (a phallic symbol), female authors are defiantly acting out against the established gender hierarchy and gender norms,³⁹ but by taking the pen to play out male-authored metaphors of monstrosity, commonly found in Gothic and Fantastic fiction, a multi-faceted act of subversion takes place, within which alternative forms of reality are expressed. More specific to the concerns of this dissertation, Kathy S. Davis suggests that when it comes to women writing vampires, female configurations impact the previously existing (male) configuration: “The issue which concerns me here is the relationship between vampire fiction and the vampire figure—specifically, how fiction has configured the vampire, and how the gender of those who write vampire

³⁹ See *The Madwoman in the Attic* for an in-depth study on the pen as a phallic symbol.

fiction may be observed to impact that configuration” (3). While Davis is therefore questioning how the vampire written by women may offer alternatives to the traditional vampire literary tradition, or impact it in such a way that traditional representations are forever changed, I would like to take her question further by exploring whether or not it can transcend the page by compelling the implicit reader of the time period to desire actual change in the treatment of Spanish women. In this way, an analysis of the short story “Vampiro” should shed light on both the implicit and explicit gender concerns of the text, the reconfiguration of the vampire figure within the male and female literary traditions, and the social and legal injustices with which the story dialogues.

“Vampiro” tells the tragic story of Inesiña, a devout fifteen-year-old girl, and don Fortunato Gayoso, a newly-rich and mysterious seventy-seven-year-old man.⁴⁰ Inesiña’s uncle, a priest, consented to the marriage, as she had no living parents, and her only demand was to marry in a sanctuary that, slightly off the beaten path, required the groom to be carried to the altar. According to the narrator, after the ridiculous and hilarious display, the young girl’s anxieties about her wedding night were laid to rest once realizing that the old man wanted nothing of her sexually: “El temor, más instintivo que razonado, con que fue al altar de Nuestra Señora del Plomo, se había disipado ante los dulces y paternales razonamientos del anciano marido, el cual solo pedía a la tierna esposa un poco de cariño y de calor, los incesantes cuidados que necesita la extrema vejez” (Pardo Bazán 352-53). However, what Inesiña thought would be a quick marriage

⁴⁰ While the name Inesiña conjures up images of purity and innocence, the name Fortunato Gayoso can be suggestive of having economic and parodic connotations. For one, Fortunato implies that he is either lucky or rich (or both), while Gayoso could be considered analogous to *payaso*, or clown.

that would require very little of her physically, would turn out to be her downfall. The narrator soon reveals that the supposedly innocent warmth and affection that don Fortunato asked of her had ulterior motives. With the help of an English doctor of occult practices, don Fortunato was robbing Inesiña of her youth and life; the more energy he absorbed from her every night, the healthier he became, and the closer she came to death. She died after five years, leaving Fortunato seemingly younger and healthier than before, and on the prowl for his next victim. The narrator, who portrays him- or herself as a townspeople, says that the townspeople went from being jealous of Inesiña's good fortune to appalled by the way she died; and what is more, they want justice for her: "De esta vez, o se marcha del pueblo, o la cencerrada termina en quemarle la casa y sacarle arrastrando para matarle de una paliza tremenda. ¡Estas cosas no se toleran dos veces!" (354).

This tragic but moral ending is just one of the conventions Pardo Bazán employs that follows Gothic tradition. According to Beatriz Trigo, "En este cuento, Pardo Bazán introduce los aspectos góticos tradicionales, haciendo empleo de todos los elementos patriarcales al uso: la mujer como víctima, la vanidad del vampiro y la existencia de una mansión a la que pocos tienes acceso" (124). Considering Eve Sedgwick's analysis of traditional Gothic conventions, the story-within-a-story narration style, the title, the use of chiaroscuro, civil unrest, and the treatment of religion (and especially the practices of priests) also add to the Gothic style and content of the story. But is the use of these themes and aesthetic traits a faithful representation or a parody, and what purpose might the latter serve? Clark Colahan and Alfred Rodríguez claim that Pardo Bazán, like Jane Austen before her, uses a parodic Gothic formula in order to expose that the world has

real horrors just as terrifying as the fictitious ones she writes about (403). While these critics are referring specifically to her highly-acclaimed naturalist novel *Los pazos de Ulloa*, their theory could easily be applicable to the story at hand: The vampire may not be real, but exploitation of minors at the hands of their caretakers and husbands is. Now, in the same way that it can be suggested that Emilia Pardo Bazán is part of both a long history of vampire literature and a female literary tradition of Gothic literature, many of her works can also be understood as part of a subcategory of the female Gothic tradition that began with Mary Shelley. As Rosemary Jackson observes, Mary Shelley's "writings open an alternative 'tradition' of 'female Gothic'. They fantasize a violent attack upon the symbolic order and it is no accident that so many writers of a Gothic tradition are women" (103). Different, therefore, from earlier female authors such as Anne Radcliffe, there is a particular female tradition of Gothic writing that denounces the status quo by exploring perverse and violent situations that end in turmoil, death, and hopelessness.

Although not limited to a female tradition, the vampire is a figure that directly attacks the symbolic order. Jackson, for example, views the figure in light of its actions: "In relation to the theories of Lacan previously introduced it could be claimed that the act of vampirism is the most violent and extreme attempt to negate, or reverse, the subject's insertion into the symbolic" (120). Taking a slightly different approach to the subject, José B. Monleón suggests that the vampire figure itself constitutes the attack: "El vampiro configura el asalto a los principios racionales sobre los que se basaba el estado, la sociedad y la familia del nuevo orden burgués" ("Vampiros y donjuanes" 20). This new bourgeois order can be understood in Lacanian terms as the symbolic order that began to consolidate after the collapse of feudalism and the onset of capitalism, a slow

transition that was caused by and contributed to changes on the economic, political, and ideological levels. Now, while vampires tended to either be represented as barbaric nobles (Count Dracula) or lords with bourgeoisie characteristics (Lord Ruthven)—therefore suggesting two very different “evils” by means of the same vampiric act—the vampire in “Vampiro” is in all likelihood a representation of the newly-formed and unstable Spanish bourgeoisie. Although Gayoso bears the title *don* before his name, it is directly implied that he is of new money, and that he may have made his fortune illicitly: “El sería bien ganado o mal ganado, porque esos que vuelven del otro mundo con tantísimos miles de duros, sabe Dios qué historia ocultan entre las dos tapas de la maleta” (Pardo Bazán 352). In addition to this, the narrator makes several allusions to his lavish mansion, such as “decorada y amueblada sin reparar en gastos” and “abarrota de ricos muebles y de cuanto pueden exigir la comodidad y el regalo” (352).

These descriptions are interesting on several levels. For one, they are a way in which the text juxtaposes civilization and barbarity, and by extension, dream and reality. If the title is suggestive of a rich, and therefore “civilized,” character whose barbarity lurks beneath the surface, then an active reader would be skeptical of the surroundings to which Inesiña refers to as a dream, anticipating what will inevitably become a nightmare. The lavish mansion, the expensive furniture, the peaceful environment and the promise of a comfortable future can therefore all be understood as superficial and misleading, creating suspense for an ending that will not correspond to the surroundings and the life that Inesiña thought she had. Second, these descriptions create doubt as to the credibility of the first-person narrator, for how and why would s/he have had access to this private space? And lastly, they offer some perspective on the author’s views on the bourgeoisie

lifestyle. As was previously addressed in the section on “La exangüe,” the author tended to oscillate between what she favored and where her loyalties lied, and her views were often contradictory: “Despite her feminism and modern views, she set great store on aristocratic rank, she was sympathetic to Carlism and the ‘old’ Spain, she had no faith in the democratic process, and she is not tolerant of non-Catholic religions” (Pattison 8). On the other hand, Carolyn Richardson Durham has noticed the author’s expression of “disillusionment with the nobility in her expository works” (122). Either way, we know that Pardo Bazán’s attitudes fluctuated for a variety of reasons—target audience, passing of time, etc.—but in this particular story her views are clear, and can be connected to how social mobility began to threaten the nobility’s way of life. According to Elizabeth Langland, “Generally, with the rapid increase of wealth generated by the industrial revolution, status was fluid and increasingly dependent on the manipulation of social signs” (293). This manipulation occurred mostly at the economic level, through lavish spending by members of the new bourgeoisie, who, like the vampire, appeared to be something that they were not.

In addition to the title of the story, the antagonism between aristocratic and bourgeoisie elements, and the juxtaposition of civilization and barbarity, there are several other aspects that liken this story to the vampire tales that preceded it. Firstly, the act itself tended to occur at night: “la noche sobre todo, porque era cuando necesitaba a su lado, pegado a su cuerpo, un abrigo dulce” (Pardo Bazán 353).⁴¹ The act also occurs in

⁴¹ This particular act could be considered symbolic since while not only suggestive of forms of exploitation (which will be addressed further below), the exchange between the victim and the vampire is based on energy, not blood. This vampiric act would therefore fall into what Christopher Frayling has deemed an “Unseen Force” and what José Miguel de Sardiñas has categorized as a sublimated mode, “en el que no siempre el medio por el

the bedroom, a space that lends itself to vulnerability, contradictions, and exploitation, as it is traditionally through the bedroom window that the vampire enters the home. But the most telling and most graphic description comes from Gayoso's focalized point of view of what he cruelly believes he deserves from his bride: "[...] aquel era el postrer licor generoso, caro, que compraba y que bebía para sostenerse; y si creyese que haciendo una incisión misma en el cuello de la niña y chupando la sangre en la misma vena se remozaba, sentíase capaz de realizarlo. ¿No había pagado? Pues Inés era suya" (353). Albeit hypothetical, this description is what solidifies the image of the vampire for the reader, but it also raises one important question: What does he mean when he says that she belongs to him because he has paid for her? One explanation could be that he literally paid Inesiña's uncle or the Church money in order to marry her, or that he was referring to how he changed his will in order to make her the full heiress of his fortune: "[...] la instituía heredera universal. Los berridos de los parientes, más o menos próximos, del ricachón, llegaron al cielo" (352). He had, inevitably, infuriated his relatives with this decision, so he could have also "paid" (i.e. suffered) for that in many ways. However, another explanation would not only enrich the vampirism aspect of the story, but also make sense within the historical context of the time period.

In Helena Petrovna Blavatsky's 1877 double-volume book, *Isis Unveiled*, the author explains how, based on her theosophical views, vampirism functions:⁴²

que se absorbe la fuerza o energía vital es la sangre, con su fuerte carga de primitivismo" (36).

⁴² Madame Blavatsky was a 19th century philosopher who founded the school of Theosophy. See the chapter "Vampirism: Its Phenomena Explained" for more on the vampire figure.

So long as the astral form is not entirely liberated from the body there is a liability that it may be forced by magnetic attraction to reënter it. Sometimes it will be only half-way out, when the corpse, which presents the appearance of death, is buried. In such cases the terrified astral soul violently reënters its casket; and then, one of two things happens—either the unhappy victim will writhe in the agonizing torture of suffocation, or, if he had been grossly material, he becomes a vampire. (449)

While it came to be known that many cases of people “coming back from the dead” were actually cases of premature burial, Blavatsky, a believer in pseudo-sciences, connects this phenomenon with supernatural possibilities. Pursuing a spiritual approach to explain what science could not during a time when a religious society had given way to a secular one was common in the pseudo or occult sciences of the time period. Brian Frost elaborates upon Blavatsky’s theory, stating, “When an element [spirit] breaks through the fragile veil that separates the spirit world from the world of the living it becomes manifest by drawing the necessary life-force for materialization from a suitable human source, preferably someone in a state of low resistance” (13). And who better suited to be in this powerless state than young, vulnerable Inesiña? This connection between Gayaso and Blavatsky’s theory is made plausible by the mention of the “especialista curandero inglés” that Gayaso consulted as a last resort to prolong his life (Pardo Bazán 353). Although not specifying that this character is of the theosophical school of thought, bringing an occult scientist into the story—instead of her usual medical doctor—can be considered indicative of Pardo Bazán’s knowledge of the occult, or can at least be considered an attempt to give the reading public of Gothic, Fantastic or science-fiction what they wanted. In this way, it could be suggested that the text dialogues not only with occult theories and practices of the time period, but that this explanation of Gayoso’s need for human contact and energy exchange is based on his suffering an earlier death in

which his soul could not quite disconnect itself from his body; he had therefore “paid” for his circumstances, which entitled him to Inesiña’s life force.

The final element in “Vampiro” that is commonly found in Gothic vampire literature is that of virgin blood. According to Raymond T. McNally, “Virgin blood, supposedly so favored by Elizabeth Bathory and others, was historically considered special, since it was assumed to be ‘innocent blood’” (108). The fact that virgin blood was synonymous with innocent blood could have less to do with age and more to do with the expectations and representations of women in society, given that what is considered innocent and what is considered sinful change over time, as they are dependent upon ideological factors. In *Dracula*, for example, the virgin/whore dichotomy is expressed through Lucy and Mina. Lucy is flirtatious, whimsical, and leads three different men to believe she is in love with them, and therefore becomes a licentious *femme fatale* before the men that love her are forced to kill her. Mina, on the other hand, does not falter in her devotion to God or her husband, and adheres strongly to the gender roles that bourgeois patriarchal society has created for her. So, although bitten, she is allowed to survive and produce a child. In “Vampiro,” there is no stereotyped, female juxtaposition to Inesiña’s character, but her representation clearly aligns with the gendered construction of innocence. Why, then, does she not survive, and how can we be sure she is a virgin? Several critics, among them Trigo and Durham, have made references to “Vampiro” in their studies on Pardo Bazán, but have failed to mention the connection between her vampirization and her virginity. Inesiña’s fears surrounding her wedding night provide some insight into her status, in addition to the fact that Gayoso chose her when there were so many to choose from: “¡hay tantas así desde el Sil al Avieiro!” (Pardo Bazán 352). But

what most supports the idea that she remained a virgin until the day she died lies in a gift Gayoso gave her: “La prueba que seguiría siendo *chiquilla*, eran las dos muñecas enormes, vestidas de sedas y encajes, que encontró en su tocador, muy graves, con caras de tontas, sentadas en el confidente de raso” (353; emphasis mine). Gayoso therefore lets her know that he will not take her innocence through sex, but she will not survive the marriage because the tragic ending is necessary in order to convey Pardo Bazán’s message, and by extension, to incite the reader’s anger with the situation in order to facilitate a change in how young girls are treated like objects consumed—in this case, literally—by patriarchal society.

Pardo Bazán wrote “Vampiro” during a time when both short stories and feminism were on the rise. An increase in periodicals, from 437 in 1867 to 1,347 in 1900 (McKenna 22-23), not only helps explain the rise of the short story—and why Gothic conventions such as the vampire found new representations in this genre after the decline of the Gothic novel—but it also sheds light on how the short story influenced late nineteenth-century feminist movements, and vice versa. In Pardo Bazán’s case, according to Tolliver:

[S]he most actively dedicated herself to the short story between about 1890 and 1920, a period that happens to correspond both to the height of intensity of the European feminist movements and to what Showalter has termed the ‘feminist phase’ of British and U.S. women’s writing (1985, 138). This may explain, in part, why it is that by and large, we find a more overt engagement with feminist concerns in the stories than we do in the novels. (“Introduction” 19)

Cristina Fernández Cubas (cited in McKenna) and Clara Pallejá-López (287) also acknowledge how Pardo Bazán used her short stories as a platform to express her social and political concerns, while Rhian Davies explains how hers and other progressive thinkers’ particular contributions to *La España Moderna* were heralded as especially

controversial: “Many of their works were perceived to be highly controversial since they questioned traditionally accepted ideas, such as women’s inferiority to men, their consequent restriction to domestic, reproductive roles and exclusion from political, social and intellectual spheres” (64). Even though Pardo Bazán herself was able to find success and a voice within Spanish society, becoming the first female president of the Ateneo de Madrid in 1906 (McKenna 33) and an important contributor who also helped shape *La España Moderna* (Davies 63), she ardently believed that patriarchal society’s mistreatment of women, most especially impeding them from realizing their full potential, was the main factor in Spain’s inability to progress as a nation: “Influenced by the end-of-the-century regenerationist debates taking place in Spain, Pardo Bazán believed that the only way to foster the necessary modernization and socioeconomic improvement of Spain was through women’s education and work” (López 581).

Despite these progressive opinions that she expressed through short stories and other outlets, Pardo Bazán chose her words wisely in order to appeal to her predominantly conservative, male audience.⁴³ This was no doubt a difficult task for such an outspoken person, but as McKenna suggests, “Pardo Bazán takes issue with the status quo but never completely alienates her predominantly conservative audience. She communicates her critical message by manipulating both the language and the design of narrative form” (6). Maryellen Bieder suggests that one of the ways in which Pardo Bazán achieves this manipulation of narrative form is through unmarked narrative voice, or a narrator whose gender remains ambivalent (140). This particular strategy is one in

⁴³ In 1878, only about fifteen percent of Spanish women were literate (McKenna 10).

which the reader's preexisting notions of power come into play, and which allows her message to reach a wide audience without compromising it.

Although Bieder examines different texts, the narrative strategies she describes are similar to those in "Vampiro," whose narrator is unmarked, has access to the private life of the couple, and is angered by what has happened: "Pardo Bazán's strategies in these texts share in common the tension between a surface conformity to the literary practice and ideology of her contemporaries and a submerged challenge to this practice and its ideological base" (142). In "Vampiro," this tension is most apparent in the call for action that is addressed through equal parts anger and Gothic parody, and by a voice whose gender is determined by the reader. As many of the feminist critics cited here have pointed out, Pardo Bazán explores women's abuse and exploitation in distinct ways, at times representing a triumphant female character, while other times representing a defeated one. These varying characterizations and outcomes can produce different effects on the reader, but they both convey the subjugation, exploitation and abuse women can suffer in patriarchal society. Inesiña can be understood as a defeated character: She has the life sucked out of her, and it is of crucial importance that her voice is never heard. The unmarked narrative voice, however, speaks for her and calls for action, and can therefore be understood as making Inesiña's revenge possible; Inesiña submits, the narrator does not. And while the ending implores the implicit reader to evaluate his or her moral compass, there are touches of humor that address the ridiculousness of the situation, both for entertainment and practical purposes. One prime example of this strategy is when the narrator exclaims that the image of Gayoso being carried to the altar was received with laughter: "¡Buen paso de risa!" (Pardo Bazán 352); a second is when

the narrator contrasts Gayoso's mental faculties, which were fine, with his physical body: "muy acabadito y hecho una pasa seca" (352). While therefore expressing Gayoso's appearance through humor, the text is arguably drawing a parallel between Gayoso and the traditional, conservative society that continues to allow this type of exploitation to occur. Thus, the narrator and the text manipulate form and content in a way that overt challenges to the ideological base are submerged.

More so than society simply turning a blind eye to this exploitation, it seems that society itself is at fault. According to Richardson Durham, "This grotesque short story is a gruesome metaphor for the lives that young women unquestionably surrendered due to the demands of society" (115). Similarly, Trigo suggests, "[e]l elemento fantástico ayuda a consolidar la posición marginal de la mujer, que, hablando de manera metafórica, ha estado siempre 'vampirizada' por la sociedad patriarcal" (126). But how exactly were these unrealistic and unfair demands that assured the marginalization of women propagated and implemented? According to Gilbert and Gubar, "[...] from the eighteenth century on, conduct books for ladies had proliferated, enjoining young girls to submissiveness, modesty, selflessness; reminding all women that they should be angelic" (*Madwoman* 23). While conduct books served as models for "appropriate" behavior, the laws of the time period were written to assure women's subjugation. Young girls, like the rest of the family, were obligated to follow the orders of the father, and once married, "women lost the few civil rights they had and, to add injury to insult, there was no divorce law in the modern sense of the word" (Louis 767-68).⁴⁴ In 19th century Spain,

⁴⁴ Ironically, the Spanish 1932 Divorce Act was "one of the most liberal divorce laws of the twentieth century" (Louis 783).

women could experience all different kinds of abuse from their husbands without, in most cases, being able to seek safe refuge or separation. According to the Spanish Civil Code of 1889, “The husband is obliged to protect the wife and the latter to obey the husband.” The term “obey” already sets the tone for the document, but the idea that a husband should protect his wife is inconsistent. For example, when it came to physical spousal abuse, the law implies that some cases are acceptable by stating that specific ones were not, such as “Violence exercised by the husband over the wife in order to oblige her to change her religion.” And when it came to adultery, men’s discretions were seen much more favorably: “The legitimate causes for divorce are: 1. Adultery on the part of the wife, in every case, and on the part of the husband, when public scandal or disgrace of the wife results from it.”

For the purposes of this discussion, Article 83 of the Spanish Civil Code is also relevant. The article states, “The following cannot contract marriage: 1. Males, until they have attained the full age of fourteen, and females until they have attained the full age of twelve.” While the age of consent in England at that time was sixteen years old,⁴⁵ Spain had a discrepancy in ages relating to genders, which only further exasperated female exploitation. In “Vampiro,” this seems to be what the text takes issue with most, as Inesiña is only fifteen years old when she marries the decrepit Gayoso. However, age is not the only factor in this exploitation, as young Spanish girls were vulnerable for many reasons. According to Durham, “‘Vampiro’ appears to be a tale of a vampire, but it actually tells of the consequences of educational deprivation and economic inequality”

⁴⁵ This became law under the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885, which was concerned with the many forms of exploitation of young girls, and more specifically with English girls being bought and sold in the international sex-slave trade (Smart 14).

(119). If Inesiña is understood as a representation of the larger young female demographic in rural Spain, then her vulnerability and defenselessness could be symptomatic of the systemic injustices Durham discusses. Even though her characterization follows the conduct expected of her at that time, her death suggests its subversion, and it also draws attention to the need for policy change on several levels. As Bronfen argues, in relation to the late 19th century *fin-de-siècle* aesthetic of female illness and death, “Over her dead body, cultural norms are reconfirmed or secured, whether because the sacrifice of the virtuous, innocent woman serves a social critique and transformation or because a sacrifice of the dangerous woman reestablishes an order that was momentarily suspended due to her presence” (181). While Inesina’s victimization can therefore be understood as a metaphor for social injustice, the text itself can be understood as a vehicle for social change by not only articulating social critiques, but demanding they be rectified.

In addition to the laws and codes of behavior that favored men over women, another contributing factor in Inesina’s exploitation needs to be considered: the role of the Church. According to Walter T. Pattison, “[Pardo Bazan] makes the point that Christianity, among other things, sought to emancipate woman, redeeming her from a slave-like condition. But woman’s subjection still exists and ‘the voice of the priest inculcates conjugal docility and routine, blind faith’” (66). This idea is made apparent through the actions of Inesiña’s uncle, who gave marital consent for her, and then later wed the couple. In this way, he took on the role of the father figure, and was also an accomplice to the controversial marriage by officiating it, therefore contributing two-fold to her demise. In this context, Inesiña’s desired location for the wedding is given new

meaning. Previously, it was suggested that her wanting to be married in the sanctuary because of her devotion to the Virgin not only conveyed her innocence and virginity, but also set up one of the more comical images of the story: Gayoso needing to be carried to the altar. Humor aside, this request could be suggested as a way of making the marriage and the age gap more visible, as everyone was forced to see just how physically incapable the old man really was. As such, the whole town became an accomplice, the narrator included. For this reason, the wedding scene is incredibly meaningful, as it exposes all of the contributing factors to Inesiña's exploitation: her caretaker, the Church, old men, and society itself, which stood by as spectators to the event.

There is, in addition to the more obvious connection between the vampire and the exploitation of young girls and women by patriarchal society and the Church, another form of exploitation in the story that, while peripheral, also sheds light on marital anxieties of the time period and the complexities of this particular vampire metaphor. In a similar way that Pardo Bazán's story "La exangüe" reveals how gender constructs and economic anxieties are not always mutually exclusive, "Vampiro" communicates that while marriage is an institution that favors one gender over the other, money can play a major factor in marital woes. In her study, "A Semiotics of the Public/Private Distinction," Susan Gal argues, "Empirical research shows that monetary transactions of various kinds are common in social relations that are otherwise understood as intimate interactions within families: love and money are often intertwined" (262). Given that there is no one, indivisible line between public and private, and that the "division" itself is an ideological construct mostly dependent on economic factors, it is logical that love and money (i.e. private and public exchanges), would be intertwined. If it is the free

market in capitalism that dictates the relationship between subjects, then it makes sense that economic activity can dictate the relationship between family members in the private realm as well; for if transitions between modes of production begin at the economic level for Althusser, it is these changes within capitalist modes of production that help shape the political and ideological coordinates of that same system. In “Vampiro,” it can be suggested that this relationship is conveyed negatively, given that in addition to the exploitation of women, this story communicates the connection between marriage and economic exploitation.

One way in which the story conveys this is through Inesiña’s uncle, who encouraged the young girl to marry Gayoso. Although his motives are not explained, it is most likely that he profited from the marriage given that Gayoso said he paid for Inesiña; at the very least, the priest was no longer financially responsible for her once she became a wife. According to Amanda DeWees, “The recurring theme of parental greed, ambition and tyranny is one of the more disturbing of the recurring motifs in vampire literature, and its frequency suggests that concern about the misuse of parental power was widespread” (20). In this manner, this vampire metaphor makes use of a common vampire theme in order to draw attention to women’s vulnerabilities in patriarchal society, and is therefore another way this text undermines ideological discourse while reproducing it.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ In *Cigar Smoke and Violet Water: Gendered Discourse in the Short Stories of Emilia Pardo Bazán*, Tolliver reveals one of the many complexities of gendered discourse: “In many cases, the reproduction of dominant discourses and thus of the ideology inherent in it, coexists in the same text with narrative tactics that undermine that discourse and that ideology” (38).

Another way in which the story conveys the connection between marriage and economic exploitation is through Inesiña's motives, which turn the tables slightly on the relationship between victim and exploiter. Clearly, the vampire in this story is Gayoso and everything he represents, but Inesiña is all too ready for her husband to die; or at least that is what the narrator is implying through her focalization: "Era un oficio piadoso, era un papel de enfermera y de hija el que le tocaba desempeñar por algún tiempo..., acaso por muy poco" (Pardo Bazán 353). Although the reader is never able to gain direct access to Inesiña's thoughts, she is an empathetic character whose ignorance and economic circumstances seem to obscure her ideas as to what a marriage should be. Still, should she have known better? According to Trigo, "El elemento monetario que en un principio se veía como liberación para la joven esposa—si el viejo muriera pronto, como se esperaba, Inesiña sería una viuda joven y rica—se convierte en esclavitud y posteriormente muerte" (124). Inesiña's prospect of freedom secured her tragic fate, and irony again comes to the forefront of this particular case, showing how economic gain should not be the sole motive in the prospect of marriage.⁴⁷ Conversely, this situation also reveals how economic incentives can lure vulnerable women into exploitative circumstances, and therefore Inesiña's "exploitative" actions could actually be understood as justifiable—if not completely necessary—for they were the only way of escaping the cycle of female objectivity (from father to husband) inherent in bourgeois patriarchal society.

⁴⁷ For more on the use of irony, parody, and narrative patterns in Pardo Bazán, see "Writing as a Woman or Writing as a Man? The Shifting Perspective Toward Women in Three Short Stories by Emilia Pardo Bazán" by William M. Sherzer.

Interestingly enough, Inesiña's body is also described in monetary terms. First, when the narrator, through a focalized point of view of the husband, refers to Inesiña's blood as "caro" (Pardo Bazán 353), and second, when the narrator, expressing his or her own point of view—which apparently corresponds to that of the town as well—describes Inesiña's sick body as "[...] un organismo que había regalado a otro su *capital*" (354; emphasis mine). Now, associating a vampiric act with economic exploitation was nothing new, as was discussed in the previous chapters, but the fact that these descriptions are referring to a victim of patriarchal society and the discourses it foments, metaphorically speaking, is particularly interesting when considering the appropriation of male-authored metaphors by female authors and their implications. The narrative perspective from which the story is told simply adds another layer to this dually-subversive metaphor by employing an ambiguously-gendered voice to re-appropriate economic discourse to feminine spaces: the domestic realm and the female body.⁴⁸

In this discussion of Emilia Pardo Bazán's short story "Vampiro," I have argued that the use of an unmarked narrative voice and a parodic Gothic formula draw attention to female subjugation in patriarchal society. By extension, it is clear that the adoption of male-authored metaphors by female authors can have tremendous implications, both within the literary tradition and beyond. Through the adaption of Gothic form and content, the text offers alternative possibilities to late 19th and early 20th century

⁴⁸ "Vampiro" is not the sole example of a text by Pardo Bazán that does this. For example, Mar Soria López discusses how the short story "El mundo" draws attention to the "re-appropriation of free-market discourse to the domestic realm" (587), and she concludes by stating that both Emilia Pardo Bazán and Benito Pérez Galdos' "texts demonstrate that homes, studied as spaces, undermine traditional ideologies that sought to bar from the domestic space any and all capitalist transactions, any contestation of the structures of power, or any non-hegemonic constructions of identity and place" (590).

conceptualizations of power and gender hierarchy, the public/private divide, the law, and of course, marriage. Specifically, the vampire metaphor draws attention to two forms of exploitation, gendered and economic, within the institution of marriage (as conceived within a Spanish 19th century ideological framework), while the ending solidifies the text as a space for potential policy changes to play out (even if the age of consent for girls to have sex or marry was not raised to sixteen until 2013 in Spain (Borgen)). According to Massé, “In the ‘real’ world of the frame, the woman can exist only in relation to another—usually as a daughter in the beginning and as a bride at the end. Insofar as we credit the shift as progress, we rewrite the Gothic and assure its repetition” (681). Without a doubt, “Vampiro” dialogues with the Gothic tradition that assured women’s place as objects in relation to male subjects, but instead of conforming to the status quo it urges a rethinking of the idea of progress by breaking the cycle of female objectification. As the narrator threatens, “¡Estas cosas no se toleran dos veces!”

“La granja blanca,” Clemente Palma

“La granja blanca” begins with a dedication to Emilia Pardo Bazán, which not only draws attention to the dialogue between Spanish and Latin American writers, but also anticipates the similarities between this story and so many of Pardo Bazán’s that were crafted in accordance with the Gothic vein of *fin de siècle* literature. Like Pardo Bazán, Palma employed formal and thematic Gothic conventions to engage an evolving and expanding modern readership, but also to address societal concerns, unpopular attitudes, and national anxieties that would have otherwise been censored. Scholarly criticism has focused on the subversive nature of Palma’s writing in general, and this story in particular. For instance, Gabriela Mora, who has published extensively on Palma, argues

that the unifying theme of *Cuentos malévolos*, the collection to which this story pertains, is that Evil is what propels the characters to behave in a way that causes harm to others (*Clemente Palma* 83). She also argues that Palma explores sexuality (female sexual desire and behavior in particular) to challenge cultural values and dichotomies (“*Cuentos malévolos*” 385). Other critics have noted how the text expresses anxieties related to existence and mortality through a pessimistic attitude grounded in a disillusionment with modern-day science, which was unable to fill the void created by the transition from a religious to a secular society. Nancy Kason suggests that this attitude, present in Hispanic modernism in general, reflects the changing philosophical currents dominated by Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, Tolstoy and others, which influenced the literary and spiritual crisis of the late 19th century (*Breaking Traditions* 33). This section will consider these evolving psychological and social attitudes to expand upon the discussion of vampirism, the Gothic, and the perceptions of Evil and morality in Palma’s story. In particular, I will discuss how the destruction of the home, the death of the wife and daughter, and the supposed pact with the Devil reveal anxieties relating to marriage and the stability of the nuclear family.

Clemente Palma (1872-1946) was a Peruvian writer of fiction, founder of a literary journal, cultural magazine, and newspaper, a library curator, Peruvian consul to Barcelona, and a doctor of letters (1897) and law (1899) (Oviedo, “Clemente Palma” 325-26). Since his writings were so difficult to obtain outside the country, he was practically unknown outside of Peru until the late 20th century, but even within his native country, he had always been overshadowed by the literary career of his famous father, Ricardo Palma. Clemente was also a political activist. A fervent supporter of Augusto B.

Leguia during his second term as president of Perú (1919-1930), he became politically persecuted by Luis Sánchez Cerro, the colonel who overthrew Leguia, and eventually exiled to Chile in 1932, where he continued to work in journalism (Kason 19). In 1933, Sánchez Cerro was assassinated, so Palma returned to Peru, living the rest of his life generally out of the political spotlight. His most well-known literary contributions are two collections of short stories, *Cuentos malévolos* (1904, 1913) and *Historietas malignas* (1925), a novella, *Mors ex vita* (1918), and a science-fiction novel, *XYZ* (1934).⁴⁹ He also wrote political and sociological essays, poetry, literary theory and criticism, and a text on Peruvian culture (Kason 21). “La granja blanca” appeared in the first and second editions of *Cuentos malévolos*, but was originally published in 1900 under the title “¿Ensueño o realidad?” in *El Ateneo*, a Lima-based literary magazine (Sardiñas 38).

“La granja blanca” is not your traditional vampire story. Aligned with the Gothic tendencies found in Poe and Hoffman, the story treats illness and the creative process as a form of vampirism, but it also creates such a heightened sense of ambiguity that not only are the categories of vampire and victim blurred, but so are those of dream and reality, truth and illusion. The story is divided into ten sections that span over two years, and begins with a philosophical debate into whether humans exist as autonomous beings or solely in the dreams of someone else (“*algún eterno durmiente*”), and as such, predates Borges’ “Las ruinas circulares” by several decades. This theme is addressed in the last section as well, thus framing the narrative, which explains why studies on this story have

⁴⁹ Mora writes that the second edition of *Cuentos malévolos* appeared in 1913 (“Decadencia” 193), but it is important to note that several libraries have dated their copies as published in 1912.

focused so much attention on dreams, mental states, and questions of life and death. Besides offering a glimpse into the mind of the narrator-protagonist, the first section also introduces an important character, the narrator's philosophy teacher, who serves as a witness to the unsettling events that later transpire. From the second section on, the story revolves around the narrator and Cordelia, his cousin and fiancée. The two share an intense romance, and appear to live only for each other. (This is an important distinction from the other two stories discussed in this chapter, where love is either non-existent or comes into question.)

One month before their nuptials, Cordelia becomes ill with malaria and dies. Notice of her death causes the narrator to faint and hit his head, prompting a possible delusion where Cordelia returns to health and they marry. They move into *la granja blanca* together, an old mansion belonging to his family that had gone uninhabited for over two centuries. There they live a simple, isolated, happy life, and one year after marrying they have a daughter whose name is also Cordelia. Cordelia resumes her love of painting, and begins a portrait of her husband. Unhappy with the outcome, he repeatedly asks her to paint a self-portrait, to which she reluctantly but ultimately agrees, upon one condition: that she be left alone in his office to paint without interruption, and that he promise not to spy on her. He agrees, but after seeing her leave her painting sessions pale, tired, and melancholy, he becomes worried about her, so he peers through the lock, finding her silently sobbing and pleading to an invisible someone. He confesses what he has done and although Cordelia is disheartened he broke his promise, she finishes a portrait that somehow seems more life-like than Cordelia herself. One night, he awakens and finds her gone. He rides on horseback through the woods only to come up empty. He returns home

and still finds her missing, and although he takes solace in the presence of his daughter and dog, he is again assaulted by feelings of terror when he finds that her self-portrait is blank except for two teardrops that replace the area where her eyes once were. After coming to terms with her death and the possibility of these past two years never having occurred, his teacher arrives with proof that Cordelia had in fact died two years prior. The narrator brings little Cordelia out to prove him wrong, but the teacher, upon understanding that the narrator would one day make his daughter his wife, throws the baby out a window to her death. The teacher leaves, impelling the narrator to set fire to their home with their deaf servant still inside, and rides away alone.

The ending leaves the reader with many questions: Did Cordelia actually survive malaria or is the narrator suffering from a delusion? Was there a rupture in time and space that would have allowed for these events to have taken place? Or, as several critics suggest, did Cordelia and the narrator make a pact with the Devil that would let her fulfill her marital and maternal duties for an allotted amount of time? Did the couple have a child together who may or may not have been another version of Cordelia? And, finally, was Cordelia a vampire or a victim? The story, ambiguous and dream-like, offers numerous possibilities but no solutions. In the end, the reader is left perplexed and abandoned by a text that refuses to fit into prescribed literary categories or resolve any of the multiple questions it proposes.

With their Gothic tropes, uncanny effects, and explicit exploration of perversity and abnormality, Palma's stories stand out among Latin American *fin de siècle* narratives, which were already rejecting bourgeoisie literary and social norms in their own right. According to Mora, "Conocido es el hecho de que la modernidad y los modernos

reaccionaron contra lo que el burgués veía como progreso, y exaltaron en sus obras no sólo el derroche improductivo (como se vio el exceso de ornamentación en el estilo, por ejemplo), sino que arremetieron contra ese tipo ideal, exaltando figuras o actividades consideradas indeseables” (“La granja” 62-63). And as Pollack suggests, “Of major import to the *modernista* writer was the atmosphere and affective charge of the narration. It was of the utmost importance to create a feeling, not just relate events” (19). Through Palma’s narration, the reader gets a sense that the world is unbalanced, cruel, unjust, and isolating. Suffering is imminent, and rules and limits are made to be broken. By the end of “La granja blanca,” the status quo is completely obliterated, breaking from earlier vampire and Gothic tales’ concern with morality, disease, race and so forth, and exposing concerns related to the growing sense of pessimism and isolation that mark social uneasiness and existential crisis in the early to mid-20th century. This story is thus capable of eliciting universal fears about mortality and the afterlife far outside the scope of the other stories discussed in this chapter, but it also elicits fear in a similar way by creating an unsettling atmosphere confined almost entirely to the home. In this case, therefore, the supposed symbol of stability in bourgeoisie ideology fosters isolation and decay—moral, spiritual, and physical. In this way, the home functions not solely as a microcosm for society—in which humans were finding themselves more and more isolated in an industrial world and a growing global market—but also as a symbol of palpable social and marital anxieties.

Having the story take place almost entirely in a home is not typical of a *modernista* writer, and Palma followed this tendency by setting his stories in exotic places (Kason, *Breaking Traditions* 70). With the exception of his story “Leyenda de haschich,”

however, Palma's vampire stories are set in the home. As Jose B. Monleón states, the vampire is an assault on reason, the state, society, and the nuclear family ("Vampiros" 20), the latter of which Palma stresses through his connection between vampirism and the marital home. In "La granja blanca," the narrator burns their home to the ground, leaving not a trace of their marriage or family, which suggests the fragility of the nuclear family and the social structures that oversee and legitimate such institutions. Can marriages survive under a new moral code, outside the confines of a religious society? And is the marital ideal even possible, or simply illusory? The isolation of the home in the story's rural setting, parallel to the isolation experienced by the narrator-protagonist during the final scenes, is crucial here. According to Kason, "This isolation becomes significant when the palace burns, effectively eliminating all traces of Cordelia's life after death. Since the old housekeeper perished in the fire, the only witness who could testify that Cordelia had returned from the dead is the philosophy professor, whose murder of the child assures his silence" ("Elements of the Fantastic" 118). The narrator assures the destruction of the home, which not only disrupts social norms through its symbolic significance, but also questions spiritual norms and the division between life and the afterlife by creating an image of an inferno on Earth. Through a combination of imagery, terror, and the narrator's attitude, the story conveys that previous conceptions of truth, morality, and social norms are just as unstable or illusory as this marriage and Cordelia herself.

By having the events take place within an old, abandoned home, the story embraces the Gothic and marital Gothic head-on. Its destruction through fire is in line with Decadent and naturalist tendencies—reminiscent of the tragic final scene in the naturalist

novel *Sin rumbo*—while the fire dissolving all traces of the last two years, leaving the reader in a state of unresolvable doubt, aligns the story with the fantastic mode.

According to Pollack, “Many of [Palma’s] stories, besides being *modernista* in intent, are also, technically speaking, fantastic. Palma, in fact, is said to be the initiator of the fantastic short story in Peru” (165).⁵⁰ Like several of the other stories considered in this dissertation, and in congruence with the critically pervasive theory that literary currents appeared later and at times simultaneously in Latin America, whereas most of Europe produced them sequentially, “La granja blanca” is neither a Gothic, Fantastic, Decadent, or *modernista* story, but all of the above. Some *modernista* traits ring true to Decadence as well, such as a propensity towards the exploration of “cultos prohibidos” (Mora, “La granja blanca” 63). This *fin de siècle* “mood” could also be the reason earlier Gothic tendencies were rescued, as their aesthetic and thematic elements allowed authors to express their disillusionment indirectly. According to Oviedo, Palma explored this more than other Latin American modernist and Decadent authors: “El gusto por el satanismo, el esoterismo y los tipos de psicología anormal, algo ingenuos a ratos, distingue al joven Palma y explica la notoriedad que sus relatos le ganaron en su tiempo: ese escalofrío de horror y esa sombría delectación criminal, casi nunca habían aparecido en la literatura peruana” (“Clemente Palma” 326). Mora, also focusing on the horror cultivated in Palma’s stories, suggests, “Las bellas muertas del peruano y los rasgos vampíricos que les otorga, lo acercan tanto al gótico cultivado por Poe, como al decadentismo baudelarieano” (“La sexualidad femenina” 26). Without a doubt, “La granja blanca” is

⁵⁰ Harry Belevan originally stated this in *Antología del cuento fantástico peruano*, p. xlvii.

the most Gothic of the three stories discussed in this chapter, mostly because of the sublime aesthetic cultivated throughout the story, but also because of the subversive themes and explicit images and descriptions that appear throughout.

Both the Gothic and the fantastic are products of the aesthetic of the sublime. According to Edmund Burke, the sublime arises as a response to terror: “Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of the sublime” (27). In “La granja blanca,” several elements incite an awe-inspiring terror in the reader. From the descriptions of the characters’ fears to the howling of wolves and the crunching of the baby’s bones in their teeth after her fall from the window, these descriptions provoke intense sensations of fear that, although disrupted by the reader’s realization of her safety, nonetheless cultivate the unsettling, dramatic, and ambiguous tone of the story. One of the most compelling examples of this is when the professor first sees the baby: “¡Cordelia!—exclamó el anciano, lívido de terror. Sus ojos querían salirse de las órbitas y sus manos se agitaban temblorosas” (Palma 131). The reader does not yet understand the full extent of the professor’s fear, since the idea that the baby is actually Cordelia reborn surfaces in the following pages, but the description of his physical responses to terror creates suspense and fear-induced sublimity. One of the other main contributors to the story’s sublime aesthetic is the descriptions of sounds, the most explicit and powerful being those that surround the death of little Cordelia: “Los lobos olieron la sangre y poco á poco fueron acercándose, se colaron por la verja, y hasta que vino el alba no estuve oyendo otra cosa que gruñidos sordos y trituraciones de huesos entre los dientes agudos y formidables de las bestias feroces” (134). The death of an

innocent baby, not to mention the gruesome nature of it, is disturbing in its own right, but her father's reaction goes beyond the imaginable. For the implicit reader, an intended fear of the wolves is quickly displaced by a fear of the narrator: Why did he not recover his daughter's body before the wolves attacked it? How could his reaction be so indifferent? Has he experienced a complete breakdown from the loss of his family, or alternatively, from the knowledge that it was never real to begin with?

The once intensely loving narrator-protagonist is no more, an evolution, as abrupt as it may be, foreshadowed by a comment he made to himself after Cordelia vanished: "Me parecía que surgía dentro de mí un nuevo individuo, que se había roto la identidad de mi yo con la superposición ó intromisión de una nueva personalidad" (Palma 126). Mora has probed into this division of the Self in several of her studies on Palma, and noted that this division would help explain how the narrator became a killer and a father possibly capable of incest ("La granja blanca" 67). She also suggests that this division, in conjunction with the importance of sexuality, is present in much of Palma's narratives, and that they are both inherent to Latin American modernism ("La sexualidad femenina" 26). After the brutal death of his daughter, the narrator returns to contemplating his mental state: "Me parecía estar vacío, sin el más insignificante de los elementos que constituyen la personalidad humana" (Palma 133). After Cordelia's (second?) death, the narrator reflects upon the division of Self that he experiences, but the death of his daughter leaves him empty, devoid of Self. In light of the pessimistic attitude of the time, these ideas conjure up notions of the relationship (or lack thereof) between God and Man. Monleón suggests that as religious doctrine waned, the notion of duality became internalized (*Specter* 72). In this way, duality is so intrinsic to the human mind, that the

duality of Self replaces the duality God/Man in a secular society. Experiencing a split in personality would thus make sense after the loss of his wife—a time when one would turn to God but is now forced to turn inward—but the fact that he feels empty after the death of his daughter suggests an inability to comprehend oneself or one's place in society. If God and mind are no longer stable categories in a secular society, how does this affect the conception of marriage, morality, and Good and Evil? It seems this story expresses that the pessimistic social attitude experienced at the turn of the century has extended itself not only to the level of the private individual, but also to the private space of the home.

The home is where the narrator experiences his lapse into insanity and murder, two major themes of Gothic literature. The formal and thematic Gothic elements in “La granja blanca,” however, far exceed these two. In addition to the cultivation of the sublime aesthetic, this story conceives a savage and nocturnal landscape, a dream-like atmosphere, ambiguity of time, and framed narration in the form of a letter.⁵¹ Thematically speaking, the story contains a villain, a suffering heroine, death-like states, the use of doubles, fire, occult beliefs, necrophilia, incest, and vampirism. Most of these were discussed above, although at times within the scope of other literary modes or currents, or in different terms (i.e. little Cordelia could be Cordelia's double, while transmigration of her soul speaks to occult beliefs). The ones most pertinent to this discussion are those relating to the private sphere, most especially sexuality, marriage,

⁵¹ For Eve Sedgwick, a framed narration in the form of a found manuscript is a principal formal element of Gothic literature. There is no found manuscript in “La granja blanca,” but the letter the professor delivers to the narrator from Cordelia serves an identical purpose in that it provides important information that will affect the outcome of the story.

and the nuclear family. Mora focuses on the sexual nature of the text, specifically on the subversive exploration of necrophilia and female sexual desire and how these question norms and rupture dichotomies, but the text can also be read as an expression of marital and familial anxieties. In fact, several key factors speak more to the ideological complexities surrounding marriage, family and the private sphere than to the subversive nature and significance of female sexual desire in relation to female autonomy. Such examples include the timeframe (before and after the marriage), the burning of the home (symbol of the nuclear family), and the death of the baby (representation of the dissolution of the nuclear family and the end of lineage), not to mention the possibility of incest between the narrator and his daughter. This not only shows the Gothic inclination towards exploring sexual and cultural taboos, but also points to both familial and marital anxieties over the makeup of the nuclear family. (Tellingly, the daughter is not permitted to live.)

While this story aligns with Massé's concept of the "marital gothic," it is unique because it blurs the line between victim and aggressor through its use of the vampire. Cordelia, unlike typical representations of female vampires by male authors, is a loving wife and a doting mother, therefore fully realizing both her socially assigned and natural roles as a woman in patriarchal society. At the same time, she exhibits traits that liken her to Dracula's wives and Carmilla: beautiful, manipulative, shares possible ties to the Devil, and sensual. Mora compares her to Ligeia, a dark-haired vampire: "En cambio, la delicada hermosura rubia de la Cordelia del peruano parece más afín a la belleza prerrafaelista preferida en la época decadentista y a su más serena disposición (111). Ambas, no obstante, tienen un rasgo de 'extrañeza'" ("La granja blanca" 65). This idea

merits a moment of reflection: Yes, Cordelia is described as tall, thin, pale, and blond, but these are contrasted with the sensual nature of her other characteristics: “[...] el rojo encendido de sus labios y el brillo febril de sus ojos pardos” (Palma 110). Cordelia, like Ligeia, acts in the capacity of a teacher to her husband, but her expertise is in line with expected gender roles: “Yo era su maestro de matemáticas y de filosofía, y ella me enseñaba la música y el dibujo” (110). This, in addition to their love story being told exclusively through a male perspective, is significant, because Cordelia’s thoughts on their marriage are never known first-hand by the reader. Moreover, the narrator creates an image of a woman who is entirely devoted to him, and who seems, before marriage, to be the perfect wife, besides one troublesome attribute: “[...] sentía la impresión de que Cordelia estaba muerta, de que Cordelia era incorpórea” (Palma 111). Her vampire-like qualities are somewhat present before they marry, but only once he marries her does he realize she is more complicated and secretive than what he had once believed.

As previously mentioned, Cordelia confesses that she needs time alone to paint, she lies to her husband in regards to her emotional state, and she leaves him in the middle of the night, but she also shows a sexual appetite he was not expecting: “Fue una demencia, una sed insaciable, que crecía en progresión alarmante y extraña. Fué un delirio divino y satánico, fué un vampirismo ideal y carnal, que tenía de la amable y pródiga piedad de una diosa y de los diabólicos ardores de una alquimia infernal” (Palma 123; *sic*). This passage highlights a break from the virgin/whore dichotomy more commonly associated with male-authored literature of the time, but it may also speak to the marital anxieties Amanda De Wees discusses in her dissertation: “A bride’s innocent appearance may only conceal a tendency to sexual predation or a character unfit for motherhood, probably the

two cardinal sins for nineteenth-century females” (87). Granted, the narrator seems more pleased than horrified by his wife’s sexual nature, but representing Cordelia in this manner could be a way of expressing latent fears about female sexuality, women’s capacity for motherhood, and men’s ability to satisfy women (especially sexually-experienced women, as will be further explored in the following chapter). Cordelia is described as incredibly tender and motherly towards little Cordelia, but it should not be forgotten that at one point, according to both the narrator and the professor, little Cordelia *becomes* her mother. This means one of two things: Either Cordelia gave birth to herself, or, through the practice of soul transmigration, she vanished to inhabit her daughter’s body. The latter, more so than the former, suggests that Cordelia is responsible for her daughter’s death, in addition to being responsible for the extreme suffering/mental breakdown her husband experiences. According to De Wees, “The traditional curse of the vampire to prey on those whom it held most dear, and to whom it bore the greatest responsibility, reveals the familial nature of the horrors at the heart of the myth” (DeWees 21). Thus, Cordelia not only challenges traditional representations of female vampires, she also confirms many of the marital and familial anxieties inherent to the literary vampire tradition.

Another way “La granja blanca” represents Cordelia as both a victim and an aggressor is through her relationship with painting. There are multiple instances when the narrator mentions that Cordelia reminds him of the young girl in the painting, *La resurrección de la hija de Jairo*: “la protagonista era una niña de cabellos descoloridos, cuyo rostro era muy semejante al de Cordelia, así como la expresión de asombro al despertar del pesado sueño de la muerte” (Palma 110). Critics have noted the significance

of this reference, for it connects Cordelia to death while anticipating her resurrection after becoming ill with malaria,⁵² but the idea that Cordelia could actually be *la hija de Jairo* has not been considered. Here lies an interesting connection between “La granja” and Le Fanú’s *Carmilla*. According to the latter’s narrator, Laura, the title character looks very much like the woman in a painting in her home dated almost two centuries prior, but not until Carmilla’s true motives are revealed to the narrator does she understand that they are in fact the same woman. Similarly, this painting provides some insight into how Cordelia was able to die and resurrect twice in the story, once as herself and the next time as her daughter: She is a vampire. A particular description, besides her red lips and affinity for resurrection, support this idea. Upon learning that it was their second wedding anniversary, “El cuerpo de Cordelia se estremeció, y á través de las ropas sentí en mis manos como si una corriente de sangre helada hubiera pasado por las venas de mi esposa” (Palma 121; *sic*). Like so many European and Hispanic vampires that preceded her, Cordelia’s body is cold, associating her with death, but this description also suggests that Cordelia herself is terrified of what is happening to her.

While her coldness and possible affinity for resurrection supports the idea that Cordelia is a vampire, her physical and emotional reaction to her self-portrait suggest that she may actually be a victim of vampirism. According to Miguel Sardiñas, “La descripción del efecto que provoca a Cordelia su dedicación a la pintura coincide con la de la víctima de un vampiro: sale pálida, agotada, melancólica” (39). Like the painter’s wife in Poe’s “The Oval Portrait,” the painting process depletes Cordelia and is a factor

⁵² According to Kason, for example, “This painting is a repeated leitmotif with symbolic importance, for it foreshadows the resurrection of Cordelia” (94).

in her death. Moreover, this process shares another aspect with Poe's stories that speak to the negative effects of intense relationships: "'Berenice,' 'Morella' and 'Ligeia' are all love stories in which one lover attempts too much, trying to subsume the other, to control her total being" (Twitchell, "Poe's 'The Oval Portrait'" 390). In all of these cases, the female characters are the ones most severely affected by their husbands' actions, represented symbolically through the act of painting in "The Oval." In "La granja blanca," it is the narrator's idea for Cordelia to draw herself, therefore deferring the blame so that her suffering appears self-inflicted, or at least disassociating himself from it. Whereas some of Cordelia's vampire traits are not directly linked to marital woes or familial anxieties, the fact that she reluctantly agrees to paint herself at her husband's request ties the narrator to the vampiric act, which in turn is tied to the dissolution of their marriage. Not all critics agree on the nature of their relationship, however. According to Mora, "Cordelia retorna impulsada por el amor. Es claro en el texto que para la pareja del peruano el 'amor es vida' (111), y fuera de él no se transparentan emociones negativas como en Poe" ("La granja blanca" 65). Alternatively, I would suggest that the narrator is unreliable; neither the narration of events nor the descriptions of his wife's reactions can be fully trusted. Moreover, and as is the case with many of Poe's stories, the problem is not so much with love but with marriage (which has mostly gone unnoticed). These couples tend to live isolated lives in secluded homes, and when the vampire element enters the household, the cracks in their marriage begin to show. Kason argues that the destruction of *la granja blanca* is precipitated by Cordelia's self-portrait, and I would add that if this is one of the two or three main vampire aspects of the story, then it becomes

clear that in line with tradition, the vampire in this story is a direct attack on marriage and the nuclear family.

Following this discussion into Cordelia's traits as both vampire and victim, an important question remains: What does the story suggest by portraying her in such a way? A likely answer to this question lies in the fact that there is no moral to the story. Now, all the stories in this chapter question morality, but by blurring the lines between vampire and victim without resolving major questions, this story does not appear to take a clear stance on Good versus Evil. While this is typical of Decadence and the pessimistic attitude it so often projects, this is rare for a vampire story at the turn of the century because it defies conventions. Also, the feelings it cultivates are left to linger, furthering the reader's doubts and uncertainties towards the events narrated, and, ultimately, the underlying message of the story. According to Mora, the unifying theme of *Cuentos malévolos* is that Evil is indispensable in life because it pushes people to action ("La granja blanca" 62), but from where does this Evil derive? From the Devil or from within Man himself? Numerous critics have argued that there are suggestions of a pact between both Cordelia and the Devil and the narrator and the Devil. Pollack proposes, "Cordelia, rather than using a living source as a bridge to this astral plane as does Lodoiska [the female character in 'Mors ex vita'], materializes by making a pact with the Devil. She refers to a *plazo fatal* which would indicate her having entered into a demonic pact" (123). The narrator's mention of Cordelia whispering to an invisible someone, possibly pleading for more time, supports this idea, as does Cordelia's terrified reaction to her finding out the date (i.e. her time here is up). In the narrator's case, Cordelia's sickness pushes him to both curse and plead with the powers that be: "Las maldiciones y las

súplicas, las blasfemias y las oraciones se sucedían en mis labios, demandando la salud de mi Cordelia. Díramela Dios ó el Diablo, poco me importaba. Yo lo que quería era la salud de Cordelia. La habría comprado con mi alma, mi vida y mi fortuna; habría hecho lo más inmundo y lo más criminal” (Palma 115). Thus, the Devil could have granted him his wish, resulting in his mental breakdown and demise, but the pessimistic attitude and ambiguity suggest otherwise.

Whereas within a feudal and Catholic society, the Devil was blamed for humans’ immorality or deadly behavior, within a secular society regulated by capitalist modes of production, the blame has turned inward: “Si en esa sociedad regulada aparece el Mal no será por culpa de Dios o el Diablo, sino por alguna maldad humana: siempre concebible precisamente por la *animalidad* que existe en el hombre” (Rodríguez, “Drink From Me” 62). This new conception of the source of Evil notwithstanding, Palma’s story is distinct from early Gothic narrative production: Whereas earlier Gothic fiction tended to employ the vampire figure to support a moral code, Palma is an example of those who sought to question or even dismantle the moral code embedded within bourgeoisie ideology. Mora argues that the text warns of the dangers of conceiving Good and Evil as fixed concepts that do not change over time (‘*Los Cuentos malévolos*’ 386). This is relevant when rethinking bourgeoisie gender, marital and familial norms at the turn of the century. Even though the text appears to place Man and Woman in fixed gender categories, the vampire logic questions these and other dichotomies, such as Good and Evil, morality and amorality, dream and reality, truth and illusion, death and life. As a result, the social institutions that rely on these dichotomies to function, particularly marriage and the nuclear family, are challenged.

The intention of this section was to both expand upon prior scholarly criticism and explore previously unconsidered aspects of “La granja blanca” in order to draw attention to how the story represents ideological anxieties related to the private sphere. Through an exploration of *fin de siècle* literary concerns and techniques, the fantastic mode, and Gothic conventions, with particular attention paid to vampire logic, it can be suggested that the story not only challenges bourgeoisie norms on a broad scale, but also challenges those relating to marriage and the nuclear family in particular. The story expresses a disillusionment with medicine and science through Cordelia’s first death and her subsequent unexplained resurrections, it questions the stability of marriage through Cordelia’s second death, the narrator’s suffering, and the destruction of the family home, and it challenges the concepts of the nuclear family and sexual taboos through Cordelia’s sensuality, the narrator’s incestuous desires, and the death of little Cordelia. The dark side of progress is thus expressed through a complete rupture with the status quo and the fundamental dichotomies inherent to bourgeoisie ideology, but the story’s dialogue with (and distance from) the literary vampire tradition is the key to unraveling the story’s attitude towards marriage, family, love, and sex. It appears that the marital ideal is as illusory as Cordelia herself, and by extension, so is the fixed nature of a new moral code outside the confines of a religious society.

“El almohadón de plumas,” Horacio Quiroga

“El almohadón de plumas” is arguably the most well-known vampire story ever written in Latin America. This is partly due to the fact that the collection to which it belongs, *Cuentos de amor, de locura y de muerte* (1917), is a fundamental component of the early twentieth-century Latin American literary canon, but also because the story is

exceptionally well-written—critics overwhelmingly agree on this point—achieving the unity of effect the author himself describes as so crucial to short-story writing in his “Decálogo del perfecto cuentista”.⁵³ “El almohadón” is a typical Gothic vampire tale in the sense that a female victim is repeatedly attacked at night in her bed, to the point of dying from loss of blood, but it is atypical for two major reasons. First, marriage is not represented as a unifying or sacred institution, and second, it is the male instead of the female character whose morality remains in question. The story therefore seems comparable to the other two stories discussed in this chapter, and thus exposes a curious trend in Hispanic vampire literature that separates it from its English and German counterparts, with *Dracula* being just one example. However, this story is unique in that while it expresses the usual marital anxieties, it also channels cultural and historical anxieties particular to Latin America through its representation of a distinctive and hostile Nature. The antagonism between civilized and barbaric forces that underlies all Gothic fiction is multi-faceted in this story, as human and Nature alternate between victim and aggressor, self and Other.

“El almohadón de plumas” tells the story of a recently married couple’s odd romance that ends with the wife’s tragic death. The story commences with the line, “*Su luna de miel fue un largo escalofrío*” (55; emphasis mine), and the next few paragraphs continue this trend of juxtaposing words associated with love and those associated with terror: desires and shudders, heavenly and severity, tender and hostile. This juxtaposition extends to, or is an extension of, the protagonists. Described as blond, angelic and shy by

⁵³ Quiroga suggests that in order to execute this, “No empieces a escribir sin saber desde la primera palabra adónde vas” (30).

the narrator, Alicia is also loving and desires her husband Jordán's attention, which is in stark contrast to his coldness, indifference to her suffering, and hostility; the latter of which, although not explicitly, is alluded to throughout the story. Similar to Palma's Cordelia, Alicia suffers from a serious disease, in this case anemia, which takes a quick and destructive toll on her body. As her sickness progresses, the doctors seem perplexed: "Había allí delante de ellos una vida que se acababa, desangrándose día a día, hora a hora, sin saber absolutamente cómo" (Quiroga, *Cuentos de amor* 57). The head doctor tells Jordán to prepare for the worst, to which he replies, "¡Sólo eso me faltaba!" (57). Quite upset yet suspiciously distant, Jordán paces the halls of their cold, white mansion and never appears to eat or rest. Meanwhile, Alicia is no longer able to leave her bed, progressing from hallucinations and night terrors to continuously whispering delusions in an unconscious state. After her death, the maid sees specks of blood on Alicia's pillow. First alarmed and then later horrified when she finds it too heavy to lift, she hands it over to Jordan, who discovers the cause of Alicia's death: a large, viscous insect that had been consuming her blood while she lay in her bed. According to the narrator, these types of parasites tend to feed off birds, but they prefer human blood, and it is not entirely rare to find them hiding in feather pillows, even reaching enormous proportions under certain conditions. This attempt at a rational explanation of the events brings the sensation of horror full-circle, but it also creates a problem for the reader, who finds the last paragraph to read more like a tale or legend than a scientific certainty, and who is unwilling to accept that Jordán is completely innocent.

There is some critical debate as to whether this story falls in line with the fantastic mode. Alfredo Veiravé, for one, focuses on the effect of the rational explanation: "La

verosimilitud del hecho narrado, merced a esta observación objetiva que el autor intercala en su pieza literaria, trasciende los límites de lo fantástico para inquietar al lector más allá de la probable ficción” (210). Rafael Olea Franco suggests that the explanation is not only possible, but that it should be taken at face value. In its original form—first published in *Caras y caretas* in 1907—“El almohadón de plumas” was longer and focused more on Alicia’s pillow, which Olea Franco believes to have been an error because it reduces the shock at the end of the story. He insists that Quiroga intended to fix this in its later adaptation, but was not able to do so to the point of reinforcing the reader’s doubt. However, it is the final paragraph, which is the same in both versions, that Olea Franco argues as the main factor in displacing the text from the fantastic to the uncanny, within the parameters of Todorov’s theory: “[...] al proporcionar una explicación precisa de los hechos, es decir, una casualidad racional, determina y cierra el ambiguo espectro de la realidad sugerido previamente por el texto” (484). Although offering a rational explanation at the end of the story would, in many cases, cause the dissolution of the fantastic, for that to be true in this particular case, the reader would have to accept the mysterious bug as the definitive cause of Alicia’s death. However, as Graciela Aletta de Sylvas observes, this certainty remains in question because of Jordán’s character: “Si bien la explicación final que brinda el narrador aparentemente elimina toda duda sobre la causa de la muerte, sin embargo el cuento queda abierto a la interpretación del lector, a saber, el carácter del marido, verdadero vampiro objetivado en el monstruo” (283). While a contemporary reader may question the rational explanation supported by scientific rhetoric, whereas a reader from the early 1900s may not have, it can be

suggested that Jordán's characterization is an integral part to this text being considered fantastic in either case.

Besides adhering to the fantastic, this story clearly conforms to its precursor as well, the Gothic mode. As discussed throughout this study, vampire logic in Hispanic fictions appears in "rationalist" narratives from the Enlightenment era to post-modern literature and film, but its Gothic character is, for obvious reasons, of particular importance to this study. For one, it supports the idea that the vampire was used as a tool to address political, economic and ideological tensions through fear, suspense, horror, abjection, and sublimity. Additionally, drawing attention to Gothic conventions in these texts showcases that not only was the Gothic employed as a literary mode in Latin America and Spain, but that it was adapted to national and regional anxieties regarding morality and amorality, civilization and barbarity, and self and Other. Although the title of the story may not indicate it, the reader soon comes face to face with all the familiar Gothic trappings: a male villain, a suffering heroine, a large home to which only a select few have access, death and death-like states, mental illness and delusions, nightmares, monsters, blood, and suspense. Unlike the traditional Gothic, however, this story clearly correlates to Massé's theory on the marital Gothic, given Alicia does not suffer in a strange place, but in her own home, as strange as it may seem to her: "The home, Freud's *heimlich*, is both starting point and destination, the house of the father repeated in the house of the husband—the house the heroine thought was supposed to be her own" (Massé 690). In the traditional Gothic novel that ends in marriage, it is assumed that the newlyweds go on to have a joyous and reproductive life, but what this and other marital

Gothic stories expose is a shift in the perception of the private sphere and all that it encompasses—the nuclear family, marital relations, and the home.

In this story, Alicia's home does not only *not* belong to her, it is an extension of Jordán himself. According to José E. Etcheverry, "La casa que habitan parece ser una prolongación de esa frialdad de Jordán" (216). In this way, what is traditionally, within the framework of bourgeoisie ideology, a sacred symbol of family, marriage, stability, and morality, becomes a paradoxically *unheimlich* place. Alicia's home, in the image of her marriage, becomes a prison to which there is no escape but death. Furthermore, in a way that questions traditional gender roles, the home becomes associated with the male character: cold instead of inviting, hostile instead of safe and comforting. This analogy between character and setting is relevant to the reading of the vampire, as Aletta de Sylvas mentions above, and as Etcheverry perfectly sums up: "El monstruo del almohadón, con todo su impacto horrendo, es menos repugnante que el vampiro humano, el verdadero protagonista del cuento" (218). In light of Jordán's behavior, the descriptive similarities he shares with the marital home, and the clear juxtaposition to his "angelic" wife, it is not surprising that critics have suggested that Jordán is the real vampire in the story, but the vampire symbolism in the story is more involved than what has been noted in scholarly criticism to date. For example, the more Jordán comes into contact with Alicia, the sicker she becomes. During a scene in their garden, the only scene that takes place outside the walls of their home, he moves her to tears by caressing her, and soon after she becomes so ill that she never again leaves her bed. Hence, his touch was what confined her to the home, and accordingly, her illness can be attributed to him. Moreover, the house responds to other people's movements in a different way than it does to

Jordán's. The narrator describes the house as follows: "Al cruzar de una pieza a otra, los pasos hallaban eco en toda la casa, como si un largo abandono hubiera sensibilizado su resonancia" (Quiroga, *Cuentos de amor* 55). Such a description manifests the Gothic character of the home, with its strange noises, sublime quality, and human-like characteristics, but it also serves to showcase how Alicia feels like an Other in her own home, as these descriptions are focalized from her point of view. After Alicia takes ill, the narrator describes Jordán's movements around the home in the following way: "Paseábase sin cesar de un extremo a otro, con incasable obstinación. La alfombra ahogaba sus pasos" (56). Thus, while Alicia's footsteps echo throughout the house, Jordán's are silent. Since vampires' bodies are corporeal spirits, he is therefore able to move about silently and undetected. Moreover, this detail suggests that while Alicia struggles to feel at ease in her new home, it is as if the house is not solely an extension of Jordán, but rather that they are one in the same.

The analogy between Jordán and the home continues as the story progresses, which prompts the reader to question whether the home (or what the home represents) is the actual vampire. Although the insect is the physical cause of Alicia's death, it seems that both Jordán and the home are terrorizing the young bride. The scene that occurs directly after her hallucinations begin is quite telling:

La joven, con los ojos desmesuradamente abiertos, no hacía sino mirar la alfombra a uno y otro lado del respaldo de la cama. Una noche quedó de repente con los ojos fijos. Al rato abrió la boca para gritar, y sus narices y labios se perlaron de sudor. "¡Jordán! ¡Jordán!" clamó, rígida de espanto, sin dejar de mirar la alfombra. Jordán corrió al dormitorio, y al verlo aparecer Alicia lanzó un alarido de horror. (Quiroga, *Cuentos de amor* 56)

Her first scream, Jordán's name, can be interpreted two ways: Either she is screaming *for* him, or she is screaming *because* of him, the latter suggesting that something on the rug

resembles Jordán and thus terrifies her. As her hallucinations progress, Etcheverry observes that the spider Alicia sees on the rug is in the exact same position as her husband, its eyes fixed on her just like Jordán's are described a few paragraphs prior. In this way, Jordán and the spider also seem to be one and the same, which begs the question: Is Alicia actually hallucinating, or is she being terrorized by her husband? Upon his entrance into the bedroom, Alicia screams again and looks back and forth between her husband and the rug, making it apparent that she is not only terrified to see him, but that she is perplexed as to how he could be in two places at once. The environment Alicia once felt to be isolating and cold is now terrorizing her, damaging both her mental and physical states, a progression foreshadowed by the fact that it had always appeared to her as a "palacio encantado" (55). Here it also becomes clear that Jordán, like his vampire predecessors, has a strong connection to the animal world and can manipulate his surroundings and the minds of his victims.

Jordán's behavior appears to motivate the vampire logic in the story, thus fusing him with the physical cause of Alicia's death: the insect. As previously mentioned, the more he upsets her, either through nightmares and hallucinations or his unexpected acts of tenderness, the quicker Alicia approaches her death. But he also shares, in a similar way to the spider, a spatial significance with the insect. As José Miguel Sardiñas observes, "El animal, oculto en el lecho, precisamente en el espacio donde debería poder realizarse el amor del joven matrimonio, ocupa simbólicamente el lugar del esposo, y por ello se convierte en su equivalente, en una especie de metáfora del marido" (41). Thus, for Miguel Sardiñas, the vampire metaphor is consolidated in the placement of the insect. While vampire tales tend to have sexual undertones, most of them function as cautionary

responses to female sexual desire. Here, however, it is the insect, a stand-in for her husband, that leaves her exhausted and bleeding; her loss of innocence, materialized in the blood stains on their bed, later becomes fully articulated by her death. Now, while the fact that she dies in her marital bed is probably the most symbolic way the story suggests that Jordán is the real vampire, it also suggests that marriage itself is complicit in her death.

Within bourgeoisie ideology, marriage ensures order, morality, and the division of public and private through the the perpetuation of gender norms, the nuclear family, and legitimate reproduction. The bourgeoisie home, as a symbol of stability, love, and warmth (and as the counterpart to the free market) allows for society to function within these ideological coordinates. For this reason, when it is said that traditional Gothic and vampire tales maintain the status quo, it is because although the plots permit the exploration of “perversity,” the vampires or villains are eventually killed, preserving the ideal of marriage and the nuclear family. In a sense, Alicia represents this ideal. She is described as an angelic and devoted wife, who even as a child had dreams of her future married life. This changes, however, upon settling into her new home: “Había concluido, no obstante por echar un velo sobre sus antiguos sueños, y aún vivía dormida en la casa hostil, sin querer pensar en nada hasta que llegaba su marido” (Quiroga, *Cuentos de amor* 55). Thus, while representing the ideal, she also represents its rupture by comprehending how unrealistic it is. So if the dreams of a happy housewife soon give way to nightmares (quite literally), the home has turned into an *unheimlich* place, and the husband figure into a vampire figure, what does this story communicate about marriage? Until this point, critics have suggested that Jordán is the real vampire, but no one has focused on the

implications of this reading, at least not knowingly. Case in point: According to Margo Glantz, the terror experienced by the reader comes to fruition when she realizes that what happens to this couple could happen to anyone:

Y se produce al darnos conciencia de su cercanía, al insinuarse como símbolo inmediato, posible siempre, en todas las circunstancias y en todos los lugares, adherido a cualquier pareja, presente en la descomposición diaria, en la rutina aparente, en cualquier situación anodina y grisácea, sin el brillo perfecto del terror que causa lo sobrenatural, aunque éste vaya implicado en el territorio del relato. (“Poe en Quiroga” 107-08).

Now, while Glantz is actually referring to the insect and how although the events have an air of the supernatural, the ending reveals that the events are plausible, her words in fact resonate with the broader message of the text: That reality is much harsher than the ideal, and any couple’s marriage is susceptible to demise. To support this, let us turn to Žižek, who suggests that any horror narrative can be understood by eliminating the horror element, revealing what the story is really about. In this case, if the insect in the feather pillow were to be removed, then the story would be about an unfulfilling and at times hostile marriage. The monster, in this way, serves to distract from the real terror at hand, and the underlying message of the text.

According to Glantz, “‘El almohadón de plumas’ es un caso típico de vampirismo con la presencia de monstruo y todo, pero antes que nada es el planteamiento de esa sinrazón, de ese caos que debe legitimarse en frases explicativas y serenas, en el que dos seres humanos se aman, pero se destruyen” (“Poe en Quiroga” 104). One reading of the text is that love is the symbolic cause of both of their suffering (*a la Poe*), but Jordán’s connection to the monsters and the home implies that her cause of death (and by extension, the suffering) is more one-sided. If the reader were to accept that Jordán and the home are one in the same, and that he and the monstrous insects are one and the same,

then Jordán must be more hostile than both Alicia and the narrator are willing to admit. In fact, it seems like there is very little delineation between Jordán, the setting, and the vampire logic in the story. For this reason, while the narrator uses telling words like “frío” and “duro” to describe Jordán’s character, words like “hostil,” “severidad,” and “rígido,” used to describe the home and their marriage, can be transposed to Jordán. Hence, these words indicate that there is a perceivable threat or violent behavior exhibited in their marriage, beyond mere tension or indifference.

As previously mentioned, vampire tales have strong sexual undertones, some much more explicit than others, but in “El almohadón” it appears that any sexual symbolism is tied to hostility and violence. Besides the uncontrollable sobs elicited by his touch and the constant lurking by her bedside that precipitates screams and nightmares, there are other not-so-subtle ways that the text communicates sexual abuse. The first line of the story, for example, takes on a more complex and sinister meaning within this perspective. More so than Jordán not giving Alicia the attention she needs, the first line suggests that he is giving her attention that she does not want. While the word “honeymoon” traditionally evokes ideas of joy and tenderness, describing it as “un largo escalofrío” implies that it was traumatic, with “largo” accentuating this idea of trauma, as it is a common understanding that happy times pass by quickly and traumatic ones seem to endure for an eternity. Of course, the most telling sign is the blood stains on their sheets. Olea Franco suggests that Alicia’s sickness impedes any sexual relations between them: “[...] la enfermedad de Alicia se desencadena y desarrolla en su cama de recién casada, lo cual simbolizaría incluso la carencia de relaciones sexuales entre los esposos” (478). However, if the insect-vampire is “penetrating” her, and if the insect represents Jordán,

then the text is suggesting that sexual relations are in fact taking place between them.

And given the time that has elapsed since their honeymoon, the blood is not suggestive of her loss of virginity, but rather, continuous sexual violence. According to Kathy S. Davis:

Numerous critics have established a connection between the penetration of the vampire bite and sexual penetration, and this conflation lends the typical male vampire/female victim scenario a disturbing element of rape. Perhaps even more troubling is the evidence that from the male authors' perspectives, when it comes to being bitten by vampires, women are always already "asking for it," and as victims they possess a disturbing degree of sympathy for their attackers. (10)

In "El almohadón," Alicia oscillates between sympathy and fear towards her attacker—the garden scene, in which she collapses on him, being a prime example of her sympathy and love for him. As Glantz observes, Alicia is represented as complicit in her abuse: "Jordán, el del 'Almohadón,' es frío con su mujer y ésta lo teme, pero acepta complacida como la misma Madeline su destino, entregando su cuello al verdugo monstruoso que la desangra" ("Poe en Quiroga" 104). Now, although the text is clearly not sympathizing with rape, nor does it overtly address the matter, there is a certain degree of sympathy with the vampires: They both live, and they both evoke a sense of sublimity instead of raw fear or disgust.

Until now, the vampire-insect has only been studied in passing and almost exclusively as a metaphor for Jordán, with the exception of Miguel Sardiñas' argument that the story falls into Frayling's archetype of the folkloric vampire (42). The folkloric element of the story does not begin and end with the mention of the insect, but with the way the rational explanation is proposed, as if the narrator were reciting a legend rooted in folklore. And it is the combination of these elements—vampirism, Nature, folklore, legend—that is the most curious aspect of the story. Numerous critics have argued that Quiroga's narrative production, as a whole, expresses the antagonism between Man and

Nature, the latter determining the destiny of the former. For example, Glantz proposes that Quiroga's protagonists' "[...] relación con la naturaleza lo enfrenta a la muerte inexorable" ("Poe in Quiroga" 112). However destructive it may be, in *Antología crítica del cuento hispanoamericano: del romanticismo al criollismo (1830-1920)* José Miguel Oviedo suggests that Nature is a sacred environment in Quiroga's stories, while civilization is a symbol of inauthenticity and deceit (395). With regards to "El almohadón" specifically, Manuel Antonio Arango argues that this conflict between Man and Nature is what perpetuates the sensation of horror: "Para aumentar el sentido de horror, Quiroga termina con unas cortas líneas mostrando la lucha del hombre con la naturaleza y los sufrimientos de los habitantes de este medio en el cual el ser humano está dominado por la naturaleza implacable" (188). All this considered, the connection between vampire logic in the story and the significance of the insect as a representation of a sacred yet destructive Nature has yet to be made.

The insect in "El almohadón" can be read as a symbol for Jordán's animal nature within, but also as a sign of the arbitrary line between the past and present. According to John Kraniauskas, "In its articulation of a desire for eternal life, the vampire also embodies a form of de-differentiated temporality in which the distinction between the past (dead) and present (living) has been blurred. Similarly, vampires represent the inhuman in the human, the ever-present threat of animalisation that sacrifice is supposed to keep at bay" (144). Since the vampire is originally a figure of mythology and folklore, the story's folkloric attributes convey a desire to return to an authentic form. In "The Vampire in Native American and Mesoamerican Lore," James E. Doan explains how even though there were no obvious vampires in pre-Conquest North American and

Mesoamerican belief systems, figures such as sorcerers and witches with vampiric traits abound: the Nahua people's *tlahuelpuchi*, the Aztec and Mayan Mictlantecuhtli, the Aztec Cihuacoatl and Cihuatateo, and, of course, the chupacabra (137-144). Regardless of the lack of traditional vampire figures (creatures that return from the dead to suck the blood of the living, in some cases resulting in more vampires) in Latin American folklore, mythology was a significant component of pre-Conquest belief systems, and the revival of the myth, an abundant theme in all romantic literatures, is unique in the Latin American case as well. According to Ana María Morales, even though Latin American peoples were forcefully required to alter their belief systems and adopt Christianity, they are continuously unable to forget their roots; their history was stifled, but not forgotten (163). It is not strange, then, that a Latin American vampire story would represent a vampire that deviates from typical European and American representations and that, at the same time, expresses the ambiguous line between past (dead) and present (living).

The insect is more than a symbol of Jordán's animal nature within, for it is also symbolic of the plurality of past "barbarities" that are hidden within Latin America's particular modernity. The text, therefore, communicates that the past is not dead, but rather that it lurks beneath the surface (or the pillow, in this case). And this is not an entirely negative trait. As discussed above, Nature in Quiroga's stories, although destructive, is more powerful and authentic than Man, and is representative of Latin America's originality. From the first chronicles of the New World, Latin America's unique and savage landscape has been emphasized, so it is not surprising that Latin American authors would shape their own perceptions of (monstrous) identity on external perspectives of their Otherness. As a colonized Other, they needed to mediate their own

legitimacy within the dominant narratives by creating a somewhat confluent narrative; that is, a narrative that made sense within intellectual circles and the existing social structures. For Roberto González Echevarría, as he states in *Myth and Archive: A Theory of Latin American Narrative*, this all began with the Archive: “The Archive, then, is like Borges’ study. It stands for writing, for literature, for an accumulation of texts that is no mere heap, but an *arché*, a relentless memory that disassembles the fictions of myth, literature and even history” (23). He goes on to suggest that “[t]he Archive is, first of all, a repository for the legal documents wherein the origins of Latin American history are contained, as well as a specifically Hispanic institution created at the same time as the New World was being settled” (29). But through its chief concern of uniqueness, in its search for identity, can the Archive direct us to a beginning, to Latin America’s origin before its “discovery” in 1492? The origin is, of course, elusive, but what could be more evocative of a quest for legitimacy, to be understood as more than simply a colonized subject or Other, than a search for identity through literature?

González Echevarría argues that there are three “masterstories” in the Latin American Archive: Legal discourse (the colonial period), scientific discourse (the 19th century), and anthropological discourse (the 20th century) (172). These masterstories are generated in relation to hegemonic discourses, and thus represent the need to legitimate narrative by basing it on prevailing concepts of truth, documentation, and classification. These truths belonged exclusively to Western discourse, and therefore the New World was understood and written exclusively through a Western perspective: “If the first discoverers and settlers appropriated Latin America by means of legal discourse, these new conquistadors did so with the aid of scientific discourse, which allowed them to

name again (as if for the first time) the flora and fauna of the New World” (96). The fact that these “new conquistadors” (19th century scientists and travelers) re-named Latin American flora and fauna is particularly interesting with respect to Quiroga’s story, as the story itself seems to negate such an act. The fact that the narrator neglects to mention the species of insect is significant because it not only breaks with these “new conquistadors” narratives, but it also recalls the tendency in colonial chronicles to describe never-before-seen flora and fauna as monstrous: “En cinco días, en cinco noches, había el monstruo vaciado a Alicia” (Quiroga, *Cuentos de amor* 58). Moreover, by using such “horrific” terms, the text clearly distances itself from scientific discourse (the masterstory to which the text would pertain, chronologically speaking), and thus questions the legitimacy of the scientific explanation itself. Myth and science are therefore at odds in this text, as neither one nor the other explanation satisfies the reader by eliminating all ambiguousness and doubt, but they are also, together, fundamental components of archival fictions.

While “El almohadón de plumas” does not directly belong to the Archive that begins with *Los pasos perdidos* and reaches its apogee with *Cien años de soledad*, as these require the presence of an inner historian and an unfinished manuscript (González Echevarría 22), it does encompass the following archival traits: dialogue with literary forms, mythic qualities, and an expression of the search for uniqueness and an origin. Important to note is the fact that, within González Echevarría’s theory, an archival fiction does not have to be a novel—Latin American narrative that can illuminate upon the concept that Latin America is a cultural, social, and politically unique space from which to narrate can be considered an archival fiction (10). González Echevarría insists that

archival fictions dialogue with literary forms: legal records, scientific documents, and ethnographies, respectively. In addition to dialoguing with scientific discourse, “El almohadón” could dialogue with an actual case of vampirism that appears in a Buenos Aires newspaper two years after Quiroga’s birth.⁵⁴ Contrary to this case, however, Quiroga’s story reads more like an oral account, a mythic quality that not only lends itself to the effect of horror (like that of certain fables with underlying morals), but also to a search for the origins represented in archival fictions. The mythic qualities also transcend the narrative structure and the conflictive relationship between science and myth, the most prominent (and most pertinent to this chapter) being the vampire myth, the myth of the happy marriage, and the myth of biblical Paradise. The first should be obvious at this point, while the second and the third require a brief explanation. It can be suggested that this story breaks with the bourgeoisie myth of the happy marriage through Alicia’s death and the insect’s appearance (representative of all the “horrors” of marriage). With regards to the myth of biblical Paradise, the garden scene is crucial—reminiscent of Adam and Eve, but reversed. Here, Alicia is not the cause of humankind’s suffering. Instead, Jordán is the cause of Alicia’s suffering. As such, and as an extension of breaking with the happy

⁵⁴ In “Un caso raro,” a young girl became very thin, withdrawn, sad, and pale, and after seeing many doctors, the case was solved when the handmaiden found a blood-sucking bug in her pillow. Several critics were disheartened to find out that Quiroga’s tale may have been based on a real case, but Veiravé argues that although there are similarities, Quiroga’s story (or at least the way he tells the story) is completely original: “[...] desde el principio el lector es conducido hacia el horror final a través de una larga y delicadísima urdimbre netamente quiroguiana” (Veiravé 213). Whether or not Quiroga had read the story first-hand cannot be proved, but the similarities are too conspicuous to suggest that he was not familiar with it on some level.

marriage myth, this story belongs to a particular trend in vampire literature that represents the male as the source of marital suffering and decay.⁵⁵

That Jordán and the vampire-insect are one in the same takes on a more culturally- and historically-particular perspective in relation to González Echevarría's theoretical framework. He explains that from the 19th century on, "the criminal Other is an Other Within, created by the split of Latin American society into urban and rural worlds as a result of modernity" (96). He goes on to suggest how this Other Within is what determines 19th century and later Latin American narrative: "From now on the Latin American narrative will deal obsessively with that Other Within who may be the source of all; that is, the violent origin of the difference that makes Latin America, distinct, and consequently original. This problematic will remain as a strong vestige not only in obvious texts such as Horacio Quiroga's stories, but also in more recent ones like Cortázar's 'Axolotl'" (97). Although González Echevarría is most likely referring to Quiroga's stories that deal more overtly with the dialectic of civilization and barbarity (such as "La miel silvestre" and "A la deriva"), wherein humans become the victims of the savage (but respected) natural landscapes that surround them, "Axolotl" has more in common with "El almohadón" than any of these, if merely for the fact that like the axolotl and the human that becomes obsessed with it, Jordán and the blood-sucking insect are one and the same; or rather, the dividing line between them is exposed as illusory. Without a doubt, both stories question Western perceptions of civilization and barbarity, and suggest that Latin America's violent past is not only present in Latin American

⁵⁵ As DeWees observes, "Clearly it is not only women who may possess hidden moral flaws that make them dangerous prospects for marriage, but also men" (126).

narrative production, it is its origin. Although González Echevarría proposes that the search for an origin is futile—this is, in fact, the secret of the Archive (36)—perhaps for Quiroga, the origin is where Man and Nature are one, before they are divided so violently by the conquest and the intellectual, legal, and scientific discourses that respectively tried to define them.

I would like to conclude this section by addressing the body itself of the insect-vampire, and its primary function as a consumer of blood. On account of scientific advancements, the 18th century bourgeoisie understood that blood circulated through the body, that it sustained life through its movement, but under feudal ideology blood was predominantly understood in symbolic terms, as a symbol of lineage. “El almohadón” suggests that blood is both material and symbolic. In *Myth and Archive*, González Echevarría explains, “[G]enealogy is a fundamental element in modern Latin American fiction, not merely as a measure of time, nor as a reflection of myth, but also because the regionalist novel studies the family as a group, and how values are transmitted from generation to generation, as well as in social practices” (158). The importance of genealogy in “El almohadón” lies in the insect, which can be suggested to function as an archive itself, as a repository of lineage—and, thus, history—in Latin America. By sucking Alicia’s blood in such a (fittingly) violent and tragic way, the insect-vampire becomes the *bearer* of blood lines, not the destructor. The description is quite telling: “Sobre el fondo, entre las plumas, moviendo lentamente las patas velludas, había un animal monstruoso, una bola viviente y viscosa. Estaba tan hinchado que apenas se le pronunciaba la boca” (Quiroga, *Cuentos de amor* 58). The vampire thus holds, in the blood it stores, the secrets to Latin America’s past—the history written for and by Latin

Americans.⁵⁶ At the same time, by draining Alicia and impeding the future family she could have created, this text suggests that recovering that lineage or past—that origin—is not possible, but rather a myth in itself. According to González Echevarría, “Latin American history is narrated in the language of myth because it is always conceived as the history of the other, a history fraught with incest, taboo, and the founding act of naming” (21). Through the myth of the insect-vampire, Quiroga’s text shows that vampire fiction in Latin America is unique in that it is connected to its landscape, and this topography, unnamed and untamed, represents its history prior to the conquest. Naturally, not every representation of the vampire figure or every instance of vampire logic in Latin America is expressed through insects, but those that do are telling because they illustrate a pattern that forms as part of a greater story of mythification in Latin American narrative, one which exposes the desire for both alterity and inclusion.⁵⁷

Conclusions

According to Susanne Becker, “Gothic horror is domestic horror, family horror, and addresses precisely these obviously ‘gendered’ problems of everyday life” (4). The vampire, as I have attempted to prove, suggests the Gothic is a space where private

⁵⁶ It is curious to note that the archive’s (the insect-vampire’s) place is in the family home, given Derrida’s theory on the archive: “On account of their publicly recognized authority, it is at their home, in that *place* which is their house (private house, family house, or employee’s house), that official documents are filed” (2). Derrida also discusses the ebb and flow of destroying and conserving forces within the Archive (29, 94), which, in reading the vampire as an archive, can be understood as the relationship between conservation and destruction (feeding and killing) that sustains it.

⁵⁷ Other examples of insect-vampires in Latin American fiction and film include Alejandro Cuevas’ story “El vampiro,” Gabriel Medina’s *La araña vampiro*, and Guillermo del Toro’s *Cronos*. Curiously, the latter addresses the Conquest directly while also connecting vampirism to Latin America’s particular Nature and natural resources, through the insect and the gold device in which it is trapped, respectively.

anxieties related to family, gender, and sex play out, but it takes this subversion to the heart of the matter by directly challenging the concepts of marriage, the home, and the nuclear family. Like the very earliest vampire representations, these stories are set around the eve of marriage— “the moment of maximum social repression,” according to Rosemary Jackson —and the months and early years that follow, but they nonetheless highlight individual and social tensions particular to early 20th century Spanish and Latin American historical realities. Changing notions of morality and immorality, gender norms, and marital expectations were exposing the vulnerabilities of the private sphere, and the vampire, who had spent most of the second half of the 19th century in hiding, found an opportune time to awaken and expose its metaphorical fangs. Against a backdrop of marital angst, these stories explore a wide array of Gothic tropes—incest, necrophilia, rape, female sexual desire, good versus evil—to expose uncertainties towards social structures, most especially those of marriage and the nuclear family through the death of the “angel of the house.” In combination with recurring Gothic tropes, the use of literary discursive practices such as framed narration, metaphor, and the aesthetic of the sublime allow all three stories to dialogue with the literary vampire tradition, while also distancing themselves from it. Thus, these stories both conform to and deviate from their literary predecessors, which can be at least partially attributed to Spain and Latin America’s marginal status.

In this particular trend of Latin American and Spanish vampire fiction, the Other is not a typical foreign Other but rather a domestic one, relaying concerns over how monstrosity develops internally, at both the individual and state levels. In this way, history should not be separated from the text, but neither should gender, as all three

stories are built upon particular social perspectives and gendered realities that affect both the use of the vampire figure and the anxieties it represents. According to DeWees, “male writers in particular make use of the vampire as a vehicle for conveying their strong support of marriage as an institution, yet their works nevertheless betray fears about the myriad problems attendant upon marriage” (De Wees 4). Neither the male- nor female-authored stories in this chapter, however, seem to strongly support marriage as an institution. But how can we account for this deviation from the trend in Spanish and Latin American vampire fiction, narrative produced in countries grounded so deeply in religious ideology, where Catholicism dominates life, and where marriage and reproduction are sacred? The stories explored in the next chapter may prove that, alternatively, this is not always the case, but the answer could lie somewhere in that more so than criticizing all forms of marriage, here the authors are manipulating an old trope to express their disenchantment with an ideal based on an outdated moral and legal code.

In “Vampiro,” the vampire represents the newly-formed and unstable Spanish bourgeoisie. In the Latin American stories, the representation is less explicit, expressing anxieties related to the configuration of a moral code, disillusionment with the marital ideal, sexual predation, and being “haunted” by the past. In all three stories, dualities are challenged, ranging from Civilization/Barbarity, Good/Evil, Morality/Immorality, Science/Religion, and Life/Death. In this way, all the stories hint at the possibility of alternate perceptions to our reality, or alternative realities altogether, the vampire being the common thread that encompasses a marginal space for these desires to play out. And although morality and immorality remain in question at times, all these stories sympathize in one way or another with the wives, whether they are the vampires or not.

As the next chapter explores, the representation of female characters in Hispanic vampire fiction is a unique and complicated matter.

CHAPTER 4

MY BLOODY VALENTINE: THE PARODIC FEMALE VAMPIRE AS AN EXPRESSION OF FEMALE AUTONOMY AND LITERARY RESISTANCE

“All human societies have a conception of the monstrous-feminine, of what it is about woman that is shocking, terrifying, horrific, abject”

(Barbara Creed, “Horror and the Monstrous Feminine” 44).

“Arthur! Oh, my love, I am so glad you have come! Kiss me!”

(Bram Stoker, *Dracula* 155).

“Undoubtedly the special destiny of woman is to be wife and mother”

(Nicholas Francis Cooke, M.D., *Satan in Society* 83).

“You had better understand once and for all that our mission is not reducible to raising your children and washing your clothes and that we also have a right to emancipate ourselves and to be free from all kinds of tutelage, whether economic or marital” (*La voz de la mujer*; cited in Maxine Molyneux, *Women’s Movements in International Perspective: Latin America and Beyond* 22)

Introduction

According to James Twitchell, “While the male vampire story was a tale of domination, the female version was one of seduction” (39). On the surface, this is true, of course—anyone familiar with the vampy *femme fatales* of 19th century tales and novels, and even contemporary films and novels, knows that they tend to seduce men to secure their own survival, toppling (and at the same time confirming) preconceived notions of masculinity and femininity while they are at it. Their attack usually consists of draining a male character of his energy (semen) and life force (blood), but can also mean draining bank accounts and other resources, an element that highlights the connection between female sexual desire and economic instability that was encouraged by the dominant medical, state, and literary discourses as a fear-fueled response to the emergence of 19th century feminist movements and the challenges to gender and familial norms that these entailed. To this end, it can be suggested that the vampiric process initiated by the female

vampire is an even more complex representation of power struggles than that of the male vampire. In these narratives, seduction *is* domination, and by defining the female vampire purely in sexual terms, outside the context of conflict, her historical importance as a symbol of female economic and political agency is reduced. Coming from an even more marginal space than the male vampire—for now the Other is gendered—the implications of the female vampire not only entail the instability of modernity through the spread of disease and barbarity, but also the rejection of the foundation of bourgeois society: The gendered public/private divide. These female characters horrify because they suggest a re-gendering of public life and a normalization of sexuality through female economic and sexual autonomy.

The female vampire story is one of domination, and this is documented in her long history. One of the earliest forms of female vampires, the succubus, is present in Hebrew mythology. They were considered a band of fallen angels who attacked men in their sleep; they were night demons and therefore occupied a peripheral space excluded from the human community, outside symbolic classification. Lilith, a succubus that mostly attacked children, and is thus probably the earliest representation of the link between motherhood and vampirism, was adopted from the Babylonian snake-goddess Lilitu (Frost 6), and she experienced another phase in her evolution when she was borrowed by the Decadents at the end of the 19th century, the most notable example being George MacDonald's *Lilith* (1895). As she was adapted within a historical context of globalization, immigration, and changing notions of the private sphere—marriage, family, Woman, and the domestic economy—she conflated images that were particular to the anxieties and literary styles of the 19th century.

One of the first literary representations of the figure appears in Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's ballad "Die Braut von Korinth" (1797), and some of her more popular nineteenth-century Gothic depictions include John Keats' "The Lamia" (1820), Ernst Benjamin Salomo Raupach's "Ein Märchen von D. Ernst Raupach" (1823),⁵⁸ Count Albert's "The Vampire Bride" (1833), Théophile Gautier's *La Morte Amoureuse et autres nouvelles* (1836), Prosper Mérimée's *La Vénus d'Ille* (1837), Charles Baudelaire's "Les Métamorphoses du vampire" (1852), Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla* (1872), Auguste Villiers de l'Isle-Adam's *Vera* (1874), Edgar Allan Poe's "Berenice" (1835), "Morella" (1835), and "Ligeia" (1838), and, of course, Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897). As such, the literary female vampire has been recognized as a particularly European (and almost exclusively French, German and British) phenomenon, but she has also made an appearance in Hispanic letters. José María Heredia's translation of Goethe's poem, "La novia de Corinto" (1825), is one of the earliest examples, followed by Rubén Darío's "Thanathopia" (1893), Leopoldo Lugones' "La vampira" (1899), Clemente Palma's "La granja blanca" (1904), "Leyendas de haschischs" (1905), and "Vampiras" (1906), Abraham Valdelomar's "La virgen de cera" (1910), Wenceslao Fernández Flórez's "El claro del bosque" (1922), Carmen de Burgos' *La mujer fría* (1922), and Horacio Quiroga's "El vampiro" (1927). The texts analyzed in this chapter are Lugones' "La vampira," Palma's "Vampiras," and Burgos' *La mujer fría*, which not only highlight a dialogue with the European literary vampire tradition, but also encompass an interesting

⁵⁸ This story was later translated as "Wake Not the Dead" and appeared in the anthology *Popular Tales and Romances of the Northern Nations* in 1823. While many critics attribute it to Johann Ludwig Tieck, in her study *The Origins of the Literary Vampire*, Heide Crawford claims that the story was erroneously attributed to Tieck by British and North American critics (88).

trend within the Hispanic female vampire tradition: A parodic representation of the female vampire as an expression of economic and sexual autonomy against a backdrop of sexually-frustrated courting couples.

The literary female vampire tradition tends to depict the figure as a seductive and sexually perverse, ruthless, cold, beautiful and dangerous predator. There are very few exceptions, mostly from the late 18th and early 19th centuries, such as Goethe and Gautier's texts, in which the female vampires are driven more so by love than by cruelty, but as the century progressed, any sympathy died off: "By 1900 the vampire had come to represent woman as the personification of everything negative that linked sex, ownership, and money" (Dijkstra 351). In *Blood Lines: Domestic and Family Anxieties in Nineteenth-Century Vampire Literature*, Amanda DeWees suggests, "sympathetic female vampires were definitely the minority, and their threatening sisters, as depicted by embittered decadents such as Swinburne and Baudelaire, became so popular that by the end of the century the word 'vampire' had become convenient shorthand for a lecherous, predatory woman" (11). In *Dracula*, Lucy Westenra conforms to this type, even before she is attacked and turned. She is an easy target for the titular character, for at one point, when she cannot decide between the three suitors who love her, she asks why she cannot simply marry them all. As a full-on vampire, she callously throws a blood-drawn child from her chest—and the marital and motherly ideal with it—and also draws attention, by penetrating her victims, to the flexibility of gender identities. For Christopher Craft, the idea of non-fixed gender identities, or gender indefiniteness, seems to be the central anxiety of the novel, arguing that Lucy's destruction by the men who all loved her restores social norms regarding sexual desire and agency: "By disciplining Lucy and restoring each

gender to its ‘proper’ function, Van Helsing’s pacification program compensates for the threat of gender indefinability implicit in the vampiric kiss” (231). By penetrating Lucy with a stake through her heart, the males have reasserted their active agency in “normal” sexual activity as was conceived within bourgeois patriarchal society. And *Dracula* is not the only text to emphasize this. *Carmilla* is lecherous and dangerous, not solely because she represents the barbaric feudal past, but also because she makes implicit sexual advances towards a young woman. The apparent message of the majority of these 19th and early 20th century female vampire narratives is that female agency is problematic, and that women’s place should remain delegated to the domestic sphere. But why the resurgence of the female vampire at the end of the 19th century? What is fuelling the message behind her lecherous and unsympathetic representations?

According to Carol A. Senf, “[T]he growing nineteenth-century interest in powerful women characters may have stemmed from its concern—even obsession—with women’s actual power, an obsession that increased as the century progressed” (154). Similarly, Heather Braun proposes, “The Decadent Movement, which united familiar tropes of courtly love with allusions to female vampires, revealed concerns about the encroaching power and visibility of the New Woman” (141). The rise of the New Woman and the feminist movements that encouraged her presence began to threaten the stability and composition of the public sphere. Women were lobbying for the right to vote and run for political office, for access to education and equal opportunities in the job market, while some feminists went as far as to call for the elimination of the double standard, for the right to have sexual relationships outside marriage, for the right to divorce and own property, and to be considered legitimate members of society without necessarily

conforming to the current male-imposed models of domesticity and motherhood.

Growing economies, immigration, the rise of the print economy (in which women were both consumers and producers), feminist movements, and the transition from the model of labor and production to that of supply and demand gave way to fears of mass consumption, the spread of disease and degeneration, and the collapse of gender hierarchy.⁵⁹ The public/private divide, bourgeois institutions, and the futures of nations were seen as under attack, fuelling opposition from the state, religious and medical institutions, and society at large. According to Jennifer Smith, “The new authority of medical discourses on sexuality was especially effective in keeping down the rising female emancipation movement, which had gained force since liberal theory seemed to promise that all human subjects, regardless of their gender, were equal and therefore deserving of the same rights” (166). The link between female sexual and economic autonomy was strengthened through dominant medical, state, and literary discourses, which encouraged women to stay inside the comfort and protection of their own homes, to exercise impeccable moral judgment and ethical responsibility to their family and their country, and to manage the household income.⁶⁰

Anxieties related to growing economies and the rise of the New Woman were not particular to Europe, as Spain and the newly-independent nations of Latin America were both dealing with economic change, the consolidation of the bourgeoisie, and a

⁵⁹ See Deanna K. Kreisel for more on the dynamics of supply and demand in vampire fiction, and Lana L. Dalley and Jill Rappoport for more on women’s role in the print economy.

⁶⁰ See Lana L. Dalley and Jill Rappoport for more on women’s roles in the 19th century domestic economy.

reevaluation of gender roles and the concept of morality within the framework of an evolving public/private divide. Different brands of feminism began to rise in accordance with liberal values, the possibility of social mobility, and the dissemination of information on a regional and transatlantic level as a result of immigration. Democratic values and the print economy in particular played an important role in the rise of the politically-conscious Latin American female writer, as Nancy LaGreca suggests:

“Women writers of the 1880s and early 1900s witnessed the disruptions of power that arose from the processes of modernization. The rhetoric of equality and education that accompanied ideals of democracy planted the seeds in the minds of women across the region to question the bases of their social and legal inequality” (171). According to Maxine Molyneux, “[t]he writings of some [European Anarchist feminists] were already being published in Argentina in the 1880s, and in the anarchist press critiques of the family appeared together with editorials supporting ‘feminism’, by then a term in current usage” (17). Anarchist communist feminism was a working-class brand born of the anarchist-communism movement of the late 19th century (Molyneux 18), and a section of the anarchist press was sympathetic to their cause, resulting in some clandestine pamphlets and even a proper journal, *La voz de la mujer* (20-21). Later, the emergence of socialist feminism in Argentina, Leopoldo Lugones’ native country, allowed women to tackle more practical issues, such as equal rights, better educational opportunities, and reforming the Civil Code (36). In *fin de siglo* Peru, Clemente Palma’s native country, women’s issues were in dialogue with liberal discourses of progress: “Liberal and conservative tendencies in the late 1800s meant that women intellectuals and activists such as [Mercedes Cabello de Carbonera] and her early feminist friends Clorinda Matto

de Turner and Juana Manuela Gorriti would fashion their pro-woman arguments in dialogue with liberal discourses of progress” (LaGreca 88-89). There was a similar progression across the Atlantic as well. Christine Arkinstall argues that even though feminism was less radical in Spain, Carmen de Burgos’ nation of origin, than in France and the United States, feminist ideas were beginning to be realized in the last few decades (17). For example, an amendment in the Spanish parliament presented the idea of restricted female suffrage in 1877, while feminist conferences took place in Palma de Mallorca and Barcelona in 1883 (221 n. 110). Clearly, feminism was a nascent movement that began to grow under a changing political and economic landscape, and while the press enabled the circulation of ideas, both male and female writers took it upon themselves to confront these issues in their narratives.

Whereas the previous chapter explored vampire stories set almost entirely in the aftermath of the wedding, these stories are set in the courting period and explore the effects of female sexual desire and/or economic autonomy on the relationship. These relationships, unlike the majority of those discussed in previous chapters, are grounded in love and passion, and most of the sexual agency is expressed by the females, whose passions materialize in different forms of physical and emotional suffering for the men that view them abjectly, as both alluring and repulsive. In Leopoldo Lugones’ “La vampira,” a young man is haunted by his love for a beautiful widow, who is defined within the vampiric *femme fatale* tradition, but ironically, also represented sympathetically. In Clemente Palma’s “Vampiras,” a young man experiments a mysterious illness, later attributed to his innocent but sexual girlfriend by his doctor, a parodic representation of Stoker’s Van Helsing. And finally, in Carmen de Burgos’ *La*

mujer fría, a young man is again haunted by his attraction for a beautiful widow with a dark and mysterious past, and forces himself to decide between two ideals of Woman that correspond to his reality, but not necessarily to theirs. As a whole, the three texts convey a disillusionment with the status quo by challenging ideological constructs, such as “Woman’s place” and Otherness, both domestically and abroad.

“La vampira,” Leopoldo Lugones

Leopoldo Lugones is arguably one of the most influential, respected, and critically studied authors of modern Latin American literature. He has been heralded as one of the major figures of *modernismo*, and later the avante-garde, a pioneer of science- and pseudoscience-fiction, and one of the greatest influencers of the fantastic mode that would develop in the River Plate later in the 20th century. He has also been criticized, on a personal level, for his markedly nationalist approach to domestic politics.⁶¹ Biographies have failed to mention, however, that before his politics evolved from socialist to militarist, he published essays on the education, role, and exploited state of women. A few years after publishing “La educación de la mujer: lo que es y lo que debe ser” (1893) and “La cuestión feminista” (1897), Lugones published the short story, “La vampira” (1899),⁶² a Gothic-inspired tale that challenges the conventional ideological constructs

⁶¹ See the “Nota biográfica” in Martín Artagaveytia’s *Los cuentos de Leopoldo Lugones* and Alfredo Canedo’s *Aspectos del pensamiento político de Leopoldo Lugones*.

⁶² “La vampira” was originally published in the Argentine journal *Tribuna* on January 25th, 1899. Apart from the brief mention in Gabriela Mora’s article, “Decadencia y vampirismo en el modernismo hispanoamericano: un cuento de Clemente Palma,” “La vampira” has received no critical attention. Interestingly enough, neither have his essays on women. Both the essays and the story appeared in a collection for the first time in 1963, *Las primeras letras de Leopoldo Lugones: reproducción facsimilar de sus primeros trabajos literarios escritos entre sus dieciocho y veinticinco años*, compiled by the author’s son, Polo. Organized chronologically, this collection is made up of

that populate the male literary tradition and maintain the status quo. By reading this story in light of these essays and the rise of the European, vampiric *femme fatale* during the latter half of the nineteenth century, “La vampira” can be understood as a text that questions traditional modes of representation and confirms the illusoriness of gender hierarchy through the use of a parodic Gothic formula.

Lugones was born on June 13, 1874 in Villa María del Río Seco, a small town in Córdoba, Argentina (Artagaveytia 5). By the age of eighteen, he published his first work and was directing his first journal, the anticlerical and libertarian *El pensamiento libre*. He soon began to tackle social causes such as student strikes, and later founded a socialist organization and literary journal (Artagaveytia 6). According to Alfredo Canedo, “Su lucha política estaba dirigida a demostrar que la incipiente burguesía argentina tendía a reprimir la libertad de los hombres. Combatía con tenacidad al estado burgués en nombre del principio anarquista por el cual los hombres deben hacer uso libremente de los medios de producción como paso primero para construir la sociedad socialista” (10). Lugones was a faithful *roquista* until World War I, when his perspective on socialism changed and he began to embrace an anti-democratic political ideology grounded in Nationalism and, eventually, militarism: “Él veía al país débil militarmente y próspero en lo económico, presa fácil para cualquier potencia extranjera; clama por la necesidad de formar un país poderoso bajo el gobierno de una clase distinguida por su disciplina y por su sentido de

approximately 150 texts that are scanned versions of the original periodical publications. As a result, many of the works have imperfections, some have lines or entire sections that have been manually scratched out, and others include handwritten notes in the margins by Lugones himself.

lealtad a la patria, valores que sólo encontraba en el ejército” (Canedo 10).⁶³ David Rock argues that Lugones emerged as a “leading Nationalist figure” (xxii), even though he was divided with other nationalists on certain issues, such as his support of a centralized military autocracy (56). He eventually left disillusioned with his party, and he was rumored to have embraced religion near the end of his life (Rock 95). On February 18, 1938, Lugones poisoned himself in a hotel room in Tigre, the cause of which is still being debated by scholars.⁶⁴

Although his aggressive political views have been a prominent topic of scholarly criticism, his thoughts on the impact of contemporary political and economic change on the public/private distinction—in particular, the changing role of women—have yet to be addressed. The two essays explored here, written during a time when the author was a fervent socialist, lay bare some of Lugones’ thoughts on gender hierarchy, women in the public sphere, and the education of women. In “La cuestión feminista,” Lugones argues that Woman is not organically inferior to men, but has been made inferior by historical social processes (64). When patriarchy was formed—for Lugones, this occurred as a result of the establishment of monogamy and inheritance rights once groups began to

⁶³ Many critics have noted, however, that Lugones’ political ideologies were subject to quick and repeated change (Rock 71; Oviedo, *Antología* 337). Still, Jorge Luis Borges comes to his defense, or at least vindicates him in light of his massive influence on the evolution of Argentine literature: “El hombre que es sincero y meditativo no puede no cambiar: sólo no cambian los políticos” (82).

⁶⁴ Artagaveytia argues that his death was precipitated by the end of his twelve-year affair with his mistress, who terminated the affair at the insistence of her family, who in turn was encouraged by Lugones’ own son, Polo (13). Alternatively, José Miguel Oviedo suggests that Lugones was unable to cope with the failure of Uriburu’s military government and the political crisis that ensued, and for this reason committed suicide (*Antología* 338), while Rock makes reference to the timing of his death, occurring just days before the inauguration of Roberto M. Ortiz as president (95).

settle—male privilege needed to be preserved, and thus the female body and female roles became subservient to those of men. Women were either wives or concubines, and this resulted in an unfair economic exchange that Lugones deems, interestingly enough, parasitic: “Esta transacción enteramente comercial, redundando naturalmente en perjuicio de la libertad de la mujer, cuya pasividad se traduce por derivación evolutiva (según está demostrada para todas las especies) en un *parasitismo* servil tanto más acentuado, cuanto más efectivo es el monopolio del hombre sobre las funciones sociales que ella abandonó para aceptar su nuevo estado” (Lugones 64; emphasis mine). To combat her socially-instilled role of servitude, the author calls for the creation of a new state in which Woman is able to rise to the social level of Man through economic equality (Lugones 65). But for women to be able to achieve economic equality, doors must be opened for them outside the confines of the home, as their “enslaved” state made it difficult, if not impossible, for them to break such barriers themselves.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Lugones was at odds with some Argentine feminists in this respect. While Lugones believed that women could attain autonomy and equality only through the assistance of men in power, the editors of *La voz de la mujer*, a feminist magazine born of the anarchist-communist movement in Buenos Aires, concluded that women could not rely upon men to take the initiative in demanding equality for women (Molyneux 22). Conversely, Alfonsina Storni’s view on the topic corresponds to Lugones’: “Para reparar la anomalía de la desigualdad institucionalizada los hombres debían comenzar por restituir los derechos de las mujeres para ‘ayudar de buena manera a la transformación de la mujer’” (Longo 477). This difference in opinion conveys the many guises that Argentine feminism took, which could be partially explained by its various influences: “The ideas expressed during the [First International Feminist Congress of Buenos Aires] reflected the eclectic nature of Argentine feminist thought, which drew on the European Enlightenment, the Generation of 1837, nineteenth-century liberalism, and European socialism. Feminists also based their actions on a belief in women’s moral superiority that would enable them to cleanse the world of war, poverty, and prostitution” (Jeffress Little 247; *sic*).

For Lugones, women would be able to escape the conditions that have rendered them powerless and submissive, and intellectually inferior from the male perspective, by finding opportunities outside the home and thus contributing to society on different levels: “La inmensa mayoría de las mujeres, es hoy incapaz de subsistir por cuenta propia y á ello contribuye no poco el estado de ignorancia en que frecuentemente se las deja. La moral corriente enseña que la mujer no tiene otro campo de acción que el hogar, lo cual, en términos claros y categóricos, quiere decir que no sirve sino como instrumento fisiológico” (Lugones 65). Under the guise that women are intellectually, morally, and otherwise inferior to men, bourgeois ideology perpetuates the idea of women as purely physiological objects, but Lugones proposes a direct challenge to this ideological construct by recognizing that it is, indeed, a construct. On the other hand, his proposition also suggests women’s inadequacies and ignorance. For example, he concludes his essay by stating that women are not aware of their enslaved status, that the idea of freedom would horrify them, and that while they may have reason to challenge their oppressors, they are causing men some unwanted problems: “¿Que la mujer no hace todo lo que debiera, que conspira contra si misma, que nos ocasiona dolores y amarguras? Asi es. Pero en todo caso, por malos que sean, los esclavos siempre tendrán razón contra sus opresores” (65; *sic*). As such, the author engages with the woman question while appealing to a male readership that may find the feminist movements of the time both irritating and troublesome.

Lugones reiterates his thoughts on female economic autonomy in “La educación de la mujer,” although his argument is much more conventional. While he admits that women should be educated and enter the work force, it is more for the good of the nation

than the individual empowerment of women. According to the author, “El trabajo, lejos de deshonrar ennoblece; lejos de empobrecer el alma, la fecunda y la hermosea. Y la mujer que lo haya soportado será verdaderamente hacendosa, ecónoma” (22). Here, Lugones defends the idea that a woman who can take care of herself financially will be able to mature and understand the workings of society, be better able to manage a family and the workings of the domestic economy, and be more apt to raise and educate the nation’s youth. Metaphorically, he argues that women should carefully tend to the home (and the husband), for it is the foundation of society where children are born and nurtured to become future citizens: “La tierra donde arraiga el árbol, es la que lo cria clorótico ó vigoroso, fructífero ó estéril, florecido ó marchito, activo ó rastrero” (Lugones 21). His argument is not advocating for single women who would rather work than raise a family, but for the importance of training and educating the nation’s future mothers, thus conforming to a standard nineteenth-century conservative view of women’s role in the nation-building process.⁶⁶ In this way, Lugones’ essays demonstrate a clear interest in the woman question. Although “La cuestión feminista” is unmistakably the more radical of the two, together they show that the author fluctuated between reactionary to progressive thought in more than just politics.

⁶⁶ According to Francine Masiello, “By enforcing woman’s duties to the home and by emphasizing her empathetic qualities, leading intellectuals molded an image of the Argentine spouse and mother to suit their projects of state. In this respect, women were often thought to be training future citizens of the nation” (*Between Civilization and Barbarism* 53-54). Similarly, Cynthia Jeffress Little draws attention to how the incipient public school system, under the guidance of Domingo F. Sarmiento, and the emergence of vocational and professional schools conformed to this project: “These institutions endeavored to make future Argentine mothers into intelligent, industrious, skilled people conscious of their part in building the nation” (240).

Lugones' interest can be understood in relation to global concerns over the growing presence of women in the public sphere, economic and industrial change, immigration, and the emerging wave of feminist movements that were (slowly) effecting policy change. Turn-of-the-century Argentina was grappling with fast-growing economic and industrial sectors, and a heavy influx of (both welcome and unwelcome) immigrants. According to Jeffress Little, "During the period 1860 to 1926, rapid urbanization, high foreign immigration, and thoroughgoing economic changes combined to alter many aspects of Argentine life. Even the role of women, long considered a constant, began to change due to these pressures" (235). Women were encouraged to take a greater role in the domestic economy, such as distributing the work and managing the income, so public schools began to create coursework based on these needs (238). However, their role was not limited to the private sphere. As a response to Argentina becoming a major trade and commercial center in the 1880s, the nation needed women to work in sales and other white-collar jobs (Jeffress Little 239). That said, women were still underpaid and underserved, and as a result, equal pay, better working conditions, and the opening of daycare facilities became major feminist causes. Such causes, in addition to the rapidly changing labor landscape, began to foster negative views of this "New Woman": "In a society where the family was equated with the national good, women who left the private sphere and moved into the public domain were often considered saboteurs of the unified household, promoting activities that undermined larger state interests" (Masiello, "Women, State, and Family" 29). This negative view of women began to affect the Argentine literary landscape at the turn of the century as well:

From the final decades of the nineteenth century through the nationalist festivities of 1910, commemorating one hundred years of independence from Spain,

Argentina saw an evolution in the representation of women, emerging from an exacerbated conflict between leaders of state and the large number of female voices decidedly struggling to be heard in public. Given the growing mass movement among anarchist and socialist workers and the demands by middle- and upper-class women for rights of suffrage and divorce, the masculine imagination identified women with subversion. (Masiello, *Between Civilization and Barbarism* 7)

Thus while this nineteenth-century literary trend of identifying women with subversion—oftentimes representing them with monstrous qualities, such as snake-women or vampires—originated in Europe, it was later adopted by male Argentine writers.

A prime example of a text that adapts this literary trend is Lugones' "La vampira." The story is narrated in the first person by a witness to the tragic relationship that unfolds between his friend, Adolfo, and a woman known only as *la vampira*. From the very first line, the hopelessness and terror of the situation are conveyed through descriptive terms such as "lágrimas," "dolores," "dudas más terribles," and "desastre." The paragraph that follows this brief introduction focuses on the locus of his friend's troubles: a rich, mysterious, and beautiful widow, whose description encompasses both Pre-Raphaelite⁶⁷ images of women and the stereotypical *femme fatale*. She is cold, passive, and expressionless at times, but she is also tall and majestic, with piercing eyes, and has a sphinx-like quality: "Tenía, como una esfinge, la sonrisa y la garra, atemorizando con éstas las inclinaciones que con aquella producía" (Lugones 79). Other *femme fatale* qualities include her status as widow, her mysterious past, her seductive nature, and her independence. Adolfo feels possessed by this "terrible mujer" (narrator's choice of words), who has managed to provoke feelings of both love and fear in him: "pues en efecto, ese amor era un demonio que le secaba el cerebro y le carcomía el alma. Llevaba

⁶⁷ For more on Pre-Raphaelite images of women in art, see Karen Z. Sproles.

un año de combates sin resultado” (Lugones 79). She is also a constant theme in local gossip due to her conduct—spendthrift with her husband’s money and a heartbreaker with a history of spurned lovers. She is, thus, seen as an ultimate consumer—of men and of their money. In this way, the text initially conforms to the late nineteenth-century *femme fatale* tradition, wherein women are viewed as both sexually and economically threatening, but the way the story later unfolds suggests otherwise.

Two days before Adolfo’s visit to the narrator’s home, *la vampira* confesses a dark secret to him. She claims that she loved her husband furiously, and that they were wildly happy, but then one day he became melancholy and took ill, and before either of them realized that it was their love that was killing him, it was too late. In an effort to save him she tried to ignore his advances, but she would eventually accede, and with every touch she absorbed more and more of him—his body, his thoughts, and his soul—until he finally passed away one night: “Su alma caía gota á gota en el sér de la amada, transfundíase del pobre vaso de su cuerpo, en el magnífico vaso donde pusiera toda su vida para adorarla mejor, y así, lleno de languidez suprema, se extinguió una noche en un doloroso desprendimiento de corazón” (Lugones 80; *sic*). At first, she was shocked, but this later gave way to guilt, and finally to joy because they had realized what had once seemed impossible: two people in love becoming one:

Sentíase invadida por el alma nueva que habia absorbido, agitada por la deliciosa confusion de sus sentimientos, de sus ideas, con las del muerto amado, doble todavía en ciertos instantes, titubeando sus ideas entre el viejo amor, ya indeciso, y el nuevo deliquio, vago aún, enredándose sus frases en infantiles balbuceos, cuyo final era el grito victorioso, el grito inmenso de amor, en que los dos séres confundidos se unificaban. (Lugones 80; *sic*)

She then had to hide her secret, a part of her that was making her more arrogant and hostile every day. Her feminine characteristics were in constant conflict with her

husband's masculine characteristics—aggressive impulses, hate, and jealousy—so when she began to fall in love with Adolfo, she also began to hate him. In a reversal of the vampiric *femme fatale* tradition of the late nineteenth century, the monstrous female entity is not only motivated by love, but her more glaring negative qualities are attributed to masculine impulses, not feminine ones. She knew that her love would eventually destroy Adolfo as well, so she asked him to leave after confiding in him, and given his obedience to her, he acquiesced before heading to the narrator's home. The narrator, even though he claims to disbelieve her story, implored his friend to keep his distance, but Adolfo ignored his advice and went to see her again. At this particular meeting, she agrees to kiss him because something in the air makes her hostile feelings subside for a moment, but then they suddenly return, and she strangles Adolfo to death.

Although Adolfo's death is not at the hands (or at the bloodied mouth) of a fanged vampire, *la vampira* clearly belongs to the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century female vampire literary tradition. She has, like many vampiric *femme fatales* before her and after, animal characteristics, a manner in which her proximity to the savage, natural world is highlighted. In addition to her sphinx-like quality, she is also described, in reference to her love for her husband, as a lioness: "Le amó con furiosa violencia, con celos terribles, como una verdadera leona" (Lugones 79). She also has a snake-like quality, similar to Lilitu/Lilith. As she is about to kiss Adolfo in the final scene, the narrator describes how her masculine side takes over her senses, provoking a film to cover her eyes. This trait is typical of the snake-woman legend, but also of the vampire right before she attacks her prey (Sánchez-Verdejo Pérez 93). In this way, the text dialogues with both the mythological and literary vampire traditions.

Besides absorbing her husband and killing her lover, the way in which *la vampira* most conforms to the late nineteenth-century image of the vampiric *femme fatale* is through her beauty, but even this mold is challenged as the reader learns more about her past. As mentioned above, *la vampira* is statuesque in terms of both her physical (“espléndido marmól”) and emotional traits (“fria, muy fria”), descriptions which liken her to Pre-Raphaelite images of beauty and female behavior, grounded in both a fascination with death and dying and a fear of female autonomy. Fear of death in conjunction with a fear of female sexual desire translated into mysterious and ambiguous Gothic-inspired plots and images, most especially the female vampire.⁶⁸ As Francisco Sánchez-Verdejo Pérez observes in his study on the female vampire in Poe’s literary works, “La idea de hermosura en Poe se funde con la de la femineidad y la muerte. En Poe, la femineidad se materializa en un ser misterioso, sensual a la par que exánime y cadavérico” (94). *La vampira* aligns with Poe’s images of mysterious and beautiful women, but the difference between her and most other female vampires, both Hispanic and European, is that her beauty evolves over time, and so with it, her cruelty. Over the course of absorbing her husband, *la vampira* confessed that she changed dramatically: “Y como por una sangrienta ironía de la suerte, á medida que el esposo se moría, su frágil belleza tornábase espléndida, casi terrible. Había crecido visiblemente en la opulencia de sus carnes. Su voz tomaba imperioso timbre, su lenguaje adquiría vibrante abundancia. Y la catástrofe irremediable al precipitarse, no hacía sino multiplicar sus encantos”

⁶⁸ Death, sickness, and cadaver-like characters are typical of Victorian-era literature, especially vampire fiction, where fears surrounding contagion were linked to sex and gender. For more on this, see “Vampires and the Empire: Fears and Fictions of the 1890s” (Warwick) and “Redeeming the Femme Fatale: Aesthetics and Religion in Théophile Gautier’s *La morte amoureuse*” (Linton).

(Lugones 80; *sic*). Her fragile but beautiful body became more voluptuous the sicker and weaker her husband became, an aspect that intensified her mysteriousness after her husband's death: "Cuando volvió á la ciudad, la encontraron muy cambiada sus relaciones. Pero callaron con prudencia porque la vieron mas Hermosa" (Lugones 80; *sic*). This new *vampira*, a combination of male and female beauty—strength and fragility—is the woman with whom Adolfo falls in tortuous love. Thus, even though being in love with *la vampira* inevitably causes the deaths of both men, they are essentially in love with different women, so the implications of each relationship and death are different. Granted, the colonel finds her more attractive as she begins to change, but the *femme fatale* portrayed in the text is no way the same fragile girl from her past. In this way, the text draws attention to the tenuous nature and absurdity of traditional representations of women.

The colonel's death through a process of absorption can be understood in relation to the late nineteenth-century fascination with the occult.⁶⁹ Modern occultists believed in a natural cosmic harmony, and soul transmigration offered the possibility of attaining it: "Transmigration is not simply rebirth into another body, it is an opportunity to perfect one's essence. One lifetime is insufficient to learn everything and attain cosmic harmony" (Pollack 101). Curiously, gender plays a significant role in this process: "One

⁶⁹ Occult influences were North American spiritualism, which emerged in the United States in the 1840s and involved communicating with spirits through a medium, and Blavatskian Theosophy (Chaves 626). Lugones was a devout believer in Theosophy, as evidenced in his reading and annotations of *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* (Chaves 636), his own ideas on the subject in "Ensayo de una cosmogonía en diez lecciones," and his contributions to *Philadelphia*, a Buenos Aires newspaper that diffused that type of thinking (Oviedo, *Antología* 338).

physical form is not sufficient because ‘the psycho-physical experience of a male is totally dissimilar to that of a female, and it is essential to have both if half of a fundamental experience is not to be missed’ (Man 7:2346)” (Pollack 101). Here lies the crux of “La vampira”: If transmigration allows for the possibility of natural cosmic harmony, and *la vampira*’s husband lives on in the body of his wife, then *he* is the one executing the action.⁷⁰ Thus, *he* may be the one who is trying to attain natural cosmic harmony by continuing to live in the body of a woman. This prompts a series of important questions, such as who is responsible for Adolfo’s death, *la vampira* or her husband, and what does this suggest of gender formation and identification? If she is not responsible, and therefore does not represent the typical anxieties related to female sexual and economic autonomy, then what *does* she represent? And if soul transmigration is conceived of in a positive light in occultist circles, why does it go so tragically wrong in the story? As previously mentioned, modern occultists believed in a natural cosmic harmony that humans had the possibility of realizing through soul transmigration. And as Pollack points out—in reference to *Las fuerzas extrañas*, but equally applicable in this case—“Lugones’ characters reflect his belief in a series of lives as a means for attaining oneness with the universe” (146). But this “oneness” in the case of the story at hand, in addition to recognizing alternative conceptions of the natural and supernatural worlds, recognizes the absurdity of the masculinization and feminization of feelings and

⁷⁰ Although she is *la vampira*, the text suggests that the colonel is the one who encourages his absorption, and not the other way around: “Su alma caía gota á gota en el sér de la amada, transfundíase del pobre vaso de su cuerpo, en el magnífico vaso *donde pusiera toda su vida para adorarla mejor* [...]” (Lugones 80; *sic*; emphasis mine). Here it is clear that he not only cooperates with his soul transmigration or vampirization, but that he actually motivates it.

behaviors, and even draws attention to the vulnerable and exploited state of Woman that the author articulates in his essays. Specifically, with respect to the latter, there is a curious connection between the parasitic relationship joining *la vampira* and her husband and the “parasitismo” to which the author refers in “La cuestión feminista.” Their relationship, which results in the definition/stereotyping, exploitation, and consumption of *la vampira*’s body, echoes the sentiments on gender hierarchy, male privilege, and fiscal monopoly expressed in his essay.

La vampira’s association with consumption is one of the most significant ways the text realizes the blurring of boundaries between victim and vampire. The correlation between sexual and economic consumption has been discussed in several studies on the representation of women in the *fin-de-siècle* literary landscape. For example, according to Dalley, “Whether women were represented as preying upon blood or consuming extravagantly in general, their presumed failure to manage their households with restraint was seen as threatening the stability of the bourgeois family” (12). In her initial description, *la vampira* is portrayed as being spendthrift with her husband’s money, but is she really the ultimate consumer in the story? It can be suggested that even though she is at first portrayed as such—hyperbolically, which only highlights the superficiality of her image—she conforms more so to the idealized bourgeois woman than to the female vampire: “For Ruskin and other commentators on the Victorian discourse of proper womanhood, the idealized woman does not, vampirelike, clamor for her fair share of comestibles. She is instead a source of consumption for others—a fertile, maternal, lactating body, with a free-flowing supply of fluid sustenance” (Kreisel 119). *La vampira* may be cold and beautiful with a mysterious and deadly past, but she is also motherly, not

solely in the sense that the vampiric relationship is akin to that of intrauterine existence (as victim and vampire are bound by the sharing of blood⁷¹), but also in the sense that her body is a source of comfort and acts as a “home” for her husband, one which he “occupies” after his death. Her husband forces her to abandon the traditional role of wife for a non-traditional role of mother, wherein her free-flowing supply of sustenance is her body, her thoughts, her happiness, and ultimately her consciousness, as the narrator reveals that she suffered an epileptic attack from which she has yet to recover after strangling Adolfo (Lugones 80).⁷² Given that her body hosts her husband, and that in doing so he is able to influence her thoughts and behaviors, it seems more appropriate to consider her a victim of consumption or vampirization rather than a consumer or vampire herself.

In addition to being a source of consumption for her husband, she is also one for society at large. Through her, the townspeople create their own versions of reality, but even more troubling, their own versions of her, projecting onto her what they believe constitutes a rich widow. Ironically, in the same sentence that describes her spending as wasteful and unprecedented, the narrator reveals that she is also a victim of gossip: “[...] su conducta era discutida en los círculos, sin que jamás hubiera podido concretarse cargo alguno contra ella” (Lugones 79). She is, thus, an image that does not correspond to an actual reality; she is a stereotype perpetuated through gossip for which there is no proven

⁷¹ For more on this, see Susan Leigh Rogers.

⁷² Typically, whether they be male or female, vampires die at the end of the story. For example, *Dracula*’s Lucy has a stake driven through the heart, Carmilla is staked, decapitated and burned, and Clarimonde crumbles into a pile of dust and bones after being doused with holy water. Lugones’ vampire, however, lives on, albeit in a state of epilepsy from which she does not recover, which adds to her sympathetic portrayal.

foundation. Accordingly, by portraying her as both the consumed and the consumer—the idealized wife/mother and the vampiric *femme fatale*—Lugones creates a grey area for both expression and understanding that breaks with the idea of binary oppositions as an unequivocal truth.⁷³ This is not surprising given the ideas expressed in his essays on the gendered division of labor. Lugones not only questions the images of women produced by men that are based on illusion or the perpetuation of the status quo, but also women’s actual place within the market, as both a consumer and a producer.

The final scene supports the idea that the colonel is the real vampire. The story begins to hint at this in the descriptions of their love, his illness, and his soul’s transmigration, and later, during the scene in the garden, where right before she asks Adolfo to leave she feels her husband’s presence taking over as a result of his jealousy and rage (Lugones 80). She and Adolfo are in love, and the colonel’s feelings are in stark contrast to this. He sees her as his possession rather than as an equal, which not only communicates the ideas expressed in “La cuestión feminista,” but also begins to juxtapose women’s and men’s feelings and behaviors. It is in the final scene, however, where the battle of the sexes comes to a head. Adolfo’s death is violent and unexpected, solidifying the tragic and ironic tone of the story, but it is also the point in which the colonel finally takes over his wife’s body. She decided to lean in and kiss Adolfo because an “instante de paz venció su repugnancia” (Lugones 80). Here, Woman (peace)

⁷³ Her namelessness also speaks to the idea that an image does not always represent a reality. The fact that she does not have a name suggests that she is both any woman and no woman; a rumor, an object, an image like any other. She represents all women and, as an imagined construct, no women. She is what her husband, what Adolfo, and what the literary vampire tradition want her to be—until she breaks from the confines of this image and becomes something else.

triumphed over Man (repugnance), but not for long enough: “Mas el poder hostil que en ella se albergaba la invadió furioso como una racha de huracán. Una nube cubrió sus ojos” (Lugones 80). This hostility can be suggested to represent the colonel, who activates a rage within his wife that triggers the film covering her eyes, anticipating the attack on Adolfo. Therefore, it can be argued that the colonel is the one who actually strangles Adolfo, not his wife. In this way, the title of the story is as problematic and illusory as the image first constructed of her.

In conclusion, “La vampira” juxtaposes masculine and feminine desire in an ironic way, challenging the idea that feminine desire is destructive, while questioning the constructs of Man and Woman themselves. Even though the initial descriptions of *la vampira* seem to conform her to the late nineteenth-century image of the vampiric *femme fatale*, these are later exposed as part of a parodic representation that conveys the illusoriness of gender constructions. Traits such as her tortuous allure, coldness, animal-like characteristics and fatal past are overshadowed by her warnings to Adolfo, love as the motivation of her actions, the exploitation of her body, and her continuous suffering as a victim. According to Elisabeth Bronfen, “Woman comes to represent the margins or extremes of the norm—the extremely good, pure and helpless, or the extremely dangerous, chaotic and seductive. The saint or the prostitute; the Virgin Mary or Eve” (181). Curiously, Man also comes to represent the extremes of the norm in “La vampira”—the extremely aggressive, impatient, and exploitative (the colonel), and the extremely weak, lovesick victim (Adolfo). In an ironic turn of events, a woman strangles a man, but the most absurd aspect about this is that it was her husband’s aggressions that made her do it, therefore dismantling the image of the *femme fatale* altogether. Taking

into account the development of the female character, in addition to Lugones' interest in the woman question, the text communicates that while she may be flawed, she is not the cause of late nineteenth-century society's problems. The text also clearly dialogues with theosophy, and soul transmigration in particular. The constructs of Woman and Man are exaggerated in a battle in which Man eventually triumphs, but this triumph leads to death and disorder, articulating the idea that the exploitation of women, albeit through soul transmigration, leads to disharmony, not natural cosmic harmony. As such, Lugones' story conveys a surprisingly radical message.

“Vampiras,” Clemente Palma

“Vampiras” is a unique and unexpected vampire story that, like “La granja blanca,” also appears in the collection *Cuentos malévolos*.⁷⁴ What begins as a Gothic tale—complete with blatant *Dracula* references, the use of the sublime aesthetic, and female vampires that literally try to devour the objects of their affection—by the outcome evolves into a parody of what it pretended to be. The staunch moral code that appeared to uphold the message of the text is quickly dissolved upon the text's journey into subversive territory: Not just the suggestion of female sexual desire, but the normalization of it. In several of her articles, Gabriela Mora argues that *Cuentos malévolos* urges the reader to recognize that female sexuality is not as great an evil as the cruel and more harmful behaviors and attitudes that also appear throughout the collection, and is therefore a direct challenge to bourgeoisie art and ideology. Alternatively, however, she suggests that “Vampiras” relays a misogynistic tone through Dr. Bing's

⁷⁴ “Vampiras” is one of the stories that appear only in the second version of the collection (1913), and not the first (1904). It was originally published in Lima's *El Ateneo* in 1906 (Mora, “Decadencia” 193).

character (*Clemente Palma* 134), and that the narrator-protagonist Stanislas' marriage to Natalia suggests the end of her subversive sexual desires ("Decadencia y vampirismo" 197). Nancy Kason's observations align with Mora's regarding the latter: "In 'Vampiras,' Palma combines the parasitic with the sexual when the nearly fatal illness is cured by marriage, thus ending, supposedly, Natalia's lust for her husband" (*Breaking Traditions* 93). I would like to build upon the current criticism by examining the text's treatment of vampirism as a response to anxieties over female autonomy and their connection to the rise of the female vampire in mid to late-19th century European narratives in order to demonstrate how the text's message is ultimately more subversive than it seems. In "Vampiras," sacred and profane love are juxtaposed in such a way that both male and female sexual desires are normalized, boundaries and binary oppositions are questioned, and the Gothic vampire tradition's aesthetic and thematic elements, as well as its moral messages, are challenged. That said, in a departure from the strong feminist message of Lugones' texts, "Vampiras" appears to be caught in a zone of partial surrender and partial confrontation to female autonomy: Woman may have sexual agency, but explored through a male perspective that ultimately believes she exists in relation to the man and the home, she is never legitimized to the point of becoming a subject. She is, however, both the cause of and the cure for her victim's suffering and impending death, and the implications of this are more than just deviating from both the female vampire and *femme fatale* literary traditions, but rather articulate a dialogue with the topic of women's place in society, and provide an outsider's response to the development of a European trope.

As mentioned in the last chapter, Palma's stories, with their Gothic tropes and explicit exploration of perversity and brutality, stand out amongst the Latin American *fin*

de siglo literary landscape. The author's stories confront bourgeoisie expectations of art, literature, morality and social structures through particularly brutal and graphic images and a pessimistic tone. *Cuentos malévolos* has received much critical attention in the last few decades as both a *modernista* and Gothic collection, with its unsettling images relayed through swift and often gripping storytelling, but at the time of its publication it did not receive the attention that Palma's contemporaries were. Mora believes this discrepancy lies in the text's treatment of sexuality; for instance, the declaration in "Vampiras" that female sexual desire is a natural occurrence, not deviant behavior: "Sobra insistir en la audacia, para la época, de una declaración como ésta, y no extrañaría que esa audacia fuera una de las causas del silencio crítico sobre la obra del peruano" ("La sexualidad" 32).⁷⁵ This statement, however, is not the only audacious aspect of the text, for while vampire literature tends to explore sexuality, it does so from a distant and often judgmental stance, insinuating more so than demonstrating, and condemning more so than validating. "Vampiras," however, takes the implicit reader directly into the bedroom, forcing the reader into a voyeuristic position, where she is unsure as to whether she is supposed to be disgusted or amused, afraid or pleased, outraged or sympathetic. As such, "Vampiras" transcends the purely cruel and horrific tone of "La granja blanca," and

⁷⁵ To provide some context, it is important to note that in the late 19th century, female sex drive was regarded by many physicians and psychologists as a problematic behavior that required treatment. Some studies include *Psychopathia Sexualis* by Krafft-Ebing in 1886, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* by Havelock Ellis in 1897, and Sigmund Freud's works on dreams, hysteria, and sexual theory from 1893-1905 (Mora, "La granja blanca" 195). In another example, *Satan and Society* (1890), Dr. Nicholas Cooke claims that sexual instincts were unnatural, and even criminal: "It might, therefore, be supposed that the exaltation of the sexual instinct by the imagination and vicious practices of man, is the occasion of his violation of what appears to be a law of Nature. Such is, indeed, the fact, and like many another unnatural proceeding, it surely entails its punishment" (159).

by the end of the story, the reader is left unexpectedly amused by the irony and playful tone.

“Vampiras” is narrated in the first person by Stanislas, a young man who recounts his past experience with a mysterious illness. While the title of the story is suggestive of its content, the first paragraph meets the reader’s expectations head on through a vivid description of physical degeneration: “Mis brazos y mis piernas se adelgazaron de una manera desconsoladora, y mi busto, antes musculoso y fuerte, degeneró de tal modo que se diseñaba claramente, bajo la piel lívida y pegajosa, la maquinaria ósea de mi torax” (Palma 207).⁷⁶ While both his mother and his fiancée, Natalia, are deeply troubled by Stan’s perpetuating illness, Stan himself does not seem bothered, as Natalia observes: “¿Es alguna preocupación lo que destruye tu ser?... Pero no; tú conservas tu espíritu alegre y apasionado” (208). Stan confirms this by stating, “La jovialidad de mi carácter no había desaparecido. Me sentía extenuado; un poco fatigado y débil en las mañanas, pero pronto me reponía, me sentía nuevamente fuerte y ágil” (Palma 208). Upon the insistence of his mother and Natalia, however, he goes to see doctor Max Bing—an obvious allusion to Van Helsing—if simply to put them at ease. Dr. Bing examines him and determines that Stan is indeed sick, suffering from a consumption that would surely be deadly if not treated: “Eres un hombre y te lo puedo decir: eres víctima de sortilegios misteriosos. Te mueres en sueños y tus enemigos te atacan dormido” (213). The cure he

⁷⁶ By addressing the sickness as the initial cause for alarm or terror, and even mentioning tuberculosis, consumption, typhus, cancer and meningitis directly later on, the story clearly engages with the era’s anxieties over contagion, race and degeneration, explored in Alexandra Warwick’s article “Vampires and the Empire: Fears and Fictions of the 1890s.” The fact that the story takes place somewhere in Europe—represented through the setting and character names—only further promotes this idea.

proposes? To marry Natalia as quickly as possible, and to then have a child, as the cries of children tend to ward off ghosts, vampires and succubi. To convince Stan, the doctor relays the story of a past patient, Hansen, who suffered from the same illness. He claims that he witnessed this young man's attacks by female vampires first-hand by hiding in his bedroom as Hansen slept. He tried to save him, but his sickness was too far gone. Like Stan, he downplayed his illness and believed himself to be healthy, and like Stan, he was completely infatuated with his girlfriend. But he finds it important to note that, unlike Stan, Hansen had courted many women, who then found themselves rejected once he had fallen for Alicia, insinuating that somehow these women were to blame.

Stan heads home and later that night, with his eyes closed but unable to sleep, he hears someone enter his room, and then feels the weightless sensation of a woman's body against his: "Loco de terror me incorporé dando un grito ahogado; y tratando de asir y extrangular á la maldita vampira sólo logré morderla en el brazo" (Palma 225). In biting her, he gets the sensation that it was Natalia who just entered his bedroom and whispered "candentes frases de amor" in his ear. The next day, the mark on Natalia's arm confirms this. Terror-stricken, he heads back to Dr. Bing, who in a turn of events consoles his patient and suggests that Natalia is deserving of his love and respect, and although she is innocent and pure like an angel, she is still a woman, and as such, has an imagination and desires: "Son sus deseos, sus curiosidades de novia, su pensamiento intenso sobre ti, los que han ido á buscarte anoche. Los pensamientos, en ciertos casos, pueden *exteriorizarse*, *personalizarse*, es decir, vivir y obrar [...]" (Palma 226).⁷⁷ By marrying her, Bing

⁷⁷ The idea that an intangible entity could be turned into tangible material was treated earlier by Lugones in his short story "El psychón," published in *Folleto de la Tribuna* on August 30, 1898.

suggests that not only will Stan get better, but so will Natalia (i.e. marriage and motherhood will kill her extreme sexual fantasies). In a kind of append, two sentences that form the fifth and final section of the story, Stan jokingly relays that the good doctor was correct: “¡Y cuán hermosa é inofensiva mi vampira! Os deseo cordialmente una igual” (227).

This story can be considered Gothic in many respects. For example, as Mora points out in *Clemente Palma: el modernismo en su versión decadente y gótica*, the strange screams Dr. Bing hears while traveling horseback through the forest at night, the sounds of rocks flying by as if someone were trying to knock him off his horse, the bite marks on the male victims’ necks, sickness, and the midnight hour ringing in Hansen’s vampiric episode all contribute to the story’s Gothic allure. She adds, “Ocurre en este cuento lo que se ha dicho de E.A. Poe: que simultáneamente emplea recursos del gótico y se burla de ellos” (131). Can this “burla,” however, be suggested to carry a significant meaning, such as the impending evolution of a European tradition, that of Gothic vampire horror turned parody, playing into the lowbrow stereotype and conveying the ridiculousness of such literature (and by extension, the absurdity of the anxieties that fomented it)?⁷⁸ Or does this mocking of a subgenre simply convey a typical trend in Gothic literature, that of contradicting moralities? Given Palma’s two other vampire tales, both serious in tone and elevated on an aesthetic level, the latter is more likely, but both may play a part.

⁷⁸ In his introduction to the anthology *Los que moran en las sombras*, Elton Honores argues that in the period between 1950 and 1990, the vampire as parody replaces the Gothic vampire as an expression of negative values. It can be suggested that “Vampiras” is a precursor to this tradition, wherein the parodic elements surpass the initial fear elicited by the vampire and the aesthetic of the sublime.

According to Kathy S. Davis, “Some works of Gothic fiction appear to raise dominant cultural standards to a pinnacle of virtue, while others emphatically cast those same established values and codes of behavior aside. Often, both of these conflicting tendencies exist within a single work” (4). In suggesting that “Vampiras” subversively explores female sexuality but also fears it (“Los cuentos malévolos” 381), Mora therefore aligns the story with those of conflicting tendencies, but it can be argued that it surpasses an exploration and fully embraces female sexuality. In addition to the Gothic traits proposed by Mora, the text also makes use of the story-within-a-story dynamic to create ambiguity and suspense and confirm the occurrence of vampirism. Ricardo Sumalavia proposes that the use of intradiegetic stories is a modernist trait, but this technique is employed in a plethora of both European and Spanish Gothic texts, and his reasoning applies to this context as well: “En Palma, básicamente se empleó con la intención de crear una atmósfera de referencia, un marco objetivo, concreta, de soporte para el mundo imaginativo propuesto en un segundo nivel” (220). Moreover, the story adheres to Gothic conventions by portraying a distant and slightly ambiguous setting,⁷⁹ dream-like states, death, doubles, vampires, a break in chronology, and apparitions from the past. That said, although the story ends with a happy marriage—and not a terror-filled one, distancing it

⁷⁹ Mora suggests that the European setting and the foreign names of the characters could be a measure taken by the author to distance himself and his country from the subversive elements: “Los nombres extranjeros de los personajes—otro rasgo característico—a nuestro juicio bien puede ser una especie de escudo para protegerse de críticos y lectores que no conciben que este tipo de historias se pueda dar entre las ‘católicas’ y ‘sanas’ familias latinoamericanas” (“Decadencia” 193). This is most certainly true, as the fear of contagion (physiological, sexual, and otherwise) threatened the health of the nation, but in doing so, the text also turns a Gothic convention on its head—the foreign setting is not catholic, feudal or Hispanic, but European. As such, this marks a clear example of a strictly Latin American Gothic, in which the civilized element according to the dominant global narrative on Otherness is challenged.

from the marital Gothic stories of the previous chapter—it does not quite fit into the traditional Gothic template. As Mora points out, the vampire does not die according to Gothic tradition, but instead marries her victim (*Clemente Palma* 137). Lastly, and even more critical, the conflict between good and evil is not fully resolved. Although Natalia's passions negatively affect Stanislas for a time, is she really to blame, or are society's moral standards the true cause of the couple's suffering? And why is Natalia deemed pure and innocent in Dr. Bing's eyes when he describes the female vampires who attack Hansen as “diabólicas, hermosas, perversas” (*Palma* 222)?⁸⁰ When does a woman go too far, leaving goodness behind for evil once and for all?

This story has been read as a comment on the idea of good versus evil as a static concept (Mora), as a rejection of the nuclear family as a bourgeois institution (Honores Vásquez), as an exploration of the newer mechanisms of modernity through a scientific attitude (Sumalavia), as a modernist text by many critics, and also as a text belonging to the particular Gothic-Decadent vein of *modernismo* (Mora), but its vampire elements have yet to be studied in relation to the European vampire tradition or the rise of the *femme fatale* and female vampire as a response to the expansion of 19th century feminism. This kind of reading would allow for the text to be understood not solely as a vehicle for subversive desires to play out, but as a comment on gender relations as the public/private divide adjusts its boundaries and configuration, as a representation of how

⁸⁰ According to Jennifer Smith, “Through the diagnosis of perversions, medicine was able to usurp the role of both morality and law by converting sinful/criminal acts into illnesses or perversions of nature” (159). This speaks to the formation of a new moral code within the realm of the law (State) and outside that of the Bible (Church), but also to how the rise of the 19th century female vampire is directly linked to anxieties relating to the female body, particularly the “sick” female body that engaged in sexual activity for non-reproductive means.

modernity has affected our understanding of the body and sexuality at different junctures, as a literary example of how images of women in male authored literature are produced by social standards and serve to control and/or define female behavior (however “modern” they may be), and finally, as a dialogue with dominant narratives from a peripheral space. As such, this reading requires an in-depth look into the vampire elements of the story in relation to the development of both the male and female vampire literary traditions, given that neither the male nor female literary vampires appeared within a vacuum—despite their mythological roots—but rather as responses to the threat (and inevitability) of political, economic, and ideological change.

According to Davis, the vampire is a manifestation of repressed anxieties: “Specifically, the vampire may be viewed as an *incarnation* of the uncanny. By this, I mean that within the frame of the Gothic text, the vampire character is an actual, physical manifestation of repressed anxieties and cultural taboos” (14). According to Robert Tracy, both *Carmilla* and *Dracula* represent anxieties relating to procreation, degeneration, and race: “The Anglo-Irish feared intermarriage with the Irish, which would lead to racial degeneration, and the loss of power which would inevitably follow letting the Irish gain ownership of land. These anxieties underlie such works as *Carmilla* and *Dracula*” (38). While Tracy emphasizes the vampire novel as a vehicle for policing bodies to avoid racial contamination, other critics focus on the vampire novel as a warning against the dangers of sexual desire; female, more often than not. For example, in his study, “The Monster in the Bedroom: Sexual Symbolism in Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*,” D.F. Bentley argues that *Dracula* encompasses repressed sexual desires of the Victorian era (28). In David Melville Wingrove’s article, “‘La Belle Dame’: *Lilith* and

the Romantic Vampire Tradition,” he argues that the female vampire in *Dracula* represents the male desire to subdue feminine sexual fantasies: “At its heart lies the collective male impulse to subdue the renegade woman, to subjugate her and put her in her ‘rightful’ place, which is, of course, on her back, with a large phallic object stuck inside her” (193). He notes that for a modern readership this scene—where four men, three of whom are in love with her, kill Lucy Westenra by staking her through the heart—can be perceived as quite sadistic and depraved (192), but it ultimately demonstrates the aggressiveness of female subjugation born out of the anxieties that arise upon the possibility of women gaining autonomy and debilitating the patriarchy. Alternatively, the female vampires in “Vampiras” do not just encompass female sexual desires: They literally *are* female sexual desire. This proclamation made by the narrator displaces the severity of Natalia’s desires—to simply imply it would align the text with its predecessors and their moral messages, but to directly state it, sympathetically no less, relays a distinctive attitude towards female sexual agency. As such, the “repressed anxieties and cultural taboos” of which Davis writes can be understood in this context as a nonconforming stance towards bourgeoisie ideology regarding sex, sexuality, and the body.

While the text clearly deviates from the traditional vampire tale’s underlying messages on sexual desire and good versus evil, the text engages with the tradition by employing several of the typical trappings. For example, the vampire attacks happen at night—Hansen’s at the midnight hour and Stan’s around three in the morning. According to Rosemary Jackson, this is typical of vampire narratives because nighttime is “[...] when light/vision/the power of the *look* are suspended” (120). Physical deterioration,

mystery surrounding the illness, the presence of a doctor with a knack for warding off vampires, impending nuptials, and the appearance of shape shifters—the forces that attack Hansen enter his bedroom as vague forms, “cuerpos aéreos indecisos” (Palma 221), before turning into recognizable female forms—are standard literary vampire elements, and particularly liken the story to Stoker’s *Dracula*. In fact, the medical theories Dr. Bing relays and the strategies he employs to reach a hypothesis regarding Stan’s condition are curiously similar to those of Van Helsing. Mora has noted Bing’s similarities to Van Helsing, but when considering the satirical tone of the story and the overt references to Stoker’s text, we should question whether Bing is simply a reference to or a parodic representation of the misogynistic Van Helsing. According to Bram Dijkstra, “After [Stoker] has his scholar-hero Van Helsing mumble in broken English that *Dracula* represents the regressive criminal type, is genetically ‘predestinate to crime,’ and has a ‘child-brain,’ he lets Mina Harker, for good measure, affirm that ‘Nordeau and Lombroso would so classify him’” (346). Here, Dijkstra is calling attention to what he believes is Stoker blatantly putting on display his knowledge of recent medical theories regarding the link between physical traits and criminal behavior (playing into the connection between vampire narratives and racial anxieties that Warwick explores in her article.) However, Palma’s texts convey an apprehension towards regarding the dominant scientific narratives as a complete truth. If we are to accept the text’s satirical attitude towards Gothic literature, then we are to accept its attitude towards the man of science as satirical as well, and therefore, question his knowledge and his misogynistic attitude

towards women.⁸¹ As such, although the text makes use of the doctor/vampire slayer trope, it reworks it in such a way that Bing's message that female sexual desire must be tamed through marriage and motherhood becomes unconvincing.

As a vampire tale, "Vampiras" can be understood both within the context of the emergence of the 18th century literary vampire and as a particular response to the growing trend of fatal women that appear in male-authored literature in the latter part of the 19th century. That said, unlike both of the other stories in this chapter, "Vampiras" engages with the female vampire tradition while dissociating itself from that of the *femme fatale*. While both of Lugones and Carmen de Burgos' female vampires are mysterious, independent widows, Natalia is not a widow, nor is she economically independent or appear to have a tragic past. (The reader cannot be sure about this with regards to the vampire women that attack Hansen, but it appears that their motive, like Natalia's, was to be united with the man they love, however unconventional that love and its depiction may be.) Natalia does, however, possess characteristics and behaviors that liken her to the female vampires of the 19th century. For one, she is a bloodsucker, like Dracula's brides, Lucy, Carmilla, and others. The act of blood sucking, that of physically penetrating the victim's body, has been discussed in previous chapters, but when it is performed by a

⁸¹ This questioning does not unequivocally translate into hesitation on the part of the reader. By "questioning," I mean that the representation of the scientist—as a parodic interpretation of Van Helsing—compels the reader to question the meaning of the scientist in vampire literature, and the message his character typically conveys: one of subordination and advocacy for the status quo. I do not mean that his character facilitates doubt as to whether or not the supernatural events take place. Kason suggests that this story is "a true expression of the fantastic" (91), but even if the reader questions Bing, the bite mark on Natalia's arm is sufficient evidence that the events took place. The reader is not left in a state of hesitation, and accepts the telling of the events and the story for the parody that it is.

woman, it has particular implications. In *Man and Woman: A Study of Human Secondary Characters* (1894), Havelock Ellis suggests that women's blood is thinner, and more watery than men's. This, in combination with their periodic blood loss and anemic constitution, led men to believe that women had a more natural desire to consume blood (Dijkstra 336). In the medical world, women were believed to be inadequate, and therefore subordinate to men, so it is not surprising that their depictions as bloodsuckers would be in response to feminist movements that sought equal rights for the "lesser" sex. Joining the ranks of her contemporaries, Natalia's bloodsucking implies a reversal of roles, an agency that is usually represented as severely problematic.

Since the very beginning of the vampire myth, women have been demonized as sexual exploiters of male energy. According to Brian Frost, "In Hebrew mythology the succubi and their male counterparts, the incubi, were originally a band of fallen angels who had degenerated into lecherous night demons. The incubi appeared to the fair sex as demon lovers and the succubi similarly haunted the dreams of young men, magically undermining their vitality and draining their potency" (6). Likewise, early representations of Lilith portray her as a nocturnal being that attacks men while they sleep, but through her, the connection is made between sex and bloodsucking: "Men attacked by Lilith lose semen and blood, which leaves them twice as exhausted [...] She seduces men to immortality and sin and drains them of their life energy. She takes her revenge on men while they are asleep, when the subconscious dominates their dreams because deep down in the subconscious lives a secret yearning for a passionate woman" (Schumann 112). These myths serve as a clear foundation for the 19th century vampiric *femme fatale*, but their differences lie in the historical context of their respective developments. Lilith dates

back to Jewish folklore and was linked to a nocturnal and demonic world. The 19th century female vampire, however, is a product of a secular society that was grappling with the concept of morality outside the confines of the Bible. She is a manifestation of the conflict between good and evil, but also a manifestation of the public/private divide. She belongs to society, but also lives on the periphery, because she is one thing during the day (prospective wife and mother) and another thing at night (sex- and blood-hungry vampire). Who is Lucy Westenra if not a woman torn between being a wife and being free to carry on relations with several men? Who is Carmilla if not a remnant of the barbaric aristocracy that sought to impose its darkness and lesbian chaos on the modern, vulnerable woman? And who is Natalia if not a woman literally torn in two: An in-the-flesh woman during the day, devoted to her fiancé, and an ambiguous form at night, dead set on realizing her sexual fantasies? This late 19th and early 20th century female vampire is therefore an adaptation of those early, mythological depictions, one that can only be understood within its particular ideological coordinates as a manifestation of the dark side of modernity, but also as a gendered response to the instability of the status quo perpetuated by the rise of feminism and the changes that began to take effect in the public sphere. The horror that sustains this nineteenth- and early twentieth-century monster lies in the fact that she can go along undetected, worm her way into the hearts (and beds) of men, then bear her fangs and drain men of the energy they need to be contributing members of bourgeois society.⁸²

⁸² Being a productive and valid member of society required making a living, getting married, and creating a nuclear family, the latter of which was put to the test if women drained men to the point of total exhaustion. Interestingly, bloodsucking not only encompasses a possible challenge to the constitution of gender roles by inverting sexual agency within bourgeois ideology, it also manifests anxieties relating to male impotence.

Natalia is similar to the 19th century model of the female vampire with respect to the differences in her daytime and nighttime (or, public and private) behaviors, but she is unique in the sense that she is not a member of the undead. As Tracy observes, vampire women like Lucy and Carmilla reside on the border between life and death, which makes their subversive nature more palatable for their texts' readership: "Though sexual themes are almost blatantly present, they are somehow veiled by the fact that, after all, Dracula is not really a sexually active male but something else, something partly unreal as well as Undead; Carmilla and Lucy act like sexually active and aggressive women, but they too are ultimately unreal, and therefore descriptions of their activities are implicitly licensed" (39). Bentley argues a similar point: "A close examination of certain episodes in the work shows that Stoker's vampires are permitted to assert their sexuality in a much more explicit manner than his 'living' characters" (28). Palma's Natalia, however, is not undead. There are no references to her being cold, of a mysterious origin or unknown age, or having possibly died in the past. She is a living, breathing, feeling woman, which makes her sexual fantasies, and therefore the story, even more subversive. Thus, what Palma has done here, while founding his vampire on mythology and the European literary tradition, is digress from the paradigm to the point of making his criticism of the status quo much more direct, and the message behind his story that much clearer.

In the section entitled "Excessive Sensuality or the Woman Vampire" in *Married Life and Happiness: Or, Love and Comfort in Marriage*, Dr. William J. Robinson wrote the following: "Some make excessive demands upon their husbands from ignorance, but some continue their practices even after being informed that it means impotence, sickness and a premature grave for their husbands" (90).

DeWees argues that the confrontation between sacred and profane love is one of the major premises of nineteenth-century vampire literature (39), with English, Irish and German stories clearly favoring characters who are able to overcome temptation to become the husbands and wives that society expects them to be. If they cannot overcome, they are punished. Take, for example, the young priest, Romuald, in Théophile Gautier's *La Morte amoureuse et autres nouvelles* (1836), later translated into English as *Clarimonde*. Although Romuald initially chooses the "correct" path, he eventually gives in to his temptation and follows Clarimonde into a life of depravity, although never fully leaving the seminary, as his fantastic adventure blurs the line between dream and reality. At the climax of the story, the Abbé Sérapion, a kind of mentor to the young man, kills Clarimonde by dousing her corpse with holy water, but this does not end Romuald's suffering: "I have regretted her more than once, and I regret her still. My soul's peace has been very dearly bought [...] the error of a single moment is enough to make one lose eternity" (63). Similarly, in Julian Hawthorne's "Ken's Mystery" (1883), a young man breaks off his engagement to a young, respectable woman when he becomes seduced by a beautiful woman from a past era. He survives her attack, but the text conveys that he will never be the same again: "'Well, that is all I have to tell. My health was seriously impaired; all the blood seemed to have been drawn out of my veins; I was pale and haggard, and the chill—Ah, that chill,' murmured Keningale, drawing nearer to the fire, and spreading out his hands to catch the warmth—'I shall never get over it; I shall carry it to my grave'" (21). While Ken chose a vampire instead of the path of marriage and fatherhood, Romuald chose to give in to sexual temptation instead of upholding his oath to the Church and to god, each story symbolizing how succumbing to profane love can

damage your body, life and soul. The message of these stories is that marriage, parenthood and religious devotion are connected facets of a productive and moral life, critical to a stable and sustainable society, and thus sacred.

“Vampiras,” however, challenges the notion of sacred love, a love related more so to the soul than the body. The profane—female sexual desire and carnal pleasure—is normalized through the use of satire, in combination with Dr. Bing’s remark about Natalia’s desires as natural: “tiene nervios, tiene ardores y vehemencias *naturales*, y, sobre todo, te ama con ese amor equilibrado de las naturalezas sanas” (Palma 226; emphasis mine). Stan describes how Natalia had entered his bedroom unsolicited, outside the confines of marriage, and adopted the active role by laying on top of him. Shortly thereafter, Dr. Bing suggests that Stan marry his vampire, and he consents, which can be suggested to convey that Natalia’s profane acts did not deem her unlovable; or even more surprisingly, deem her ill-suited to wifedom. But even before Dr. Bing’s comments and Stan’s tongue-in-cheek final remark, the text conveys the notion that the individual and society are at odds in their ideas of love through differing perspectives on Stan’s illness. If it was not for his mother and Natalia insisting that he see a doctor he would not have gone, given that he felt fine; actually, he could not have felt better: “En primer lugar, no he estado enfermo, doctor, y creo al contrario haber gozado de *inmejorable* salud” (Palma 209; emphasis mine). His insistence on feeling so well, given the later realization that he was being physically attacked at night, implies that he was reveling in his illness (i.e. sexual acts with Natalia), an idea strictly at odds with the moral code of the time, which is represented in the panic-stricken attitudes of his mother and (daytime/public) Natalia. As such, the text can be argued to challenge the moral code through its representation of

sex and love, appearing to advocate for a more tolerant idea of carnal love that was condemned as profane in previously published vampire literature.

The story not only challenges morality through its exploration of female sexual desire, it also rejects the idea of marriage solely as a means of reproduction and as an end to sexual freedom. Honores Vásquez has briefly touched on this in his introduction to *Los que moran en las sombras: asedios al vampiro en la narrativa peruana*, stating that the story rejects the family as a bourgeois institution, which appears to destroy the subject's *eros*. But is Natalia's *eros* really destroyed? A typical message of 19th century vampire literature is that those who successfully ward off the vampire's attempts at seduction and subversion are awarded with life-long happiness through marriage, and a soul intact. (In the case of *Dracula*, the marriage is fruitful, as the ending reveals that Jonathan and Mina Harker had a son.) This coincides with a dominant belief of the time, that of marriage as a means of civilizing people.⁸³ According to DeWees, "The vampire provided an arresting metaphor, replete with meaningful associations, through which to induct readers into the proper attitude toward their future or present roles in marriage" (56). Honores Vásquez is arguably correct in his assumption that, based on Stan's final remark that the reader find a "vampira" of his own, the story challenges the idea of the nuclear family. Does this challenge, however, lie in the fact that the "civilizing" of Natalia's sexual freedom is criticized, as Honores Vásquez suggests, or does it, alternatively, lie in the implication that Natalia continues to display sexual agency? Critics overwhelmingly agree that, through marriage, Natalia's subversive desires are put to rest. However, given the

⁸³ In 1840, Rev. C.B. Tayler called marriage "the great civilizer," a view that DeWees argues is abundant in both fiction and nonfiction throughout the 19th century (29).

satirical tone of the story, and the fact that Stan seems as pleased at the outcome as he was at the onset, it seems more logical to assume that their relationship has not changed. The fact that he continues to refer to her as his “vampira,” as if she were still engaging in activities that liken her to her previous self, makes this more evident. As such, and within the context of a shifting border between good and evil, morality and amorality, the sacred and the profane, the text communicates that marriage does not have to repress sexual desires, but instead, it can serve as a permissible space in which sexual desires can be realized; thus, not solely as an institution within which a nuclear family is produced. This is a major digression from the moral message inherent to Gothic vampire literature, and the element that makes the text so subversive.

The purpose of this section was not to support the idea that “Vampiras” contains a feminist message, nor to argue that Clemente Palma was a feminist. Based on his thoughts on women in the workplace, it cannot be maintained that Palma believed in equal rights or equal access to opportunity for women. In fact, Palma thought that women were becoming increasingly masculinized by taking jobs in the public sector and teaching positions at institutions of higher education: “La mujer se hace productora y activa, pero pierde su poesía, su fragancia: el hombre se hace más sensible, más sutil, más complejo en sus sentimientos, pero en cambio pierde en energía, en fuerza productora y emprendedora” (cited in Mora, “La sexualidad” 25). What the text does do is normalize sexual desires and behaviors, including those of women, which for the time was incredibly subversive. As Mora observes, “Lo importante y transgresor del cuento es que Palma representa la fuerza de las ansias sexuales, especialmente las de la fémica, y que elija hacer del varón el objeto pasivo de la mirada, deseo y activa acción de la mujer”

(Mora, “Decadencia” 197). The story’s implied reader is male, and the plot and tone convey the idea that men should be more understanding of women’s sexual desires. It does not, like Lugones’, sympathize with the female perspective or attempt to legitimate women’s place outside the home. Natalia is delegated to the role of object—although Mora may not agree—for although she briefly transcends it through sexual agency, she never becomes a rightful subject since all of her actions are explored in relation to how they affect men, nor is her perspective on her own agency explored. That said, “Vampiras” does seem to press for a renegotiation of female archetypes in male-authored literature. Whereas Dr. Bing expresses the virgin/seductress dichotomy in his characterization of Natalia as angelic and the other vampire women as demonic, the story appears to call attention to the absurdity of such a division. Neither Natalia nor the other female vampires are killed—in fact, Dr. Bing makes no mention of trying to hunt them down—and their motives appear to be linked: Their vampiric actions, like Clarimonde’s before them, but unlike their later 19th century counterparts, are motivated by desire, not destruction. Of course, Hansen dies while Stan lives, but this may be as a result of Hansen’s own past behaviors, and the fact that Stan eventually understands that Natalia’s desires do not make her profane, monstrous, or ill-suited to marry. In this way, the story not only questions the paradigm of European Gothic vampire literature, but also questions bourgeois ideological constructions of sex and gender, teetering on the line between partial surrender and partial confrontation to female autonomy.

La mujer fría, Carmen de Burgos

As a selection in this chapter, *La mujer fría* serves many purposes.⁸⁴ First and foremost, it is a contribution to the literary vampire tradition that offers a unique take on the female vampire. Second, its inclusion in this chapter offers a female adaptation of a male metaphor, and therefore serves as a point of comparison to the male-authored stories. Accordingly, the text is a significant example of how vampire literature by female authors can not only question patriarchal norms and male discursive practices, but also acknowledge female subjectivity and support female autonomy. Third, and in a similar fashion to Clemente Palma's "Vampiras," the story is an example of an early 20th century trend that deviates from a strictly Gothic horror towards a parodic Gothic formula, which has interesting implications from a doubly marginalized author in terms of both gender and nationality. From a historical and feminist perspective, the story yields many questions. For example, does the fact that the author employs an already exhausted trope (the female vampire) entail that female authors are incapable of writing their own images? Does the author solely invert images to challenge the status quo, or does her reappropriation have greater implications, both within and outside the text? And finally, what is the purpose of giving Blanca (the female protagonist) a voice, a gaze, and sexual agency if she just ends up broken-hearted?

Many critics have explored Carmen de Burgos' life—if not focused on it exclusively—in order to recognize and better understand a public figure who until the last

⁸⁴ The novella was first published in the literary magazine *Flirt: Revista Frívola* in 1922 and later in *Mis mejores cuentos* (published posthumously in 1986), a selection Burgos herself made before passing away in 1932.

few decades was all but erased from literary history.⁸⁵ At sixteen, Burgos married against her family's wishes to a man twelve years her senior (Ugarte 57). They had four children together, only one of which survived infancy (Imboden 16), and later, as a means of gaining financial independence from her abusive husband, she decided to study teaching. After she was accepted at La Escuela Normal de Maestras de Guadalajara (Imboden 16-17) she separated from her husband, although she could not obtain a legal divorce, a personal dilemma that became a social mission: "[...] she became an outspoken advocate of legalizing divorce and of revising the penal code that was so prejudicial to women in Spain" (Kirkpatrick, "Skeletons" 389). Under the penname "Colombine," she became a prolific author of twelve novels, over one hundred novellas and short stories, and a variety of essays on topics ranging from politics to women's etiquette and beauty (Ugarte 57). In addition to contributing to several literary journals of the time, she founded her own, *Revista Crítica* (Imboden 20), and went on to become Spain's first woman journalist and the nation's first female war correspondent (Ragan 235). In her article, "Skeletons in the Closet: Carmen de Burgos Confronts the Literary Patriarchy," Judith Kirkpatrick asks how it was possible for Burgos to have been forgotten, suggesting that after the fall of the Republic, her feminist agenda had to be censored (390). The fact that she was a woman, of course, did not help matters, as she was not considered part of the

⁸⁵ The first critic to "rescue" Carmen de Burgos from oblivion (from a feminist perspective) was Elizabeth Starcevic in her dissertation, *Carmen de Burgos: defensora de la mujer* (1976).

Generation of 1898 or 1927, literary categories created by and consisting of her male contemporaries.⁸⁶

Critics have also focused on the author's life for the same reason that they continue to focus on the life of Emilia Pardo Bazán: To explore the correlation between her feminist concerns and her literary production. In particular, the author uses melodrama, a familiar literary genre that would appeal to her predominantly female middle-class audience, and which "allows her to foreground her themes rather than her techniques and tropes" (Sharp 29). In "Whose Melodrama is it Anyway? Women and the Law in the Work of Carmen de Burgos," Louis Anja suggests that Burgos not only relies on melodrama to reach her audience, but that she manipulates it in order to express her feminist concerns: "In adapting the radical potential of melodrama to a feminist agenda, Burgos subverts melodrama and is acting in consonance with feminist demands of the time, namely that civil rights extended to male citizens by political liberalism should also be extended to women" (770). It can be suggested that a similar act of subversion is the foundation of the 1922 short novel, *La mujer fría*, although in this case the styles, modes, and conventions adopted range from melodrama and Decadence to the Gothic and the fantastic.

La mujer fría tells the story of a woman who evolves from a sexualized object to a subject capable of making her own sexual choices. When Blanca first appears in a Madrid theater she is the object of everyone's attention; so much so that no one seems to

⁸⁶ In Kirkpatrick's dissertation, "Redefining Male Tradition: Novels by Early Twentieth Century Spanish Women Writers," she discusses the problems that arise when an entire period of literature is created and based on the works of a few writers, especially when the categorization applies exclusively to male authors (6).

be paying any attention to the performance, inverting her role from spectator to spectacle. Afterwards, both men and women alike ask don Marcelo, an old friend of hers, to introduce them to her. Men want to make Blanca fall in love with them, as if she were some quest to be conquered, and women want to learn her beauty secrets, while both are curious about her mysterious past. Finally, she agrees to a small gathering, but only because—as the reader later finds out—she is interested in Fernando, the boyfriend of Marcelo’s niece, Edma. Fernando eventually abandons Edma for Blanca, leaving Edma brokenhearted. This upsets Fernando, but he is unable to ignore his feelings for Blanca, until he finds out for himself that her body is exceptionally cold and that her breath reeks of cadaver. Distraught over the combination of attraction and repulsion he feels for the woman he loves, Fernando is fueled by curiosity and turns to don Marcelo for answers concerning her past, to which Marcelo finally agrees. This is when Fernando and the reader both learn that Blanca was born as cold as an icicle, her mother died giving birth to her, she lived in the wild amongst animals that both adored her and were terrified by her, she married twice and is twice widowed, and has suffered the deaths of two small children. Marcelo met her in Vienna, where she was adored by everyone for her beauty and style, but after the death of her second husband, an Austrian count, the people went from calling her “la mujer fría” to “la muerta viva.” Fernando is horrified, and plans to break off his relationship with her, but again goes back to her because of his intense feelings for her. (Curiosity and ego also play a part.) After two melodramatic scenes involving a fainting spell, moonlight,⁸⁷ marriage proposals, passionate kisses and broken

⁸⁷ According to David Melville Wingrove, there is a correlation between the moon and the female vampire in particular that is present throughout the Romantic and Victorian eras (184). He offers several examples of novels and stories to support his claim, one of

embraces, he abruptly leaves her in silence, as his love was not enough to overcome her pestilent kiss and abject body.⁸⁸

Although this text clearly employs melodrama as a literary recourse, many critics also focus on Blanca's physical description in relation to *fin de siècle* representations of women in artistic production. For example, in her article, "Carmen de Burgos's 'La mujer fría': A Response to Necrophilic Aesthetics in Decadentist Spain," Robin Ragan argues that Blanca aligns with the Decadent movement⁸⁹ and Pre-Raphaelite artistic images of women, while also stressing the dangerous nature of these images in the formation of beauty standards (253). In a similar vein, Kirkpatrick suggests that the text "is a

these being *Lilith* (1895): "The face of the moon and the face of Lilith are revealed at one and the same moment. To know one, it seems, is to know the other" (184). Interestingly, a correlation between Blanca's face and the moon is also stressed in *La mujer fría*: "Besó el rostro helado, iluminado por la luz fría de los ojos de esmeralda y la luz de la luna, que lo hacía un poco cárdeno, poniendo manchas violáceas en la sombra de las facciones" (Burgos). Whether this indicates that Burgos' text is directly dialoguing with the literary vampire tradition cannot be proven, but it can be suggested.

⁸⁸ Blanca's body can be considered abject for two reasons. First, because it causes both repulsion and desire, and as Julia Kristeva explains, "[u]nflaggingly, like an inescapable boomerang, a vortex of summons and repulsion places the one haunted by it literally beside himself" (1). Two, she is a representation of the living dead, and for Kristeva the dead body is, outside the parameters of science and religion, "the utmost of abjection" (4).

⁸⁹ The Decadent movement was born in France, and although it was short-lived, "diluted elements of its foremost concerns—such as an abiding fascination with questions of non-normative gender, sex, and sexuality and an interest in a self-conscious aestheticism, can be found in much twentieth- and twenty-first century literature" (Thompson 548). In terms of the representation of women, Thompson argues, "The Decadent heroine is almost invariably represented as a dangerous, even deadly creature who wields an attractive yet terrifying power over the submissive, frequently masochistic hero" (546). For Matei Calinescu, Decadence is compatible with a high degree of technological advancement: "The fact of progress is not denied, but increasingly large numbers of people experience the *results* of progress with an anguished sense of loss and alienation. Once again, progress *is* decadence and decadence *is* progress" (156).

commentary on the dangerous images of women created by men in art and literature at the beginning of the century” (“Redefining Male Tradition” 14-15). In his article, “Hacia una redefinición de la sensualidad femenina en la modernidad: *La mujer fría* de Carmen de Burgos,” Ricardo Krauel proposes that the text is part of two antithetical imaginaries: The Decadent or *fin de siècle* imaginary (born of Romanticism) and the *avant-garde* imaginary. For him, this is why the text fails: “Se trata de un texto que ha ido a la búsqueda de una nueva formulación de la sensualidad femenina, pero sin estar todavía totalmente preparado para encontrarla, por pesarle demasiado aún el anclaje en la tradición precedente” (534). Krauel argues that Burgos intends to reconcile two forms but is unable to do so, and that ultimately, the text’s shortcomings and contradictions get in the way of its success. But what does it mean to reconcile these two imaginaries? And is such a reconciliation even of primary concern in the text, or enough to determine its success or failure? It is clear that the story adopts aesthetic traits from more than one literary current, but instead of proposing that the text fails in reconciling these forms, it could alternatively be suggested that the mixing of styles serves as part of a greater pattern within the text, one with significant implications with regards to not only the vampire and the literary trajectory of the figure, but also the concepts of female authorship and the representations of women in literature; specifically, the belief and practice that literature (and women) fit neatly into prescribed categories.

Blanca is clearly a response to Decadent aesthetics, but she is also much more than that. She is, like Edma, an expression of the idea that women are more complex than male-authored literature has tended to portray them. Men have constructed different notions of Woman throughout history—from Eve and the “angel of the house,” to Lilith

and the 19th century *femme fatale*.⁹⁰ However, as Carol Smart observes, “[n]ot only have there always been contradictory discursive constructs of Woman at any one time, thus allowing Woman herself to be contradictory, but the subject, Woman, is not merely subjugated; she has practised the agency of constructing her subjectivity as well” (7; *sic*). This is an interesting thought when considering Burgos’ portrayal of Blanca, who in addition to aligning with Decadent and Pre-Raphaelite artistic conventions—through her objectification, beauty, and passivity—conversely encompasses a plethora of contradictory and overlapping representations previously exercised by male authors: the snake woman, the fairy tale princess, the *femme fatale*, the New Woman, the bourgeois wife and mother, and, of course, the vampire. Some of these constructions even allow her to transcend passivity into agency, and objectification into subjectivity.

The principal way in which the text communicates the rupture of the strict categories of Woman is through the overlapping of archetypes in Blanca’s character. In the beginning of the novella, the omniscient narrator describes Blanca as if she were a beautiful statue: “Alta y esbelta, sus curvas, su silueta toda y su carne eran la de una estatua [...] Hasta los ojos, grandísimos, brillantes, de un verde límpido y fuerte, lucían como dos magníficos esmeraldas incrustadas en el mármol” (Burgos n. pag). In this description, which lacks both subjectivity and movement and where she is the object of someone else’s gaze, Blanca clearly aligns with Decadent conventions. Later on, though

⁹⁰ For clarification purposes, “Of course, the *femme fatale* was not the invention of the Decadents, or even the Romantics—cruel, sensuous women with a penchant for destroying their lovers are to be found throughout the literature of Antiquity and the Renaissance—but it was the Decadents, and later the Symbolists, who made her into an established type. So much so that by the turn of the century the ‘vamp’ had become a cliché” (Frost 44-45).

still conforming to this model, other characteristics are introduced that complicate her categorization: “Aquellas manos estaban heladas, yertas: no era la frialdad del mármol ni de la nieve, era la frialdad de la carne helada, la frialdad de la muerte” (Burgos).⁹¹ Here, Blanca’s character has notes of vampirism, but her coldness, in addition to her having lost two husbands and two children, likens her to the snake-woman as well, another type of *femme fatale*. At one point, Marcelo even tells Fernando, “Hombre de ciencia ha habido que ha pensado en un extraño organismo de reptil, de sangre fría, en el que ha encarnado una mujer” (Burgos). Ragan, however, argues that “[...] instead of the perverse satanic being the snake woman has always represented, Blanca is a harmless, kind, loving woman” (244). This is disputable, given that she indirectly causes Edma’s suffering, she does not feel very remorseful about it, and at no point in the novel does Blanca seem kind towards anyone except Fernando. Either way, it is clear that the text manipulates these images.

Other ways in which the text communicates the rupture of the strict categories of Woman is through the description of Blanca’s hotel and her evolution from someone else’s subject to summoning her own subjectivity. As is the case with Jordán of “El almohadón de plumas,” it can be suggested that Blanca’s living space is an extension of her character. Like her, it is beautiful, rare, peculiar, and a blend of styles that makes it

⁹¹ Coldness has come to be one of the literary vampire’s most identifying features, but as Krauel observes, men have tried to justify their dominance throughout history by considering themselves morally and physiologically superior by arguing that women’s bodies are cold while men’s are hot, and therefore more aligned with Nature (531-32). This notion gives the title new meaning, given that Blanca could be felt as cold by Fernando because she, as a woman, has been viewed as less perfect than him for centuries.

all the more appealing: “Era el salón internacional, la mezcla de todos los estilos, de todos los tiempos, las que se acumulaban allí, sin tomar, a pesar de prodigarse tanto los ‘bibelots’, aspecto de casa de anticuario, o de bazar. Por el contrario, los objetos más distintos se unían de un modo extraño para formar un todo armónico” (Burgos). In this manner, Blanca’s hotel supports the idea that, at times, breaking with traditional aesthetic norms can be surprisingly appealing. The rooms are a mix of styles, just like Blanca and the text itself, a possible comment not only on representation and aesthetics, but on how not everything needs to model preexisting notions. In her relationship with Fernando, Blanca also steps out of the confines of the archetypes that have been laid out for her by beginning to question how society views her actions. In one scene, she tells Fernando, “Es que no comprenden que una mujer que ha sido casada y madre, pueda amar hasta con más vehemencia que una criatura que aún no sabe lo que es el amor” (Burgos). In saying this, Blanca distinguishes between love in connection with desire and love in connection with the construction of the nuclear family and motherhood. Fernando replies that if she had not professed her love first, he would not have been able to profess his, therefore identifying her as the more active agent in their relationship. In this way, Blanca’s character defies male-authored literary constructions of women by manipulating already existing tropes. Accordingly, the combination of literary tropes and currents can be suggested to strengthen the underlying themes of the text, not cause its failure.

Fernando thinks of Edma and Blanca as opposites, as the “angel of the house” and the seductress, respectively, but are they really that extreme or different from one another? When Blanca inquires about the seriousness of his relationship with Edma, Fernando tells her that he loved her like a sister, like something very familiar. Later on,

however, when he tells Marcelo about his at-times combative feelings towards Blanca, he declares that he may still love Edma: “Es que yo mismo no sé lo que quiero. He llegado a conquistar el amor de Blanca, la adoro, sin dejar de querer a Edma, y cuando ha caído enamorada en mis brazos, la he rechazado, presa de una repulsión inexplicable” (Burgos). Fernando admits that he cannot interpret his own feelings, as he is torn between two conflicting ideals of Woman. Consequently, he cannot be content with one or the other ideal because his stance towards love and marriage is shaped by social constructions that impose limits and unrealistic expectations. In this way, the text makes it clear that these ideals are not representative of actual women (or either character). As Ragan observes, “[Fernando’s] contradictory stance reveals the impossible double standard for women’s sexuality that rests at the heart of this story” (248). Blanca does not fit neatly into the category of a seductress or a *femme fatale*, given that Fernando leaves apparently unscathed. Meanwhile, Edma is not as “familiar” or innocent as Fernando would like to think. During a conversation with her uncle, Edma asks him to find out the brand of Blanca’s perfume. Marcelo’s response is dismissive, explaining how she has the scent of youth, but Edma divulges that she knows that men do not always value youth over experience, and that she wants to be perceived as an experienced woman: “Se habla mucho de la belleza de lo natural, de la bondad, de la inocencia; pero yo veo que los hombres gustan más de los labios pintados y sabios. Se dejan a sus virtuosas mujeres por una ‘perversa’” (Burgos). Whether through her actions or merely through the perception of experience, Edma expresses her duality, making her a much more profound female character than early 20th century literature typically allows, especially Romantic expression and its offshoots. In this way, it can be suggested that the text subverts male

discursive practices through the complex portrayal of female characters that encompass qualities from both female archetypes.

Although Edma and Blanca are expressed as more profound characters than the Decadent imaginary typically permits, they both adhere to the code of sickness so embedded in *fin de siècle* aesthetics.⁹² According to Ragan, “In Spain too, by the turn of the century illness in women had become a beauty ideal. The *fin de siglo* made a fashion of illness. It was in style to have dark circles under the eyes, pale faces and thin bodies” (237).⁹³ After Fernando leaves her for Blanca, Edma becomes so distraught to the point of unhealthy, which takes a toll on her beauty: “Edma se sentía morir sin el amor de Fernando, y no lo ocultaba. Pasaba los días llorando, sin querer comer ni ir a ninguna parte, sumida en un duelo que estropeaba su salud y su belleza” (Burgos). In this way, Edma’s suffering becomes aesthetized according to Decadent images of women, although the manner in which the other characters worry about her suffering problematizes the ideal image.

Edma's fate is never revealed, but while her sickness was acquired via emotional distress, Blanca was, according to Marcelo, born with hers. He goes on to elaborate upon the possible scientific and supernatural explanations of her low body temperature: a snake

⁹² For more on sickness in the Decadent era, see Barbara Spackman's *Decadent Genealogies: The Rhetoric of Sickness from Baudelaire to D'Annunzio*.

⁹³ But why was this in style, especially during a time when policing sick bodies for the health and development of the nation was so important? The reason may lie in how the New Woman was being represented by men, which influenced both fashion and *fin de siècle* literary representations. According to Horace Bushnell, women who were permitted to work would take on a “thin, hungry-looking, cream-tartar” appearance in their faces (Dijkstra 337). In this way, the connection between economic autonomy, sickness, and vampires is clear.

who took the form of a woman, a mysterious disease inherited from her parents, a dead body taken over by a spirit, and a natural anomaly. With respect to the anomaly, he supports this idea by presenting the case of Catalina de Médicis, another supposed “muerta viva.”⁹⁴ Curiously, Marcelo reveals that Blanca's sickness does not seem to affect her, only those around her: “Ella estaba sana, pero daba el efecto de esas manzanas podridas que pudren a las que están en contacto con su mal” (Burgos). Hence, the text distances Blanca from the typical Decadent heroine, while also connecting her, through the apple metaphor, to both Eve and the Evil Queen from the Brothers Grimm’s “Snow White,” therefore further challenging typical tropes in its disruption of female literary archetypes.⁹⁵ Now, it is important to stress that this information is provided by Marcelo, not Blanca, and is thus a way in which the text communicates how female perspectives are silenced when their stories are appropriated by men, becoming part of the dominant male narrative as a result. For Kirkpatrick, “Once again, Blanca is forced to represent male mythology rather than female reality as she is recreated from the masculine

⁹⁴ Being that the text offers multiple explanations for Blanca’s condition through a possibly non-credible source, while never settling on whether her condition is caused by natural or supernatural events, it can be considered fantastic in accordance with Ana María Barrenechea, Rosemary Jackson, Cynthia Duncan, and (for the most part) Todorov’s definitions. Barrenechea goes beyond the confines of Todorov’s definition—which imposes both period and genre limits—while Jackson emphasizes the subversive function of the fantastic (4) and Duncan suggests that “[...] women are especially attracted to the fantastic as a way of subverting patriarchal society and the norms of a male-dominated symbolic order” (234).

⁹⁵ It is curious to note that the text offers up a juxtaposition to this representation, with Fernando likening Blanca to Sleeping Beauty: “Se le aparecía Blanca como una princesa encantada de cuento de hadas, que sólo amaría a quien resistiese la prueba para hacer cesar el hechizo” (Burgos). In Fernando viewing Blanca as a fairy tale princess in need of rescue, the text not only communicates that Fernando sets unrealistic expectations upon women (and himself), but also that literary representations of women by male authors tend to be either one extreme or the other, and therefore quite limiting, unfaithful, and problematic.

perspective” (“Redefining” 44). However, Blanca also discloses part of her past to Fernando. Typically, according to Anja, “[w]omen in Burgos’ melodrama are not silenced: they speak out with dramatic clarity, even though society (as portrayed in the texts in which these women appear) clearly wants to silence them. More importantly, the omniscient feminist narrator, by explicitly intervening to question phallocratic society’s written or unwritten rules, makes the reader aware of its absurdities” (772). In *La mujer fría*, the omniscient feminist narrator does not explicitly intervene, but she does implicitly challenge (or persuade the reader to challenge) masculine perspectives by temporarily allotting Marcelo Blanca’s voice in his descriptions and theories of her sickness.

Although female sickness is more prevalent in Decadent art and literature, women were not the only ones affected by physical, mental, and emotional deterioration at the turn of the century. According to Warwick, as the 19th century progresses, “the relationship between gender and infection becomes central to the narratives, as it is the female body that is increasingly seen as the source of danger, and the disruption of gender identity as one of the effects of contagion” (204). This is an interesting observation when considering Fernando’s character, for although he seems to leave the relationship sane and healthy, he nonetheless becomes nauseous, unbalanced and terrified when in contact with Blanca. In this way, illness, Ragan suggests, “moves fluidly from site to site, from the dead woman to the nausea it produces in her suitors, in this sense transferring the illness from women to men symbolically, from the looked at to the looker” (253). This transference from woman to man is especially interesting in relation to the vampire and, more specifically, the female vampire. Speaking in broad terms, the main goal of vampirism is to feed, while the second goal is to infect, and therefore

propagate sickness (i.e. Otherness). By “infecting” Fernando with her illness (being Woman), he becomes feminized, albeit temporarily, and can therefore be understood as Blanca’s victim.⁹⁶ Moreover, Fernando only becomes ill when Blanca becomes sexually assertive; if he is merely in her presence, and she is looking down or away, he is overwhelmed by his love and adoration. This not only parodies the correlation between sickness and female sexual desire, but also that of the female as the weaker gender.

On account of the aesthetization of sickness, the Decadent imaginary lends itself to vampire fiction, and more commonly, female vampire fiction. From Poe’s “Ligeia,” whose title character dies from an illness and then returns as her husband’s latest wife, to Le Fanu’s *Carmilla*, whose narrator-protagonist, Laura, begins to take ill when a mysterious and beautiful woman shows up at her family’s estate. Until now, critics have only touched on the connection between Blanca and the female vampire. While Ragan mentions it in passing, Kraus’ analysis is limited to suggesting that vampirism and necrophilia transcend the romantic tropes and bring the text within gothic parameters (531-33). Kirkpatrick’s dissertation is the only study that discusses Blanca’s vampire traits and how Burgos manipulates the image to deconstruct male ideals of women: “The artistic figures that men have constructed for women: statue, dead woman, and vampire, do indeed control Blanca. She is doomed to personal unhappiness and lack of fulfillment because she is a literal representative of these products of male fantasy” (“Redefining” 46). One of the objectives of this section is to expand upon Kirkpatrick’s study by exploring Blanca’s vampirism more in depth in order to support the idea that the text not

⁹⁶ For more on women as diseased bodies in need of state regulation and the establishment of the new national hygiene, see Jennifer Smith’s chapter “Women and the Deployment of Sexuality in Nineteenth-Century Spain.”

only belongs to the vampire literary tradition, but that it also shapes future vampire narrative in both literature and film.

As previously mentioned, Blanca is beautiful, cold to the touch, wreaks of cadaver, has a slew of dead bodies in her mysterious past, fosters abjection, and “infects” others with her illness. The fact that she was raised in the wild after the death of her parents is also significant, given the strong connection between vampires and animals. In fact, as Rodríguez argues, if vampires can so easily morph into animals, it is because they *are* animals (“Drink From Me” 84). Vampires’ human characteristics, however, and the fact that humans are their prey, made them all the more terrifying in the first two centuries of their literary representations because they showcased the connection between Man and Nature, evoking a fear of the savage and of the bestiality within. Blanca, however polished she may be on the surface, was nurtured far from civilization, an interesting thought when considering how she is viewed (with terror) and treated (unjustly) by society. This connection to both nature and vampires is strengthened by the fact that Blanca is never seen outside during the day, likening her to the nocturnal creatures that populate vampire narratives. She is either at the theater, in her hotel, or in the hotel garden at night; at one point, she even tells Fernando to leave as daybreak approaches. In addition to her apparent aversion to daylight, Blanca has also been the cause of both animal and human suffering, a typical vampire trait. With respect to the female vampire, Edma’s suffering is particularly interesting. According to Kirkpatrick, “If Burgos is indeed experimenting with this image of woman as vampire, then it follows that a woman would suffer more acutely from Blanca’s influence” (“Redefining” 45). In *Carmilla*, for example, the victims are all female, but contrary to that novel, Blanca’s sexual desire is

geared explicitly towards men and not implicitly towards women, thereby expressing different social and gender anxieties.

Like the vampire, Blanca is always on the move. She currently lives in a beautiful hotel, a modern-day space that symbolizes transience and luxury, which is significant for two major reasons. First, its selection appears to play on male anxieties related to women's spending habits. In the bourgeoisie conception of the private sphere, women's governing of the home typically included the management of household income, and its mismanagement could contribute to a fall from the middle to the lower classes.

According to Ragan, "The cultural fear of women's activities—as consumers of products or consumers of men—also spur the literary and artistic portrayals of beautiful, passive, and passionless women who are themselves consumed rather than consumers" (242).

Even though Blanca originally adheres to the Decadent image of a passive woman, her living arrangements and her reversal of the gaze promotes the idea that she is a consumer,⁹⁷ while her vampire-like qualities only further support her role as such. The hotel is also significant because, as Krauel observes, it is detached from the traditional feminine space, the home (529). For DeWees, this became a trend in female-authored vampire fiction: "Ironically, while male writers portrayed women as the natural geniuses of the domestic sphere, women's writing is far less concerned with the domestic world that men were so eager to protect. Appropriately, as the roles of living women moved beyond the sphere of the home, so too did vampire fiction, as practiced by women

⁹⁷ While the opening scene portrays Blanca as the object being "consumed" through the audience's opera glasses, this is reversed during the course of her relationship with Fernando, who becomes the subject she watches leave her hotel through the same glasses (Ragan 247).

writers” (207-08). Contrary, therefore, to the locked cabinets and drawers that populate nineteenth-century literature by women (Gilbert and Gubar, *Madwoman* 85), vampire fiction by female authors tends to express gender concerns through representations of liberated women, not confined ones. At the same time, however, Blanca is both a liberated and an imprisoned woman, for she is confined to a statue-like aesthetic, but also transcends it.

Blanca’s description as a statue can also be seen in connection to her reading as a vampire. In one passage, her head is described as a rock sitting above a black pedestal (her dress): “Su mano calzaba guante negro, y su cabeza de piedra con las esmeraldas incrustadas, tenía apariencia de cabeza cortada descansando en el negro pedestal” (Burgos; *sic*). Ragan ties this passage to Freud’s theory of the castration complex: “Burgos’s text highlights the inner workings of the psychology of the castration complex as well as using castration imagery to demonstrate the difficulty with which women can openly express desire” (250). She goes on to argue that this fear of the desiring female could account for the “odor” that Blanca’s lovers have detected. Given that numerous critics discuss vampire fiction in Freudian terms, the argument is more than reasonable.⁹⁸ It could, however, be alternatively proposed that Blanca’s depiction as a severed head on a black pedestal is suggestive of a vampire trait that is grounded in feudal ideology. Within the ideological framework of feudal society, the head held the soul of the person, which is why nobles were decapitated, while servants, who lacked a noble soul, were

⁹⁸ For example, as mentioned in the last section on “Vampiras,” Kathy S. Davis likens the vampire to an incarnation of the uncanny (14).

typically hanged.⁹⁹ Count Dracula was, as were many of his descendants, decapitated. Likewise, Blanca, who is noble through marriage and described by Marcelo as “tan noble,” is aesthetically “decapitated,” which opens up further possibilities for reading her odor.

Fernando, like her past suitors, perceives her odor most when she becomes sexually assertive, but his repugnance could also be indicative of her “race.” Before Fernando leaves Blanca at the end of the novella, he tries to convince himself that her smell is nothing more than “un olor de raza”: “Recordaba vagamente en aquel momento que los individuos de ciertos pueblos tienen un olor especial en su carne, en su piel, que los diferencia de los demás. Así los negros de las diferentes tribus se distinguían por el olor de sus cuerpos” (Burgos). This is an interesting thought given how Marcelo declares Blanca is of “raza vasca,” and therefore different from the *madrileños*. She is blonde and Caucasian, but given the allusion to racial difference, in addition to Fernando’s racial explanation of her odor, it could be suggested that he views her race as problematic. Her possible racial Otherness is also interesting given vampire fiction’s penchant for linking foreignness and disease. According to Warwick, the fears at the turn of the century were race, gender and disease, thus the foreignness of female vampirism expressed fears surrounding degeneration (211). While the text does not directly imply that Blanca is nonnative or nonwhite (her name insists that she is), it does engage with the racial politics of the time. Therefore, in addition to her odor being a marker of female sexual desire, it

⁹⁹ For more on this, see “Head or Heart? The Political Use of Body Metaphors in the Middle Ages” by Jacques Le Goff in *Fragments for a History of the Human Body* (Vol. 3).

can also be understood as an expression of racial anxieties, aligning the text even more so with the vampire literature of the time.¹⁰⁰

Blanca has always been a vampire because she is a woman, and even more so because she is a sexually-experienced woman who dares to gaze and desire. In her study on the trajectory of the female vampire, Nancy Schumann argues that the motif is so instilled ideologically that it continues to appear even as other representations of women have evolved: “The vampire motif is clearly used to suggest a sexually aggressive woman in the very traditional sense of the Gothic novel; as soon as Bella’s wish for sexuality is fulfilled, there is no stopping her transformation into a vampire. The human girl was the virgin victim, but the sexual woman is automatically a vampire” (117). Here, Schumann discusses how the female protagonist in the contemporary *Twilight* series inevitably becomes a vampire once she consummates her relationship with Edward and becomes pregnant with his vampire child. Especially interesting here is that Bella is the more sexually assertive of the two, and what Schumann neglects to mention is that the only reason Edward gives in to her desires is because they are finally married. Edward, like the good Victorian boy that he is—he was “turned” in the 19th century—believes a sexual relationship to only be acceptable within the parameters of marriage, and he is able to fall in love with Bella and see her as a potential mate because she is a virgin. Sexually-experienced women are not considered “marriage material” —neither during the *fin de siècle* nor, apparently, in some contemporary representations—and are typically not

¹⁰⁰ For more on race in Burgos’ writings, see Carmen Arranz’s article, “El discurso de raza como pretexto feminista: Carmen de Burgos desde Melilla,” where the author argues, among other points, that Burgos employs racial discourse to highlight national problems and their solutions.

capable of being truly loved by the men that try to conquer them. Unlike Bella, Blanca has sexual experience. Not only is she twice-widowed and has twice bore children, but she has also had other suitors, which clearly bothers Fernando, even though she assures him that these were merely “flirteos sin importancia.” This could explain his disgusted reaction towards both her body and her sexual advances, given that his knowledge of her past and her current behavior make her undesirable, and therefore monstrous.

Accordingly, Fernando’s quick departure shortly thereafter could be attributed to his uneasiness towards Blanca’s past sexual experience, as well as her current sexual desire outside marriage.

In addition to being a sexual woman, Blanca is also undeserving of Fernando’s love because she is not the ideal mother figure. Besides giving birth to two unhealthy children—one was an “idiot” while the other died at the age of two from a tumor—her low body temperature may impede any sexual contact between the two, much less contact that leads to the birth of a healthy child that would consolidate a nuclear family. In her analysis of the role of motherhood in several of Burgos’ narratives, Sharp suggests, “Burgos questions the conventional wisdom that a lack of children prevents women from reaching their full potential. She wishes to eradicate the notion that a woman who is not a mother is not a true woman” (121). Although Sharp does not mention *La mujer fría*, it could be suggested that in sympathizing with Blanca, the text draws attention to the fact that the stereotypes, fantasies, expectations, and limits imposed upon Blanca’s body are what cause her unhappiness, not the fact that she was not part of a nuclear family. Yes, she wants to be loved, but she also chooses to express her desire rather than giving in to Fernando’s (and society’s) expectations of her.

The concept of motherhood takes on new meaning when reading the text as a vampire story. Vampires impede the reproduction of the human race through sickness, murder, and the propagation of vampires like themselves, furthering a chaotic and terrifying alternative to the natural order of things. The female vampire, however, is doubly stigmatized because she is not only a vampire, but also a body that cannot perform its natural and primary function as a woman. According to Warwick, “What the female vampire is threatening to draw out of the man is not blood but semen [...] and to no reproductive end” (212). As a mother of deceased children and a potential vampire who is most likely unable to provide Fernando with a family, it would make sense that Fernando not only be terrified of Blanca, but that he also leaves her after he gets what he wants from her, which as the reader learns through the narrator’s focalization of Fernando, is for an unattainable woman to love him: “Habría una mayor gloria en conseguir el amor de una de esas mujeres excepcionales, incapaces de amor” (Burgos). From Fernando’s perspective, Blanca is there to fulfill his expectations and desires, and once she has fulfilled the ones that she is capable of, he has no use for her, indicative of how women’s roles and worth are unjustly determined by men in patriarchal society.

I began this section by discussing how literary critics have attempted to draw parallels between Carmen de Burgos’ personal life, feminist causes, and narrative fiction. Following this scholarly trend, it can be suggested that Burgos’ own frustrations and suffering as a mother who experienced the deaths of three young children influenced her sympathetic characterization of Blanca. Conversely, Burgos’ determination to leave her husband and take control of her finances through an active career as both an author and a public servant can also be suggested to have influenced Blanca’s independence, agency,

and disregard for gender norms.¹⁰¹ In this way, Blanca can be read as a symbol for the woman who steps outside the traditional roles of wife and mother, but she can also be read as a symbol for female authors who are encroaching upon a typically male field. According to Ragan, “Blanca can symbolically represent the woman writer who tries to write her own story but whose voice is drowned out by the masses of male-authored texts that circulate about her” (225). Along these lines, the male gaze, rumors, and speculations about her can be considered symbols of a greater system at work that serves to silence women and marginalize female authorship.

Blanca’s sympathetic characterization is also significant outside the parameters of the text itself, mostly because it is a precursor to a major trend in contemporary vampire literature. From Anne Rice on, “Vampire fiction by women often maintains the vampire as a focalized Other, but introduces an important twist to the genre by letting the vampire be perceived by focalizers who are primarily sympathetic towards its Otherness as an embodiment of their own estrangement or liberation from those same patriarchal standards” (Davis 7). In tracing the trajectory of the figure, Schumann makes a similar point: “It’s safe to say that Anne Rice started a trend for modern vampire literature in humanizing vampires” (115). Clearly, however, Anne Rice was not the first female author to humanize the vampire or sympathize with Otherness in vampire fiction.¹⁰² In

¹⁰¹ It is important to note that the subversion of gender norms is commonplace in Burgos’ fiction. For example, in *Los anticuarios*, “Adelina and Fabián have reversed the traditional roles of married couples; she is the chief breadwinner, and he, although part of the business partnership, is the stay-at-home caretaker of the children” (Roberta Johnson 144).

¹⁰² Burgos’ representation is in stark contrast to other female vampires in female-authored literature. For example, in 1900, Marguerite Eymery-Vallete (whose pseudonym was Rachilde) published the short story “The Blood Drinker,” a tale of a female vampire that

this way, *La mujer fría* sets the stage for a new trend in vampire literature that is born of a variety of motivators: From the feminist movements that sought equal rights, education and protection for women, to the end of slavery as a legal economic system, and which continues to be influenced by the global awareness of inequality, exploitation, and marginalization.¹⁰³

Blanca is not a female vampire in the traditional sense. She is not Carmilla, Lilith, Lucy, or one of the female vampires living in Dracula's castle. At the same time, she does not align with the other extreme: Mina, Laura, or the other stereotypical, submissive victims that find their way back on a course set out for them by the patriarchy. In her complex representation that questions customary female archetypes, Blanca shatters the 19th century superficial images of the "angel of the house" and the *femme fatale*. Additionally, she is a product of many literary currents, styles, and modes: Romanticism, melodrama, the Gothic, the fantastic, Decadence, and the *avant-garde*. This reappropriation and blending of styles to serve progressive concerns could be a factor in how the text moves away from horror and towards parody. Here, the reader is not persuaded to fear Blanca, but fear *for* her in such a way that calls attention to the oppressive systems that determine both her worth and that of female authorship. In this way, the text serves as a precursor to what Honores Vásquez has argued to be a shift from Gothic horror to Gothic parody in the representation of the vampire figure. It is also a

documents, according to Dijkstra, "the level of self-hatred reached by some turn-of-the-century women" (340).

¹⁰³ I am not arguing here that Blanca is the very first sympathetic female vampire in literature—Keat's *Lamia*, Gautier's *Clarimonde*, and a few others preceded her. What I am proposing is that Blanca is the first female vampire whose sympathy remains intact throughout her evolution from a sexualized object to a woman with a voice and sexual agency.

significant contribution to the vampire theme in Hispanic literature and beyond, and showcases how female authors can dialogue with the male-dominated literary canon while writing their own images of women.

Conclusions

The female vampire in literature is a site of alterity where the vulnerabilities of the public/private divide are exposed, where gender norms and heteronormative sex practices are challenged, and where the dominant medical, legal, social, and literary discourses are typically maintained, but also called into question for their absurdities and exploitative qualities. She is a site where the past still looms over the prospects of modernity, and where the present is rattled with how to maintain progress, privilege, and hierarchy. Whereas challenges to the bourgeois ideal of wife- and motherhood usually perish alongside the perverse gendered imaginary that is the female vampire's body, the texts examined in this chapter show a sympathetic view towards the figure, dismantling the bourgeois moral code that encompassed gender relations, sexuality, and appropriate "places" for men and women.

According to Elisabeth Bronfen, "[t]hree types of femininity presided over the literary imagination of the nineteenth century: firstly, the diabolic outcast, the destructive, fatal demon woman, secondly, the domestic 'angel of the house', the saintly, self-sacrificing frail vessel, and thirdly a particular version of Mary Magdalene, as the penitent and redeemed sexually vain and dangerous woman, the fallen woman" (218). Whereas the last chapter argued that the vulnerabilities of the private sphere were exposed most blatantly through the death of the "angel of the house," this chapter explored the fatal woman, demonstrating how Lugones, Palma, and Burgos' texts

dismantle this type of representation through sympathy, irony, and parody. All three female characters in the last chapter die as a result of sexual, social, and economic exploitation; they are effectively drained by their husbands and/or the social structures and models that either render them vulnerable or exploit them. In this chapter, however, all of the female characters survive, and more importantly, all of the female vampires survive, who come to represent not the marginal or the negative, but the relevant and the modern. All of their “vampires” appear to be one thing at the onset of the text, but they soon break from the mold, conveying the complexity of Woman in addition to the arbitrariness of classification, most especially those systems based on an outdated and unjust moral code.

Breaking with the literary female vampire tradition, all three stories blur the line between victim and aggressor. In Lugones’ story, the nameless female vampire is a victim of masculine aggression and social standards of women, which seem far more immoral than the desire she expresses towards Adolfo. In Palma’s “Vampiras,” Natalia is a vampire but also a victim of a moral standard that she cannot live up to because it is in conflict with her nature as a woman. She is, ironically, also the remedy for her victim’s suffering. And in *La mujer fría*, Blanca’s status as a victim is made the most apparent, as the text conveys how she struggles with her objectification, and how, even despite all the resources she has at her disposal (and maybe even *because* of them), she cannot disavow the social and moral standards imposed upon her body and find love and happiness at the same time.

This break with the victim/vampire dynamic is linked to shifting ideas of Otherness, and while the origin of Otherness is more ambiguous in these stories than in

those of the previous chapter, there are descriptions that point to both domestic and foreign anxieties. The most apparent Other is, of course, Woman, for while the texts are sympathetic to her cause, her agency is clearly the greatest threat to the status quo. As such, the level of subjectivity awarded her is not constant, and can be suggested as being gender dependent. For example, while Burgos traces Blanca's evolution from a sexualized object to a sexual subject, in Lugones' text the reader gets a glimpse into the depth of the character, as she does not conform to male standards or binary oppositions. Alternatively, her subjectivity is not nearly as realized in Palma's text. Although female agency is embraced, it is done so in relation to Man and the home.

As is the case with the European version of the female vampire, the rise of feminist movements and evolving gender roles in Spain and Latin America may have influenced the emergence of the *fin de siglo* literary female vampire, but in these cases, it seems that sympathy with their causes played more of a part than a total rejection of their plights, especially in the cases of Burgos and Lugones. While "Vampiras" and *La mujer fría* have received critical attention focused on their language, forms, and the literary currents that nourished them, "La vampira" has gone unnoticed until now. By reading these three stories in connection to each other, this chapter has drawn attention to a particular trend in Hispanic vampire narratives that elevates the subgenre in relation to the European literary vampire tradition on a small scale, while asserting Spain and Latin America's particular modernities on a larger one.

EPILOGUE

As this study has discussed, the cloaked, fanged, aristocratic vampire made a very minor appearance in Hispanic letters, for reasons which may include censorship, the rejection of foreign tropes coupled with the search for uniqueness, the mixing of literary currents, and different pasts and literary traditions that produced distinct figures of monstrosity or distinct responses to social anxieties. For Spanish and Latin American authors, the inclination was more so towards what I have referred to as “vampire logic”—processes (capitalism, imperialism, etc.) and figures (husbands, girlfriends, doctors, etc.) that either explicitly or implicitly (through metaphor or allegory) suggest an exploitative relationship similar to that of a more traditional vampire and his or her victim, and which speak to greater ideological, political, and economic anxieties. At times, literal bloodsucking occurs. Other times, a character suffers loss of willpower, loss of energy, or other anemia-like symptoms. Some of these texts had yet to receive scholarly attention, but for the most part, I found that they had already been subjects of scholarly research, albeit usually not in connection with Gothic literature. These stories were discussed within the parameters of Decadence, Romanticism, melodrama, and in specific cases, *modernismo* and *criollismo*, and as such, contributed to the erroneous idea that the Gothic had never appeared in Hispanic letters. In the Latin American context, as Casanova-Vizcaíno and Ordiz reveal, this is partly due to a rejection of the term by Hispanic authors themselves. Combined with outside perspectives of what constituted the Gothic novel—or the “true” Gothic—such acts have promoted the Western idea that Spain and Latin America, although fundamental to the development of modernity in different ways, exist on the periphery of it. This study has also explored the idea of what it “means” to

use vampire logic in what has been considered to a great extent “non-modern” literature, which has required an examination of historical events and processes, and further thought as to the implications of its usage on the political and literary levels. What are, for example, the implications of a Spanish female author writing her own images of female monstrosity, or of texts clearly engaging, but not conforming to, European models? By referring to these models in each chapter, what I have attempted to outline over the course of this study is that vampire logic in Hispanic letters has pointed to singular Spanish and Latin American Gothic traditions, at times intersecting but also independent of each other, formed as responses to particular anxieties over authorship, modernity, nationhood, the economy, the family, morality, and gender.

At the heart of Gothic fiction is the juxtaposition between good and evil, which takes shape in the antagonism between morality and amorality, hero and villain, past and present, and self and Other. The Gothic needs this conflict, oftentimes as a subversive outlet wherein the status quo is maintained, while other times as a means of indirectly challenging oppressive forces—the patriarchy, the bourgeoisie, the aristocracy, the monarchy, the Church, the colonizer, etc.—or “immoral” ideals—female sexual desire, non-heteronormative sexual practices, sex outside the confines of marriage, etc. As the genre developed into a mode under the particular ideological coordinates of the mid to late 19th century, this conflict was still front and center. In *Carmilla*, the titular character, being both a lesbian and a noblewoman, represents the dark, savage, and immoral past that threatened Ireland’s progress. In *Dracula*, the juxtaposition is more far-reaching: Van Helsing is emblematic of progress, scientific and medical advancements, and morality, while Dracula is the foreign tyrant who disrupts both the public and private spheres by

causing financial and familial panic; in the meantime, Lucy Westenra, a whimsical girl who lets her sexual desires get the best of her, becomes a full-blown *femme fatale* (consumer of men and children), therefore inverting her sanctioned role (producer of children and breast milk) within the confines of marriage, while her friend, Mina Harker, manages to use both her love and faith to ward off Dracula, and is thus later rewarded with a child of her own. The same tends to ring true in short fiction; if a clear juxtaposition is not apparent in the archetypes, the moral of the story is that if the male or female characters would have acted differently, in accordance with morality and societal expectations, they could have avoided suffering, death, or the hell that awaits them. “Ken’s Mystery” and the novella *Clarimonde* are both examples of this. This dissertation has shown, however, that the Spanish and Latin American Gothics of the late 19th and early 20th centuries did not tend to conform to this tradition.

These stories have all challenged the prevalent ideas over what constitutes good, lawful, and moral behavior. In some cases, it is clear who the vampire is and what the narrator’s stance is towards his or her actions; sometimes it is sympathetic, other times not so much. An example of the former would be Palma’s “Vampiras,” while an example of the latter would be Pardo Bazán’s “El vampiro.” But in most cases, these stories have blurred the line between victim and vampire altogether, prompting the reader to question the motives and actions discussed in the story. In the section on “La exangüe,” the young Spanish woman falls victim to Philippine indigenous rebels, and to a lesser but arguably more significant degree, to the doctor and painter who continue her subjugation and objectification, but she is also likened to a vampire herself, an allusion that creates ambiguity as to Spain’s role within the national allegory. In Palma’s “La granja blanca,”

Cordelia appears to be both a victim of vampirism and a vampire herself. In what seems to be a reflection of her marriage, she undergoes a vampiric process when she paints her self-portrait, but she also shares qualities with vampires and vampiric *femme fatales*, such as the ability to resurrect and project sexual desire. In the final chapter, both Lugones' female vampire and Blanca of *La mujer fría* share similar qualities that are particular to the Decadent era's vampiric *femme fatale*: They are both widows with mysterious pasts and abject forms—beautiful on the outside, but their sexual desires sicken the men who want them. Curiously, they are simultaneously represented as loving, misunderstood, and complex women who have suffered at the hands of the men and society that deem them unlovable. In all of these stories, what is considered lawful or moral is questioned, and ultimately, the evils and weaknesses of women are pitted against the greater evils of bourgeois patriarchal society to expose vulnerabilities in both the public and private spheres, in the eyes of the law and behind closed doors.

These examples do not entail a complete rejection of the stereotypes and dichotomies present in European models of vampire fiction, but in all of these cases, they do entail a reworking of them. Take, for example, the “angel of the house” literary motif. While it appears in “El almohadón de plumas,” Alicia's death destabilizes the marital ideal, and with it, the status quo. And while the angel of the house/seductress dichotomy does appear in “Vampiras” and *La mujer fría*, both texts sympathize with the female characters that exhibit sexual desire, albeit to varying degrees and for different reasons. Another example would be the “good doctor.” Doctors are typical characters of vampire fiction, appearing as the rational voice in contrast with the irrationality of the vampiric events—one in Marryat's novel, two in *Dracula*, and three in *Carmilla*, as Warwick

asserts. She goes on to explain that these doctors' purpose was to legitimize the actions taken against the vampires while undermining the agency of the female characters (209-10). In the selected corpus, however, none of the doctors conform to the model. *La exangüe*'s doctor is nothing more than a collector of lives, the English healer that appears in Pardo Bazán's "El vampiro" is complicit in Inesiña's death, and the doctors that attempt to treat Alicia in "El almohadón" are perplexed and useless. The one most like Van Helsing is Dr. Bing—knowledgeable, clever, compassionate—but even he is a parody of the model. These stories therefore dismantle the traditional stereotypes and binary oppositions inherent to earlier Gothic fiction, and as a result, diverge from vampire women such as Brunhilda and even Clarimonde, but most especially from those in *Dracula*, their most significant contemporary. In doing so, these stories create, for the most part, a space for the Other outside the typical Gothic trappings, and more importantly, outside societal norms.

The analysis portion of this dissertation appears to be divided into two parts: The first an exploration of how vampire logic in Spain and Latin America communicates specific political and economic anxieties (chapter two), and the second a study of how vampire representations in Spain and Latin America express ideological anxieties related to sex and gender in both the private (chapter three) and public (chapter four) spheres. But close readings of the eight stories have proven that these anxieties are oftentimes linked, and that therefore, the vampire is imposed with many meanings, simultaneously. A prime example of this is Pardo Bazán's "La exangüe," which I argue to have both political and ideological implications related to authorship and gender, as I understand it to be a national allegory on economic and political loss narrated ironically through a

female perspective. Another example is Pardo Bazán's "Vampiro," where marriage is explored as an economic investment or loss, and *La mujer fría*, where the female vampire is an expression of women's economic and sexual autonomy. On a subsidiary level, even Quiroga's two stories adhere to this through his treatment of the female body in connection with historical metaphors and allegory, as well as Palma and Lugones' to differing degrees. The Spanish and Latin American Gothic vampire can therefore be understood as a complex trope, one that more accurately represents how the different levels of our social structure interact with each other. I understand women's gender roles to be, within bourgeois patriarchal society and under capitalism, determined by the economy, and these stories speak to this, if not also to the fact that change occurs, as Althusser proposes, first at the economic level. In these Gothic stories, the manifestation of this phenomenon is arguably due to how women were permeating the public sphere during that time in history, and how women's gender roles were adapting to these changes. Thus, while these texts are divided into chapters based on major trends, they show how vampire logic can be a response to changes at every level of our social structure—ideology, politics, and the economy—simultaneously.

There are, of course, some concerns with this study. I have come to many conclusions regarding the Spanish and Latin American literary vampire tradition by comparing their productions with those of England, Ireland, France, and Germany, and even the United States to a lesser degree through the works of Edgar Allan Poe. That said, a closer look needs to be taken at French and German Gothic literature in particular, which could contain similar usage of vampire logic as a tool for social criticism or as a means of manifesting political and economic exploitation. For instance, there is a story

by Erckman-Chatrian entitled “L’Arraigne-crabbe,” which Margo Glantz suggests has similarities to Quiroga’s “El almohadón” (“La metamorfosis” 8). Stories such as this could potentially challenge what I have argued to be a unique trend in Latin American literature to express vampire logic through insects as a means of confronting myths about the landscape, peoples, and history of the region. There could also be cases of the Gothic *fin de siècle* vampire written by more obscure authors and/or that appeared in other forms, such as poetry or the short story. In these cases, there could be appearances by the male and female vampires that represent greater ideological, political, and/or economic tensions through the use of parody.

Another aspect to consider, and one which I mentioned in the introduction, is that this dissertation is not nearly exhaustive in terms of the Latin American and Spanish sources. If my research has done anything, it has shown that the vampire was indeed alive and well at the turn of the 19th century, and for reasons outlined earlier, I have chosen not to include several cases of vampire literature I have come across for reasons varying from, but not limited to, the vampire logic not being central to the plot, the literature not sharing fundamental similarities with other texts, and the fears or anxieties manifested not relating to the three overarching themes of political and/or economic exploitation, marriage and the nuclear family, and Gothic parody of the female vampire as a response to fears surrounding female economic and sexual autonomy. The stories omitted also warrant scholarly criticism, as a closer look into 19th and early 20th century literary vampires would not only inform our ideas on the intersection of Otherness, exploitation, modernization, authorship, sex, and gender at the turn of the century, it would also inform future studies on contemporary representations of the vampire and its trajectory. For this

reason, I would like to dedicate some space to a few of these stories, as it may prove useful to future scholars.

Although this study has explored occultism and spirituality in several of the stories, and Theosophy in particular, I have not included vampire fiction that has overt religious themes, as these seemed outside the scope and theoretical approach of my study. An example of this type is Pardo Bazán's "La santa de karnar," where a young girl from Compostela who appeared to be progressively "consumed" by an unknown force is sent to live in a small village as part of her medical treatment. There, she meets *la santa*, who she believes cures her; her doctor, on the other hand, dismisses this and instead attributes her improvement to the open air. This story has some traditional Gothic trappings, such as suspense and the sublime aesthetic through the depiction of strange sounds, wild animals, and an isolated nocturnal landscape.

Besides overt religious themes, there are other stories that have been excluded for different reasons. For one, I have omitted stories that are not set in the time period in which they were written, as these did not appear to comment on contemporary anxieties, at least not strongly. These stories would fall more in line with Frayling's category of the folkloric vampire, such as Abraham Valdelomar's "La virgen de cera" (1910) and Clemente Palma's "Leyenda de haschich" (1904). I have also omitted stories that do not fit into the broader trends I have identified. Examples of this are Rubén Darío's "Thanathopia" (1893), which clearly follows European models of the vampiric *femme fatale*, Julian del Casal's "El amante de las torturas" (1893), and Wenceslao Fernández Flórez's "El claro del bosque" (1922), the latter two being tales more aligned with

psychological horror. In this way, these last two convey greater anxieties related to *fin de siècle* and post-war despair, respectively, in addition to growing trends in psychoanalysis.

A final matter that merits mentioning, and which is in connection with the previous one, is the fact that all of the Latin American primary sources I have studied are authored by men, while all of the Spanish sources, with the exception of Goya's etchings, are authored by women. This was not on purpose, nor is this necessarily a reflection of a greater trend. Although I have not found cases of vampire narrative fiction authored by Latin American women, there are examples of Gothic vampire fiction written by Spanish male authors, such as the aforementioned Ramón del Valle Inclán's *Ligazón* (1926), Castelao's *Un ojo de vidrio: memorias de un esqueleto* (1922), and Wenceslao Fernández Flórez's "El claro del bosque" (1922). As I mentioned in the theory chapter, and in addition to the reasons outlined above, the vampires or vampire logic in these texts are secondary to the plot, which is a major reason why they were omitted. But an important question to address is why Emilia Pardo Bazán and Carmen de Burgos were writing vampires when Latin American female authors were not. It could be that they were, and that more archival research just needs to be done, with the inability to access these texts outside their respective countries also being a factor. Still another factor to consider is that writing as a woman in Latin America at the turn of the century, despite some feminist activity (or possibly because of it) was very difficult. As Nancy LaGreca observes, turn of the century Latin America experienced a decline in women's access to education in many countries, there was an ideological push to normalize behavior for women through the definition of gender norms, and women writers were often scorned by their contemporaries, since writing prose was considered a public, intellectual, and thus

male profession (2-3). As difficult as it may be to explain the discrepancy, one could also safely suggest—based on the social, political, and economic restraints faced by Latin American women at the turn of the century—that women needed to be more careful about the topics they chose to write about in order to be taken seriously. At the very least, they needed to already be established, such as Pardo Bazán and Burgos were, before venturing into such obscure, controversial literary territory as the Gothic vampire.

As the Gothic vampire continues to evolve, both in the Hispanic world and beyond, it is important to understand not only the trajectory of the vampire in art, literature, and film, but also the ways in which these monsters are representing contemporary anxieties and the implications of these depictions. This study focuses on literature over four decades, the 1890s to the 1920s, and argues that these vampires represent a myriad of political, economic, and ideological anxieties, ones which are particular to the ideological coordinates in which they were produced. In the later 20th and 21st centuries, changes in our social structure at all three levels have influenced adaptations in the representation of the vampire. Take the vampire as a direct attack against the nuclear family and the private sphere, for example. As Amanda Raye DeWees proposes, “Since we no longer worship the Home with the religious fervor of Victorians, we can no longer fear the monsters that undermine it” (242). I would add that as we move farther and farther away from a clear idea of what is “good” and “evil” in society, and as we continue to look inwards and embrace society’s and our own monstrosities, the vampire figure adapts to accommodate these shifts. That said, while we may no longer “worship the Home” in the same way as before, the home and the private sphere that it symbolizes are still nucleuses of anxieties, fears, and contradictions, resulting in their continued vulnerability. In the 21st century, the

division between public and private still characterizes our spaces, bodies, institutions and so forth, but as Susan Gal notes, the distinction is neither stable nor continuous (247). According to her, “public and private will have different specific definitions in different historical periods and social formations” (268). What is considered public and what is considered private changes over time, which will result in different representations of vampirism and the meanings behind them. Yet another factor to consider is the emerging space of the “common,” characterized by virtual or cyber spaces and physical spaces such as plazas. These developments have and will continue to influence the public/private distinction, so not only is it practical to keep this in mind while exploring these literatures, it is also necessary to understand that while vampires have appeared in oral and written accounts for centuries, they are all shaped by their ideological realities, and by extension, their political and economic ones.

As modern humans, we still question and fear technology, but it has saturated our lives, and to a great extent, isolated us and changed the way we think as a species. We also still fear Otherness, which is clearly projected in our immigration policies, our political efforts on a local and global scale, race relations, and how society continues to condemn women and non-normative sexual identities and practices. And of course, since science has not allowed us to know what lies beyond, we still fear death, a universal condition that can be suggested to underpin the vampire even to this day. That said, the vampire continues to evolve, and we, as readers and spectators, continue to be fascinated. It is this fascination that has led me down this long road and has resulted in the completion of this study, which is a small contribution to scholarly criticism’s recent upswing in Gothic studies in Spanish and Latin American literature. Clearly, there is still

much work that needs to be done, as future studies need to address how other Gothic forms are employed by Latin American and Spanish authors to begin to get an understanding of the scope, characteristics, and implications of producing horror and monstrosity within these literary traditions.

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