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Colonization and Cultural Clashes: Irish Rage and Vampire Attack against Britishers in Bram Stoker's Dracula

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Abstract

This article discusses on colonization, cultural conflicts and power exercises of British authority that Irish people cannot bear easily. British colonial power supremacy and their hegemony during Victorian period is exposed in Bram Stoker's Dracula. The novel is structured in a journal form. It shows British's colonial power and suppression that is exemplified through different kinds of sufferings that people experience. The novel depicts the conflicting images of Victorian society when British colonized other countries and imposed its own cultural ideology. Objective of this paper is to show the Britishers' power exercise and Irish resistance against them. This paper is prepared in qualitative research method. Comparative study is made on the text and referential resources to know about the British and Irish cultures and so this paper analyses the text from a part of cultural study and resistance perspectives respectively. Finding of this paper is that power exercises of the colonizers brought cultural clashes. Irish people felt insulted by the colonizers. British control over their property and dominance in cultural identity guided them to go on resistance.

Keywords

Colonization, Clashes, Rage, Vampires, Revenge.

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1. Introduction

Bram Stoker's Dracula raises the issues of colonization, cultural clashes and human sufferings. Irish citizens suffered of British colonization that distorted their artworks and cultural practices. Britishers tried to continue the spy to control over the Irish activities and resources. Colonizer's activities raised the rage among Irish citizens and they wanted to take a revenge against them for which Count Dracula tried his best. Stoker's *Dracula* looks like a journalistic work which exposes the mysterious birth and activities of Count Dracula. About Dracula, George Stade writes, "Dracula is already a reflection, a shadow, an apparition, a matter of mind rather than matter-and in any case, when we look for him in mirrors, our own faces get in the way. Nor can the light of day illuminate his murks, for until nightfall he likes to lie dormant in his coffin" (Introduction, p. v). Dracula looks like wolves, bats, rats, ghost or a spirit and his activities are mysterious. His shape and sizes dazzle the others. He says, "I love the shade and the shadow" (p. v). In this regard Dr. Abraham van Helsing notes that "Dracula's power ceases, as that of all evil things, at the coming of day" (qtd. in Stade, p. v). His birth was mysterious as he was born with red eyes, white mustache and grown hairs on the palms. Dracula and vampire activities in the present time also are terrific who disguise and terrify the enemies.

In addition to Dracula's mysterious activities, this paper analyzes the events of physical and mental attacks of the British character like Jonathan Harker, Mina Murray known as Mina Harker, Lucy Westenra and the others. Dracula and the other characters in the form of vampires (unnatural characters like devils or ghosts and Mephistopheles who eat the fleshes and drinks blood) try to attack the colonizers as a revenge that is shown in Stoker's *Dracula*. Mina Harker is also a dangerous character about whom Stade writes, "she has a man's brain......and woman's heart" (Introduction, p. ix). She disguises and makes the people suffer from her activities. Harker's

entry to Dracula's castle is suspicious where he wants to track Dracula and control his activities and so Dracula is furious against him. Harker is observing the castle from colonial eye and mindset that turns to the case of attack. Stoker writes:

......one of the wildest and least known portions of Europe. I was not able to light on any map or work giving the exact locality of the Castle Dracula, as there are no maps of this country as yet to compare with our own Ordnance Survey maps: but I found that Bistritz, the post town named by Count Dracula, is a fairly well-known place. I shall enter here some of my notes, as they may refresh my memory what I talk over my travels with Mina. (Dracula. p. 2)

Due to an unfair treatment and harassments of the Britishers to the Irish society, Irish people started to speak against the wrong practices of colonizing. Among the disputes, castle performances and cultural clashes are the major issues for which Dracula and vampires started attacking to the Britishers.

Harker worries seeing Irish anger, vampire attacks and merciless death there in the castle. It is a challenge to British society because the country was exercising super power during the colonized period. The novel, Dracula exhibits Victorian society when British was in power in the world. British colonization was in direct rule over countries. As a result, most of the countries around its periphery were politically dominated and so they had to protest against the colonization. Stoker writes, "There were dark, rolling clouds overhead, and in the air the heavy, oppressive sense of thunder. It seemed as though the mountain range had separated two atmospheres and that now we had got into the thunderous one" (Dracula, p. 10). Stoker's writing symbolically refers to the thundering position between British and Irish territory that brought the cultural, political and the other clashes. Dark rolling clouds refers to the spy activities and dominance of the Britishers that increased the Irish rage and turned towards the protest activities. British penetrated to the neighboring countries and imposed own cultural ideologies there. Even not having direct rule, it created power and imposed English way of living. Many countries were terrified by the power of England against which Dracula characters revolted. At the end of the century, British rule left its grip and power. The nationalist movement like Irish nationalism process gradually weakened British laws and that started their downfall.

The novel presents Irish protest against British colonization and shows disputes along with resistance by torturing British people. It presents Irish threat to British society in terms of cultural and ideological issues. The major character Dracula shows an anger against the British society, culture and people. He imprisons British representative character Jonathan Harker who visits to Irish representative character Count Dracula for some conspiracy. His activities are taken as "gloom of the night" (Dracula, p. 12). This research focuses on mainly two characters who represent British and Irish society respectively. The villainous character Dracula being vampire inflicts and exploits British gentleman and his family. It is a representative case which brings a clash between Irish and British society. As Dracula frightens Harker, vampires also try to expose their mysterious power to make him more frightening. Irish threatens British society during Victorian era when Irish people were unable to accept imposition of British power and culture.

2. Theoretical Underpinning

The novel, Dracula typically depicts Irish culture, society and tradition during Victorian period when British had practiced colonial power in Ireland. Irish people had nationalistic feeling of "exposing their own culture and ideology" (Louis, p. 246). Irish people hate the English culture therefore they begin cultural resistance against English culture. The novel introduces similar Victorian issue that shows Irish voices for political as well as cultural freedom. Thomas Boylan analyzes:

The diverse range of Irishness and Britishness viewed as either fundamentally antagonistic or potentially complementary over the long period of Victorian's reign. The main issues addressed include the Victorian monarchy's attitude towards Ireland and reciprocal reactions of the Irish, the debates relating to Irish differences and integration and the different views of Ireland's place in the imperial world order. The implications of the cataclysmic impact of the great famine are given particular attention. More specifically the disruptive impact of the Great Famine is in Irish British relations in the Victorian period. (p. 209)

Due to the colonization, it created political hostility and enmity between Ireland and England. Ireland negatively responded to coercive power of British society. Irish people faced starvation and they started eating only the potatoes. Even in the production of potato, a disease created a problem. There was a great devastation in the potato in Ireland that caused hunger and death that is known as potato famine.

The potato, which was the main source of food of Irish, was a relatively easy to grow in Irish soil in that time but it was ruined up to one-half that year. Farmers of Ireland were ruled as colony of Great Britain. In this regard, Irish people have hatred and negative feeling was developed toward English society. For Irish, being engaged in potato famine was their compulsion which happened due to British colonial power. One of the critics, Dean Braa explains:

The Great Irish Potato Famine should be understood as primarily the result of British colonialism. While the failure of successive cops resulted from blight, the famine itself was the result of a historically created peasant dependence on the potato. This dependence was the direct result of the development of Ireland as a colonial holding. ("The Great Potato Famine......", p. 193)

After Ireland was colonized by British, they totally lost their right upon their own decision, land and other properties. The land's fertility rate also was decreased.

There was nothing on their hand and there was no other choice left except potato farming but even in this farming they have to bear the loss. Later on, they themselves started to dominate Irish behaving as lower level workers. In order to show the level of British domination, Stephen Greenblatt remarks:

Compared to bread, the potato was antisocial; there was no structured division of labor, no fusion of foods from different sub agricultures. You could just dig them out of the ground and boil them. They also focus on how the fears of overpopulation were driven by the production of the potato itself like dumb, zombie like potato people rising up directly from the ground. (np)

As the bread was main food of British and potato was of Irish, British felt proud thinking that their food is pure and healthy which grows above the soil whereas potato is impure and low-level food which grows under the soil. They even compared Irish society with zombie and dumb where zombie refers to the creature that is disgusting and dreadful who is unable to think. Similarly, dumb provides the meaning like stupid and unable to speak. They viewed the Irish as "potato eaters" with disdain, describing them as coming from dirty holes in the earth like the tuber itself. The English took

Irish as "garbage" collected from the ground, least they too, become like the potato. These things guide the Irish people towards protest activities. Irish anger is the cause of British dominance that went ahead violently to threaten the Britishers.

According to the critics, Dracula shows a complex picture of Victorian society and discusses about several causes behind Irish hatred towards British society. The character, Dracula represents Irish society and Jonathan Harker represents British society. The major character of the novel is Count Dracula who belongs to Irish society. His character's roles are representative of Irish culture and nation. Major issue raised in the novel is British hegemony that is challenged through the Irish art, literature and cultural performances. This novel explores potato famine which was the cause of creating power in Ireland. By creating famine, British ruled over Ireland. British society had several influences upon Ireland and British were cause for suffering of the Irish people. British tried to control Ireland politically and culturally in the Victorian time. Irish had sense of resentment as well as revenge therefore, Count Dracula symbolically imprison British representative character Harker. Rodger Swift points out, "Urban life in Victorian Britain was for the Irish that was often harsh and disorientating experience because they were concentrated in towns and cities. The Irish stood out from the host population by their poverty, nationality, race and religion" ("The Outcast Irish in the British Victorian City...." pp. 264-65). From the beginning of colonization, Irish culture and society was dominated and English society imposed own social practices against which the Irish people fought.

During the colonization period British redefined and left political-cultural influence over Ireland. British rule established its political, cultural and economic influence over there. Ireland influenced British society but it was against Irish nationalism and culture against which Dracula, a representative Irish man, stood with revengeful feeling against British society and British representative character Jonathan Harker. With nationalist feeling of Irish, Dracula protests British man and scares them being vampire. Vampire is mysterious as it seems sometimes as a male but frequently as woman. During Victorian era, English culture was dominant in his colonized countries. Because of colonized culture, English culture had been dominant and impressive. Along with industrial revolution, the particular culture was dissected and at the end of nineteenth century,

British culture and its power gradually loosened political grip and started cultural revival. Not only in the Irish society, throughout the world cultural revival movement spread and nationalist revived their own culture, society and national identities. As a result, the novel presents threat for resistance of English culture and its influence increased in Ireland so that they wanted to oppose the British power as a revenge of their suffering. It represents people's voice of resistance in threatening them. William Harrison Woodward discusses:

The victims of political crises at home were in the second half of the century who constantly exported to the island, as by Cromwell after his reduction of Ireland and of Scotland; those who survived the voyage and the hardships of their new life attained, after a period of service, both liberty and citizenship. Scotsmen, it was noted, proved more useful settlers than Irishmen. A system of kidnapping in the large English towns provided other elements of similar temporary white slavery. (p. 61)

British rulers exploited rest of the world during colonial period when they had power and mainstream culture. Even they unfairly interfered other's religion, culture and politics.

Dracula discusses on the issues of conflict between British and Irish culture. Colonial effect narrated in the text explains socio-cultural impact of the colonizer to the colonized people or country. It is an experience of colonized people who still find effect of colonizer's ideological presence in own country. In the same notion, Irish experienced similar colonial effect. During colonial period, English colonizers imposed their cultures to Irish people. Colonizers were able to train their ideology and English cultures.

3. Dracula's Power and Mysterious Activities

Count Dracula remains mysterious and makes incomplete expression. Though, showing respect and gratitude, he is not favorable to Englishman. He indirectly shows his invisible power in front of him to create a fear. His ultimate intention is to create a power against Englishman which threatens an entire English civilization. Harker comes as spy in Count Dracula's castle, he introduces his castle and surrounding which was a beautiful place but he but Dracula imprisons him there with his vampire power. Unlike Harker's expectation, Dracula shows his mansion and introduces him as a vampire. Harker had underestimated him but he

found him powerful as well as dreadful figure. Even Dracula indirectly despises English way of living by showing their formality and showy culture.

Harker represents the British society, maintains English formality and tries to create a standardization. He tries to create an impression to Dracula as a part of "English ideology and culture in mainstream" (Wilson, p. 62). Dracula intends to violate those formality and standard. In fact, he wants to demoralize English ego of Englishness. Along with their close familiarity, both of them discuss about their cultural differences. Harker tries to maintain his city life and hates rustic life by showing his physical personality, attitude and behavior. His perspective is city culture oriented and observes them from lower and uncultured perspective. His language is dominating to others. This conversation shows English's attitude and ego.

Harker explains cultural difference between English and others. English culture as they have certain standards and values from which they make judgments to other culture. Harker does not find what would have been in English culture. Therefore, he criticizes the room where he was living. On the basis of his practice, he makes judgment over there. He does not accept difference because his certain assumptions to look over things and the reality at all were different. As Harker criticizes Dracula's castle then Dracula also seems aggressive and attacks him. He does not like his blame to his cultural pattern and way of living. Dracula challenges him and his cultural pattern. English way of observing others' is misinterpretation for Dracula. Dracula discusses him about his mission. Dracula directly shows his interest to go London where he wants to "violate their culture" (Foucault, p. 27). In this respect, he informs him that he is able to speak English language. Though, not having humanity, loyalty and civilized culture, English is assumed them to maintain the standard position with civilization and the cultural integrity. Dracula does not accept his claim.

Valerie Mack, one of the critics describes English cultural pattern, value and standard during Victorian period as a "machinery work" ("Reputation and Social.......", pp.112-23). As a powerful country, it created code of morals and formal cultural pattern which are forced to follow even in other countries. He further describes it on the basis of "certain rules and regulations" (Timothy, p. 28). It remains moral insanity with them and it always creates mindset in English people. In

order to make British attitude like so called trustworthy and civilized society failure, Dracula attacks the British people in London including women as vampire representatives. Podonsky M. Amanda has written in his research that, "Using enigmatic approaches to sustain power and control over the minds of his people Vlad Dracula (also known as Vlad the Impaler) punishes such minor sins as unfaithful wife by cutting out her sexual organs and skinning her alive" (p. 14). The intention of Dracula is to destroy so called civilized British society where such women are pure and devotees to their spouse.

Dracula makes most of the characters his slave. Firstly, he attacks the women characters and makes them impure sexually. He attacks them until they fall unconscious and makes the playful actions in their sexual organs. Similarly, he attacks the other male characters making vampires through women characters where vampire refers to deadly and uncivilized. Dracula threatens to Harker in his castle, Harker shows his formality. Being egoist about own British standard, he tries to convince to Dracula but he scares him not to free from the castle imprisonment. Dracula's intention was to mistreat him and take revenge by showing his power against British man.

4. Methods and Materials

This paper is prepared in qualitative research method. Comparative study is made to know about the British and Irish cultures. The study materials are Bram Stoker's Dracula, reviews and the referential materials. According to the reading resources, Dracula in fact takes revenge and demoralizes to Harker. Harker tries to expose his standard and show his own cultural practices. Harker does not understand other's culture and value. It is problematic for Dracula therefore; he misbehaves and mistreats to Harker as a British spy. Harker seems fearful when he communicates with his wife Lucy. Dracula does not accept his request then he "intends to torture him" (Moretti, 60). However, both of them do not find reason behind imprisoning. Harker gets surprised at his treatment. He investigates the nature of his confinement. Thus, the research paper presents power relation between colonizer and colonized and resistance against colonial power. It is also an allegorical representation of colonizer and resistance against it. Stoker has created a powerful and intellectual fictional character named Count Dracula who had played the allegorical role of colonizer and tried to make chaotic to the so called British civilized and cultural system. It also examines criticism

of British hegemony over Irish culture and society during Victorian society when British culture was considered as mainstream culture. During the period, British unfairly created existential horror through potato famine. Therefore, this is a qualitative research paper prepared with the help of different materials.

5. Results and Discussions

This paper brings out a result of Irish rage against the British. Among the multiple factors of this rage; colonization and cultural clashes are the major issues. Dracula's symbolic threat to Harker stands as a threat to entire British political, cultural and economic power exercises. The novel Dracula overviews Victorian context and presents English colonial power during the period. The major discussion of this research is on Irish resistance to British society. As English society imposed his power as a superior and stereotype for all countries and societies, it was gradually being resisted along with nationalist movements, cultural revival and identities. Thus, the novel depicts similar situation in which English and Irish cultural conflicts have been prime issues during the period. The protagonist of the novel Count Dracula resists British power and shows economic power along with his physical power. As he reminds potato famine against Irish people, Count Dracula takes revenge with British man Jonathan Harker. This symbolic case represents entire cultural and political clashes between British and Ireland.

Irish people had sense of revenge, anger and resentment; therefore, Dracula misbehaves to the Britishers. He threats and challenges them. The representative character of English society is Jonathan Harker who is a lawyer. It symbolically represents British "colonial power over rest of the people in the world" (Moretti, p. 259). During colonial period, England imposed its power over all countries along with its direct interference. The basic ideology is always centralized though English people. Count Dracula as a fearless and daring character treats others for the shake of Irish identity. Power exercises of English people in the name of political civilization tries to frighten them. Having knowledge of English civilization, rest of the countries were trivialized in terms of all sphere of life. The study particularizes a landmark of history which was an example of British colonization that is potato famine. Due to the famine, Irish people had sense of revenge against British people.

Count Dracula reminds past history of British which was unendurable for Irish society. As British behaved and exploited Irish, it was unforgettable for them. Count Dracula wants to take revenge against them by creating fear before coming Harker. Dracula reminds their past and he is furious against British society when they created famine to impose their power in Ireland. During the colonization period, British society mercilessly treated Irish people. He invites Harker in his castle and imprisons there. This research paper raises issue of famine and the cultural crisis which were in the heart of Irish people therefore; Count Dracula wants to torture British people to take a revenge against the colonization. Stoker recreates colonial perspective of colonizers to represent Irish culture and people. Stoker recreates knowledge and starts discourses to save the Irish identity which represents a picture of the country. Harker, an Englishman from England, represents a colonizer and he moves to Ireland with keeping colonizing mission. In course of living in Ireland, he exposes all kinds of negative images of the country in order to show the national inferiority. The colonizer's perspective represents Ireland as poor, uncivilized and backward country but in reality, it is different. He uses negative language and throws rude words to picturize the British activities. He tries to construct the national identity through the knowledge of nationhood.

Jonathan Harker visits Ireland being a representative of the British society to influence them on the British culture but he fails. Harker observes all cultural practices in comparison to English society. The novel through the perspective of colonized mentality shows its "reflection and representation on Irish culture and people" (Walter, p. 52). This study shows how colonizers represent others as Harker represents Ireland and its culture through a single perspective of colonizing. The journey to the castle is terrible and unexpected to Harker. Harker encounters physical and mental attack when he reaches in the castle. Dracula was in old castle where he lives for years. At first Harker had different perspectives however in the present, he finds him educated and civilized. Harker finds that the elderly Dracula is a well-educated and hospitable gentleman. Harker realizes that he is effectively a prisoner in the castle. In a sense, Harker visits Ireland and makes the political approaches. Harker reaches there in order to know about their culture and lifestyle.

Harker is a representative character of English society who understands Ireland as a poor country and claims that it is

"uncivilized and backward" (Glennis, p. 7). He represents a colonizer; he thinks from colonizer's perspective to capture and exploit colonized land and people. Stoker shows the people's resistance against the British colonialism. Colonizers have used stereotypical and dominant words to devalue the Irish arts, culture and the performances in the Victorian period and so they went on protest. About the colonizer's practices in Victorian period, Mack Valorie remarks:

It is already established assumption in English culture who have created both good and bad practice in society. Even they wanted to make people follow similar pattern. On the basis of those cultural patterns, they find out civilization of others. English culture does not respect others' culture because along with physical colonization, they make compel people to assert cultural imposition. ("Reputation and Social Perfection......", p. 112)

Britishers do not respect the others and they do not value their identities. Harker's perspective as a representative of the British authority is rooted and set within British society. British cultures and policies are considered as best through which colonizers hate Irish culture and society. Harker does not find and understand others as different one. His rooted belief in set mind does not respect the others.

The colonizer's intention was to exercise their power and rule over the countries but they failed. Britishers tried to destroy Irish lives, culture and economic condition against which Count Dracula made a resistance. Dracula presents a kind of revenge against British society by creating deadly horror when Harker visits in Ireland with spy mission. The novel introduces two major characters Count Dracula and Jonathan Harker. Dracula represents Irish culture, society, civilization and thought and in the same way, Harker represents British society. As Harker visits Dracula's castle, it brings tussle and conflict between them. Dracula's intention is to terrify to Harker and wants to take revenge against colonized mentality. During colonized period British society imposed, influenced and forced on mindset and treated them as uncivilized citizens. Harker still shows his influence and observes from own perspective against which Dracula takes a revenge. He threatens and terrifies against dominance and underestimate of the others.

The major discussion of the research is on Irish resistance against British society. With the help of representative characters, it shows horror and terror against Harker. Being vampire and prisoner, Dracula scares him and his fiancé. He even uses supernatural power as vampires to frighten Harker. In order to protest and resist British culture and ideology, he tries to symbolize resistance of British culture and colonized mind. Harker is an egoist, formal and self-centric in terms of British culture and his mentality is guided by colonized mindset. For this reason, he visits to the Dracula's castle. Dracula's treatment and power shocks Harker. Dracula shows his power, he terrifies and scares him. It is a kind of threat and challenge against British society. It is a challenge to British society because the country was super power during colonized period, however an unfair treatment and harassment to Irish society turned to be the cause of their downfall. Dracula being representative character of the Irish society dares to challenge the British society and their power.

Dracula is a mysterious man with fearless and daunting motive. He wants to challenge British people because of egoist feelings. As Dracula meets Harker, he does not honor him as an Englishman or a colonizer rather than he mistreats him. Dracula's mission behind dominating is to challenge English ego and sophisticated culture. Harker uses dominating language about mentioning the new place. As he thinks, Dracula's residence was new for him. He assumes that English can know all places around the world but the place is new for him to observe. Most of the places around the world are in the grip of his country and they can have knowledge about it. For this reason, he looks for the places in library where they have restored all information.

Jonathan Harker wants to meet Dracula and visits in his castle. When he moves toward the castle, he imagines his castle and changes his own perspective toward him. Having English intuitive knowledge, he always interprets things from English perspective. This intention of man itself shows ego of English society. Harker thinks himself as elite and sophisticated man therefore, he observes the others as peasant and rustic. Harker is with colonial eye and mindset when he visits in Dracula's castle, however, he warmly welcomes for the first time. Later on, he wants to frighten him to take a revenge charging that the English was dominant power and it had created terrible image in front of the people. Harker wanted to expose his dashing power in front of Dracula but now he is amazed in front of him.

The act of transforming Lucy and Mina into vampires is made by Dracula to tortures Harker physically and psychologically. This intention behind terrifying Harker is to take revenge against British people by threatening them. Thus, the research paper presents power relation between colonizer and colonized and resistance against colonial power. Stoker has created a powerful and intellectual fictional character named Count Dracula who had played the allegorical role of colonizer and tried to make chaotic to the so called British civilized and cultural system. It also examines criticism of British hegemony over Irish culture and society during Victorian society when British culture was considered as mainstream culture.

6. Conclusion

This paper on Dracula concludes that the colonizers in the Victorian period exercised for their power performance in Ireland but the Irish rage turned to be expensive to them. Major discussion to carry out the research conclusion is made on Irish resistance to British society. Britishers tried to impose their power as a best cultural performers and superior ruler but their dream is failed because of Irish resistance. Irish nationalist movements, cultural revival and identity politics of Count Dracula and the vampires resisted British power. Dracula exposes then Irish economic power through the castle performances along with his physical power. Dracula takes revenge with British man Jonathan Harker as a challenge to the entire Colonizer and their spy. Cultural and political clashes between British and Ireland seeks for the new way of identity politics.

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