

**DAUGHTERS OF DARKNESS: INTERTEXTUALITY IN
LE FANU'S «CARMILLA» AND GOGOL'S «VIY»**

In *Carmilla* and *Viy*, Sheridan Le Fanu and Nikolai Gogol (Ukrainian: Mykola Hohol) manipulate folklore to revitalize the fantastic and create their own kind of spectacular Gothic. Representing two peripheral colonial cultures situated at the extreme eastern and western fringes of Europe, both writers draw respectively on Irish and Ukrainian nineteenth-century cultural Revivals evolving from the antiquarian movements of the eighteenth century, movements partially motivated by a nostalgically desperate desire to document and register the remnants of what seemed then to be almost extinct cultures. While attempting to contextualize local aristocracy severed from history by reconstructing its genealogy [16, p. 45], antiquarianism was also bridging discontinuities, thus turning out to be politically dangerous for imperial systems as it ultimately provided for fundamentals of future national and cultural identity based on collective identities of the past. In addition, as Markman Ellis writes, in the «antiquarian collection, belief which was fugitive and unofficial was granted (or assumed) an official imprimatur» [6, p. 175]. Moreover, having started as one whose gaze was retrospective, the movement became much more radical and less romantic, catalyzed by the 1840s Famine in Ireland [9, p. 316]; a succession of Russian bans and repressions in Ukraine; and the breakout of revolutions throughout Europe in 1848, signifying the «springtime of the peoples» [33, p. 116].

Studies in history, ethnography, and language and literature, and publications of historical chronicles and documents initiated in the eighteenth century were of great importance both for Ireland and Ukraine in resisting the tendency common to all the imperial states where «colonialism did not merely force itself and its laws onto a people's present and future, but also on to their past, distorting, mutilating and annihilating it» [8, p. 311]. Although seemingly uninvolved in politics, being caught between open liberalism and embedded conservatism, both Le Fanu and Gogol contributed to the cause of their national Revivals: Le Fanu, when associated with *Dublin University Magazine*, which, among other literary works, published and thus popularized translations from Gaelic [26, p. 221]; and Gogol, when collecting and recording Ukrainian

folklore¹ and materials for a Ukrainian dictionary. Both writers revealed their interest in the pasts of their countries by turning to the genre of the historical novel: Le Fanu, in *The Crock and Anchor* (1845), *The Fortunes of Colonel Torlogh O'Brien* (1847), and *The House by the Churchyard* (1863); and Gogol, in *Taras Bulba* (1835; revised version, 1842).

Reading Gogol against Le Fanu through the lens of Gothicism as a diverse but still typological strategy for the production of meaning in colonial literatures might be illuminating since the ever increasing critical literature on Irish Gothic emphasizes its link to the colonial powers in Ireland that resulted in psychological ambivalence of predominantly Anglo-Irish practitioners of the genre [3, p. 109–112]. This «hyphenated culture» [29, p. 3–10] developed a tradition that privileges uncertainty over certainty and «refuses to dissolve binaries such as living/dead, inside/outside, friend/enemy, desire/disgust» [20, par. 20]. Unlike the situation in Irish studies, so far there have been no attempts among the scholars of Ukrainian literature to establish a relationship between the colonial condition and the propagation of Gothic forms in «minor» literature² – let alone in Gogol, its major nineteenth-century exponent – constructed within an imperial literary discourse. Gogol's oeuvre, however, reflects both what he himself called «twin-soulness», referring to his connectedness to both Ukrainian and Russian cultures [23, p. 2–3], and his hesitancy between an imperial hegemonic cultural logic, the embracing of the future and the «rational», and the «anachronisms» of his Ukrainian «past». Similar indeterminacy can be also observed in his national identification in critical inquiries; traditionally included in the canon of Russian literature, he has quite recently, in the last decade of Ukraine's post-independence period, been claimed as part of the Ukrainian cultural space.³

In examining Gogol's and Le Fanu's novellas, I am interested in one particular aspect of Gothic – female characters featured as monsters,

¹ See *Narodni pisni v zapysakh Mykoly Hoholia*, ed. O. I. Dei (Kyiv: Muzychna Ukraïna, 1985).

² I use the concept of «minor» literature elaborated upon by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in their *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* (pp. 16–27).

³ See, for example, Luckyj's *The Anguish of Mykola Hohol*; Oleh Ilnytskyj's «Hohol' and the Post-Colonial Context», *Krytyka*, March 2000, no. 3: pp. 9–13, and his «Cultural Indeterminacy in the Russian Empire: Nikolai Gogol as a Ukrainian Post-Colonial Writer», in *A World of Slavic Literatures. Essays in Comparative Slavic Studies in Honour of Edward Mozejko*, ed. Paul Duncan Morris (Bloomington, Indiana: Slavica, 2002), pp. 153–171. For the latest discussions see *Canadian Slavonic Papers* (Special Issue: The 200th Anniversary of the Birth of Nikolai Gogol' / Mykola Hohol' [1809–1852]) 51.2–3 (2009).

specifically vampires – figures situated amidst two conflicting modes of representation since the vampire novel is a genre that depends, according to Matthew Gibson, «upon a tension between naturalism and the supernatural» [17, p. 11]. In addition to the politics of representation, Gibson's *Dracula and the Eastern Question* further explores wider implications of vampire narratives in the nineteenth-century European context, arriving at the conclusion that Gothic is capable of transposing the «appalling superstition of native people» into a national allegory and of casting «this superstition about revenants from the dead, who suck blood of the young and spread sexual perversity, as symbolic of a political allegory» [17, p. 51]. Without ignoring the conventional European vampire resonance, numerous literary treatments of vampirism and their socio-cultural impact, I would like to stress the significance of local sources, which were brought to light by the nineteenth-century Irish and Ukrainian cultural Revivals, that nourish the fearsome power of both writers' fictions, awakening the dormant world of monsters: Irish folklore of the Undead and drinkers of human blood found, for example, in a discussion of the *neamh-mhairbh* in Seathrún Céitinn's seventeenth-century *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn* [19, p. 384], or Ukrainian tales about blood-thirsty *upyri* [18, p. 430–497]. By featuring the female vampire, both writers implicitly recreate the colonial gendered power matrix and establish the relationship between sex, violence, and death. In both works, blood, «as a vital element, also refers to women, fertility, and the assurance of fecundation. It thus becomes a fascinating semantic crossroads, the propitious place for abjection» [Kristeva qtd. in 5, p. 59]. Both works contributed towards the formation of distinct iconography and attributes of the vampire novel that were fixed by the end of the nineteenth century⁴ and further developed in contemporary culture where the female vampire's world has come to signify «darkness, the undead, moon, the tomb/womb, blood, oral sadism, bodily wounds and violation of the law» [5, p. 71]. Yet, although Le Fanu and Gogol relocate vampirism from the forests and mountains of folklore to inhabited spaces, thus rooting their narratives in a quasi-realist fictional context, neither makes any attempts to rationalize the paranormal, thus leaving the division between the real and the supernatural in place. In both novellas, though, the representations of the power of the anomalous involve a dynamic of limit and transgression that, because of their shifting borderlines, results in

⁴ Robert Mighall argues that the text that solidified and fixed the stock features in vampires' representations is Bram Stoker's *Dracula* published in 1897; see his «'A pestilence which walketh in darkness': Diagnosing the Victorian Vampire», in *Spectral Readings: Towards a Gothic Geography*, ed. Glennis Byron and David Punter (Houndmills: Macmillan, 2009), p. 109.

radical instability and divisibility of identity enveloping several dimensions. In both, forbidden figures, the emanations of the terror of a split society, thrive as an apt metaphor to conceal the abomination of the existing order.

Right at the beginning, the prologue to *Carmilla* introduces the subject of dualities by citing the note from Doctor Hesselius that refers to «some of the profoundest arcane of our dual existence, and its intermediates» [22, p. 243]. The suggested life/death dichotomy puts fissiparating binaries in motion; their reproduction and re-division render all boundaries uncertain and thus destabilize discrete or finite meanings in the novella. When meeting Carmilla, an enticingly beautiful and mysterious visitor to the schloss located in a forlorn and «primitive place» [22, p. 244] in Styria, Le Fanu's narrator Laura experiences an eerie feeling of dream-come-true, which intensifies in the process of their first liminal encounter. At the threshold between dream and reality, Laura sees, or fancies she sees [22, p. 278], a sinister, sooty-black monstrous cat: «I felt it spring lightly on the bed. The two broad eyes approached my face, and suddenly I felt a stinging pain as if two large needles darted, an inch or two apart, deep into my breast» [22, p. 278]. After what the narrator perceives as awakening, the phantom of her nightmare – the shifting and nebulous animal-like shape – morphs into a female figure in a dark loose dress: a «block of stone could not have been more still» [22, p. 278]. The ambivalence of the episode opens up an indeterminate zone in which the differences between imagination and actuality are no longer secure. The demarcation line between the two, «in here» and «out there», is blurred, and, as Lucie Armitt writes elsewhere, the distinctions between the «interior nightmare realm and the outside world of so-called daylight are called into question» [2, p. 53]. Furthermore, in addition to the porous borderline in the fantasy/reality dyad, Le Fanu's shape-shifting vampire also transgresses other boundaries, those that can guarantee a stable identity whose definition is based on binary logic – human/animal, culture/nature, self/other. These dualities are presumably based on the parity of terms, but in fact, European thought implicitly privileges the former over the latter, thus tipping the balance. Gothic pushes this undercurrent disparity to the extreme and makes it volatile. The traversing identity of Laura's nocturnal tormentor, which puts the boundaries between the bodies of animals and humans into perpetual flux, reflects her infringing, violent, and voluptuous nature.

Gogol's protagonist Khoma Brut, a student of philosophy, is indirectly introduced to the vampiric aspect of an old Cossack captain's daughter, a stunning beauty who, like Le Fanu's Carmilla, is at the center of mystery in *Viy*. The inset story relates the metamorphosis of a howling dog into a *pannochka* (a young lady of the estate) who snatches a baby from the

cradle, sucks its blood, and then attacks its horror-stricken mother. Gogol uses demonic personification of the beautiful woman, who turns «all blue ... her eyes glowing like coals» [15, p. 218], to embody the terrors of vampiric visitations that plague the vicinity. Both Le Fanu's and Gogol's vampires assault their victims, depleting their bodies of vital fluids, in zoomorphic forms. On the one hand, such becoming-animal may test the limits of corporeal logic; on the other, it may reveal the bestial within the human, signifying the return of animalistic, instinctual habits. In addition, shifting shape along the species line in *Carmilla* appears to draw on Celtic *fith-fath* legendry and spells, which made it possible to transfigure someone into different forms, women usually into a cat or hare [25, p. 153]. Used as a means of survival or to facilitate rebirth, among other things, such charms have long been associated with witchcraft. *Viy*, in its turn, idiosyncratically revamps Ukrainian folk tales about the supernatural powers of metamorphosis attributed to witches, who often turn into dogs [18, p. 453–460] and who, after they die, become vampires [18, p. 487]. Thus, while continually feeding on the objects of their malevolent desire with omnivorous appetite, Carmilla and the *pannochka*, in their supplemental alliance with witch figures, metaphorically propagate by transmogrifying into an animalistic frame of their familiars, the evil minions of darkness.

Carmilla's appearance in the castle, accompanied by her nighttime visitations of Laura's bedroom, causes the narrator's melancholy as she is mysteriously fading, being immersed in dim «thoughts of death» [22, p. 281]. Carmilla is also featured, in an inset story recounted by General Spielsdorf, as Millarca – each act of naming, Carmilla, Millarca, Mircalla, reiterates and reinstates her foundational, albeit every time different, identity – who drains life from his beloved niece and ward. Gogol's blood-craving *pannochka* likewise targets young girls who are reported to lose quarts of blood [15, p. 219]. However, while Le Fanu's story reveals, as James B. Twitchell argues, the «psychodynamics of perversion», being the «story of a lesbian entanglement, a story of a sterile love of homosexuality expressed through the analogy of vampirism» [34, p. 129], or, as Margot Backus contends, a «paradigm of female sexual development within the Anglo-Irish settler colonial order» [3, p. 128] (both interpretations focusing on different aspects of homoeroticism), sexual desire in *Viy* betrays itself in a slanted way, through violence that can be seen as a sadistic response to the erotic in the framework of the opposition of the sexes. Whereas Le Fanu's maidens fall prey to Carmilla's devilish charms, recognizing them as «hateful and yet overpowering» [22, p. 264], Khoma resists all the stages in the *pannochka*'s metamorphoses: the «witch's sexual advances, the sensual allure of the beauty she becomes, and her clutches as a demonically

possessed corpse» [27, p. 202]. It is repressive censors of feelings that keep him under control, and his panicky self-restraint borders on misogyny.

Gogol extensively develops the witch aspect of his vampire character. At the beginning of his voyage, Khoma is cornered, mounted, and ridden by a mysterious old woman during the night he spends at a solitary farm. First appearing as a recognizable female monster from legend and folk tales, she is shortly transformed along the bipolar temporal axis: hideous old hag/beautiful young maiden, another case of the polymorphous representations of unstable identity and, by extension, female sexuality. This shape-shifting formula is reminiscent of numerous hags in Irish mythology and folklore who, like an ugly hag from the origin-myth about Nial, undergo extraordinary changes and become beautiful young women [24, p. 94–95]. In the description of this disturbing event, Gogol hybridizes two types of witches from Ukrainian demonology: that of a conventional, iconic old hag with one of a young enchantresses, *iarytnytsia*, who is dangerously alluring, aggressively engages in risky amorous pursuits [21, p. 601], and represents a less common witch-aspect. The shift initiating phantasmagoric blurring of the real and the supernatural that supercharges Khoma's fatal adventure generates the questions obsessively flashing through his mind: «Was he awake or dreaming? ... [W]as it really an old woman?» [15, p. 199]. Not unlike in *Carmilla*, because of the uncertainty of various frontiers, the reader is left unsure whether this uncanny occurrence depicts an unsettling return of repressed fears and desires or psychological disturbance, or, as Fred Botting observes in his analysis of the nineteenth-century Gothic literature, «wider upheavals within formations of reality and normality» [4, p. 11].

Khoma's night adversary is one of the «ladies of darkness» who terrifies and inspires. While flying through the night sky with the creepy rider on his back, he becomes acutely «aware of an exhausting, unpleasant, and at the same time voluptuous sensation assailing his heart» [15, p. 198]. The intensity of this mixed emotion is emphasized through the repetition of key words, which paradoxically provide the only point of stability in Khoma's alarming experience, as he, again, though seized by despair, was «aware of a fiendishly voluptuous feeling[;] he felt a stabbing, exhaustingly terrible delight. It often seemed to him as though his heart had melted away, and with terror he clutched at it» [15, p. 199]. In *Le Fanu*, Laura's feelings towards *Carmilla* are also perplexing – at times, she «experienced a strange tumultuous excitement that was pleasurable, ever and anon, mingled with a vague sense of fear and disgust ... [and] was conscious of a love growing into adoration, and also of abhorrence» [22, p. 264]. Although torn by powerful mutually contradictory feelings, both characters are affected by what David

Punter calls «dreadful pleasure», that is, «pleasure which is felt when meddling with components of life which are outside the pale of ‘civilised discourse’» [32, p. 190]. Here, transgressive Gothic energies come into play since the unlicensed emotions of those who cross the line between the cultured and the barbaric threaten to violate proper limits of social order, and the unleashing of forbidden passions and desires destabilizes the mores and manners of decent, and acceptable, social conduct.

Vacillating between desire and disgust, Khoma’s nightmarish «nuptial» escapade also manifests what has been termed a «mythic fear of woman» [7, p. 192] and the fear of crossing gender boundaries. By turning him into a means for her nocturnal transvection, the demon-rider makes an incursion into the conventionally male dominion. She is seen as a usurper because, as Joseph Andriano argues in his study of feminine demonology, such a demonic agent «insidiously attempts to exert her influence, to feminize the male» [1, p. 5]. At last, the philosopher manages to re-establish his manliness by switching the rider/ridden and, correspondingly, the dominatrix/dominated positions – shifts that invariably accompany and complement hag/beauty transformation. He mercilessly whacks his mysterious nightrider, on this turn of the spiral reversing the victimizer/victim roles, to compensate for his humiliation and loss of control. Being carried away by the brutal outbreak of violence, the philosopher suddenly sees the old woman transform into a «lovely creature with luxuriant tresses all in disorder and eyelashes as long as arrows. Senseless, she tossed her bare white arms and moaned, looking upwards with eyes full of tears» [15, p. 200]. Completely shattered by having beaten the hag into the gorgeous young woman, Khoma returns back to school in Kyiv.

However, by an uncanny twist of fate, a daughter of one of the richest and most influential military officers in the area, who was viciously attacked and badly hurt while taking a walk, is on the verge of death. She has expressed her specific wish that Khoma «should read the prayers over her and psalms for three days after her death» [15, p. 201]. Although having no idea who she is, and being haunted by premonitions of imminent disaster, Khoma is apprehensive about going to the estate, but the rector of the seminary forces him to do so. Having arrived in a secluded church whose macabre and gloomy atmosphere and grotesquely ornamented interior outwardly collude with the darkness of his anxieties, Khoma discovers that the dead girl in the casket is the transmogrifier he encountered previously. He is simultaneously smitten by the «terrible», «brilliant», and «striking» beauty of the corpse and overwhelmed with «panic fear» [15, p. 221] because the most horrifying thing about the dead

maiden is that she is actually undead: «there was in her features nothing faded, tarnished, dead; her face was living» [15, p. 221].

Likewise, Le Fanu stages the final encounter with an enchanting vampire in the solitary ruins, the burial crypt in the Chapel of Karnstein, the «haunted spot», a «triste and ominous scene» [22, p. 311] that horrifies Laura with its aura of the spectral and the diabolical. Both her father and the General recognize in Countess Karnstein, like the protagonist in *Viy*, their «perfidious and beautiful guest» [22, p. 315] lying in the coffin. Similar to Gogol's *pannochka*, her features «were tinted with the warmth of life[;] ... there was a faint but appreciable respiration, and a corresponding action of the heart. The limbs were perfectly flexible, the flesh elastic» [22, p. 315]. It is tempting to think here about a monstrosity that engages in contestations of natural order, in Slavoj Žižek's metaphorical terms: «The paradox of the vampires is that, precisely as 'living dead,' they are *far more alive* than us, mortified by the symbolic network . . . the real 'living dead' are we, common mortals, condemned to vegetate in the Symbolic» [qtd. in 14, p. 56]. This maneuver in the narrative, despite replicating formulaic attributes of the genre, also reveals the representation's elasticity and uncertainty through its capacity to reverse the relationship of life and death. Furthermore, the bizarre oxymoronic duality adds an additional twist to the dispersion and multiplication of meanings in vampires' quest for eternal life, demonstrating the continuous presence of conventional fears related to sexuality, to the primitive not only from the past but also in the present, and to history with its fatal grip, to name but a few.

It is noteworthy that Carmilla's character is invested with malicious subjectivity that manifests itself in her ability to express her selfhood in and through language. Sweet-voiced Carmilla [22, p. 255] is very articulate about her thoughts, moods, and emotions. When Laura tries to satisfy her curiosity about any aspect related to Carmilla's life, she constantly faces her guest's «ever wakeful reserve» [22, p. 262]. Being very evasive about her history, Carmilla effusively explains the nature of her attitude to Laura, who is genuinely hurt by her strange companion's secrecy. Carmilla's «rhapsody» professing love contains disturbing connotations as she verbalizes her desires in terms of blood, corruption, sacrificial death, and lethal possession. This utterance reiterates and expands upon her earlier laconic, almost point-form, arcane reasoning about a past love experience: a «cruel love – strange love, that would have taken my life. Love will have its sacrifices. No sacrifice without blood» [22, p. 277]. Being centered on the images of a lacerated, oozing heart and on a warped co-dependency within the life/death dyad, Carmilla's discourse obliquely alludes to what creatures of the night feed off and also tacitly assumes the transference of her vampiric powers to Laura:

Dearest, your little heart is wounded; think me not cruel because I obey the irresistible law of my strength and weakness; if your dear heart is wounded, my wild heart bleeds with you. In the rapture of my enormous humiliation I live in your warm life, and you shall die—die, sweetly die—into mine. I cannot help it; as I draw near to you, you, in your turn, will draw near to others, and then learn the rapture of that cruelty, which yet is love; so, for a while, seek to know no more of me and mine, but trust me with all your loving spirit [22, p. 263].

The same preoccupation with inflicted wounds and death is revealed in a completely different context when Carmilla remarks, with angry resentment and hauteur, on a funerary procession of peasants and their singing of a religious hymn: «[H]ow can you tell that your religion and mine are the same; your forms wound me, and I hate funerals. What a fuss! Why *you* must die—*everyone* must die; and all are happier when they do» [22, p. 266]. It is ironic that the deceased girl, as it becomes evident from Laura's comments, is one of the local victims of Carmilla's phlebotomizing passion who was forced to make a sacrificial contribution to the vampire's everlasting life by «dying into» it.

As opposed to Carmilla's eloquence, the demonic agency and supernatural power of Gogol's young lady are not translated into the power of speech. She is profoundly excluded from the verbal production of meaning and thus is staged only as a sinister body. In the shape of the old woman, she tries to capture Khoma in embrace with a peculiar «glitter in her eye» but «without uttering a word» [15, p. 197]. When she is turned from the rider into the ridden and he assaults her in rage, she at first produces «wild howls», angry and menacing, that gradually grow «fainter, sweeter, clearer» to fade into the melody of «delicate silver bells that stabbed him to the heart» [15, p. 199]. This change of the voice register provides a soundtrack for her wordless transition from the repulsive hag into explicitly sexualized beauty. The *pannochka's* «hollow mutter», when she replicates her earlier appalling effort to catch Khoma during his night vigil at her coffin, is incomprehensible; her words «gurgled hoarsely like the bubbling of boiling pitch. He could not have said what they meant; but there was something fearful in them» [15, p. 225]. On the third night of his frightful service, Khoma is exposed to her incantatory «wild shrieks» [15, p. 232], which echo Carmilla's «piercing shriek» [22, p. 315] in the shocking scene of the vampire's extermination and which give voice to the unspeakable hidden beyond the shifting frontiers of consciousness.

Carmilla ends with the vampire's destruction that complies with the traditional measures of decapitation and a sharp stake driven through

the heart, which is, according to Botting, a «perfectly natural end in the story in which superstition, legend and folklore are part of the everyday reality» [4, p. 144]. The final fixity and motionlessness of Carmilla's body parallel the moments of her deadly standstills in the text and are consistent with the stability of her positioning as the demon lover throughout the story. In opposition, Gogol's vampiric fiend, indestructibly rising in her coffin, summons to her aid the most terrifying supreme creature of preternatural primordial evil, Viy, who reveals Khoma to his horrifying entourage that «pounced upon the philosopher. He fell expiring to the ground, and his soul fled from his body in terror» [15, p. 233]. In the denouement, Khoma's becomes an increasingly subjective state dominated by what gives an impression of being fantasy and hallucination, and his imagination tortured in this monster-infested claustrophobic space – the abode of an indescribable agony and dread, the simulacra of hell – reaches its own collapse, whereas the *pannochka* turns into an avenging demon, a fearsome power instrumental in his demise. This provides yet another dimension to *Viy*'s multidimensional space, making it, among other things, a tale of chillingly executed vengeance of feminine element rejected by masculinist order.

Although both authors construct the seductions of their female demons as supernatural, Le Fanu's uncanny threat in the guise of the vampire is eventually contained by rationalism represented by the group of proliferating parental figures, doctors, and scholars involved in endless consultations through which the «vampire can be diagnosed and managed» [14, p. 50]. It is interesting that the authoritative structure they form is quintessentially patriarchal, the law of the father being ultimately reinforced through the «ritualized killing of vampires [that] reconstitutes properly patriarchal order and fixed cultural and symbolic meaning» [4, p. 151]. Conversely, the matrilineal connections in the story lead to one transgressive nexus – all the maternal figures are the descendants of the Karnstein clan that makes Carmilla their progenitress. If not suppressed, women might have compromised and overturned mainstream male authority, challenging the norms promoted by social and domestic ideology by comprising a separate tribe co-functioning by contagion and thus threatening to spread endlessly. As Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari suggest while emphasizing the preeminence of the «epidemic» nature of the vampire phenomenon over the hereditary, the vampire «does not filiate, it infects» [12, p. 242]. Whereas Le Fanu offers the reader moral resolution, Gogol does not conclude the narrative with any sacred or rational expulsion of evil, leaving his novella open to the play of ambivalence. The societal defenses – either knowledge, skepticism, Christian scriptures, or chanting

exorcisms – used by Khoma fail, and his fall seems to showcase Deleuze's and Guattari's idea that it is not the «slumber of reason that engenders monsters, but vigilant and insomniac rationality» [13, p. 112]. The ill-fated philosopher left face-to-face with the urges that rage through his diabolical foe, without any network of fabricated supremacy to seek advice from, turns out to be unprotected from uncontrollable supranormal forces invading and desecrating the church, and the vampire, symbolically «unmanaged», vanishes at dawn as if laying the scene for an onset of another return.

In both *Carmilla* and *Viy*, the horrid creatures of destruction engage in a complex interplay of appearances, shifting identities, past and present, and superstition and reality. The creation of the monstrous feminine through the dark and macabre imagery of the return of the dead signifies the disruption of categories and the elimination of boundaries as it consistently exceeds any coherent system of identification. Suggesting numerous societal and identitarian splits and fissures, it reveals, all over again, the archetypal terror of the alien and the unknown, of spaces where disturbingly ambivalent blood-sucking revenants foster compelling challenges by questioning representations of the transparent and the communicable experience. As Brian D. Palmer writes in his *Cultures of Darkness*, however often the «monster may be sacrificed on the altar of literary convention, it remains a fearful earthly and earthy presence, the metaphorical power of terror residing less in the imagery of horror than in the horrible realities of human social relations. Haunting humanity, the monster – the desires it awakens and nightmares it induces – «disappears into the darkness» [31, p. 119].

The appearance of the Gothic vampire trope in Le Fanu's and Gogol's works, being evoked by myth and providing a metaphor to express the unresolved conflict between the imperial power and the colony, is symptomatic, culturally and politically, of a long struggle against the powerful historical dysfunctions of Irish and Ukrainian societies and of manifest as well as repressed evidence of their abusive character. Here Gothic becomes almost an ideal mode of representing the paranoid colonial psyche, with its lurking fears and buried desires, and the disjunctive, fragmented, dislocated, and diasporic agency of those who have suffered the sentence of history – subjugation and displacement in the supplementary spaces of the colonial world; the «missing people», to use Deleuze's expression [11, p. 4], who did not get to parade in the imperial progressive march of history and whose own history was erased, but not completely, only to haunt them as ghostly apparitions from the pasts.

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Анотація

Автор статті досліджує інтертекстуальні зв'язки «Камілли» Фану та «Вія» Гоголя крізь призму жіночих демонічних образів.

Ключові слова: жіночі демонічні образи, «дочки темряви», фантастика, фольклор, готика.

Аннотация

Автор статьи исследует интертекстуальные связи «Камиллы» Фану и «Вия» Гоголя сквозь призму женских демонических образов.

Ключевые слова: женские демонические образы, «дочери темноты», фантастика, фольклор, готика.

Summary

The author of the article explores the intertextual connetions in Le Fanu's «Carmilla» and Gogol's «Viy» through the female demon characters.

Keywords: female demon characters, «daughters of darkness», fantastic, folklore, Gothicism.