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Images of Transylvania in the West
– A Deconstructive Analysis

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ABSTRACT:
The immediate association of the region of Transylvania with Dracula constitutes one of the oldest cultural stereotypes today. However, with globalisation, mobility and multiculturalism, intercultural encounters have become more frequent whence the prevalence of such frozen images became problematic if not overtly debilitating. The question of identity and image making for cultures has become of great concern today and the issue opens up the contemporary debate on the politics of representation and cultural images.

This study analyses the way the 'Transylvania-Dracula' cultural stereotype was created by the gradual de-construction and building-down of its constituent elements. Visualised by the model of culture as an Iceberg, the study asserts that cultural stereotypes are but frozen images built on the solid foundation of a generation of discourses, motivated by the intention of representing *the Other* as the very other or the opposite of the *Self*. The extended analysis of the East-West binary discourse exposes the way Western discursive texts consistently used generalizations and alienating labels in reference to Transylvania in particular and the East in general. These representative habits were then easily transferable to film, fiction and travel literature, as proven in the analysis of Bram Stoker's novel *Dracula* and its subsequent movie adaptations. The theory of deconstruction together with discourse analysis is indispensable for the understanding of the representation of otherness and image creation. Deconstructive criticism and critical discourse analysis help unveil the authoritative nature of discourses and uncover the oppositional binaries that underpin our thinking, showing how representations of *the Other* prey on old cultural associations and concepts. This is a reminder of our postmodern condition, that we have only representations from the past to construct our narratives. Moreover, the analyses reveal the constructedness of cultural images - with the implication that this construction necessarily involves restriction, emphasis and omission - and thus prove why images cannot be taken for granted.
Although the study does not manage to overthrow all these tendencies, it does contribute to cultural studies by encouraging critical theorizing and analytical thinking.

KEY WORDS: cultural stereotype, image, representation, deconstruction, discourse, discourse analysis, East-West discourse, Transylvania, Dracula

> The champions of truth are hardest to find, not when it is dangerous to tell it, but rather when it is boring.
> (Nietzsche 1994: 506)

1 INTRODUCTION

Transylvania or "The Land beyond the Forest" - a region of Romania considered as "exotic", a prototypical Central-Eastern European country – has long been fraught with confusion, contradiction, misconceptions and paradox. The land is very often automatically associated with Dracula – a fictive figure inspired by a 15th century Romanian Count: Vlad Ţepeş, warlord of Wallachia (1431-1476) and son of Vlad Dracul. Scholarly research has determined that the Dracula used by Bram Stoker as the model for his vampire was an existing 15th-century Wallachian prince, famed for his military exploits against the Turks and for the cruel punishments he inflicted on both enemies and compatriots. The Romanian term "Ţepeş" means "the Impaler", referring to his favourite form of torture. All that most people know about Transylvania is that it was the setting for Bram Stoker's novel, *Dracula* (1897) although Stoker himself has never visited Transylvania, using others' descriptions to present an amalgam of Eastern European landscapes and mythologies.

According to authors McNally and Florescu (1972 & 1989), Vlad Ţepeş was born around 1430 on the Transylvanian plateau of north-central Romania, in the fortified town of Schassburg (Sighişoara). Although he is linked with Transylvania through his birth, the land where he reigned and spent most of his life was the southern Romanian principality of Wallachia, bordering the Danube. The Romanian word '*Drac'* means '*dragon'*. '*Dracula'* -a diminutive, which means "the son of Dracul" - was a surname to be used ultimately by Vlad Ţepeş. His father Vlad II (called Dracul or "devil") was invested by the Holy Roman Emperor with the Order of the Dragon– a semi military and religious society, originally created in 1387 by the Holy Roman Emperor and his second wife, Barbara Cilli. The main goal of this fraternal order of knights was to

protect the interests of Catholicism, and to crusade against the Turks. The honour made the Princedom of Wallachia a frontier where the Turks were constantly threatened.
Vlad Ţepeş inherited his father's mission, carrying on a tenacious, heroic resistance against the invader over the course of three reigns spanning 1448-76, interrupted by periods of exile and imprisonment. "Dracula's" youthful experience of slavery in Turkey taught him the enemy's language, cunningness, and political cynicism. It has also given him a taste of the harem, and shaped his chief character traits: suspicion and vengefulness. As a ruler, Vlad formed short-lived alliances, employed the guerrilla-tactics of his mountain-dwelling people to harass the Turks, and used terror to intimidate the sultan's forces, rebellious boyar nobles, and ordinary citizens. Despite his extreme bloodthirstiness, in Romanian peasant folklore he has been portrayed from a different angle as well: the brave warrior defending his native soil, ruthless towards the rich but a powerful friend to the poor.

It was the cruelty of the Wallachian count that captured Stoker's imagination, considering the character suitable for a Gothic-style story of terror. After Stoker's novel several literary and movie adaptations have followed, and the Dracula phenomenon, thus, proliferated through reinvention, blurring ever more the already mystic conceptions of the West about Transylvania. Hollywood studios have further perpetuated the Eastern European legend of vampires living in the exotic Carpathian-Balkan region. Subsequently, stereotypes about vampires, cemeteries, spooky ruinous castles and foggy mountainous regions, wild and haunted forests have become so prominent that Transylvania's image seems to be forever marked by them.

Till today not many have knowledge of Transylvania's rich history and culture, the demographic diversity or economic challenges of the Carpathian Basin, thus becoming the victims of media propaganda. Most often Transylvania is believed to exist only in fiction; therefore the very existence of the region is doubted and ignored, and its past and people are obscured by continuous reinventions of its history. Dracula has become a concept so profoundly associated with Transylvania that it is questionable whether the "real" place can ever be represented.

This study will embark on a challenging mission to try and disentangle the various representations of the region in literature and media. In Western texts one finds many stereotypic images that have eventually led to the preponderance of an automatic association of the type *'Transylvania? Ah! Dracula!'* In fact, we can state that the Dracula myth has become one of the strongest cultural stereotypes of today.

The analysis of the images of Transylvania cannot be devoid of the analysis of the various discourses manipulating their creation. Therefore, the first two chapters will present the reader with the politics of representation and cultural stereotypes. The main discourse around which the analysis will evolve is the long-contested West versus the East problematic. This geographical division marks a differentiation in the cultural status of the respective zones and began somewhere around the end of the middle ages. Within this discourse Western culture and tradition claimed dominance over the Eastern one and represented this *'Other'* persistently in derogatory terms.

The hypothesis the present study is based on is that the images and representations of Transylvania created by the West build on an amalgam of fictive, imaginary half-truths and an emphasis of essentials and news-worthy elements in order to disseminate an image that rather generalizes than observes. Consequently, these images become dominant, thus obscuring the concept and preventing other representations from permeating the public knowledge. Representation of the *'Other'* can, therefore, be considered as the main problematic of my study. Current studies of culture emphasize the importance of representation, that is, the production of meaning through language, discourse and image. The analysis of representations is imbued with critical questions concerning meaning, truth, knowledge, and power in representation, as well as its relation to pleasure and fantasy.

In my study I will address a variety of approaches to representations, bringing together concepts from philosophy, linguistics, discourse analysis and cultural studies. What is implied and emphasized throughout my paper is a cautious and critical attitude required from scholars of cultural studies, a reminder of Stuart Hall's words that we need an "awareness that the structure of representations which form culture's alphabet and

grammar are instruments of social power, requiring critical and activist examination" (During 1999: 97).

The questions I will touch upon in the following chapters are: how do the different representations form part of a bigger network? How are they disseminated within discourse? And how does one discourse lead to another, creating chains of discourses? In my study I will draw on several Western literary texts and media coverage where Transylvania is depicted as a borderland within the East-West divide. The East-West discourse will be, therefore, the backbone upon which subsequent representative discourses build upon to further emphasize the geopolitical division of the East from the West. An extended chapter will focus on this East-West dichotomy, including the larger discourse as presented by Edward Said in *Orientalism* ([1978] 1995), the Balkan and the West dichotomy as exemplified by Maria Todorova's *Imagining the Balkans* (1997), the construction of Eastern Europe as discussed in Larry Wolff's *Inventing Eastern Europe –The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (1994) and the discursive formation of post communist cultures within Europe as argued by Sibelan E.S. Forrester's *Over the Wall/After the Fall: Post communist Cultures Through an East-West Gaze* (2004).

Chapter 4 will be the focal part of the thesis, where theory and literary material meet to support the initial hypothesis. This chapter will be a comparative, deconstructive analysis of various literary and cultural texts that contributed to the corresponding dominant discourses and the proliferation of cultural stereotypes. The texts to be analysed will focus particularly on excerpts that depict Transylvania. These will include passages from Bram Stoker's *Dracula* ([1897] 1997), as well as a comparative study of the novel's film adaptations. The chosen movie adaptations for my comparison are: F. W. Murnau's *Nosferatu-Eine Symphonie des Grauens* (1922), Werner Herzog's remake of Murnau's version: *Nosferatu the Vampire* (1979) - where the imaginary, 'Orientalist' Transylvania is an elemental part of the film, a lot more so than in the original movie – and the more recent Francis Ford Coppola version: *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1991).

1.1 Why Transylvania?

The primary aim of the study was to emphasize how representations of *the Other* can create dominant discourses that are to the detriment of the understanding and knowledge of the various other representations of a culture and its people. In addition, another reason I have chosen the region of Transylvania was to make a pledge to my home and emphasize my consciousness of being a Hungarian in Transylvania, a Hungarian in Romania. Thus, on one hand, the study's aim is to provide an important contribution to shaping and transforming the representations of the *identity* of the Transylvanian region, and on the other hand it also contributes to the formation of my identity as an individual.

Despite its stereotypical *mis*representations, Transylvania is neither myth nor fiction. Today, Transylvania is Romania's largest and most diverse region. It extends throughout central and north-western Romania, and includes most of the country's mountains, the Transylvanian Plateau, and the north western plain. The area is bordered by the Carpathian Mountains to the east and the south, by the Ukraine to the north, by Hungary to the west and former Yugoslavia to the southwest. The history of Transylvania and its nationalities are a unique phenomenon in the formation of Europe. Indeed, Transylvania poses a great challenge in this study, owing to the plurality of cultures within its territory. The historical narratives of these cultures often oppose each other and are often misrepresented to serve a political purpose. The emphasis on *multiculturalism* and *parallel cultures* is important here as it has the implication of "cultural differences" and its consequences in situations of coexistence.

According to statistics today there are at least 10 registered national minorities in Transylvania. Within a population of 8 million people the number of existent ethnicities shows the (although diminishing) multiculturalism of the territory. Coexisting with the approximately 5 and a half million Romanian majority, the two largest minority groups are Hungarians (1.4 million) and the Roma (or *Gypsies*, 800 000). The other ethnic groups coexisting in Transylvania are the Germans (or *Saxons,* 25 000), Serbs (20 000),

Slovaks (15 000), Armenians (15 000), Jews (10 000), Ukrainians (5 000) and Bulgarians (5 000). (The National Institute of Statistics 1998-2007)

The coexistence of these 'parallel *cultures'* during historical times has been both a source for conflicts and clashes as well as a major driving force. In Gavril Flora's words:

> Interaction is in itself a driving force: both a cause and effect. It constantly creates and recreates the interethnic context, but at the same time is significantly affected and influenced by it, thus acting both as a factor of stability, and as a motive power of change. (Lord & Strietska-Ilina 2001: 125)

However, as she argues, the decline of the Jewish and German populations led to "a diminishing of Transylvania's multi-cultural profile and an increasing Romanian-Hungarian bipolarity within that region" (Lord & Strietska-Ilina 2001:140).

Transylvania, as a borderland country, underwent the integrationist policies of two modern nation states: Hungary under the framework of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, and Romania after 1920. Nationalism, therefore, plays a key role in creating a festering wound for Hungarians and Romanians compelled to cling to age-old myths about their past sufferings and a deeply held sense of entitlement to an area. Interethnic tension and controversy has been on the agenda since the collapse of the communist regime. It was a period of blooming ethnic nationalisms based on the Eastern European model of nation building which claimed that 'primary loyalty must always belong to one's ethnic group, rather than to the state.' (Lord & Strietska-Ilina 2001: 144.)

According to Turda (1999: 1-2), representing Transylvania as either Hungarian or Romanian has led to conflicting discourses within Romania – "a classical post communist example of a society seized by national radicalism". As travel writer Robert D. Kaplan observes:

> For the Romanians, Transylvania … is the birthplace of their Latin race, since the ancient Roman colony of Dacia was situated in present-day Transylvania. For the Hungarians, Transylvania … was the site of their most famous victories over the Turks and the democratic uprising against Austrian rule that led to the creation of the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy in 1867. Janos Hunyadi, who defended Central Europe against the ottomans; Matthias Corvinus, the greatest king in Hungarian history who brought the Renaissance to Hungary; Janos Bolyai, one of the independent inventors of non-Euclidean

> geometry; and Bela Bartok, the composer, were all Hungarians from Transylvania. (Kaplan 2000: 27)

Since these long-wrought controversies, however, a new global view has arrived that emphasizes the advantages of complexity in a multicultural and dynamic environment. The narrow-mindedness that has haunted it from beginning is diminishing, therefore old concepts, old representations and images need to be shaken and reconsidered in light of new ones.

Based on the above considerations, the variety of issues the chosen topic invites, the focus on Transylvania provides the ground for a very interesting and complex analysis. On the other hand, it gives an insight to what has been on debate in recent years, that is, the politics behind representations and image creation.

1.2 The politics of representation in cultural stereotypes and images

> The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas; i.e., the class which is the ruling *material* force of society, is at the same time its ruling *intellectual* force; the class which has the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the mental production are subject to it. (Marx/Engels Internet Archive (Marxists.org) 2000)

As the present study aims to deconstruct, analyse and compare both literary texts and media texts, the understanding of the politics of representation will necessarily rely on a humanities-based textual approach. The reason for this is that the more complex methods of textual analysis (like the deconstruction this study will use), have emerged from a deeper analysis and better understanding of texts, narratives and representations as well as of critical concepts as ideology and hegemony.

The urgency of the politics of representation is further accentuated by the fact that today the world is filled with images –be they visual, static or moving – in literature and in different forms of the mass media. Some go as far as to say that "we have moved from a logocentric (word-centred) to an occulocentric (image-centred) world" (Holliday et al 2006: 98).

'Image' in this study is understood both as a visual representation but more in the broadest sense of what Miriam Cooke (1997:1) termed:

> [P]preconception built on the weak and resilient foundations of myth and [visual] image. Images are flat impressions that provide pieces of information. They are like photographs that frame and freeze a fragment of the real and then project it as the whole. What was dynamic and changing becomes static. Just as a snapshot provides a true, if partial, picture, so these cultural images contain some truth. That is why they are so hard to change (…) these images are the context of a first encounter between two people who know little if anything about each other. Images we have of each other are always part of the baggage that we bring to dialogue. Sometimes we are at the mercy of the image our addressee has of us or chooses to invoke. Sometimes we hide behind the image. Sometimes we act as though neither of us had an image of the other. Sometimes, those ideal times, the image disappears and the contact is unmediated by the myth. Then we can act as individuals between whom messages pass easily regardless of the contact, code or context.

The idea that all cultural representations are political is one of the major themes of cultural theory of the last decades. Contemporary criticism has shown that there are no innocent texts, there is no pure entertainment, that all representations of a culture and society are laden with meanings, values, biases and messages. Cultural texts contain representations: they are saturated with meanings; they generate political effects and reproduce or oppose governing social institutions and relations of domination and subordination. (Durham & Kellner 2001: 5-7.)

From the above hypothesis follows the assumption that the images of Transylvania that come down to us from literary and cultural texts are constructed and form part of a bigger network of discourses. At the bottom of discourses lie what Marx and Engels in the 1840s termed *ideology*. (Marx/Engels Internet Archive (Marxists.org) 2000) Ideologies in the broad sense reproduce social denomination; they legitimize prevailing groups over subordinate ones. Furthermore, they are hard to discern as most often they seem common sense; therefore they are often invisible and elusive to criticism. However, the more advanced the study of cultural forms and representations, the more obvious the presence of ideologies becomes within a context. This is true because ideologies are most noticeable when negative and prejudiced representations of the subordinate groups are prevalent. The abundance of derogatory and pejorative terms in representations of Transylvania in Western texts will be shown later in the study, in the Chapter 4 analysis.

Criticism of ideology soon developed into critical discourse analysis through the gradual intervention of audiences into the politics of representation. The turn towards audiences in the 1980s has increased consciousness of the fact that audiences can and *should* perform oppositional readings, reacting negatively to what they perceive as prejudiced representations of their own culture or social group. Thus audiences have become active creators of meaning instead of being passive victims of manipulation. They can be empowered to reject prejudicial or stereotypical representations of specific groups and individuals, and could affirm positive ones. (Durham & Kellner 2001: 24-25.)

It is in this sense that I find important the presence of agency and reception in the analysis. The empowerment of audiences is necessary as this will enhance a dialogue between writer, text and reader, perpetuating change and exchange. Unless audiences give voice to their own ideas, the texts will remain relics, literary constructs to be taken for granted.

Reading culture could thus be seen as a political event, discerning negative or positive representation, learning how narratives are constructed, how images and ideology function with media and culture to reproduce either social domination and discrimination, or more positive social change. *Culture,* on the other hand, is now conceived as "a field of representation, as a producer of meaning that provides negative and positive depictions of gender, class, race, sexuality, religion, and further key constituents of identity" (…) Consequently, *representations* are seen as "constructions of complex technical, narrative, and ideological apparatuses" (Durham & Kellner 2001: 25-26).

It is to this end that media technologies, narrative forms, conventions and codes are indispensable for unveiling the politics behind representations. This is done by decoding and encoding, and analysis of texts and audiences. Film, television, music, and literary text as cultural forms can be interpreted as contexts wherein representations transpose discourses of conflicting social movements. As Larry Gross filmmaker and scriptwriter has aptly formulated it: "representation in the mediated "reality" of our mass culture is

in itself [sic] power" (Quoted in Durham & Kellner 2001: 4.) This notwithstanding, cultural studies benefit largely from the perspectives of the politics of representation as they provide tools whereby the critic can expose aspects of cultural texts that reproduce class, gender, racial and diverse forms of domination and positively valorise aspects that subvert existing dominations, or depict forms of resistance and movements against them. (Durham & Kellner 2001: 390.)

Unless the politics of representation is taken seriously, cultural and prejudicial images and associations - of the type "Transylvania – Dracula" - will prevail and diminish the possibility of the "real" place to emerge in its complex integrity. Being aware of the fact that ideologies and dominant discourses affect our perceptions of reality is a first step to avoid stereotypical attitudes and behaviour in an intercultural context. On the other hand, perception, conceptualization and evaluation of different contexts and experiences are crucial to communication. Within an intercultural context, in an instantaneous meeting with the '*Other'* - more often than not - stereotypes are the first to emerge. But what are these stereotypes? The term itself was introduced in 1824 to describe a printing duplication process "in which the original is preserved and in which there is no opportunity for change or deviation in the reduplications" (Rudmin 1989: 8).

Although the meaning has changed somewhat through the years, the basic idea is still that you expect the meaning to be the same in every situation of its use. Cultural stereotypes can thus be understood as overgeneralizations or fixed perceptions which may be applied to people from another culture. Through such overgeneralizations we come to perceive each and every individual from that culture. (Klyukanov 2005: 214-215.) Gross generalizations, emphases on essentials, repetition, and exclusion of details are methods by which not just stereotypes are being constructed but also– as the study will prove later – discourses, ideologies and images.

According to Gudykunst & Kim (2003: 129) there are two different types of stereotypes: normative and non-normative. Normative stereotypes are overgeneralizations based on limited information. Non-normative stereotypes are

overgeneralizations that are purely self-projective; we project concepts from our own culture onto people of another culture.

Picture 1. An example of self-projective stereotype: a summer 2007 Transylvanian International Film Festival poster. (A leaflet from the Cinema 'Arta', Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

However, stereotypes work in both ways: we project on a group or culture our overgeneralized view of them, but there are times when stereotypes become self-projective as well, when we promote a stereotyped image of our culture, which brings us some benefit. A good example is **Picture 1**, a summer 2007 Transylvanian International Film Festival advertisement where the Dracula stereotype (here represented by four main actors in the role of Dracula in its several movie adaptations) is used as a magnet to attract foreign spectators.

Every stereotype is a firm conception ("stereo" means solid or firm) that we use over and over again with the assumption that it constructs the same reality whenever we use it. Intercultural communication can only be successful if our dealing with people from another culture reflects that culture. The more generalizations we use in our approaches, the more individual cases are left out; thus the more stereotypical, and less reliable the conceptualization becomes. One-size-fits-all concepts, however, do not work well with intercultural communication. (Klyukanov 2005: 218.)

To conclude, stereotypes are rigid and inaccurate perceptions that ignore reality. Stereotypes work against reality, putting blinds on people, preventing them from perceiving the *'Other'* and the Self unbiased, unmediated. The image resulting from this misperception is usually distorted and fails our intercultural interactions. (Holliday, Hyde & Kullman 2006: 224.) As Bhabha (1994: 75) argues: "the stereotypes give access to an 'identity' which is predicated as much on mastery and pleasure as it is on anxiety and defence, for it is a form of multiple and contradictory belief in its recognition of difference and disavowal of it."

Looking at the above mentioned criteria relevant to cultural images, it is obvious that the implications to it are many and complex. Indeed, the politics of representation brings to light the powers behind a seemingly innocent image: ideologies, hegemony, discourses. However, as has been consistently raised by Critical Discourse Analysts, audiences can and *should* act as active receptors, pointing out deficiencies and manipulative tendencies in cultural texts, thus enhancing an unbiased dialogue. This capacity can be strengthened by the knowledge of media technologies, narrative forms, conventions, codes and by the expertise in the methods of decoding, encoding, deconstructing and analysing. Although it is beyond the scope of this paper to enter into an analysis of all these matters, it has to be pointed out that the evaluation of the different contexts is indispensable both for understanding and communication. One issue of concern is that of cultural stereotypes, as argued above. As the short introduction to the politics of representation exposed here indicates, we, scholars should actively recreate the contexts for overused images, thus overthrowing the supposed autonomy of stereotypic concepts.

2 DECONSTRUCTION, REPRESENTATION AND DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

This study is based on a cultural studies account of culture as 'way of life', or to use John Frow's and Meaghan Morris' (1993: x) words:

> …the whole 'way of life' of a social group as it is structured by representation and by power … a network of representations – texts, images, talk, codes of behaviour, and the narrative structures organising these – which shapes every aspect of social life.

Drawing from this understanding, the main questions addressed in my thesis in relevance to cultural studies will be: How does one represent other cultures? What is another culture? What is involved in notions like "different culture"? How do ideas acquire authority? How do discourses evolve and disseminate knowledge? How can we scholars learn to be self-aware and self-critical, practising an oppositional critical consciousness?

Therefore, as a starting point, the analysis of images representing a culture (here Transylvanian) requires a clear understanding of the act of signifying, of representing. The notion of *representation* needs to be clarified in more detail in order to see what drives us in the attempt to represent *the other*. Representation is a broad concept and approaches and definitions of it are many. As Maria Todorova (1997: 7) notes:

> There has appeared today a whole genre dealing with the problem and representation of "otherness". It is a genre across disciplines, from anthropology, through literature and philosophy, to sociology and history in general. A whole new discipline has appeared – *imagology*- dealing with literary images of the other.

However, in this study I will restrict myself to only a few authors' definitions relevant to the discussion of the East-West dichotomy and most importantly Jacques Derrida's complex deconstructive analysis of representation.

Since representation is a mental process, the study has a deep philosophical implication. Indeed, philosophy is needed as a core to analysing cultural images, for, as Rorty claims:

> Philosophy can be foundational in respect to the rest of culture because culture is the assemblage of claims to knowledge, and philosophy adjudicates such claims. It can do so because it understands the foundations of knowledge and it finds these foundations in a study of man-as-knower, of the "mental processes" or the "activity of representation" which make knowledge possible. To know is to represent accurately what is outside the mind (…) (Rorty 1980: 3)

The philosophies my studies will touch upon are: the Plato-Kantian tradition of western logocentric metaphysics, Foucault's post-structuralism, and most importantly Jacques Derrida's theory of deconstruction that evolved as a polemic to challenge previously taken-for-granted systems of thought. My analysis of various texts will, therefore, be carried out based on Derrida's deconstruction. The 'deconstructive' elements taken as analytic tools in my work are briefly the following: the identification and subversion of taken-for-granted ways of thinking about historically entrenched binaristic logics, the tenacity of these ways of thinking, and the violence of their effects as well as the gradual building down of the elements that are at play in the construction and *framing* of cultural images.

2.1 Derrida's deconstructive view of representation

In analysing the elements of the East-West dichotomy within the Transylvanian image, the deconstructive research method is useful to unravel the binaries that underpin our thinking and our perceptions of 'significant Others'. Deconstruction, which is a theory, methodology and a method, is at the same time one of the most popular devices to critically analyse cultural texts. The method helps in answering the questions what kinds of social and political issues and inequalities do these dichotomies tell about and whether they articulate diverse kinds of social subordination or bids for power. Deconstruction as a methodological approach is closely related to both semiotics and genealogy. They both challenge taken-for-granted or naturalized concepts and practices. Like semiotics, deconstruction is interested in uncovering the binaries that underpin the language and culture we use to make sense of reality.

The reason why I have chosen to focus on Transylvania is that it has been the locus of one of the most naturalized and often contradictory cultural dichotomies: East/West, Irrational/Rational/, Evil/Good, Balkanised/Western, Barbarian/Civilized, Occult/Scientific, etc. What deconstruction does is that it unearths the binaries that interlace these associations as well as helps to expose the way in which they prey on old cultural associations, such as society, authority and the individual.

One of the most influential philosophers of post-World War II, Derrida's thinking has often been depicted as controversial, radical and "difficult" to read, his theory of deconstruction limited, obscured by an elusive style that avoids the simplification of ideas, and is overtly suspicious of abstraction and generalisation (Styhre 2003: 120-127). Nevertheless, his thinking, infused with sophistication and a constant urge for change, has been a source of inspiration to many. According to Spivak (1996:210) the greatest gift of deconstruction is "to question the authority of the investigating subject without paralyzing him, persistently transforming conditions of impossibility into possibility."

Edward Said has called Derrida's work a 'technique of trouble', pointing similarly to the profoundly anti-authoritarian nature of Derrida's project. Jennifer Biddle (in Lee, Alison & Cate Poynton 2000: 171) made an interesting parenthetical note in this respect, claiming that this might be the reason why Derrida is taken up by women theorists, to back their politicised, explicitly anti-authoritarian agendas, be these feminist, sexual, postcolonial or otherwise. She mentions Gayatri Spivak, Judith Butler, Barbara Johnson, Jane Gallop, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Trinh T. Minh-ha and Elizabeth Grosz as examples. When men take up the subject, Biddle argues, they do it for strictly philosophical and literary purpose i.e. Gasche, Rorty and Culler. I shall refer to some of these authors throughout my study in reference to deconstruction, representation and discourse analysis.

Nevertheless, Derrida's major breakthrough came with his attempt to criticize and challenge the western tradition of thinking. Western metaphysics – called by Rorty (1998) the "Plato-Kant axis of philosophy" – has been termed by Derrida "logocentrism" and has been the focus of his criticism. He claims that our ideas of correspondence are based on assumptions imbued with logocentric thinking. Logocentrism asserts that the spoken word represents innate qualities; it is embedded in *presence.* This very idea of presence *–arche-* and of teleology and finality has strong belief in the possibility of an absolute knowledge and absolute certainty:

> …[w] ithin the metaphysics of presence, within philosophy of knowledge of the presence of the object, as the being-oneself of knowledge in consciousness, we believe, quite simply and literally, in absolute knowledge as the closure if not the end of history. And we believe *that such a closure has taken place*…The history of presence is closed, for 'history' has never meant anything but the presentation…of Being, the production and recollection of beings in presence, as knowledge and mastery. (Derrida 1973:101)

Logocentrism assumes that the real is what is present at any given instant because the present instant is an indecomposable, absolute totality. The present instant simply ***is***. Therefore, in oppositions such as meaning/form, soul/body, intuition/expression, literal/metaphorical, nature/culture, intelligible/sensible, positive/negative, transcendental/empirical, serious/non-serious, the superior term belongs to the logos and is a higher presence; the inferior term marks a fall. The first term has priority over the second, which is rather a compilation, a negation, a manifestation, or a disruption of the first. The metaphysics of presence is pervasive, familiar, and powerful. Its power of valorisation, the authority of presence structures all our thinking: i.e. notions of "making clear", "grasping", "demonstrating", "revealing", and "showing what is the case" all invoke presence. (Culler 1983: 94.)

In the philosophy of logocentrism it could be shown that "all names related to fundamentals, to principles, or to the centre have always designated the constant of a presence" (Derrida 1967: 411/279). The history of metaphysics –Derrida argues- like the history of the West, is the history of these metaphors and metonymies. Its matrix … is the determination of *Being* as presence in all senses of the word (Derrida 1967: 279). Western metaphysics has, consequently, created a language that we cannot escape and speak outside of. In Derrida's work notions of 'difference', 'presence' and 'absence' are central; he emphasizes how Western culture has tended to promote the dominant poles of a system of binary distinctions to the exclusion of the other, terming this 'metaphysics':

> Metaphysics – the white mythology which reassembles and reflects the culture of the west: the white man takes his own mythology, Indo-European mythology, and his own *logos* that is the *mythos* of his reason, for the universal form of that he must still wish to call Reason. (Derrida 1982: 213)

Derrida aims to deconstruct this tradition of thinking, even if he remains sceptical about the possibility of solving epistemological problems or of actually breaking out of the

logocentrism of Western thought. Nevertheless, in its attempt it does bring about change.

2.2 Deconstruction as a philosophy

The definition of representation in Derrida's deconstructive theory deviates from logocentric definitions that give constitutive meaning to a written signifier. Derrida casts harsh criticism on Saussure, the founder of semiotics, considering him dependent on logocentric thinking:

> The written signifier is always technical and representative. It has no constitutive meaning. This derivation is the very origin within itself the distinction between signifier and signified. (…) The notion remains therefore within the heritage of that logocentrism which is also a phonocentrism: absolute proximity of voice and being, of voice and the meaning of being, of voice and the identity of meaning. (Derrida 1976: 11-12)

Similarly, he refers to Plato's view on writing, that is, writing has no essence of value of its own, it plays within the simulacrum, it is the mime of memory, of knowledge, and of truth. Derrida brings this even further, claiming that "writing is only apparently good for memory (…) But in truth writing is essentially bad, external to memory, productive not only of science but of belief, not of truth but of appearances" (Derrida 1981: 103).

The crisis of representation strongly affects anthropology, since the ontology of separateness, difference, and otherness is its methodological basis. Anthropologists have been long aware of what in physics is known as the Heisenberg effect: the notion that, in the course of measuring, the scientist interacts with the object of observation and, as a result, the observed object is revealed not as it is in itself but as a function of measurement (Todorova 1997: 10).

According to Derrida philosophical discourse defines itself in opposition to writing and thus in opposition to itself (since writing is indispensable to communicate thought). Philosophical discourse claims that its statements are structured by logic, reason, truth, and not by the rhetoric of the language in which they are "expressed". In philosophical thinking the ideal would be to contemplate thought directly, in its pure form. However, this is impossible as we are not mind readers and therefore language should be as

transparent as possible. In writing the unfortunate aspects of mediation become apparent: the forms of the signifiers of a language might affect philosophical thinking. This condemnation of writing, in Plato and elsewhere, is of considerable importance because the "phonocentrism" that treats writing as a representation of speech and puts speech in a direct and natural relationship with meaning is inextricably associated with the "logocentrism" of metaphysics, where thought, truth, reason, logic, and the Word are conceived as existing in itself, as foundation. (Culler 1994: 91-92.)

As I've mentioned earlier Derrida has blamed Saussure for being logocentric, yet Saussure also inspired him since he put the arbitrary character of the sign and the differential character of the sign at the very foundation of general semiology, particularly linguistics. The two motifs *–arbitrary* and *differential-* are inseparable, in his view. Like Saussure, Derrida also considers the written text as getting its meaning through opposition and relationships within the text: "In language, in the system of language, there are only differences (…) The elements of signification function not through the compact force of their nuclei but rather through the network of oppositions that distinguishes them and relates them to one another" (Derrida 1991: 63-64).

To sum up, deconstruction deprives the sign of its meaning in itself and it ascribes to it meanings in terms of its differences in relation to other signs. This "play with differences" is captured by Derrida's concept of *différance:*

> Essentially and lawfully, every concept is inscribed in a chain or in a system within which it refers to the other, to other concepts, by means of the systematic play of differences. Such a play, *différance,* is thus no longer a concept, but rather the possibility of conceptuality, of a conceptual process and system in general. (Derrida 1991: 64)

According to Leitch (1983: 122) this system of interrelatedness – in linguistics - leads to an understanding of the world as an "infinite Text". In this world everything gets textualised and all contexts, be they political, economic, social, psychological, historical, or teleological, become intertexts. Caputo (Derrida 1997: 79-80) further emphasized the interrelatedness of several texts inherent to Derrida's thinking, claiming, "We are *always* and *already* embedded in various networks –social, historical, linguistic, political, sexual networks…-various horizons or presuppositions", which is

what Derrida means by the 'general text', or 'archi text', or 'textuality', or, here, just 'text'.

It is as a consequence of this textualisation that one should talk of *intertextuality* rather than innate qualities and essences, for it implies that all concepts are mutually dependent on each other. In Julia Kristeva's (1980: 66) words: "every text takes shape as a mosaic of citations, every text is the absorption and transformation of other texts". Jorge Luis Borges (1962: 214), in reference to books similarly notes: "A book is not an isolated being: it is a relationship, an axis of innumerable relationships".

Emphasising the complex interrelatedness of texts and contexts, Derrida finally manages to break away from essentialism, a notion of high praise in Western logocentric thinking. According to Derrida, norms are produced by acts of exclusion. Speech act theorists exclude non-serious examples so as to ground their rules on consensus and conventions. Moralists exclude the deviant so as to ground their precepts on a social consensus. Essentialism is ingrained in this system of creating differences.

Using Caputo (Derrida and Caputo 1997: 42), we can summarise deconstruction succinctly as follows: "deconstruction means to be essentially anti-essential." Concepts, therefore, are no longer solid representatives of underlying realities, but become knots of meaning in a field of textuality, effects of distributed networks of meaning. In this network the differences and intertextual relationships between concepts and words are what endow the concept with qualities such as meaning and utility. (Styhre 2003: 127.)

2.3 Deconstruction as a method

Having traced how deconstructive philosophy evolved – as a conscious disengagement - out of logocentrism, let us now seek to define the deconstructive strategy more closely, what it does, how, and to what end. According to Derrida the description of the deconstructive strategy *("une strategie générale de la deconstruction"*) is as follows:

> In a traditional philosophical opposition we have not a peaceful coexistence of facing terms but a violent hierarchy. One of the terms dominates the other (axiologically, logically, etc.),

> occupies the commanding position. To deconstruct the opposition is above all, at a particular moment, to reverse the hierarchy. (Derrida 1972: 56-57/41)

According to this definition the practitioner of deconstruction works within the terms of the system in order to breach it. As one of Derrida's most famous pronouncements implies -that is there is no 'outside the text' (Derrida 1976: 158) - we are stuck with the tools and the concepts that we have to work with. To deconstruct a discourse is to show how it undermines the philosophy it asserts, or the hierarchical oppositions on which it relies, by identifying in the text the rhetorical operations that produce the supposed ground for argument, the key concept or premise. Deconstruction, as a result, upsets the hierarchy by producing an exchange of properties. (Culler 1994: 86-88.)

In Derrida's deconstructive theory acts of signification/ representations depend on differences: i.e. the terms "food" and "non-food" allow food to be signified. This is extended to the system of signs in general and means that– to use Saussurean terms - the linguistic system (*langue*) is necessary for speech events (*parole*) to be intelligible and produce their effects, but the latter, in turn, is necessary for the system to establish itself. There is a circle here: before one can dissociate *parole* from *langue*, one must recognize a systematic production of differences, the production of a system of differences. (Derrida 1972: 39-40/28.) To sum up: deconstructive theory defines representations as signs that refer to other signs, which refer to still other signs, creating an endless array of texts and contexts.

In the case of cultural representations – that is the subject matter of this study – we need to look at other theorists' ideas on the matter and see to what extent their definitions were influenced by Derrida's deconstruction. I shall restrict myself to a few authors whose voice will be heard further on in the study, that is Michel Foucault, Edward Said, and I.E. Sibelan Forrester.

Michel Foucault's (1970: 138, 144) words -"[all] designation must be accomplished by means of a certain relation to all other possible designations. To know what properly appertains to one individual is to have before one the classification – or the possibility

of classifying – all others" - reiterate the idea that representations are a way to assert ourselves by differentiating us from others.

Said, on the other hand, defines representation as

> [A] universal practice of designating in one's mind a familiar space which is "ours" and an unfamiliar space beyond "ours" which is "theirs" and in this way making geographical distinctions that *can* be entirely *arbitrary*. *Arbitrary,* since the imaginative geography of "our land – barbarian land" does not necessarily mean the barbarians acceptance of the distinction, rather these distinctions are boundaries merely set up in our own minds.(…) As a result "their territory" and "their mentality" become designated as different from "ours". (Said 1978: 52)

The *arbitrariness* inherent to the mechanism of representation was also highlighted by Sibelan E.S. Forrester (2004: 17) in her book *Post-communist Cultures through an East-West gaze*, claiming that it is indeed "the human strife for hierarchy through analysis, discovery, and establishment of difference that engenders borders and their representation, arbitrary and man-made lines separating East and West, self and other". The emphasis falls on the *createdness* of geography and maps of nations and cultures. She draws a comparison between empire, borders and knowledge, arguing that borders not only reflect power and acquisition but also an awareness of the other, whereas knowledge is also "an empire with more-or-less sacrosanct aesthetic and intellectual borders accepted by convention but permeable in their nature." (Forrester 2004: 17.)

Billig et al. (1988:16) write that "many words are not mere labels which neutrally package up the world. They also express moral evaluations, and such terms frequently come in antithetical opposites which enable opposing moral judgements to be made." Consequently, one needs to be sensitive to what is involved in representation, for, as Said (1978: 273) warns us, representations have purposes, are effective and most often become deformations. Such deformations can lead later to more harmful prejudiced opinions and stereotypical processes of attribution.

Representations in the form of polarities reiterate the mechanisms involved in stereotyping as argued in the first chapter of the study: *contrasting*, which tends to emphasize the differences between cultures; *assimilating*, which means that foreigners are perceived through stereotyped social representations of their cultures of origin,

encouraging the belief that all individuals of the same country fit those representations. As a result, the asymmetrical or universalistic binary counter-concepts as self-designations deprive the "other" of some kind of essential trait, such as being a member of some kind of "universal" community. The same logic may be found in myths, like in dreams – according to Said (1995: 312) - to welcome radical antitheses, since - he argues - a myth does not analyze or solve problems but represents them as already assembled images.

2.4 Discourse analysis

The idea of discourse as a system of communication is central to the analysis of the East-West dichotomy. Therefore it is necessary to understand the concepts of *discourse* and *discourse analysis* next to the concept of *representation.* The most systematic elaboration of the concept of discourse comes from Foucault (1974) who also had a great impact on Said's (1978) theory of Orientalism. Discourse is generally described in the social sciences as an 'institutionalised way of thinking' that affects our views on all things. One can hardly escape discourse, with its own vocabulary, expressions and style of communication.

The importance of language and discourse in the construction of knowledge and the formation of persons or subjects has increased during the *linguistic turn* in the human sciences over the past three decades. This interest has been manifested in an array of different forms of discourse/textual analysis as important for cultural research. Discourse analysis offers a way to think about the circumstances in which texts arise. This is based on the assumption that "knowledge is distributed through assemblages of texts situated in appropriate settings, where setting both is and is not 'context' and certainly involves 'institution'" (Lee, Alison & Cate Poynton 2000: 2). The interrelation between institution, discourse and subject derives from Foucault who thinks of discourse as a body of language, not so much a matter of language as of discipline. (Lee & Poynton 2000: 4.)

However, Foucault does not agree upon a singular discourse but on a general one that implies the possibility of other particular discourses. In *Discipline and Punish* (1975) he demonstrates that discourse is not only composed of words but also *dispositifs*:

> a resolutely heterogeneous assemblage, containing discourses, institutions, architectural buildings [aménagements architecturaux], reglementary decisions, scientific statements, philosophical, moral, philanthropic propositions, in one word: said as well as non-said [du dit aussi bien que du non-dit], those are the dispositif's elements. The dispositif in itself is the network that we can establish between those elements. (Foucault 1975)

In this network the various discourses are intertwined or entangled with one another in a constant motion forming a 'discursive milling mass' which at the same time results in the 'constant rampant growth of discourses'. It is this mass that discourse analysis endeavors to disentangle. Furthermore, it is important to note here that 'collective symbolism' is what most often links the various discourses. Collective symbols are nothing more than 'cultural stereotypes (frequently called 'topoi'), which are handed down and used collectively' (Wodak & Meyer 2001: 35).

Collective symbols dispose of a large repertoire of images with which we visualise a complete picture of societal reality and through which we then interpret these and are provided with interpretations – in particular by the media. To put it bluntly: discourses exercise power as they transport knowledge on which the collective and individual consciousness feeds.

According to Foucault (1972), discourse analysis refers to the understanding of rules and regularities in the creation/dispersal of objects, subjects, styles, concepts and strategic fields, and thereby reveal why certain statements are made instead of others and their relation to each other:

> Whenever one can describe between a number of statements such a system of dispersion, whenever, between objects, types of statements, concepts, or thematic choices, one can define a regularity (an order, correlation, positions, and functions, transformations) we will say, for the sake of convenience, that we are dealing with a *discursive formation.* (Foucault 1972: 38)

Discourse analysis, extended to include dispositifs analysis, therefore, aims to identify the knowledge (valid at a certain place at a certain time) of discourses and/or dispositifs,

to explore the respective concrete context of knowledge/power and to subject it to critique (Wodak & Meyer 2001: 33). Proponents of critical discourse analysis (CDA), on the other hand, claim that all discourse is structured by dominance; it is historically produced and interpreted, it is situated in time and space, and dominance structures are legitimated by ideologies of powerful groups (Wodak & Meyer 2001: 3). Similarly, deconstructive – and postmodern – critics also emphasize that 'truth' and 'reality' are always provisional and constructed; therefore concepts are subject to ideology.

Nevertheless, it must not be omitted that critical discourse analysts (CDA) have from the beginning had a political project: that of altering inequitable distributions of economic, cultural and political goods in contemporary societies (Kress 1996: 15). It is this element of *domination* that Said highlighted when drawing comparison between Foucault's discourse theory and Orientalism. He argued that Foucault's idea of discourse combined with the use of discipline to employ masses of detail is like a *carceral system* similar to Orientalism that was used by the West "to administer, study, reconstruct, and subsequently to occupy, rule and exploit almost the whole of the non-European world" (Said: 1978a, 117-118). However, Foucault's influence on Said's Orientalist theory will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Discourse as a modality of dominance stems from Foucault's analysis of power influenced by Nietzsche's *genealogical critique*, according to which power is an outcome of claims regarding specific utterances as truthful.[1] These are the grounds upon which theories, models, and ideas are built. Power is, therefore, inherent to intellectual manifestations and utterances, truth-claims. Consequently, such truth claims are only discursive and are put forth by enunciative modalities. Power operates as a network of forces capable of inclusion and exclusion, but it is not only coercive, it has its creative forces as it produces reality and liberates knowledge. Knowledge, as a conclusion becomes a manifestation of power. (Styhre 2003: 86-90.)

[1] Nietzsche's thinking demonstrates a most sceptical attitude towards the idea of essences, of stable and fixed innate qualities that serve as truths. (See e.g. Nietzsche 1974)

In Foucault's view discourse is only an activity, of writing, of reading, of exchange. 'It never involves anything but signs' (Foucault 1971: 20). This constitutes a form of control and involves profound *'logophobia'* (Lee & Poynton 2000: 47). In Foucault's terms, this logophobia is: "[A] Sort of dumb fear of these events, of this mass of spoken things, of everything that could possibly be violent, discontinuous, querulous, disordered even and perilous in it, of the incessant, disorderly buzzing of discourse" (Foucault 1971: 21). In order to overcome this fear, he argues, three things are needed: "to question our will to truth, to restore to discourse its character as an event, and to abolish the sovereignty of the signifier" (Foucault 1971: 22).

To review the study's theoretical framework: the crisis in the representations of *the Other* is a crisis across disciplines. It involves philosophy –as philosophy adjudicates claims to knowledge; anthropology – as it is based on the ontology of separateness, difference, and otherness; history – as most often history-writing serves political interests and historical narratives depend on the dominant political ideologies; literature and media – as the literary or filmic images of the other are mainly fictional, yet still effective, and the self-determination of the author/director and his/her differentiation from the represented other can deform reality.

In view of the above, the presentation of the deconstructive philosophy as well as the discourse analysis was inevitable to understand the workings of representations and to be able to interpret them. As the study concludes, discourses are structured by dominance and power that creates claims to absolute knowledge and certainty, while, opposed to this, representations in the light of deconstructive philosophy can be set free of this discursive discipline and can be seen as part of an endless array of texts. Terms become without meaning in themselves but acquire meaning in terms of differences in relation to other signs. This finding serves as an important indication that we live in a world of infinite texts and infinite possibilities, where terms can be given new meanings within new contexts without being essential, conclusive in their meaning, and most importantly, without becoming boring.

The following two chapters will serve as practical illustrations of the workings and consequences of discourses and the opening up of a possible new interpretation of a frozen image built on imposed meanings, with the analytical tools given by the deconstructive method. The analysis of the East-West polarity will highlight the discursive elements at play when creating the cultural stereotype of Transylvania, while the subsequent deconstructive-comparative analysis will emphasize the redundancy of context, setting and rhetoric and the weak system on which an image and its meaning is built.

3 EAST - WEST DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

The Transylvanian story constitutes a good topic for deconstructive analysis as it is unusually saturated with meanings underpinned with binary logic. The most common discourses depicting Transylvania often focus on the 'stereotypical' representation of the place in mainstream media as a haunted wild region full of were-wolves, witches, vampires, scarecrows and ruinous castles within untraceable forested mountains. These misrepresentations are nothing new. Diaries from travellers from earlier centuries record all manner of surprises and prejudicial reactions to unfamiliar customs. This is a quite common reaction of the human mind to untreated strangeness, and as such cultures have tended to impose complete transformations (if not *deformations*) on other cultures, often treating them not as they are but rather as they ought to be.

This line of inquiry has usually been predicated on notions of 'wrong' kinds of images (the Balkan, barbarianism, etc.) in opposition to 'right' ones (the West, civilization, etc.). The advantage of deconstruction is that it draws attention to the dichotomous nature of these discourses that suppress one image and elevate another. As seen earlier in the study, the image of Transylvania contains some of the most naturalized and often contradictory cultural dichotomies: East/West, Balkanised/Western, Barbarian/Civilized, Occult/Scientific, and Irrational/Rational. These appear among the universal binaries that most often underpin the thinking and perceptions of 'significant Others'. How these universal binaries are manufactured in a politics of domination and hegemony where certain patterns dominate another is here to be proven.

In the deconstruction of these binaries I will proceed from the more general to the more specific. To begin with I will give a presentation of different views concerning the wider East-West discourse based on Foucault's (1972, 1974) theory of discourse and Edward Said's (1978) theory of 'Orientalism', then a closer analysis of Western-Eastern European discourse including the Balkan phenomena and studies of post-socialist countries, down to representations of Transylvania by the West. The narratives and discourses surrounding the East-West binary are highly problematic and interpretations of them have been manifold. I do not attempt to take sides with either of the two

geographically positioned sides, but will rather focus on a specific area that is situated in-between, in mid-way points of "half western, half eastern" countries. However, as it will be emphasized later in my study, the categories 'east' and 'west' raise the question 'east of what?' and emphasize that these geographical dividing lines are only relational categories.

For a better understanding of the idea and as a backbone to my study I devised a schema called "The Iceberg-effect". (**Figure 1.** page 34) This serves as a succinct illustration of the patterns of my analysis. The idea of the iceberg as a model is based on the well-known "iceberg model of culture" (AFS Orientation Handbook 1984:14) that claims that among the elements that make up a culture there are many very visible while others hardly noticeable. According to the model, culture can be pictured as an iceberg, where the smaller, visible portion above the waterline is discernable, while the much larger part of the iceberg is underneath the water line and therefore invisible. The visible part is *supported* by the invisible one that is its powerful foundation. This, consequently, implies that the visible parts of culture are just expressions of its invisible parts and indicates how difficult it is to understand people with different cultural backgrounds. Since we spot only the visible parts of their iceberg, we cannot immediately see the foundations that these parts rest upon, thus leading to a stereotyped image.

Based on the above, my figure is an iceberg-construct that is made up of the elements that form a cultural stereotype, in this case the Dracula myth connected to Transylvania. According to my schema, above the surface of the water is the actual expression of the stereotype in the context of an instantaneous intercultural exchange. At this moment there is only the image, the first information that is remembered in reference to Transylvania. Right below, just above the water line are the easily recollectable associations that come down to us via mediated knowledge: fiction, film, travel literature etc. Regarding the Dracula stereotype, at this level we find the popular novel by Bram Stoker (1987) and its subsequent adaptations (drama and film), here exemplified only by 3 major movie adaptations: F.W. Murnau's *Nosferatu* from 1922, Werner Herzog's 1979 remake, *Nosferatu the Vampire,* and F.F. Coppola's 1991 version, *Bram Stoker's Dracula*.

Below the surface there are the discourses supporting the texts above. These can be discerned by the investigation of mass media, political discourse and history-writing, and therefore require scholarly research. The cultural texts carrying the stereotyped image of Transylvania are grounded on the Orientalist discourse which delimited two oppositional geographical categories – the Orient and the West - according to the radical differences in the cultural traits of the people who inhibit these territories. On this larger, foundational discourse further discourses of East and West are built. These are the Balkan versus the West and a rather miniature reproduction of it, the Eastern Europe versus Western Europe discourse after the Cold War. The elements highlighted in the agendas of the above discourses will serve as sources that help elicit the images the cultural texts are trying to disperse. The idea is that – while deconstructing the elements – one must dive down to "the bottom of the sea", that is to understand the psychological and philosophical drives when representing *the Other* as the *very Other from the Self.*

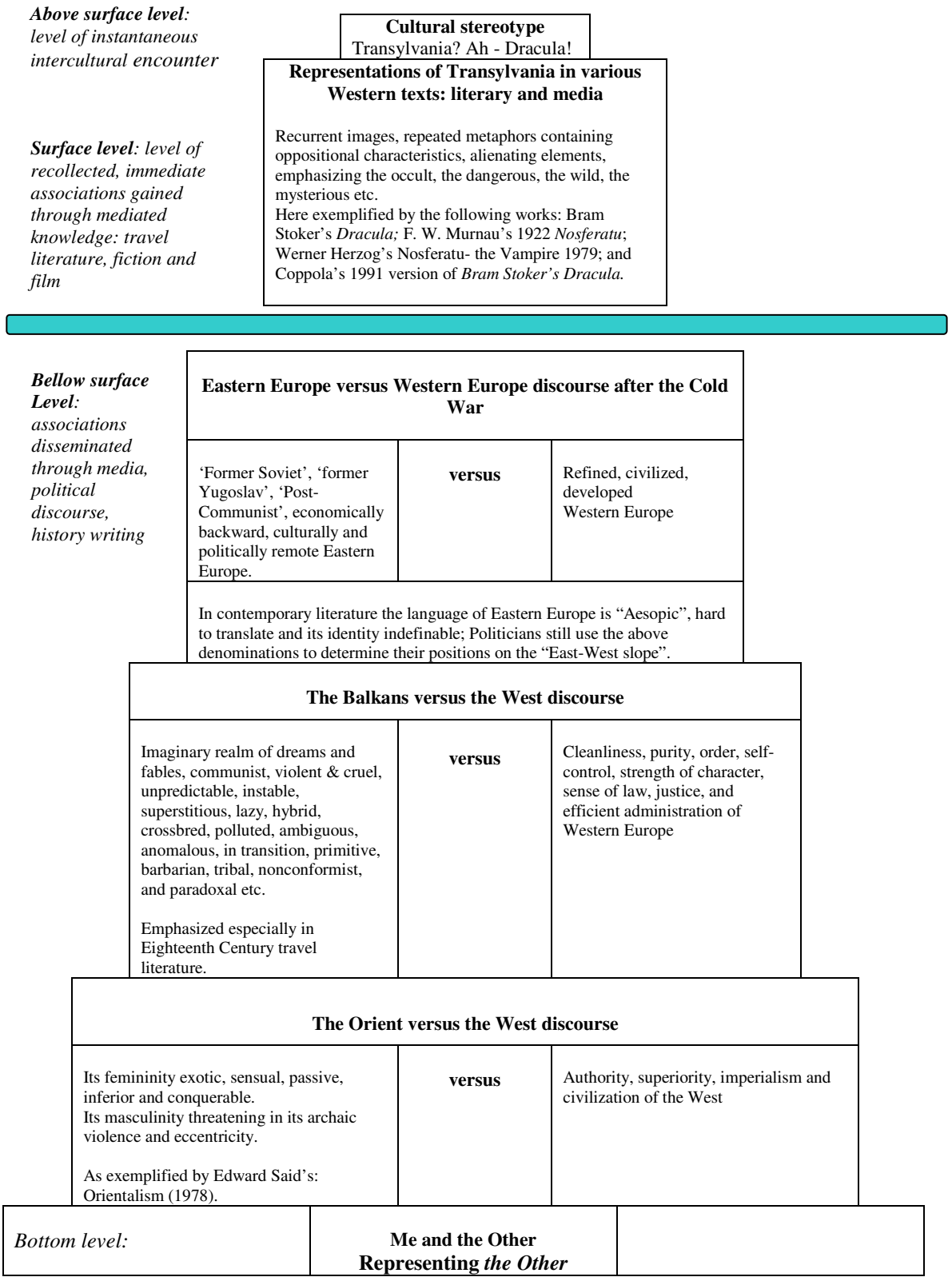

Figure 1. The iceberg-effect

3.1 Representing *the Other*: Edward Said's Orientalism

Owing to its borderland position between the demarcations of East and West, Transylvania appertains partly to the East most often generalised by the West as "the mysterious Orient". In today's post-modern, electronic world, ruled massively by the media, the nineteenth-century academic and imaginative demonology of the "mysterious Orient" has been intensified by standardization and a reinforcement of cultural stereotypes (Said 1978: 26). Therefore, the lack of self-representations and the abundance of the stereotypical representations by the West with regard to Transylvania correspond to what Said (1978: 40) defines as Oriental, that is, "being contained and represented by dominating frameworks".

As Brian S. Turner (1997:3-4) aptly concluded, Edward Said's work earned a special place in humanities and social sciences during a period when the problem of social and cultural diversity, the question of cultural difference had become an acute issue in politics. Said's debate about Orientalism –started in 1978 – marked the arrival of a critical tradition that came to be known as *"cultural discourse studies"* (Bhabha 1983 in Turner). Said presented a profound critique of liberalism by showing how knowledge and power are inevitably combined and how power relations produced through discourse a range of analytical objects which continue to impact on scholarship. He also provided us with a critique of the alleged separation of facts and values and the neutrality of science. His work was significant in showing how discourses, values and patterns of knowledge actually construct the 'facts' which scholars are attempting to study. Over the years, Said's scholarship significantly affected the way people understood the notion of "Otherness". Furthermore, Said's work posed an exciting challenge through his genuine application of the *'methodology of the text'*, and *deconstruction* – the most advanced aspects of American literary studies at that time – to the analysis of historical and social phenomena.

His influential book *Orientalism* (1978) builds on presumptions of discourse and power developed by Foucault. According to Lockman (2004: 186-187), Orientalism for Said was very much a discourse in the sense Foucault used the term: a specific form of

knowledge, with its own object of study ("the Orient"), premises, rules, conventions and claims to truth. Thus, Orientalism as a form of knowledge simultaneously was produced by, and perpetuated power relations.

Said's work (1978) has been largely responsible in both academic and more public circles for focusing attention on the processes by which those nations and their people on the "peripheries" of the world, and particularly those who have been colonized and dominated by one or more European powers, have been framed by the discourses of the colonizers. In *Orientalism* (1995:4) Said states his belief that the 'Orient' is a social construct:

> The Orient is not an inert fact of nature … both geographical and cultural entities – to say nothing of historical entities – such locales, regions, geographical sectors, as 'Orient' and 'Occident' are man-made. Therefore, as much as the West itself, the Orient is an idea that has a history and a tradition of thought, imagery and vocabulary that have given it reality and presence in and for the 'West'. In addition, 'Orientalism' depends for its strategy on … flexible positional superiority, which puts the Westerner in a whole series of possible relationships with the Orient without him ever being the relative upper hand.

It is the nature of this 'flexible positional superiority' that is the basis of *'Otherization'*.

According to Edgar, A. & Sedgwick, P. (1999: 216) the notion *'Other'*, used by Said, may be designated as "a form of cultural projection of concepts. This projection constructs the identities of cultural subjects through a relationship of Power in which *the Other* is the subjugated element." What Orientalism did was to construct them as its own (European) Other. Through describing purportedly 'oriental' characteristics (irrational, uncivilized, etc.), Orientalism provided a definition not of the real 'oriental' identity, but of European identity in terms of the oppositions which structured its account. Hence, 'irrational' *Other* presupposes (and is also presupposed by) 'rational' self. The construction of the Other in Orientalist discourse, then, is a matter of asserting self-identity: and the issue of European account of the Oriental Other is thereby rendered a question of power. (Holliday et al 2006: 93-94.)

There was no objectively existing Orient; that entity - Said argued - came into being with a specific meaning for Europeans (and later other Westerners) through the very operation of the discourse of Orientalism, which defined its object in a certain way,

produced widely accepted "truths" about it, and thereby made a certain representation of it appear real. Said argued that from the late eighteenth century onward one could identify Orientalism as

> the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient – dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient. (Said 1995: 4.)

Why and how the West gained predominance and an authority that allowed such categorizations can be answered by looking at some historical events. A major shift in Western culture – one that possibly marked its forthcoming development and claims for cultural superiority - can be dated back to the end of the Middle Ages, when technological innovations made possible the production of printed books and the discovery of America. At the same time the Reformation marked a shift in the position of religion and a worldview centered more on the individual leading to capitalism (Weber), secularization and western dominance. (Huntington 1996)

It is on these grounds that a certain Western tradition evolved, leaving its mark superimposing its models of thought on the structures of other cultures. One cannot deny its excellence, though, when thinking of the prosperity it brought about, its legal systems, its forms of banking and communications that today opened up opportunities for all human initiatives across frontiers. However, when it comes to the images and representations it produces – since it owns the *authority* and *means* to do so- one needs to be cautious and critical. Authority can and indeed *must* be analyzed for

> [t]Here is nothing mysterious or natural about authority. It is formed, irradiated, disseminated, it is instrumental, it is persuasive; it has status, it establishes canons of taste and value; it is virtually undistinguishable from certain ideas it dignifies as true, and from traditions, perceptions, and judgements it forms, transmits, reproduces.(Said, 1995: 19)

A special place in European Western experience, the Orient has been defined by Said (Said 1995:1) as one of its richest and oldest colonies, the source of civilizations and languages, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the '*Other'*:

> [T]he Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience. Yet none of this Orient is merely imaginative. The Orient is an integral part of European *material* civilization and culture. Orientalism expresses and represents that part culturally and even ideologically as a mode of discourse with supporting

> institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines, even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles. (Said, 1995:2)

This representation is the end product of a sheer exteriority, that is, the Orientalist poet or scholar makes the Orient speak, describes the Orient, and renders its mysteries plain for and to the West.

Quoting Marx in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, "Sie können sich nicht vertreten, sie müssen vertreten werden" [They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented], Said (1995: 21) concludes by pointing to the dangers inherent in cultural discourse and exchange: "what is commonly circulated by it is not "truth" but representations". In fact, in this fierce criticism of uncritical acceptance of authority and authoritative ideas, Edward Said lines up with Derrida in valuing a sceptical critical consciousness. Similarly, he urges us not to be ignorant of the insights, methods, and ideas of modernism (a truly Western product) that could dispense with racial, ideological, and imperialist stereotypes of the type provided by Orientalism. He sees the failure of Orientalism in its inability to cope with a world it considered alien to its own, in its ignorance of human experience altogether, claiming that "…systems of thought like Orientalism, discourses of power; ideological fictions – mind-forged manacles –are all too easily made, applied and guarded" (Said 1995: 328).

Orientalism is a good example to understand all that has been said before about the workings and often negative implications of discourse, as it certainly was one systematic discipline by which European culture managed the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period. It was not pure fantasy, but a created, *manufactured* body of theory and practice. The relationship that resulted from this systematic differentiation was (*is*) a relationship of power, of domination. As Said formulated it, Orientalism is "a form of regularized writing, vision, and study, dominated by imperatives, perspectives, and ideological biases ostensibly suited to the Orient (…) a system of representations framed by a whole set of forces that brought the Orient into Western learning" (Said 1995: 202).

To sum up, Orientalism is really about the manufacture of '*an Other'* which is convenient to the self-perception of oneself. This is most often done for purposes of domination, as knowledge and domination in the imperial context almost always go together. What is central in Orientalism is the question of difference, of human difference and whether this notion of difference can extend to large collectivities such as the East and the West, the Orient and the Occident. According to Said these differences are rather historical than genetic or physical; they are manufactured as a political reflex developed for other reasons: i.e. resources, oil, or a geo-strategic idea of who should control what area and for what reason.

However, what really interests him in Orientalism is how cultures constantly feed each other across what are supposed to be lines of demarcation –that to Said are rather lines of coexistence and complementarity and counterpoint –which he sees as horizontal rather than vertical lines always facing each other. In a broader context, Said's attack on Orientalism was a specific critique of what has since become known as the *general crisis of representation*. More significantly, he posed the question not only in epistemological but also in moral terms: "Can one divide human reality, as indeed human reality seems to be genuinely divided, into clearly different cultures, histories, traditions, societies, even races, and survive the consequences humanly?"(Said 1995: 45)

If the designations of Orient, Occident, East and West are taken to the degree of the profound study of the Other as *very other*, of the various circumstances these designations grew and how they related to the empire, the question arises whether we can maintain that kind of profound knowledge and in the meantime maintain our humanism. Said doubts that the two can ever go together (humanism and knowledge) as there is something profoundly antihuman in knowledge that is based on differences and superiority and the submission if not the alienation of the other. This notwithstanding, he sees hope in thinking of knowledge as not something fixed or frozen, the equivalent of a closed book on a shelf, but as something dynamic, constantly changing, where *You* and *the Other* are always in dialogue, based on comprehension and common ideas about humanity.

3.2 The West and the Balkans

Since geographically Transylvania is situated in-between Eastern and Western Europe, one must pull back from the world politics surrounding Edward Said's criticism of Orientalism (a book focusing largely on the farther Orient as a Western construct – the West including the U.S. -and predominantly the Arabic world in the Western discourse) and instead take a closer look at the construction of "the East" *within* Europe itself. Nevertheless, the conclusions drawn from the former discourse serve as an important foreground to this study.

Despite the fact that the distortions between the two manufactured geographical divides of East and West within Europe appear to be lesser today – consider the *inclusionist* politics of the European Union - still, "Easterners" (emigrants) can very easily be faced with prejudice and marginalisation in an intercultural encounter. To find the causes that lay behind this new disparity we need to trace the predominant representations of this part of Europe in earlier paradigms.

It must be noted, though, that the "Eastern Europe" I am referring to here is not so much an existing geographical region as an intellectual invention of a cultural zone constructed during the Enlightenment through travel diaries, maps, imaginary travelogues and armchair philosophising. As Larry Wolff (1994: 1) argues, much of the construction of Eastern Europe that is separate from the "civilized" portions of Western Europe can be attributed to Enlightenment philosophers (Voltaire and Rousseau in particular) and to fictional travellers of the same period. In both representations, the eastern part of Europe appears as a "backward and barbaric homogenous region", or as a "ridiculous and fantastic place". Wolff concludes that the invention of Eastern Europe is the result of

> The synthetic association of lands fused with fact and fiction, a cultural construction, an intellectual invention, of the Enlightenment (…) the intellectual project of demi-Orientalization; produced as a work of cultural creation, of intellectual artifice, of ideological self-interest and self promotion. (Wolff 1994: 356)

Wolff introduces his discussion of “Eastern Europe” with the speech made by Winston Churchill in 1946 that described an iron curtain dividing the “continent” into eastern and western parts, and then claims that the source of such division is much older, and dates back to the Enlightenment. During this period – Wolff argues - the more prominent division of Europe into north and south (obvious to Mediterranean-encircling Romans and reinvented during the Renaissance) was overlaid by an east/west axis that began to take on significance in the "north." Previously northern cities in Western Europe such as Paris, London, and Amsterdam had become economically and politically powerful, whereas northern lands in Eastern Europe (such as Poland and Russia) were places of potential conquest by the West. During the Enlightenment, Western Europe took on the connotations of "civilization" (previously reserved for the Italian Renaissance cities of the "south"), and Eastern Europe took on the characteristics of civilization’s antithesis (previously associated with the barbarians of the "north"). (Wolff 1994: 1-7.)

In Wolff’s book, travelers and philosophers in the West convey the voices and visualizations of “Eastern Europe”; local voices and visions are not heard or seen. The questions that rose about the "paradoxes" of Eastern Europe (a place of elegance and debris, fire and ice, culture and nature) are imposed, not indigenous. The "mapping" of Eastern Europe should be seen as part of the mapping and colonization of the world associated with the expansion of Europe outside Europe, and the expansion of Occidental Europe into Oriental Europe. In both cases Western Europe is set out to identify and make use of unknown or incompletely known lands. The "mapping" of these lands was an extension of the Enlightenment’s powerful agenda of coordinating knowledge with control.

Similarly, Maria Todorova’s influential book *Imagining the Balkans* (1997) outlines the process of “discovery” of the Balkans by diplomats and other travellers who return, packed with stories and descriptions, often emphasizing “the beauty of the women and the crudeness of the men”. Analysing travelogues, diplomatic accounts, academic surveys, and journalism her book uncovers the ways this intellectual tradition was constructed, mythologized and finally transmitted as a discourse. Todorova (1997:18-

20) defines "balkanism" as a complex set of stereotyping practices, which are often developed in opposition to an imagined, Orientalized or Occidentalized other. As the author has said of her book:

> [t]he central idea of *'Imagining the Balkans'* is that there is a discourse, which I term Balkanism, that creates a stereotype of the Balkans, and politics is significantly and organically intertwined with this discourse. When confronted with this idea, people may feel somewhat uneasy, especially on the political scene. (Todorova 1997:20)

The construction of the Balkans as a negative mirror discourse to a European identity is built on the foundation of Edward Said's *Orientalism* discussed above, this time marking a manufactured frontier between the Western sphere of Europe and the Eastern sphere of Europe once under Ottoman rule. However, Todorova stresses that the East is always a '*relational category'*, depending on the point of observation: East Germans are "eastern" to the West Germans, Poles are "eastern" to the East Germans, and Russians are "eastern" to the Poles. The same applies to the Balkans, with their propensity to construct their internal Orientalisms, aptly called by Milica Bakic-Hayden "nesting orientalisms". That is, a Serb is an "easterner" to a Slovene, but a Bosnian would be "easterner" to a Serb even though geographically situated to the west; the Albanians situated in the western Balkans are perceived as the easternmost by the rest of the Balkan nations. For all Balkan peoples, the common "easterner" is the Turk, although the Turk perceives himself/herself as western compared to "real" easterners, such as Arabs. (Todorova 1997: 58.)

The Balkans label echoes the automatic *essentialism* of other similar clichés like *the Orient,* indicating that it exists as a region with a certain identity defined by common features like religion, language, historical narrative, pattern of behaviour, everyday practices and rituals, political and economic traditions, canons of art and literature, etc. According to Forrester (2004: 10) Balkanism, as "one complex historical set of images and assumptions" is also the way peoples of Eastern Europe have been imagined, and have imagined themselves in distinction to cultures farther west or east. Such determinations of collective identity, however, prove to be false, since they include some essentialist characters while excluding other, seemingly non-essential ones.

Balkanism was gradually formed in the course of two centuries and crystallized in a specific discourse around the Balkan wars and World War I. The Balkans, as a distinct geographic, social and cultural entity were in fact discovered by European travellers from the late eighteenth century on, who believed that the European possessions of the Ottoman Empire had a distinct physiognomy of their own. Having evaluated the travellers' accounts from that period, Todorova concluded that two extremes could be found in the way they treated the "other": one that was complete enchantment and the other total negation. These traveller's diaries were therefore considered unreliable since the descriptions preferred overgeneralization. (Todorova 1997: 62-63.)

However, these accounts served other purposes quite well: they marked the beginning of a perception of the Balkans as a distinct geographic and cultural entity; they were produced and published for a comparatively broad-reading but enthusiastic public, serving as latter-day journalists: they shaped public opinion, expressing the dominant tastes and prejudices of their time; and last but not least they included the combination of those elements that later shaped the stereotypic image of the Balkans (Todorova 1997: 64). To use Mary Douglas' words, a travel narrative's importance lies in that it "simultaneously presents and represents a world, that is, simultaneously creates or makes up a reality and asserts that it stands independent of that same reality" (Douglas 1970: 49).

By the beginning of the twentieth century "Balkanization" had become a new term in the vocabulary of *Schimpwörter*[2], or disparagements of Europe. It has become a synonym for a reversion of the tribal, the backward, the primitive, and the barbarian. Described as the "other" of Europe, the Balkans implied the assumption that its inhabitants do not care to conform to the standards of behaviour devised as normative by and for the civilized world. This – according to Todorova (1997: 3) - is based on reductionism and stereotyping to such a degree that the discourse requires special attention and analysis of how such a *frozen image* became persistent. Although she admits that both Orientalism and balkanism are a subgenre of the concern with

[2] *Schimpwörter or disparagements* means speaking of something in a slighting way, bringing reproach and discrediting (Oxford English Dictionary).

otherness, she claims that balkanism is not merely a subspecies of Orientalism. Her arguments are more than a mere "orientalist variation on a Balkan theme".

It is important to highlight the differences between the two categories of the 'Orient' and the 'Balkan'. On the one hand, the Balkans is historically and geographically concrete while the Orient has an intangible nature. That is, Said's treatment of the Orient is ambivalent: he denies the existence of a 'real Orient'. This is premised on a justified conviction that Orient and occident "correspond to no stable reality that exists as a natural fact". (Said 1995: 3.)

On the other hand, beside the intangible nature of the Orient and the concreteness of the Balkans was the role of the Orient as an escape from civilization. As Todorova (1997: 13) comments, the East, in general, was constructed for the West as an exotic and imaginary realm, the abode of legends, fairy tales, and marvels, and it offered an option as opposed to the prosaic and profane world of the West. The Orient became Utopia, the escapist dream of affluent romantic conservatives, a metaphor for the forbidden – at the end an antiworld to the West and incompatible with it. In contrast, the Balkans has been presented as being in a transitory status, evoking the image of a bridge or crossroads, a land in-between and full of contradictions. This, on the other hand, invokes labels such as "*semideveloped, semicolonial, semicivilized, and semioriental"*. (Todorova 1997: 16.)

Unlike Orientalism, which is a discourse about an imputed opposition, Balkanism is a discourse about an imputed ambiguity. Drawing similarly on Mary Douglas' idea that the objects and ideas that confuse and contradict cherished classifications provoke *pollution behaviour*, persons and phenomena in transitory states are considered dangerous, ambiguous, and anomalous. (Todorova 1997: 17.) Todorova's thesis is that, while Orientalism deals with a difference between imputed types, balkanism treats the differences within one type. What is rejected and hurled on the Balkans by Westerners is their state of being *in-between, in transition*. This condition is disquieting and ambiguous, and therefore either blighted or ignored: "It is well known that one cannot live on a bridge or on a crossroads (…) the bridge is only part of the road, a windy and

dangerous part at that, not a human abode" (Todorova 1997: 17). The bridge metaphor is evidently premised on the endorsement of an East-West dichotomy, an essentialized opposition, an accepted fundamental difference between Orient and Occident.

It was always with reference to the East that Balkan cruelty was explained. Comparison with the east enforced the feeling of being alien and emphasized the oriental nature of the Balkans. Yet it was not until the second Balkan war (1913) that its denotations gained even worse pejorative meanings. It must be stressed that the prevailing spirit of time blamed the outbreak of World War I on the Balkans in general and Serbs in particular. As a consequence, whenever the label "Balkan" was employed it stood for "filth, passivity, unreliability, misogyny, and propensity for intrigue, insincerity, opportunism, laziness, superstitiousness, lethargy, sluggishness, inefficiency, and incompetent bureaucracy." (Todorova 1997: 117.) "Balkan", while overlapping with "Oriental", had additional characteristics such as *cruelty, boorishness, instability, and unpredictability*. (ibid) Both categories were used in opposition to the concept of Europe which symbolised cleanliness, order, self-control, and strength of character, a sense of law, justice, and efficient administration.

As a result of the Balkan wars (1912-1913) and World War I (1914-1918), representations in regard to the Balkan regions emphasized violence as a central "balkanic" feature. Violence in Balkan history was nothing new. European travellers to the Balkans often wrote about their horror witnessing the specifically "Eastern" barbarities, especially *impaling*[3], which struck their imagination, although there is considerable evidence of other terrifying ways of execution and torture in Medieval England, see for instance London Dungeon, the White Tower Museum to name only a few. It was the exoticism of the "impaling method" that turned the historical Vlad Ţepeş into the figure of Dracula; however, the latter is less an illustration of Balkan violence than an attribute of morose Gothic imagination.

[3] Some Balkan writers internalised the stereotype and used impaling in their own work, like the Serbo-Croatian writer Ivo Andrič (*The Bridge over the Drina* 1977)

Seeing violence as a leitmotiv of the Balkans was mainly a post-Balkan wars phenomenon. Balkan violence was considered more violent because it was archaic, deeply ingrained in the psyche of Balkan populations. This argument takes into account environmental factors (mountainous terrain), economy (sheep and horse raising), and social arrangements (extended families, clans, tribes) to explain the creation of a cultural pattern. Once the cultural pattern is created, it begins an autonomous life as an unchangeable structure and no account is taken of the drastic changes that occurred in the social environment of the Balkans in the past century. This is typical of the ease and irresponsibility with which overgeneralized categories are used in academic discourse. (Todorova 1997: 120-125.)

Yet another aspect of balkanism highlighted by Todorova came to the fore during the interwar period, when modern racism acquired its aesthetic criteria. As such, evaluative statements were made according to observation, measurement, and comparison with ancient Greek aesthetic ideals: white and classical, usually appertaining to a settled, middle-class. As a rule, beauty was based on racial purity. The Balkan people were, in contrast, described as a "hybrid race". A 1921[4] English account describes the Macedonians as follows:

> Being essentially cross-bred, the Macedonian is hardly distinguished for his physique…The Turks are perhaps the best physical specimens of the various Macedonian types, probably because they have indulged in less cross-breeding…Turkish women, when not interbred to any pronounced extent, are generally attractive, but those of Bulgar or Greek extraction usually have broad and very coarse features of the Slav type. Such features, comprising thick lips, broad flat noses and high cheek-bones, scarcely conduce to beauty in a woman. (Quoted in Goff & Fawcett 1921: 13-16)

A similar description is given by Marcus Ehrenpreis, a Swedish traveller who wrote on the Levant in 1927 after having traversed the Balkans, Egypt and the Holy Land in quest of "the soul of the East":

> There is something eccentric in their conduct, they are overloud, too sudden, too eager…Oddish, incredible individuals appear on all sides – low foreheads, sudden eyes, protruding ears, thick underlips…The Levantine type in the areas between the Balkans and the Mediterranean is, psychologically and socially truly a "wavering form", a composite of

[4] The 1920s was also a time when the American Eugenics Society, which espoused the theory of natural genetic superiority of races and social groups, claimed that racial mixture would bring about social deterioration and advocated that assimilation with cultural inferiors, particularly Slavs, should be avoided as much as overbreeding of social inferiors.

> Easterner and westerner, multilingual, cunning, superficial, unreliable, materialistic, and above all, without tradition. (…) In a spiritual sense these creatures are homeless; they are no longer Orientals nor yet Europeans. They have not freed themselves from the vices of the East nor acquired any of the virtues of the West. (Ehrenpreis 1928: 208-209)

A new feature in the image of the Balkans was added first between the wars but especially after World War II when a new demon, a new other –communism – was grafted on it. The Balkans was proclaimed, "Lost to the Western world" and "written off by proponents of western civilization", as long as Russia remained strong in the peninsula, because Russia was "the end of Europe". (Roucek 1948: 7.)

The Balkans, as Todorova's complex analysis proves, fall within the general rubric of how people deal with difference. It is another example of discourse formation, behind which lies the human attempt to give meaning and order to the world by means of generalisation, classification and typification. These processes of categorization render the world knowledgeable, predictable and safer to encounter. However, the categories, in terms of which we group the events of the world, are only constructions or inventions. As humans we have always had a yearning for rigidity, for hard lines and clear concepts. Yet, while we indulge in piling up a mass of information, we invest deeper in systems of labels:

> So a conservative bias is built in. It gives us confidence. At any time we may have to modify our structure of assumptions to accommodate new experience, but the more consistent experience is with the past, the more confidence we can have in our assumptions. The essence of the patterning tendency – the schema - although certainly dynamic in terms of longue durée, has certain fixity over a short period of time. (Todorova 1997: 117)

3.3 Eastern Europe - Western Europe after the fall of communism

Resembling the Orientalist paradigm, the formation of a local Eastern Europe by the West has been going on since at least the eighteenth century, a period marked by colonialism, occupation, and most recently by the Iron Curtain. Forrester (2004: 10) called this newly forged Eastern Europe "the badly needed other, safely "Orientalizable" while seemingly racially unmarked", or in Said's (1995: 206) terms: "a locale [also] requiring Western attention, reconstruction, even redemption".

One might ask why it requires redemption and reconstruction. Colonialism ended and the need for a new redefinition of powers and places brought about the "conceptual reorientation of Europe" along the borderlines between west and east, the East becoming the complementary concept for the West, defining it by antithesis: a geographically and culturally remote and barbaric East versus a refined West. It is an "active shifting of paradigms", Forrester (2004: 11) argues, one that subdues geography, maps, identities to "bipolar ideological discourse and the economic and military hegemony of the map-writers".

Despite the fact that the dismemberment of the Soviet Union brought about the political independence of many Eastern European countries as well as their most recent ascension to the European Union, the patterns of dominance have not disappeared, and notions like "balkanization" still appear occasionally in the mass media. Imagining the East as childish and innocent, with all the attendant Orientalized associations, including the internalisation of inferiority and eroticism by the Easterners, was a self-serving strategy of the West to justify exploitation of people, resources, or discourses, a way to cover up more painful facts.

Melegh (2005) imagines the present dominant discourse as "an East-West slope" which prescribes the gradual Westernisation of different areas of the world and a drive to climb higher on the east-west slope. He argues that this upward emancipation leads to a mechanism designated as "movement on the slope which invites a grotesque chain of racism or Orientalisms between different public actors, depending on the position and perspective they adopt on the above slope". (Melegh 2005: 4-5.)

Another aspect of the East-West divide within Europe outlined by Forrester (2004: 5) is the difference in terms of understanding the East by the West that is related to *language*. The link between language and power was also emphasized by scholars of critical discourse analysis (see Wodak & Meyer 2001: 1-3) and was aptly formulated by Habermas (1977: 259): "language is also a medium of domination and social force. It serves to legitimize relations of organized power".

Forrester (2004: 5) argues that Westerners have had greater access to uncensored discourse whereas Eastern European cultures under century-long official censorship have had to develop an ironic, detached attitude and rely on nonverbal and non-denotative means of expression such as satire and coded humour, thus developing a so-called *Aesopic*[5] *language* that invokes artistic rather than political authority. The idea is – Forrester claims -

> to develop a full understanding and vocabulary to express and theorize the crises of post-Cold War representation, which can be identified using Julia Kristeva's term "new maladies of the soul" (Kristeva 1995: 9-10) or what Serguei Oushakine defines as the phenomenon of "post-Soviet aphasia", regression and disintegration of collective discursive behaviour caused by society's inability to find proper verbal signifiers for new reality and practices. (Forrester 2004: 6)

Throughout the analyses of the East-West divisions in the previous chapters it is obvious that Eastern Europe is generally represented in public discourse through a veil of inherited clichés, reinforced by unquestioned assumptions and sometimes nostalgia of the diasporic communities. Although writing decades after Said's Orientalism, Forrester still sees that the era of Cold War polarization has left scholarship with a traditional approach. This has a limited discursive freedom and an overtly nationalistic tone. It asserts that the habit of binary categories persists over a decade and a half after the end of the Soviet Union: the shorthand of "West" and "East" is still appreciated, and terms such as "former Soviet", "former Yugoslav", and "former communist" are still widely used in the West. There is no doubt: the West still relies on its perceived distinction from the East, while the East, having internalised its inferiority is still lacking a new vocabulary to inscribe its identity. It is a vicious circle despite the changes, and therefore image-making for countries is becoming a big agenda in East Europe.

The challenge Forrester poses for the next generation of scholars is to introduce a new set of tools, a theoretical sophistication into the study of Eastern Europe that can offer

[5] Aesop was by tradition a slave known for the genre of *fables* ascribed to him in mid-sixth century BC ancient Greece. He was believed to have enjoyed only *discursive power* and through his fables Aesop spoke up for the common people against tyranny.

correctives to the universal binaries that result only from a lack of information. A way to achieve this is to see

> *Culture* as a mix of high and low academic and popular productions and discourses reflecting social and historical change and as a realm where diversity and hybridity have always provided a constant, though often unacknowledged, undercurrent for more "traditional" paradigms of thinking (Forrester 2004: 5.)

Realigning the discourses around the single central binary of East/West, the scholarship Forrester speaks of is a 'post socialist studies' that poses a test case for 'deconstruction that makes the constructedness of walls completely obvious'. Within this discourse Eastern Europe is "the other whiteness" containing the same binaries in miniature; it is the "Other Europe" or "the Second World" that has been missing from the First/Third World dichotomy (Forrester 2004: 24).

Despite its genuine agenda, the scholarship Forrester refers to is also limited and debatable. The 'post socialist' expression Forrester proposes is a self-contradictory one as it resembles the 'former communist' fallacy she argued against previously. Moreover, it contradicts the deconstructive strategy that refuses not only philosophical but historical determination. As an interminable process of rereading, deconstruction refuses and goes against determinations of temporality in terms of past, present, and future. These limitations notwithstanding, the discourse Forrester speaks of does offer another, significant version of the East-West binary construct.

As set out above, the East-West discourse encompasses a complex system of labels containing binary opposites, a complex set of images, assumptions and stereotypic practices based on essentialism. Thus far, therefore, the Orientalist, Balkan and Eastern European pejorative terms are: irrational, uncivilized, backward, barbaric, hybrid, transitory, ambiguous, anomalous, unpredictable, semideveloped, semicolonial, semicivilized, semioriental, unreliable, cruel, boorish, etc. All these opposed to the Occidentalized Other, standing for cleanliness, order, self-control, strength of character, a sense of law, justice, and efficient administration. However, demonstrating the way these labels are used and disseminated through literary narrative, rhetoric and film technology is yet another chapter in the present study.

4 DECONSTRUCTING THE STEREOTYPED IMAGE OF TRANSYLVANIA

The previous chapters have shown the unique nature and the widespread occurrence of a phenomenon, that is cultural stereotyping and its undercurrent discursive processes that involve many disciplines and fields of interest. Therefore, developing a comprehensive deconstructive analysis of the images of Transylvania in cultural and literary texts will be a challenge considering the dimensions of the study, seemingly deviating along lines of historical-factuality, deconstructive theory, discourse analysis and literary analysis. However, I hope that the analysis will fulfil its task in combining these fields giving an in-depth view of the literary and filmic illustrations of Transylvania.

Since deconstruction is interested in what has been excluded from the image, the present analysis will mainly focus on showing the restricting methods used in the construction of images – be them literary or visual. The deconstruction will be effected through the critical analysis of narrative technologies, rhetoric, and cinematic tools of image creation. All this will be carried out with the knowledge that "all cultural forms of representation – literary and visual – are ideologically grounded, and, therefore cannot avoid involvement with social and political relations and apparatuses" (Hutcheon [1989] 2002: 3). With the above implication, the present analysis alludes to the contemporary, postmodern condition, where culture is seen as the effect of representation, the assertion that we can only know the world through a network of socially established meaning systems and discourses.

4.1 Finding elements of Balkan and Eastern European constructs in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897)

Considering its popularity and the longevity of its influence, I chose to first analyse Bram Stoker's 1897 *Dracula* as a point of literary reference to Transylvania. Ever since its appearance the vampire theme has proliferated in literature, plays and horror films and the novel itself has been reissued by several different publishers. Notwithstanding the fact that the vampire element has gained so much attention, the present study will be limited to the analysis of excerpts in references specifically to the region of

Transylvania as I do not wish to dwell too long on its gothic theme of vampires. That aspect has been dealt with extensively as a popular subject of scholarly research. In fact, the vampire in literature was not an invention of Stoker; it had distinguished pedigree decades before in England. Dr. John Polidori's *The Vampyre: A Tale* (1820), Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), James Malcolm Rymer's *Varney the Vampyre: or the Feast of Blood* (1845-1847) and J. Sheridan Le Fanu's novella *Carmilla* (1872) – to list only a few among the many vampire tales circulating in nineteenth century England evidently stood as immediate sources for Bram Stoker's novel.

However, as Stephen D. Arata (1990: 627) has argued, Dracula represents a break from the Gothic tradition of vampires. The "natural" association of vampires with Transylvania began with Stoker's Dracula despite its initial setting in Styria, Austria. In rewriting the novel's opening chapters, Stoker moved his Gothic story to a place that, for readers in 1897, resonated in ways Styria did not. At that time Transylvania was known primarily as part of the vexed "Eastern Question" that so obsessed British foreign policy in the 1880s and '90s. It was a region first and foremost characterized by political turbulence and racial strife. Victorian readers knew the Carpathians for its endemic cultural upheavals and a chaotic succession of empires. The western accounts of the region that Stoker consulted invariably stress the ceaseless clash of antagonistic cultures in the Carpathians. [6] One late-century account illustrates concisely the rise, decay, collapse and displacement of empires: "Greeks, Romans, Huns, Avars, Magyars, Turks, Slavs, French and Germans, all have come, and seen and gone, seeking conquest one after the other" (Bates 1888: 3).

[6] The standard Victorian and Edwardian works in English on the region that Stoker consulted include: John Paget, *Hungary and Transylvania* (London: Murray, 1855); James O. Noyes, *Roumania* (New York: Rudd & Carlton, 1857); Charles Boner, *Transylvania: Its Products and Its People* (London: Longmans, 1865); Andrew W. Crosse, *Round About the Carpathians* (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1878); C. Johnson, *On the Track of the Crescent* (London: Hurst & Blackett, 1885); M. Edith Durham, *The Burden of the Balkans* (London: Edward Arnold, 1905); Jean Victor Bates, *Our Allies and Enemies in the Near East* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., n.d.); and especially Emily Gerard, *The Land Beyond the Forest: Facts, Figures, and Fancies from Transylvania*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1888) qtd in Stoker 1997.

How the setting in Transylvania leads to Dracula's relationship to his historical namesake, Vlad Ţepeş - "the Impaler" warlord of Wallachia (1431-1476) - is also only a matter of coincidence in Stoker's choice since Wallachia and Transylvania stood as two geographically and politically distinct principalities of Romania in that period of time. Moreover, Stoker's library research on count Vlad Ţepeş was limited to only a single volume by William Wilkinson: *An Account of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia: with Various Political Observations Related to Them* (1820), which briefly mentions Vlad's exploits. Although the count Vlad Ţepeş was indeed feared by people for his severe punishments of those who breach the law and his method of defence from the Turks – his favourite method of dispatching the enemy being impalement on a wooden stake - Stoker never mentions any specific connection to Vlad's sobriquet "the Impaler".

Moreover, there is no empirical evidence that Stoker knew of or made use of any folklore tradition of vampirism either, despite the fact that there are some traces of vampirism to be found in Romanian - not Transylvanian - "popular" or agrarian, pastoral cultures that have survived the conversion to Christianity. During that period numerous ethnic religious traditions, as well as local mythologies were homologized: that is, the innumerable forms of pagan heritage have been articulated in the same outwardly Christianized mythical-ritual corpus.

Mircea Eliade (1985) - while writing on European witchcraft – makes use of some Romanian documents that show a mythico-ritual scenario with sorcerers (called *strigoï* in Romanian from the Latin original of *striga*) who were either living or dead. In the latter case, these *strigoï* were considered *vampires*, endowed with supernatural powers. They could become invisible; they could enter houses with bolted doors, or play with impunity with wolves and bears; they could transform themselves into monkeys, cats, wolves, horses, pigs, toads, and other animals as well as they were supposed to go abroad on certain nights, in particular on those of Saint George and Saint Andrew. As paralleled in many other European beliefs, garlic was considered the best defence against the dead or living strigoï. (Eliade 1985: 221; 228-234.)

Notwithstanding the variety of interpretations as to the sources of this gothic novel and its allusions to vampire traditions, the main objective of this analysis is to highlight the parts where Transylvania's stereotyped image is framed. My choice fell on the term *frame* not only for its being an elemental part of the photographic and filmic image and that of a painting in art, but also as a suitable tool for deconstructive analysis aiming at the constructing and meanwhile restricting tendencies inherent to image creation. As Christoph Parry has aptly concluded when discussing the constructed nature of traditional landscape paintings:

> The frame around the small sheet of canvas is a necessary evil. It can't be helped; the painting has to stop somewhere, much as the curious observer might like to see what lies around the next corner. The use of perspective somewhat compensates for the restrictions of the frame, suggesting a particular point of view from which the landscape be viewed, one that is common to the artist (or at least to the implied artist) and the (ideal) beholder. (Parry 2003: 20)

The reference to landscape and landscape artists, on the other hand, is salient for the study also in the sense that nature is seen in art as *the* ultimate *Other* and artistic creation ritually recreates the desire to pass over into *the Other*:

> During the moments of artistic creation, artists fulfil the fundamental human instinct for transcendence. The craving to be freed from the limitations of one's humaneness is satisfied by the experience of passing over into the *Other*. Momentarily tasting transcendence, artists break the iron band of individuality and experience universality. They are freed not only from the limitations of human individuality and fallibility but also from human frailty and, precisely the most powerful form of that frailty, death. Artistic creation suspends Time." (Eliade 1990: xi-xii)

However, it must be noted that landscape in art in the present context is most relevant in the interpretation of Christoph Parry (2003: 4), that is, landscapes are socially constructed rather than naturally given, based on the meanings attributed to them through art and narrative, and form part of an unending process of interpretation and reappraisal. As such, "landscape is not so much what is there, as what is seen and how it is seen" (Parry 2003: 14). From this followed the "landscapes of discourse" which refers to the broader discourses and various intertexts within and outside literature:

> The landscapes of art relate to the world in which they were produced as fragments of discourse to a broader discursive environment. By probing the implications of both the material transformation of the world's surface and the conceptual redefinition of time and space they contribute to a comprehensive vision of today's cultural condition. (Parry 2003: 5)

Understanding cultural images as landscapes in art on the one hand reiterates the ideas exposed in Chapter 2.4 regarding discursive formations, and on the other hand it implies that images too are elusive and relative to new contexts, constantly changing according to "the eye of the beholder" offering variety, and unlimited interpretations. Art just as much as literary narrative implies a subjectivized perspective that offers a clear challenge to realism, or Logocentrism as argued previously, that contained visions of absolute certainties. Uncovering the frames in the "Dracula" novel, seeing the perspectives, the narrative techniques creating the meanings, is therefore a possible tool to unveil subjectivized and therefore relative perspectives. Moreover, the study becomes also an exploration of the way in which narratives and images structure how we see ourselves and the world and how we construct our notions of self.

As the framing mechanism will be obvious in Stoker's descriptions, it will be further taken over to the white canvas, where the frame of the filmic scene becomes the eye of the camera leading audiences to an already constructed world of sets and images. All this with the knowledge that setting both is and is not a context and it necessarily involves some sort of institution. As with discourses, where words are signs that give meanings already existent in our mental paradigms, and refer to meanings assigned to them by previous contexts, "the novel not only imitates discourse, but also its mental effects. The work of reading tends to make the words of the text themselves transparent, using them simply to trigger off the generation of fictional worlds in the mind." (Parry 2003:24.)

However, before embarking on a more detailed analysis of Transylvanian images in the novel, it is necessary to present the reader with a brief summary of the novel's plot. Composed mainly of journal entries and letters, this gothic tale is told mainly through the novel's main protagonists, the young solicitor Jonathan Harker, his fiancée Mina, her friend Lucy Westenra and Dr John Seward (who is in charge of a lunatic asylum in Essex). They tell the story of Jonathan Harker and his journey from England to Count Dracula's remote castle in Transylvania. His mission is to provide legal support for Dracula for a real estate transaction overseen by Harker's employer, Peter Hawkins, of Exeter, in England. However, in the count's strange and disturbing castle he is drawn

into bizarre and horrifying experiences and realizes with terror that he has become a prisoner.

Soon after, the action shifts to England. This time it is the count himself travelling to Whitby on a Russian ship called *Demeter,* carrying earth from Transylvania in wooden boxes. All of the ships' crew go missing or dead before it could arrive, and Dracula disappears on the streets of Whitby in the shape of a wolf. Back on land Dracula embarks on regular nightly visits to menace Harker's devoted fiancée, Wilhelmina "Mina" Murray, and her friend, Lucy Westenra. Little by little Lucy becomes vampirized despite the desperate blood transfusions initiated by Dr Abraham Van Helsing (a renowned doctor from Amsterdam). He confides in Seward, Arthur and Morris (all Lucy's admirers, seeking her hand) and discloses to them his knowledge of vampires. They follow Lucy in the night and stake her heart, beheading her. By this time Jonathan and Mina have arrived back from Budapest- where they got married – and joined in tracking down the count.

The story concludes with a thrilling and conclusive return to Transylvania. Mina's hypnotic treatment - during which she is telepathically connected with Dracula – is used by the plotters to follow the count. Before sunrise Dracula is found approaching the castle on the carriage of Gypsies and is finally killed by shearing "through the throat" and stabbing "into the heart" (Stoker 1997: 325) with Jonathan's great knife. The count crumbles to dust[7], his spell is lifted and Mina is freed from the marks.

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[7] From Stoker's original manuscript we find that initially he planned to collapse the castle in the moment Dracula dies:

> "As we looked there came a terrible convulsion of the earth so that we seemed to rock to and fro and fell to our knees. At the same moment, with a roar which seemed to shake the very heavens, the whole castle and the rock and even the hill on which it stood seemed to rise into the air and scatter in fragments while a mighty cloud of black and yellow smoke volume on volume in rolling grandeur was shut upwards with inconceivable rapidity. Then there was stillness in nature as the echoes of the thunderous report seemed to come as with the hollow boom of a thunder clap – the long reverberating roll which seems as though the floors of heaven shook. Then down in a mighty ruin falling whence they rose [shot?] the fragments that had been tossed skywards in the cataclysm. From where we stood it seemed as though the one fierce volcano burst had satisfied the need of nature and that the castle and the structure of the hill had sank again into the void. We were so appalled with the suddenness and the grandeur that we forgot to think of ourselves." (quoted in Stoker 1997: 325)

However, later Stoker changed the storyline and the castle remained intact. Unless he stuck to his previous draft, castle Bran in Transylvania - which earned its notoriety through Stoker's novel

This being succinctly the plot - morose and unsettling in its own way - let us turn now to the method Stoker uses in the narration or *framing* of the story, the choice for its setting and consequently its effect on the novel's rhetoric. From the point of view of the story's implicit allusions to actual history and geography, Stoker seems to have focused rather on the scientific and anthropological aspects of Dracula than on its historicity. As such, Dracula is explained in terms of Eastern European folklore while the "historical" Vlad is treated as a legendary figure about which contradictory stories abound. Obviously, there have been more literary than historical antecedents to Stoker's selection of the plot and the choice of the setting. This in itself belittles the historical-factuality of the story and gives a rather fictional dimension to it.

The scientific method is apparent in the novel's narrative. Stoker uses multiple types of documentation. The scientific method, the research behind it already implies the constructed, framed character of the story. There is no central narrative voice to be heard throughout the novel but it is fragmented into dated journal entries that are evidence of a struggle to replace the authority of history with that of science. Here and there in the novel Stoker adds newspaper clippings to relate events not directly witnessed by the story's characters, thus contributing to the documentary character of the novel. This narrative method deludes the novel's temporality and makes it *ahistorical*, in David Glover's words: "a continuous present that is constituted jointly through the procedures of law and science" (Glover 1996: 62). The novel might very well be also considered postmodern in that there is no single controlling point of view, and the several journal entries and letters are put together like a *collage* - a common literary method in post-modern texts.

The scientific paradigm is formed out of a profound mistrust of historical memory. It is obsessed with the present, constantly seeking to establish the objective facts at the time of the events in order to obviate the necessity for remembrance. The scientific paradigm is essentially documentary. Its method can be well traced in documentary films, for example in the sequences of photographic images that - according to Roland Barthes -

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and is one of Romania's most important tourist attractions nowadays - wouldn't be of much value today.

created a new sort of consciousness, of the *having-been-there* of the thing represented. The image in documentaries provides evidence because it denotes that certain events occurred, and occurred in a certain way. (Renov 1993: 37-57)

Moreover, what Annette Kuhn says about photography applies to fictive narrative as well: "Representations are productive: photographs, far from merely representing a pre-existing world, constitute a highly coded discourse which, among other things, constructs whatever is in the image as object of consumption – consumption by looking, as well as often quite literally by purchase (…)" (Quoted in Hutcheon [1989] 2002: 21). This notwithstanding, scientific and documentary images cannot capture all, and are taken from specific perspectives that have a restrictive rather than narrative nature. It is the missing elements that make images of all kinds relative, reproducible and constantly changing. Consequently, photography, film and fiction all foreground the productive, construing aspects of their acts of representing.

In order to avoid narrating histories – considered immaterial, tentative, and dependent on the method of telling - Stoker structures the novel into various discourses and accumulates scientific evidence. The scientific method of representation, in its turn, gives the impression that the novel tries to avoid "telling" the story as a historical way of remembrance. The several writers of the plot all come up with the same story, except for the count that stands as a relic of history: a voice like oratory with power and cultural resonance. With this narrative technique – juxtaposing many different accounts of the story from several characters' point of view - Dracula alludes to a postmodern treatment of fictionality:

> Framing fictions within other fictions, making the Chinese boxes McHale speaks of, also offers the opportunity for breaking illusions. Fiction, usually obeying some degree of logic, is ultimately not bound by the same logic that governs everyday life. One of the most effective ways of challenging this logic is crossing the frame from one level of fictionality into the next (…) Such devices are also much used in postmodern novels with the effect of destabilizing the ontology of the fictional worlds. (Parry 2003: 31)

Interestingly enough, the more Stoker struggles to avoid historicity, the more he is engulfed in science falling silently into the same trap. The scientific method claims its characters just as much as history did – not by chronology and linear storytelling – but

by constructed framing, paralleling, positioning, highlighting, eliminating and consequently, restricting.

The image of Transylvania in Stoker's Dracula is one of the best examples to illustrate Stoker's framing mechanism. After having decided – at the last minute- to move the setting of his plot from Styria to the region of Transylvania, Stoker derived information about the region mainly from the folklorist Emily de Laszowska Gerard. Her 1885 essay "Transylvanian Superstitions" was later incorporated into her two-volume book *The Land beyond the Forest* (1888) - a popular Victorian account of Transylvanian history and legends. Gerard's essay seemed tempting to Stoker for there was "first-hand immediacy" in her research, as Gerard was married to a Hungarian cavalry commander and lived in Transylvania for two years. From her lines one can see why Stoker's choice fell on this particular area:

> Transylvania might be well termed the land of superstition, for nowhere else does this curious crooked plant of delusion flourish as persistently and in such bewildering variety. It would almost seem as though the whole species of demons, pixies, witches, and hobgoblins, driven from the rest of Europe by the wand of science, had taken refuge within this mountain rampart, well aware that here they would find secure lurking-place, whence they might defy their persecutors yet awhile. (Gerard: 1885: 128) [8]

Furthermore, the choice of the setting corresponded to the Gothic literary age prevalent in nineteenth-century England. As Goldsworthy notes:

> The Gothic plot requires a setting which is sufficiently close to the reader to appear threatening, while nevertheless being alien enough to house all the exotic paraphernalia – the castles, the convents, the caverns, the dark forests at midnight, the mysterious villains and the howling spectres. (Goldsworthy 1998: 75)

According to Gerard's essay, the scenery of the country serves as the backdrop for the flourishing of superstitions. Transylvania is represented here as peculiarly adapted to host all sorts of supernatural beings and monsters:

> There are innumerable caverns, whose mysterious depths seem made to harbour whole legions of evil spirits: forest glades fit only for fairy folk on moonlit nights, solitary lakes which instinctively call up visions of water sprites; golden treasures lying hidden in mountain chasms, all of which have gradually insinuated themselves into the minds of the oldest inhabitants, the Roumanians (sic), and influenced their way of thinking, so that these people, by nature imaginative and poetically inclined, have built up for themselves out of

[8] Also from Gerard comes the term "Nosferatu" as well as the use of garlic and the wooden stake.

> the surrounding materials a whole code of fanciful superstition, to which they adhere as closely as to their religion itself. (Gerard 1885:129)

It is on the basis of the above-mentioned criteria that the representations of Transylvania in the novel are constructed - an image that resulted from selection, emphasis, repetition, restriction and recycling built on the literary model of Gothicism.

Moreover, according to Elizabeth Miller (2005), Dracula – while representing Transylvania - encodes most of the negative stereotypes that dominated much of nineteenth-century British travel literature. As discussed in the previous chapters through Larry Wolff, these accounts revealed and perpetuated an attitude that weaved its way insidiously through the pages of Stoker's novel, and from there into twentieth-century popular culture. Victorian travellers habitually presented their readers with comparisons between Western science and Eastern superstition, between Western civilization and eastern barbarism. The sources Stoker consulted refer to Transylvania through a variety of derogatory labels: *"a hotchpotch of races", the "odd corner of Europe", "beyond the pan of Western civilization", "a fearful place, grim and phantom-haunted"*. (Miller 2005) No wonder that the author settled on Transylvania and even less that some of the same attitudes and perspectives permeate Dracula.

Based on the perspectives already given by Enlightenment travelogues and journals, it is easy to reveal the inherited Balkan labels in the text. Although the references to Transylvania are not many, the characteristics highlighted do correspond to the binaries of the East-West discourse. For instance, at the beginning of the book we find Jonathan Harker on his way from Munich to Transylvania, making a stop in London and visiting the British Museum, where - like Stoker did when writing Dracula - he learns about Eastern European history and legends. It is on these readings that Jonathan Harker's lines from the beginning of *Dracula* rest: "I read that every known superstition in the world is gathered into the horseshoe of the Carpathians, as if it were the centre of some sort of imaginative whirlpool" (Stoker 1997: 10). Similarly, Mina Harker's journal evokes an image of Transylvania fraught with superstitions:

> It is a lovely country; full of beauties of all imaginable kinds, and the people are brave, and strong, and simple, and seem full of nice qualities. They are *very, very* superstitious.

> In the first house where we stopped, when the woman who served us saw the scar on my forehead, she crossed herself and put out two fingers towards me, to keep off the evil eye. (Stoker 1997: 312)

The special role of 'superstitions' in people's everyday life was very well grasped by Grimm, in that "superstition in all its manifold varieties constitutes a sort of religion, applicable to the common household necessities of daily life"[9]. In the novel, Transylvania is most often presented as a backward, rural region inhabited by wild animals and superstitious peasants - a rocky countryside with isolated peasant villages and an ancient impregnable castle – an image that reappears in each movie adaptation and is perpetuated likewise today in tourist brochures.

The mentioning of tourist brochures in reference to the Transylvanian image is not incidental either. According to Ernst Bloch (1986: 375) it is in the nineteenth century tourism that the very scenery becomes a commodity:

> the nineteenth century had … managed to get the express train to roar past a place undisturbed where according to old travel-guides there had previously been a den of robbers ... Instead, however, precisely beautiful foreign lands were falsified into a petit-bourgeois holiday binge. The so-called tour operators emerged as a means of cheaply carrying out not only the journey but also the previously wishful images turned towards it. So-called sightseeing began, and the sights stood inside a world set up ready for the tour, an arranged-Italian, arranged-oriental world (…) Tourist snapshots repeat views already available on countless picture postcards and in the guidebooks demonstrate the power of social convention in not only determining what is looked at, but also *how*. (Quoted in Parry 2003: 25)

This is similar to *dark tourism* trends which include the famous Dracula tour to the castle Bram in Romania. Framing Transylvania as another version of the imaginary *Ruritania*[10] has become a stereotype and an appropriate imaginary abode for a monster to emerge and threaten Victorian England.

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[9] Translated from: *'Der Aberglaube in seiner mannigfaltigkeit bildet gewissermassen eine Religion fur den ganzen niederen Hausbedarf*' [Jakob Ludwig Karl Grimm (1785-1863) and Wilhelm Karl Grimm (1786-1859), German folklorists.] qtd in Gerard 1885: 130.

[10] *Ruritania* is a fictional kingdom of central Europe which forms the setting for three books by Anthony Hope: *The Prisoner of Zenda* (1894), *The Heart of Princess Osra* (1896) and *Rupert of Hentzau* (1898). These novels and their various adaptations resulted in *Ruritania* becoming a generic term for any imaginary small, European kingdom used as the setting for romance, intrigue and adventure. John Spurling – a post Cold War writer – placed Ruritania in the Carpathians, thus hinting at its being in fact the former Habsburg – today part of Romania- province of Transylvania. (Wikipedia)

The novel opens and ends with Transylvania; however, the chapters set in Transylvania are but few: Chapters 1-4, and Chapter 27. Despite this fact, the setting leaves an indelible impression on the reader. Depicted as a world of dark and dreadful things, it assumes the dimensions of myth and metaphor: a land beyond scientific understanding, a part of the "primitive" East, Europe's dark unconscious, a descent into wildness. A good example of this entrenched binary opposition of East versus West is the excerpt from Jonathan Harker's journal, describing the trip from Munich to Transylvania:

> The impression I had was that we were leaving the West and entering the East; the most Western of splendid bridges over the Danube, which is here of noble width and depth, took us among the traditions of Turkish rule. (Stoker 1997: 9)

Thus, Stoker, already in the first pages of his book, introduces two main elements of the "alienated": superstitions and Turkish rule that is reference to a frontier that marks the maximum sphere of Ottoman influence. Consequently, Jonathan Harker's journal entries can be viewed as a throwback to a not-so-distant literary era when Eastern Europe came to be known as a magical, timeless place. It is in this sense that Dracula serves as part of the same politico-geographic project whereby Eastern Europe was constructed as something entirely different from the West.

During the second visit to Transylvania –occurring towards the end of the story - in search of the count, Jonathan stresses again the dangers inherent to their trip:

> It is a wild adventure we are on. Here, as we are rushing along through the darkness, with the cold from the river seeming to rise up and strike us; with all the mysterious voices of the night around us, it all comes home. We seem to be drifting into unknown places and unknown ways; into a whole world of dark and dreadful things (…). (Stoker 1997: 309-310)

This '*trespass'* is almost devoid of spatial reference, it stands there as a "land-in-between" marking a transition to a new, to an *opposite*. In *Dracula*, as in other literature of the time, Western Europe and Eastern Europe are portrayed as opposing spaces, which together embody a series of dichotomous relationships.

Violence and aggression as alienating and Balkan elements are not missing from Stoker's hidden rhetoric either. As suggested through the count's words, Transylvania has been the scene of perpetual invasion: "there is hardly a foot of soil in this entire

region that has not been enriched by the blood of men, patriots or invaders", he tells Harker (Stoker 1997: 33). Like Maria Todorova's (1997) analysis of the Balkan discourse (Chapter 3.2 of this study) emphasized it, referring to violence as a racial characteristic deeply ingrained in the psyche of an entire population is another example of the ease with which over generalized categories are used in discourse.

On the other hand, Dracula's race is beclouded with ambiguity: once he claims to be a Székely[11] warrior, once a vampire. Therefore it is impossible to distinguish his vampire nature from that of a conqueror and invader. By emphasizing this "violent" aspect in his nature Stoker lines up with the Western tradition of seeing unrest in Eastern Europe primarily in terms of racial strife and violence. For Stoker, the vampire "race" is the most virulent and threatening of the numerous warrior races – Berserker, Hun, Turk, Saxon, Slovak, Magyar, and Székely – inhabiting the area. Nineteenth-century accounts of the Carpathians repeatedly stress its polyracial character. For example, a standard Victorian work on the region, Charles Boner's *Transylvania* (1865) begins with a description of its variety:

> The diversity of character which the various physiognomies present that meet you at every step, also tell of the many nations which are here brought together … The slim, lithe Hungarian … the more oriental Wallachian, with softer, sensuous air, - in her style of dress and even in her carriage unlike a dweller in the West; a Moldavian princess, wrapped in a Turkish shawl … And now a Serb marches proudly past, his countenance calm as a Turk's; or a Constantinople merchant sweeps along in his loose robes and snowy turban. There are, too, Greeks, Dalmatians, and Croats, all different in feature: there is no end to the variety. (Boner 1865: 1-2)

It is indeed a "whirlpool of European races" as Dracula calls it. However, within this diversity racial interaction presented itself as conflict rather than accommodation. According to Western writers and readers this racial heterogeneity combined with a barbaric extent of racial intolerance characterized regions similar to the Carpathians. The combination of racial strife and the collapse of empires with vampirism naturally led to the assumption that a vampire is a sign of profound trouble. As such, Dracula's

[11] For the astonishment of the Hungarians of Transylvania, Stoker confuses the Székelys (the same mistake occurring in Gerard's *"The Land beyond the Forest"*) and claims them as branch of the Romanian race. This confusion is also obvious in the association of a Wallachian warlord, descendant of the Basarab family (Vlad Ţepeş) with a Transylvanian leader, descendant of Attila the Hun.

move to London in the novel indicates that the turbulences previously present in Transylvania will be now moved to England. Leaving the Carpathians, the Count penetrates the heart of the modern western world, and his very presence seems to presage its doom:

> This was the being I was helping to transfer to London; [Harker writes in anguish] where perhaps for centuries to come, he might, amongst its teeming millions, satiate his lust for blood, and create a new and ever widening circle of semi-demons to batten on the helpless. (Stoker 1997: 67)

According to Arata's (1990) interpretation, Count Dracula embodies late-Victorian England's worst fears about degeneration, atavism, and devolution. This Transylvanian, who poses a threat to the pure bloodlines of England, must be first driven back to his homeland and then destroyed on his native soil. This is a clear-cut expression of the late-Victorian nightmare of reverse colonization: the Count endangers Britain's integrity as a nation at the same time that he imperils the personal integrity of individual citizens. (Arata 1990: 630.)

A Christian who fought against the Turks represents both Christianity and the history of the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, Dracula's identity is a hybrid identity: European and Ottoman at the same time, later deforming into a blasphemous Christian. The duality of his being is also emphasized by the Count's desire to move to London, to the new dynamic Europe. Travelling, passing over "the lands in-between" throughout the novel affirm the geographic interpretations of Dracula. However, when in England, the count is repulsed and driven back to the East by Van Helsing, Harker and Morris. Thus, the journeys can never be fulfilled; there will never be an arrival, as hybridism and duality imply the constancy of being "in-between".

Furthermore, besides the hybrid identity of the Easterner, other "exotic" features like lust, pain, sexuality, and violence were seen as contemptible in Western society. Dracula must be driven back and kept out in order to protect Western identity from "contamination" and "corruption". This threat of "pollution" by the East reappears in most of the movie adaptations of the novel, for example in both Murnau's and Herzog's version it is taken to its extreme degree as the appearance of the count in Germany

brings about the spread of rats and plague. However, the transmutations from the book to the movie adaptations will be the subject of the next subchapter.

To sum up, my reading of Bram Stoker's Dracula addresses the historical and geographical context of the novel that is the East-West Question. It is not easy to overlook this fact since the novel clearly imitates the genre of travel literature during the eighteenth and nineteenth century through its heavy use of journal entries and letters from abroad. As such, the accounts of these documents resemble the Enlightenment philosophers' descriptions that instilled a fantasy-filled image of Eastern Europe, disseminating a list of preconceptions and pejorative labels in their imagination.

From a deconstructive point of view, it can be concluded that most of the associations of Transylvania cannot be found in Bram Stoker's text. References and descriptions are only few in the book. However, a lot more to it is imagined by the readers who are already biased by the knowledge from previous contexts and discourses. Reception is crucial as meanings are mainly created through the associations of written texts to mental images that most often than not form a more complex world. As Christoph Parry has aptly put it:

> The fictional world is possible but not real and therefore not present, and the past is a world that is real but no longer present. In both cases an absent world is accessed through the mediation of imagination. The similarity between memory and narrative fiction involves the way the reader complements what is there in the text with what is not there, in other words, what Umberto Eco calls "the openness" of the work or Roman Ingarden its "indeterminacy" (…) by filling in gaps and adding information which is either only implicit in the text or not there at all, the readers must of necessity connect the world of the text to their own experience both as people interacting in social reality and as readers. To this extent at least, each reader is involved in the authorship of the work and it is this involvement which makes the fiction appear acceptable as some kind of virtual reality. (Parry 2003: 26)

At the end, the emphasis on imagination brings back the subject to the subjectivized perspectives and frames through which landscapes and images are constructed and not given as absolutes. The means by which we comprehend them are either taught or given to us by previous contexts, therefore biased, or they are perceived through the looking glass of a subjective beholder, therefore relying on imagination. Nevertheless, it is necessary to understand that we only have access to the past through its traces – its

documents, the testimony of witnesses, and other archival materials – and these representations from the past, in their turn, help us to construct our narratives or explanations. As a consequence, cultural images and representations in any contexts challenge us with the ambiguities in their meaning and interpretation.

4.2 Comparative analysis of the novel's main movie adaptations

Since the publication of Dracula, the myth of Transylvania has been reinforced through films and fiction. Considered as one of the most *mediagenic cultural icons* (Stoker 1997: 404) of the twentieth century, Dracula has made hundreds of appearances on screen, usually in transmutations having nothing whatsoever to do with the original novel. In this study I resort to three of its many movie adaptations: F. W. Murnau's *Nosferatu-Eine Symphonie des Grauens* (1922), its homage reproduction by Werner Herzog as *Nosferatu the Vampyre* (Germany, 1979) and Frances Ford Coppola's more recent *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (U.S.A, 1992).

The choice was made because of the differences in reviving Stoker's story. Coppola's version – considered the most expensive horror film ever produced – is disingenuously claimed to be a completely faithful adaptation of the book. Murnau's 1922 version is a German Expressionist tale of horror, with many differences from its source, while Herzog's uneven homage to F.W. Murnau in the 1979 *Nosferatu the Vampyre* is most successful in presenting Dracula as simultaneously repellent and oddly pathetic.

The present film analysis will partly continue the lines of thought from the previous analysis - that of the *framing mechanism* – the frame which holds the constructed scene and which consequently restricts the image. On the other hand, the oppositional binary constructs will also be revealed in light of the previous study and analysis of the East-West discourse. Last but not least, film comparison will enhance the understanding of how images can be recreated within new contexts, and how similar meanings can be attributed through different techniques.

On a larger scale, film analysis and comparison is necessary in the study of a cultural image for the crisis in representation affected film art and media just as well as it affected writing. Representation in film was for long thought of as an insensible filter of truth, mediation ready to be dissolved. Now, with the crisis in representation, instead of the transparency of visualization, they place its intransparency. Furthermore, representation was considered the grasping of the outwardly or the expression of an inner universe. However, today this functionality is replaced by the resistance of representation. Consequently, the function of the organic illustration of a world was replaced by its disseminating character.

The old assumption that representation is a mirror, a tool, a synthesis, came from the definition of representation as a pure re-presentation: something that is not present at the moment (truth) reappears in another form (the image). The question today is what this act of *replacement* includes: what gets lost with it, what will be missing, and left out. With these questions in mind it is easy to see how the mimetic and symbolic dimension of representation is only illusory: it is a consoling copy, benevolent and malevolent image that both fills and beclouds our eyes. It is for this reason that intransparency, resistance and dissemination become more salient elements in representation: they claim that representation is not the integration of the missing and the present but an open tension between the replaced and the substitute, the result and the work done before it. (Casetti 1998: 192-193.)

The crisis of representation in film was strongly influenced by Derrida's deconstructive view of representation discussed in the second chapter of this study. The crisis is of a philosophical type: it considers the term itself – *re-presentation* – wrong, as it privileges the presence of things over their loss. Therefore, when looking at a filmic image, it is necessary to change our optics, to change our conceptual horizon, and emphasize the unrepresented (that in Derrida was called *the unsaid*).

The filmic scene is just as much a framed scene as fiction and art: we don't see what lies outside it, what is not shown, what is not said. This is the so-called negative thinking

promoted by Derrida and Lacan. [12] The film is not there to represent a world or a state of mind, but it is there to deal with the material it uses. Film is not illustration, nor confession: it is first of all an object, the result of hard work. It will be the very emphasis on hard work on the basis of which the processes of filmic image creation shall be highlighted in this comparative analysis. However, as in the previous chapter it is necessary to limit the study once again specifically to the analyses of the creation of the Transylvanian image in the three movies.

The earliest and still to-be-found movie-adaptation was F W. Murnau's 1922 interpretation of Stoker's novel as a German expressionist fairy tale. Considered an unauthorized version, coping with copyright issues and difficult financial times, the movie wasn't an immediate success. Despite all this, *Nosferatu: Eine Symphonie des Grauens* was a masterpiece of Expressionist artwork which made Murnau's artistic breakthrough. The film earned the reputation as one of the best Dracula adaptations, unique in its description of Dracula as the repellent creature Stoker initially described.

Since the plot is somewhat faithful to Stoker's novel, I shall restrict myself here only to the major differences from the novel. Firstly, the characters in the movie have different names than the ones in the novel due to the copyright introduced by Bram Stoker's widow. As such, count Dracula is called Count Orlok, Jonathan Harker is called Hutter, his wife Mina Murray is named Ellen, and the real estate agent is called Knock. Secondly, the plot takes places in Bremen, Germany and alternatively in Transylvania, Romania. Moreover, in Murnau's version the last trip back to Transylvania is missing, the deaths conclude the story in Bremen. The third major difference is Ellen's self-sacrificing death, whereas is the novel Mina survives and is freed from vampirism.

As Murnau's main contributions to film making were borne out of the silent era, what one notices at first viewing is the abundance of written texts: titles between Acts and intertitles between scenes. These intertitles served not only as headings and to convey dialogue, but were in fact a continuation of the sets. In Nosferatu, the style and

[12] See especially Derrida's influential essay: *Le théatre de la cruauté et la cloture de la représentation*. In: *L'écriture et la différence*. (1967) Paris: Seuil.

composition of the intertitles corresponded to three books: to the chronicle/diary of the plague; to the vampire book that Hutter finds in the Carpathian inn; and, finally, to the ghost-ship's logbook. There are, in addition to these, letters, a page from a newspaper and various other official documents that similarly to Stoker's narrative technique are juxtaposed like a collage to gather scientific evidence.

Consequently, very much like Stoker's Dracula, Murnau's Nosferatu is an assembly of different texts, split up into different narrative levels: the research conclusions of historian and omniscient narrator Johan Cavallius; Hutter's letters to Ellen; the strange hieroglyphs on count Orlok's letter; the same "rotten" language in the contract that grants the vampire access to the core of civilization; the newspaper announcing the Master's arrival to Renfield; the Demeter's log as an intermediate nightmare at the sea. The resemblance with Stoker's narrative technique is also obvious in the editing of the film as a whole: the titles with their supporting verbal accounts of the visual construct, as well as the descriptive pauses and presentation of actual words and indirect presentation of characters interacting.

What is remarkable in these diaries and excerpts from journals is that they are anonymous. The keeper of the diary marks him/herself only with three graveyard crosses. In this sense, Murnau makes reference to author-less literary genres: anonymous testimonies, folk tale, legends, and books of magic, and chronicles. The anonymity of the storyteller, his voice from bellow the grave also alludes to the vampirical count that finally disappears in a puff of smoke. The count is presented here as a creature somewhere in-between human and animal, between life an death, a hermaphrodite like the flesh-eating plant with which he is compared in the film. Moreover, the presence of these pre-literary forms of writing already aims towards dissolving the link between cinema and literature. This effect reaches its highest expression with the title-less film that rests entirely on the image.

The original intertitles in Nosferatu also indicate that the movie was conceived as a day-and-night film. Every change in the time of day is announced by a title ("…at last the Carpathian peak lit up before him", "Hurry, the sun is setting", "As soon as the sun

rose, the terrors of the night left Hutter" etc.) The day and night marks a clear dichotomy construct. A twilight image opens up a mountainous view, clouds or seascapes, open and large panoramic images without people, whereas night scenes usually are shown in confined, hermetically closed spaces, like Orlok's drab castle devoid of natural life. The way Orlok fills the door frames and his coffin gives a claustrophobic feeling while the location scenes present life, freedom, health, nature and serendipity.

The dichotomous opposites of night-day, dark-light are a foundation to a story of good against evil. Healthy signs of life in Hutter's home (flowered wallpapers in the house interiors, kitten in the flower box, vase painted with flowers, foliage and flowers surrounding the house exterior) as well as his will to provide financially for his lovely wife Ellen give the impression of an immaculate, blissful marital love. This is opposed to Orlok's dark castle, a bare ruin - terrain for decomposition, contagion and decay. Moreover, night scenes had sometimes been coloured blue and green, as was the convention at the time. However, in the scenes in Hutter's and Ellen's apartment in the final act when Nosferatu is sucking Ellen's blood, blue exteriors alternate with green interiors to underline the eeriness of the scene. The colouring effects were further reinforced by musical accompaniment.

Music, colours and tones, consequently, interplay with alternating images of natural landscapes: the bounding waves foretell the approach of the vampire, the imminence of the doom about to overtake the whole town. Oddly shaped mountains follow Harker's journey to Orlok's castle. Dark hills, thick forests, skies full of stormy clouds, atemporal surroundings in Transylvanian mists are part of making the story supernatural. However, despite being an Expressionist, Murnau opposed the overuse of special effects in favour of using the negatives and the blurry dreamlike images creatively in order to convey the appropriate feeling. He used stylistic effects to blur the line between reality and imagination and his work is therefore very much reminder of the Romantic and Impressionist movements.

The dichotomous differentiation between day-night, dark-light, and good-evil is transposed from the setting and image composition in a more exaggerated way to the movie's theme. Nosferatu is most and foremost a film about networks of contagion and contamination as the story starts with trying to find clues to the great deaths during the Bremen plague in 1838. Trying to find the reason for the fatal disease puts the relationship of the vampire to the story as predatory, effect preceding reason. The networks of contagion are dispersed by Nosferatu's eroticism, his sexuality being the source for all evil. He stands for raw carnal desire which must be kept in check in the interest of higher spiritual values. Ellen must similarly die at the end as she –seen through a patriarchal culture – represents female sexuality, a mixture of desire, curiosity, and horror.

The cinematic illustration of the vampire in Murnau's version reinforces the idea that the vampire is the cause of the epidemic that spreads throughout Europe –the plague – because of the rats arrived with the Ship of Death. The reinforcement is done by the figure's ungainly appearance, his rodent like features, his lengthening fingernails as if a vulture's, and with fast scurrying movements. A clear-cut expression of the fear of consummation by a vampire is when van Helsing shows his students a Venus fly-trap devouring a fly and a polyp, with mouth and tentacles consuming its live victim, a threat in the otherwise safe environment of nature.

The image of Transylvania in Murnau's version is projected amidst atemporal surroundings, beyond conventional knowledge and register. Against this image stands the stable, modern and Occidental world of Bremen. The film itself opens with a brief high-angle shot of a clock tower beside the city and the overall impression is that of a resigned tranquillity, with Hutter's home symbolizing domestic bliss. Can the constructed image of modern conventions, the apparent stillness of quotidian life and order hold in face of tempting imbalance and a system of horror? Can modern society, with its firmly established convention of meanings, comprehend difference and otherness? Clearly, Murnau's Nosferatu is a story of a possible transgression, an alienation, a departure and an arrival into an opposite, embodied by Hutter's physical movement towards Transylvania, the land beyond the forest.

Transylvania, when Renfield points to it on the map in the darkness of his study, is an undiscovered, gloomy and hostile land, and the trip to this land involves "pain and even a little blood". With a close-up on the count's letter – a text written in cryptic hieroglyphs – an exotic and mystic calling comes with persuasion from some lost corners of the Carpathians, as an allegory of otherness. The two 'texts' – the one dictated by the here-and-now common sense and stability of an Occidental study room, and the primitive writing of an indefinable identity – are set out to Hutter as two opposing and irreconcilable worlds.

Therefore, the journey from one opposite to the other does not offer a possible alternative, a midway, but instead it casts its pilgrim into a massive natural vastness. The arrival at the Transylvanian inn is an interesting episode, where the environment is constructed as both protective and warning. This duality in characterization implies the condition of being in transition, and therefore it still is disquieting and ambiguous, as Todorova's (1997:17) argument from Chapter 3.2 implied, "one cannot live on crossroads or bridges".

What is remarkable in Murnau's version at this scene is that he managed to give authentic portrayals of the peasants of Transylvania, who in fact were played with dignity by the local people. The well-meant warnings come from these hospitable but superstitious peasants, and from The Book of Vampires. The peasants - clad in folkloric costumes and engrained in the obsolete mode of rural everyday – live according to the primacy of fear, superstition and oppression. Consequently, the inn becomes part of the spatial antithesis constructed against Hutter's home and industrial Bremen.

During the night at the inn Jonathan hears the murmuring prayers of the old women, sees the restless image of horses running away threatened by the snarls of a hyena as anticipators to the threats lurking behind the mists of the Carpathians. When Hutter renounces and ignores the warnings and decides to cross the bridge, he decides for transgression. From here there is no way back, the image becomes a negative and the events take supernatural speed: a coach appears from the misty nowhere and almost

flies with Hutter through the blue forests of the Carpathians to the dark, decaying castle of count Orlok.

However, this transgression goes both ways. Orlok, the rodent-like repellent vampire count from Transylvania, longs for his own transgression. Filled with self-repulsion yet enchanted by the female purity seen in the framed photo of Ellen, Hutter's wife, he feels prompted to transcend to the otherness of Western civilization. It is actually with Orlok's bizarre coffin-trip to Bremen that the before so distant and isolated threats of an Eastern land acquires collective measure: with Orlok comes an army of white rats spreading the plague. (Murnau set his story in 1838, which was actually the year of an outbreak of the plague in that German city) The appearance of Orlok and with him the plague foreshadows a collective supreme evil nightmare, regression and decay in the enlightened industrial city. This is intensified by the impersonal long shots of desolate streets, closing windows and doors, where the vampire will wander freely.

Finally, with Ellen's heroic act, a final antidote is given to the evil, by her purity. Murnau's visual imagination is filled with dualities: natural/supernatural; reality/fantasy; evil/pure; the collision of the attractive with the repellent as well as its metaphorical use of light/dark; and day/night. He realizes this imagery by the masterful blending of Expressionist design and documentary techniques (especially in the scenes shot in Transylvania). The symphony announced in the subtitle is not incidental: symphonies are in fact composed of themes and opposing counter-themes. Accordingly, the movie's opposites - the historical and personal documents superimposed on a fictive, supernatural imagery - gather into a "symphony of horror".

The stylistic remake of Murnau's 1922 adaptation is Werner Herzog's *Nosferatu the Vampyre,* a 1979 West German horror film, set primarily in 19th Century Wismar, Germany, and Transylvania, Romania. However, the scenes were not originally shot in Wismar itself but in the Dutch town of Schiedam. The film is not a clear copy of its source; however it does offer an occasional shot-for-shot echo. Although it was meant as homage to the 1922 Murnau classic, with Herzog's interests in epic journeys into the souls of madmen, the movie acquires grand landscapes and enigmatic, lonely heroes.

Compared to its original source, the only apparent differences in Herzog's version to be mentioned are in the names of characters, this time faithful to Stoker's original, except for Jonathan's wife, who is named Lucy and in that Jonathan is made a successor in the end, last seen riding into the stretch of tomorrow, unmarked by his past life and stricken with vampirism. Compared to Murnau's reductionism in coloured imagery, Herzog's is rich in the distinctions of dull colours bleeding between light brown, yellow, white and occasional splashes of blue. The transition from the German town of Wismar to Transylvania is made with an accompanying change in palate. Colours grow darker, red appears, the Count dominates the screen and time slows to long takes of shadow and inexplicable shapes in the night. Throughout the film, visual storytelling takes central stage away from a more literary approach because the script is deliberately slim, as opposed to Murnau's title-heavy version.

The thrilling horror effect is elicited by the slow motion generated by images that appear and linger, without cause and effect. There is an over-all aspiration to beauty in the movie, and places are constructed both familiar and unconventional. The lingering long shots are meant to invite the audience into the space of reflection and wonder. The suspenseful slow motion of the movie - both in Murnau's and Herzog's treatment – does not only create an eerie atmosphere but most importantly it provides a visual and imaginary space. The audience is left unassisted for long seconds over lingering images to make out for the meanings, based on their imagination.

Once again, the subject matter of the study being the image of Transylvania, in Herzog's version Jonathan's trip to Transylvania is set as an archaic story of initiation: the lonely hero rides on horseback into epic landscapes, into unknown adventures. The picturesque shots bring to fore Transylvania's rare mountainous landscape, the dramatic passes of the Carpathians, and its snow peaked mountaintops. The transition into the dangerously opposite is done mainly by the cinematic techniques of colouring, the changes in the natural landscape and close-ups. As the mountains approach, the horses draw on heavier, darkness ascends as premonition. Once again, Jonathan is thrown into a vast land with barren pine trees, foggy mountaintops while the filter turns into blue.

The shots taken on location at the Transylvanian peasant inn resemble a documentary-style photo of a village house: with wooden porch, wooden roof, large garden with surrounding trees, a local horse-drawn carriage passing in front, gypsies and peasants in their traditional wear. Similarly to Murnau, Herzog presents the locals as extremely hospitable and protective. The innkeeper is the first to come and greet the newcomer. Inside the inn the rural atmosphere becomes once more accentuated: old women gathered around the fire engage in gossip, gypsies in their traditional costumes play their music, and maids serve cordially. These images do not give the impression of the terrifying alien; in fact, the atmosphere is that of a warm home and strong community feeling.

The only unsettling element is the anticipation of fear with the pronouncing of Dracula's name and the rumour of the wandering nightly werewolves: a close-up on terrified, almost grotesque faces give signs of shock and will to protect Hutter. The old women cross themselves at the sound of the wolves, the colour turns into a blue filter and a werewolf's close-up gives us an indelible thrill. This is aggravated by the restless horses fleeing from the wolves on the fields. At night the Carpathian Mountaintops are glimpsed again through a window frame: bare, desolate and misty and mourned by a shadow as an allegory of danger.

The closer Jonathan gets to the castle the darker the colours become. Towards the Borgo Pass the filter changes into purple and the clouds become black. Music and the sound of werewolves become louder and more dramatic. Soon the fist image of the castle is given on a tall mountaintop with the tower of the castle protruding into a dark blue sky with black mountains in the background. As soon as the carriage arrives to take him to the castle, the colours start to blur and soften. We follow the carriage passing among pine trees as it drives into mist or appears out of mist. This is the suspenseful moment of the *bridge*, the final, untraced trespass between *This* and the distant *Other*.

Dracula's castle is a desperate sight, like a long-forgotten lonely light-tower. There it stands, within the frame, under the arch of the castle's gate, Count Dracula, stiff as a museum relic. (This is very similar image construction to Murnau's, especially in the

scene where count Orlok is shown under the arch of Bremen) His dark figure is hardly discernable unless the contrasts of light and dark within the frame. Life in the castle is also depicted according to the drastic changes in the natural world: the mornings are sunny, skies appear wide and the forests healthily dense; in the evening the skies turn purple and the camera closes in on some dead, barren pine trees, to contrast with the natural abundance in the daylight. This duality in nature and colour reappears in moments of anticipated horror.

The trip to Wismar is captured with some changes in Herzog's interpretation. While in Murnau's version Orlok travelled on the Ship of Death, in the remake, Dracula is first seen fleeing on a primitive river raft over wild mountain waters while Jonathan crosses the Transylvanian mountains on horseback. The wooden river raft and the horse are reminders not only of epic stories but also of backwardness. The transition to the Western civilization is made when Dracula's coffin is given over to a large boat that will take it to Wismar. The ship and Hutter are shown intermittently on their journey: one travels by sea, the other by land, both lonely voyagers going through desolate seas and dense forests. These sights appear again as trespasses – innocent spaces out of context, places in-between – they are the transition, *the differance*.

The boat, on the other hand stands also as symbol of civilization, further emphasized by the following scenes: a doctor's scientific examination is shown on the carnivorous plants while consecutively a mental asylum is accessed exposing the disturbed obsessive compulsive behaviour of agent Knock. Meanwhile, waves on an angry sea and a huge wind give the signs that Dracula has overtaken the ship and the crew dies one by one. At the moment of arrival the ship covers the whole frame: Wismar is being intruded and a mass of rats disperse on its streets. Images of closing windows and closing doors are shown: a contrary *welcome* compared to the hospitability of the Transylvanian peasants. With Dracula's death at the end the castle is shot as a last image: now a ruin. This closing is closer to Stoker's original intention - expressed in his Working papers - to destroy the castle together with its master.

Compared with the previous two movie adaptations, Coppola's 1992 version, *Bram Stoker's Dracula* tells a lot about Hollywood style modern cinema and as such it is very rich in giving references and implying meanings stylistically. This notwithstanding, the script of the movie is scrupulously true to the book. As Stoker composed his novel through a compilation of notes, journals and fragments of diaries, similarly, Coppola and his crew used period documents and travel aids in the montage when Harker arrives in Transylvania. The scientific method of accumulating proof is thus reiterated in Coppola's interpretation.

The story is framed around the history of Prince Vlad: considered an extremely modern Renaissance Prince, and a very brilliant and extraordinary figure. The presentation of Vlad in this movie is similar to that in the novel; however Coppola placed special emphasis on passion and eroticism. The journey to Transylvania is unveiled in layers: multiple dreamlike images and writings, snippets of documentation. Finally, the letter from Dracula takes us across to *the other side*. Coppola tried for a unique, striking visual style that evokes the realm of magic. He explored the tradition of early cinema and used many of those naïve effects, tricks done with the camera with mirrors, to give the film almost a mythical soul. Although Dracula's figure was presented as a reptilian creature in previous movie adaptations, Coppola breaks this tradition and emphasizes once again the historical and literary traditions behind the story.

The image of Transylvania appears significantly two times in the movie: in the first Act Transylvania in 1462 and in the last Act, Transylvania in October 1897. The first presentation opens up a battle scene where Vlad the Impaler led 7000 of his countrymen against 30000 Turks in a last heroic attempt to save his homeland and the Holy Church. Meanwhile prince Vlad is presented and his portrait framed within an aggressive and violent context. Unlike Stoker's novel, the movie gives more credence to the historic Vlad and his method of impaling, with special emphasis on violence, blood and barbaric methods of torture.

In Act 1 we see Van Helsing sitting in a library and reading out loud from a large, leather-bound volume: "Here occurs the shocking and frightening history of the wild

berserker Prince Dracula. How he impaled people and roasted them alive and drank their blood (…)" (Coppola 1992). All this and the battle scene are constructed in a setting appropriate to underline and emphasize the prelude to a Transylvanian horror of barbarity: right to left, soldiers on mountain range with spears. There's fog and some foreground flags and men crouching down. There are some spectacular red sunset shots with the troops emerging over the crest of the hill. People stand on cliffs with dramatic Carpathian Alps in front projection, night, high winds, and fabrics blowing in the wind.

Religion is emphasized as an important element in the image of Transylvania in this section as almost the whole Prologue is told through mosaic and religious icons. There are repeated scenes where Dracula kisses the crucifix at the beginning of the movie. When Dracula's wife, Elizabeth commits suicide she is considered damned and lost to the world by the orthodox monks. Her soul is doomed forever and denied holy burial by the church. In his outrage at the news, and condemning himself blasphemous, Dracula impales the cross with a sword.

The next view on Transylvania is shown during Harker's travel. While in a wide shot a train moves across the top of the frame, travelling downward, superimposed over the lower part of the frame we see Harker's journal, the first direct quote from Stoker's novel:

> 25th May. Six days out of London. Left Buda-Pesth [sic] early this morning. The impression I had was that we were leaving the West and entering the East…

While this first emphasis is made on the transition from the West to East, the camera widens the frame as the train travels down the magnificent Carpathian Mountains, taking us into the heart of Transylvanian darkness:

> The district I am to enter is in the extreme east of the country, just on the borders of three states, Transylvania, Moldavia, and Bukovina, in the midst of the Carpathian Mountains (…) one of the wildest and least known portions of Europe…

The Eastern element is further emphasized when the map of Eastern Europe is superimposed, closing in on the region of Transylvania. Approaching his destination, at the Borgo pass, Harker changes vehicle: a coach travelling through the mountains is

shown from the interior. Harker, nervously checking his watch; a bearded, bespectacled merchant; and two gypsy peasant women sit inside. The old gypsy woman leans forward and makes a strange two-fingered sign at Harker - a fear-meaning movement, the sign of the cross and the guard against the evil eye – as a reminder of superstitions.

The following scenes are already within the realm of horror and need no further explanation. The setting turns into a gothic decadence, where fantasy looms large and all happenings occur within a constructed ambient of hollywoodian cinematic effects: a grotesque shrine bearing a wolf's head, howling wolves, a ghostly coach with an appalling dark figure driving black stallions, and extreme sound and light effects that emphasize the figure's strength, like the blue flame accompanying Dracula's coach. These gothic elements are further emphasized by the image of the castle, a vast ruin.

The East-West binaries are not only done through the visualizations of the Transylvanian plateau and atmosphere as opposed to London's but also through the protagonists. Harker's character is modeled on the Victorian gentleman ideal. He's a very conservative man, a family man, a man with a life plan, hardworking, ambitious, class-conscious, and obsessed with time. He even checks his watch as his fiancée, Mina Murray, is kissing him goodbye. But Harker takes a life-changing journey: he is terrorized by his Transylvanian host, raped by the vampire brides, escaping by almost superhuman courage, witnessing his beloved sharing blood with the arch-fiend Dracula, and hunting the vampire prince to his final grave. At the beginning he is a hero and at the end a shadow of what he was: a powerfully constructed contrast between the Victorian ideal and the eastern, Transylvanian decadence.

The contrast is given an Orientalist element when Harker is introduced to Dracula's world. Francis Ford Coppola writes in the notes for this scene: "Here's where we really introduce the world of Dracula, and we ought to feel as though we're coming into his world…with that Byzantine, oriental feel to it" (Coppola 1992: 38). From prince Vlad's history it is known that Dracula had lived in Istanbul and must have been influenced by Turkish culture. When Harker enters the castle Dracula looks like a tall old man with Tartar features and he puts down a bowl of fruit and an Oriental lantern.

The Oriental versus Western is further developed in the scenes shot on Hillingham Estate, England, a well-constructed aristocratic ambient. Here Mina Murray sits at a table, typing in schoolmistress attire. However, soon we find Mina and Lucy Westenra poring over the Arabian Nights. The presence of the Arabian Nights in Victorian morning rooms is intended. With this incident, the audience is immediately reminded of the Eastern flavor in Stoker's novel, its Transylvanian setting, and Victorian culture. Straight-laced Victorian England was fascinated by the sensual Orient and the freedom it implied. The Arabian Nights and its translator, explorer-hedonist Sir Richard Burton, were subjects for scandal.

The meeting of East and West was visually conveyed by the recreation of mosaics and icons from the Eastern Orthodox Church; costumes whose fabrics, detailing, and colors reflected Byzantine décor; the use of furs later in the film to suggest Russian influence – an Eastern style blending of cultures. The multiethnic element in constructing the East in the movie was also emphasized by the choice of actresses representing Dracula's brides. It was Coppola's assumption that a prince influenced by the East –like Dracula – must have kept a harem. Similarly to a Turkish sultan, Dracula's harem contained women of different ethnic types: Russian, Mongolian, Balkan, and even Ethiopian.

On the other hand, the construction of the opposing Victorian Age England is done with an emphasis on scientific innovation. "There are no limits to science!" Dracula marvels upon fist viewing the miracle of cinema in London. Indeed, the Victorian age, when Dracula is set, is a time when science and rationality clashed with faith and tradition. Stoker dramatizes this encounter in the novel and Coppola has emphasized it accordingly through the movie: Mina's typewriter and shorthand, Jack Seward's cylinder recorder and psychological researches, the transfusions performed to save Lucy, all show scientific progress.

As to Dracula's journey from East to West - a key episode in most movie adaptations – the penetration of the West by the East is constructed in a more exaggerated way in Coppola's version. While in Murnau's and Herzog's version it was portrayed as a metaphor of pollution, contamination through rats and plague, here, it is visualized in a

human storm. It first breaks out in the asylum, in the behavior of the inmates. Dracula's coming to England throws everything out of balance, as if the moon had came too close. Any intuitive being is affected by Dracula's presence: "The master has come; the blood is the life …" The music is accelerating; the storm is building and building, and reaching its high point with Dracula's arrival.

The subsequent scenes of doom are visualized in the mood of decadence, mostly done according to the Symbolist artists from the fin de siècle (Gustav Klimt, Caspar David Friedrich, Gustave Moreau, Fernard Khnopff, Wojciech Weiss etc.) Symbolists drew heavily on myth, fantasy, and historical references. As such, the scenes when Dracula arrives to England exhale a sense of uneasiness, melancholy and an outburst of erotic rebellion. This quote from French poet Verlaine conveys the tone that Symbolism shares with Coppola's film: "I love the word 'decadence'; all gleaming with crimson … It is made up of carnal spirit and melancholy flesh, and all the violent splendors of the Byzantine Empire" (Quoted in Coppola 1992: 70). Indeed, Dracula's world is presented here as an abyss to bygone ages, to dreams and nightmares.

To sum up, Murnau's Expressionist tale of horror constructed the binary opposites of day/night, dark/light, good/evil, natural/supernatural, real/fantastic, evil/pure, attractive/repellent by lights, tones, music and natural landscapes. Bremen stood here as the representation of Occidental West while Transylvania for atemporality and ambiguity owing to the duality of its landscape and nature, both fascinating and threatening. The transgressions from East to West and West to East remained unfulfilled emphasizing once again the irreconcilable nature of the two opposites. Herzog's Impressionist and Romantic style epic story was set in an ambient of enigma, loneliness among dramatic landscapes. Long and lingering shots were deliberately given as space for contemplation and imagination. It is probably this adaptation that focused most on the transitions from this world to the other, to the trespass, the space in-between, given the long takes, shades and a large array of color blends. Finally Coppola's version, with its combination of Orientalist, Eastern, Victorian and Symbolist styles, accumulates almost all of the above-mentioned East-West binary opposites, and is most rich in elements leading to the realm of the fantastic and the supernatural.

In light of the above comparative analysis, we can conclude that all three movie adaptations contained and emphasized the pejorative labels given by the east-west discourse. Despite the tendency to provide new meanings and nuances to the story by the different settings, styles and cinematic techniques, all three directors consciously resorted to the main oppositional categories given by Stoker's novel, thus further disseminating the implied hierarchies of East versus West, unable to break out from the frames of discourse. The foregoing deconstructive analysis demonstrated that the cultural stereotype 'Transylvania – Dracula' is not unprecedented and in fact is part of a complex phenomenon of discursive writing in the West.

5 CONCLUSION

I began my thesis by stating that representations of the *Other* can create dominant discourses that undermine the understanding of a culture and its people within an intercultural context unless old assumptions are shaken by the conscious questioning of discursive authorities. This problem was raised on grounds of one of the oldest cultural stereotypes today: the automatic association of Transylvania with Bram Stoker's fictive *Dracula* that, in its turn, was result of the discursive East-West construct. The question of cultural stereotypes was indispensable for the understanding of the politics of representation and image creation - one of the most contested territories of cultural studies today.

Based on the above hypothesis I approached the problem by first enlarging on the cultural stereotype itself, the cultural zone it denominated and then by implying the negative consequences it had on the identity formation of a culture. Taken in this sense, the topic of the thesis contributes importantly to a chapter in cultural theory, namely: the politics of representation and image creation. The idea that all cultural representations are political is one of the major themes of cultural theory of the last decades: contemporary criticism has shown that all representations of a culture and society are laden with meanings, values, biases, and messages. In light of the politics of representation, *culture* is most and foremost conceived as a field of representation, whereas *representations* are complex technical, narrative and ideological constructs.

As a consequence, the medium of literature, film, television and music could now be interpreted as contexts whereby narrative forms, media technologies, conventions and codes, representations were laden with meanings that transposed political, historical discourses. Therefore, the approaches to representations cross many disciplines: philosophy, linguistics, discourse analysis and cultural studies. It follows that the questioning of these categories and constructs may be carried out from many different angles. Even if we couldn't get outside conceptual frameworks to criticize and evaluate, the mere attempt to theorize does in itself lead to changes in our assumptions,

institutions and practices. To this end, the subsequent theoretical chapters were meant to give depth to the analysis.

The theoretical backbone of the study was Chapter 2 where the philosophical and linguistic implications of cultural representations were discussed. The philosophies I referred to in this study were: the Plato-Kantian tradition of western logocentric metaphysics, Foucault's post-structuralism, and most importantly Jacques Derrida's theory of deconstruction with special emphasis on the latter, which evolved as a polemic to challenge previously taken-for-granted systems of thought. As demonstrated above, this philosophy called for a change towards a more critical attitude that is necessary for unbiased intercultural communication. It asserted that representations formed part of a bigger network and were disseminated within discourse while these were part of larger chains of discourses. This line of thought was further evaluated from the point of view of linguistics and on the basis of Michel Foucault's discourse analysis.

I preceded the theoretical part of this thesis by the assertion that the images of Transylvania that are brought down to us by the West were part of the larger East versus West problematic. To this end Chapter 3 was intended as an in-depth presentation of the East-West dichotomy, and included Edward Said's Orientalist discourse (*Orientalism* [1978] 1995), the Balkan and the West dichotomy as exemplified by Maria Todorova's *Imagining the Balkans* (1997), the construction of Eastern Europe as discussed in Larry Wolff's *Inventing Eastern Europe –The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (1994) and the discursive formation of post communist cultures within Europe as argued by Sibelan E.S. Forrester's *Over the Wall/After the Fall: Post communist Cultures Through an East-West Gaze* (2004).

The resulting hierarchy of discursive formations was visualized as an Iceberg (see Figure 1, page 34), implying that cultural images were made up of parts visible and invisible, the latter forming the solid structures, the discursive undercurrents to a superficial, frozen stereotype. Through the analyses of the East-West divisions it became obvious that Transylvania in particular and Eastern Europe in general was represented in public discourse through a veil of inherited clichés, reinforced by

unquestioned assumptions and sometimes nostalgia of the diasporic communities. All these came down to us through the Enlightenment travel literature that promoted a complex system of labels containing binary opposites, and a set of stereotypic practices based on essentialism. The Orientalist, the Balkan and the Eastern European characteristics were opposed to an Occidentalized set of traits, these denominations implying a larger variety of binary opposites, emphasizing the superiority of the West over the East. It was the demonstration of the above argument on the basis of which I then developed the empirical, analytical part of my thesis.

Chapter four was therefore considered the focal part of the thesis, meant to combine theoretical findings with evidence from literary and film material. The resulting comparative, deconstructive analysis dealt particularly with the stereotypic formation of the Transylvanian image in Western consciousness as result of the knowledge disseminated by Bram Stoker's novel, *Dracula* and its subsequent movie adaptations.

First of all, the analysis of Bram Stoker's novel *Dracula* was carried out by means of pointing to the narrative processes that framed the image of Transylvania. Although references to the land itself have been but few in the text, they were found to be mainly restrictive, emphasizing superstition, danger and backwardness, inheriting Balkan and Oriental clichés. By framing and constructing the image of Transylvania according to these precepts the reader was told not only what to read but also *how*. As proven above, the novel borrowed largely from Eastern-European folklore as well as from Western texts that disposed of a large repertoire of derogatory Eastern labels. As a consequence, *Dracula* corresponded to the same politico-geographic project whereby Eastern Europe was constructed as the opposite of the West. The study suggested that the novel imitated discourse and also its mental effects by the triggering of generations of fictional worlds and discourses in the reader's mind. The framing process itself, in its turn, led the discussion to photography, art, film and consequently to discursive formations. These findings showed that all the above cultural forms – owing to their restrictive nature – foregrounded the productive and construing aspects of their acts of representing.

Second, the *framing mechanism* highlighted in the analysis of the novel was easily recognisable in the movie adaptations as well. However, most importantly, these film comparisons enhanced the understanding of how images were recreated in new contexts, adding and leaving out elements, by means of the technical tools of filmic image construction. Moreover, film as a subject matter was salient for the study of a cultural image and for cultural studies in general since the crisis in representation affected film art and media just as much as it did writing. It has been found that the old perceptions of representation in film as mirror, tool and synthesis have been refuted and could not hold any longer. Image in film was now conceived intransparent, resistant, and disseminative. Image in film today told more about itself, about its constructive tools and the work it required than about the subject it was meant to represent.

In light of the above, the constructing methods highlighted in each movie also emphasized the *variety* and *the creative energies* with which film art disposed of and proved how similar meanings could be attributed through different techniques. This notwithstanding, the resemblance in the meanings generated by the resulting images reiterated the idea that we cannot escape discourse, and, unless a new vocabulary of representations is created, we cannot but rely on old representations and concepts. What could be deduced from the above analyses is that both the novel and its adaptations framed Transylvania's image according to the traditions dictated by the East-West discourse, resembling the Enlightenment philosopher's descriptions that highlighted two irreconcilable worlds of opposites.

The conclusion is a reference to our postmodern dilemma, that is, we only have representations from the past from which to construct our narratives. To quote Linda Hutcheon's ([1989] 2002: 55) words:

> In a very real sense, postmodernism reveals a desire to understand present culture as the product of previous representations. The representation of history becomes the history of representation. What this means is that postmodern art acknowledges and accepts the challenge of tradition: the history of representation cannot be escaped but it can be both exploited and commented on critically (…)

Therefore, representation and its politics in cultural studies constitute a postmodern concern. In Stuart Hall's (Quoted in Hutcheon 2003: 168) terms: representation plays a

"*constitutive* and not merely reflexive role" in creating both group and individual history and identity, and has a "formative place" in political and social life.

These findings and the contributions to cultural studies notwithstanding, there are considerable limitations to this study as the Transylvania-Dracula stereotype would allow for a much larger selection of sources, as well as it could propose a new array of material for alternative representations to this land. However, I leave the space for further researches open with the hope that more works – be them high or low academic productions – will appear about Transylvania's image, reflecting social and historical change, diversity and hybridity, refuting and mitigating old and worn-out assumptions and solid representations.

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