

Sweeney Todd versus Dracula (film versions)

Comparison of their personalities and life-styles

First, I would like to mention several reasons why I've chosen this particular topic. After watching these two movies in our seminar session I realised that however different the main characters are, they share the same grief because both of them lost their wives which led to their bloody life-styles. In the result, who is worse - Dracula or Sweeney Todd?

In Coppola's film Dracula is expressed more like a human being than a cruel beast, however his need of blood forces him to look for victims very often. He becomes a vampire after the death (suicide) of his wife because God let her die and as a suicide she can't go to heaven. His grief is so big that he curses God and turns to Darkness (Satan). Drinking blood becomes the meaning of his life but he doesn't completely lose his humanity inside. We can occasionally see the inner struggle between a human and vampire; how he longs for love. But he can't stop being a vampire who kills people. In the second part of the film Dracula moves to London which gives him a great opportunity to choose a victim among a lot of young girls. He meets an "incarnation" of her wife and wants to make her a vampire to be forever together. He is really desperate after being alone for such a long time but at the end of the movie she helps him die in peace and with God on his side. The character of Dracula is a portrait of the man who is destroyed by his love and gives his life to eternal suffering and loneliness.

However, a character of Sweeney Todd is a little bit different. He starts as a quite naïve young man who has a beautiful wife. But his happiness is destroyed by a merciless judge who falls in love with his wife and takes him his family. Sweeney Todd becomes very embittered and lives just for revenge. In his behaviour we can also see some flash of his love buried under anger and wrath but he is more straight in his deeds than Dracula.

Sweeney is kind of obsessed with the idea of killing the judge but he doesn't know what to do after that. His life has meaning because all his hopes were put into the marriage and his family. He thinks that his wife is dead – which is not true, she just went crazy and when he meets her in the street, he cannot recognize her. At the end of the movie, he accidentally kills her. This is the last thing he does because right after that he dies as well.

Finally, both characters suffered because of love. Both of them went mad and were killed at the end. They are portraits of people who are so attached to somebody or something that they cannot even think of losing it. It is horrible to lose the wife or to be separated from the family but there is no sense in punishing other people. If somebody let his grief or despair totally consumed him, it is very hard to get back to reality and live happier life without troubles. I cannot decide which one was worse because regardless the number of killed people, both of them chose not to live, just to be alive.