

Jana Vašíková

Ing. Mgr. Věra Eliášová, Ph.D.

AJPV\_LOND Londýn v literatuře

15 June 2011

## **The parody on vampirism in Terry Pratchett's 'Carpe Jugulum' in contrast to Bram Stoker's 'Dracula'**

Two novels with vampirism as their main theme were chosen to be contrasted in this paper. It is Sir Terry Pratchett's comedy fantasy novel *Carpe Jugulum* (1998) and Bram Stoker's epistolary gothic novel *Dracula* (1897). Although these two share the same main theme, their approaches to vampires are opposite – gothic novel vs. parody. The novels were written in about a hundred year distance from each other and became very popular at that time.

The contemporary novel *Carpe Jugulum* chose to mock vampire features in a modern way. The story is set to an imaginary Discworld that resembles our world in many ways. The title itself paraphrases well known Latin aphorism 'Carpe diem' ('seize the day') to 'Carpe Jugulum' ('seize the throat') suggesting vampires' theme of the novel as well as their attempt to gain control over the residents. Similarly as Count Dracula, Count Magpyr and his family come from a distant exotic undeveloped country Überwald (Count Dracula's Transylvania). Being invited to the naming of a newborn Princess into the Lancre Castle, they announce their intention to stay and take over the whole kingdom. Strangely enough, it seems as a good idea to everybody except the three witches and a priest. To witches horror, the vampires are resistible against traditional testified methods such as garlic, bright light and religious symbols. This contrasts with Dracula who would fear those vampire repellents. In addition, these 'modern' vampires had built up this tolerance purposely by exposing young vampires to

small amount of these objects from youth in promising vision of expansion from their territory. Their plan seems to work out as the first attempts to kill them are unsuccessful. They seem to succeed in making themselves invincible. Not only they possess all Stoker's vampire powers (such as hypnosis, mastery over wolfs and other creatures etc.), but also they are able to fly and are alike normal people. They drink wine (though only red), and they are able to consume human food. Their manners are aristocratic and appear very civilized. Therefore main threat lies in seizing control over the common people and enslaving them according to their will rather than actually killing them. The chief witch (Granny Weatherwax), who is the most feared one among all evildoers in the country, is bitten and appears to be changing to a vampire too. However, the old ways to defeat vampires start to work again and strangely enough for the vampires they have bizarre longing for a hot cup of tea with biscuits and are not able to actually harm anyone. It is revealed that they had been 'Weatherwaxed' by sharing the same blood with her and lost their supernatural abilities. Horrified that they might be turning into good people, they flee to their home country to find out old Count Magpyr supporter of the old traditions has been awakened and is furious with what has become from his family line. Eventually, they are killed by the inhabitants from Überwald who prefer more the manners of the good old Count Magpyr. Dracula is conquered at his own castle by forces of brave man and his attempt to become civilized member of London society fails as the Magpyr's efforts do. The idea of reversed effect of a vampire's bite is extraordinary. When everything fails against vampires, their main weapon betrays them and backfires. Both novels have happy endings as main protagonist continue to live an ordinary life.

Stoker's novel delivered sensation by fear from unknown and supernatural powers, Pratchett's parody gives entertainment by refreshing old themes and shaping them into comic plot. His main mastery of comedy lies in witty commentaries, explaining footnotes and funny

similies. All these features are underlined by deep knowledge of the subject of parody and contribute the author's status of the second most read contemporary British author.

### **Bibliography:**

Pratchett, Terry. *Carpe Jugulum*. Talpress: Praha, 2000. Print.

Stoker, Bram. *Dracula*. Nakladatelství XYZ: Praha, 2008. Print.