The ominous Romanian landscape – a source of terror and distress in Bram Stoker's Dracula

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ABSTRACT: The aim of this paper is to highlight the way in which Bram Stoker chose to represent the Romanian landscape with a view to creating terror and conveying the sense of otherness to an area of wilderness and superstition. The representation of such a place is "embedded" in a novel where Transylvania no longer belongs to a real, but to an "imaginative geography", standing for threat, menace and supernatural. The stylistic approach will bring to the fore the meanings attached to this land situated "beyond the forest", on the very edge of Europe.

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1. Introduction

Irrespective of whether one views it as a historically confined genre or as a tendency in fiction generally speaking (Emandi, 2016), the Gothic genre is meant to scrutinize taboo areas of peculiar cultures, aiming at border transgression, abject and terror. Regardless of the year when they were written, Gothic writings have plot elements that may change, yet they preserve a brooding atmosphere, fearsome incident piling upon incident, superstition and ominous presences. The productive nature of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* relies on the easy cohabitation of different discursive fields, on the fact that it seems to engender new readings rather than annihilate them. The analysis of the stylistic devices used in the depiction of the Romanian landscape is based on theoretical assumptions upon style according to which the approach of style is an approach of complete meanings; therefore, a discussion of style as epistemic choice is to be considered taking into account wide areas of prose, which permit the reader to distinguish usual types of choice as far as themes, vocabulary or syntax are concerned. Therefore, the image of the vampire's lair is to be circumscribed within the vast area of the Gothic novel. Michel

Foucault in "Language to Infinity", highlights the place of such writing referring to one of the main sources of horror, that is the labyrinth of language: "The language of terror is dedicated to an endless expense, even though it only seeks to achieve a single effect. It drives itself out of any possible resting place. Sade and the novels of terror introduce an essential imbalance within the works of language: they force them of necessity to be always excessive and deficient." (*Apud* Botting, 1996) Through language the Gothic novels impersonate Julia Kristeva's sense of the abject: "The abject lies, beyond themes, in the way one speaks; it is verbal communication, it is the Word that discloses the abject."(Kristeva, 1982) The meaning of abjection is mainly linked to ambiguity: the threat is always present, and what abjection does is to acknowledge perpetual danger.

2. Problem Statement

Transylvania, as it appears in Dracula, belongs to the realm of imagination, term defined by The Oxford Dictionary as "the (mental) faculty or action of forming new ideas, or images or concepts of external objects not present to the senses". It doesn't belong to the real geography, being just a representation. This term is very important, as attention should be paid to the fact that experiencing "such representations is crucial for the way in which we construct mental pictures of other places." (Light, 2008)

In an age when the visual "fights" so much with the written text, that hides within itself secret worlds, the oxymoronic essence of the human being's nature finds pleasure in living vicariously his / her own fears mediated by the written text. The readers put on their glasses, see documents of long gone ages, and find themselves, as the Gothic is very much about man, in the most humane sense possible, for both the readers and the Gothic have in common the substance of the oxymoron. The elements that create the needed atmosphere can be circumscribed to the sublime, an aesthetic category which, according to David B. Morris "by releasing into fiction images and desires long suppressed, deeply hidden, forced into silence – greatly intensifies the dangers of an uncontrollable release from restraint." (Morris, 1985)

3. Research Questions

The purpose of the present paper is to analyse by means of stylistic devices the Romanian experience of Bram Stoker's characters in terms of how they perceived the surroundings and the dwellers. Throughout the present paper a special attention will be paid to the following questions:

1.   Which are the main tropes used in describing the Romanian landscape?

2.   What is the intended effect of using such figures of speech?

3.   Which are the categories of keywords directly connected to landscape presentation (creating Gothic atmosphere)

4. Research Methods

The approach to prose style in our paper relies on Richard Ohmann's "Prolegomena to the Analysis

of Prose Style", where he tackles the concept of **style as epistemic choice**. He believes that this concept may be what John Middleton Murry means when he states that "a true idiosyncrasy of style [is] the result of an author's success in compelling language to conform to his mode of experience" (Ohmann, 1972). According to Ohmann, style covers everything dealing with "the hidden thoughts which accompany overt propositions; it is the highly general meanings which are implied by a writer's habitual methods of expressing propositions."(in Babb, 1972) Also, our approach is strictly connected to W. K. Wimsatt Jr.'s theory of **style as meaning**. In accordance with it, the principal nature of words is to transmit meaning, thus, words and style cannot be treated in isolation from a "meaning" or considered as offering alternative manners of saying precisely the same thing. Therefore, the words and the rhetorical pattern into which they are used are viewed as fundamentally "expressive" of meaning.

Stephen Ullmann's levels of linguistic analysis represent the fundamental method used in the present analysis of the terror linguistically conveyed through conjuring Transylvanian surroundings and dwellers. The stylistician proposes three levels of analysis: the phonological, the lexical and the syntactical one. In his view, the stylistics of the sound has to do, among other things, with "the utilization of onomatopoeia for expressive purposes." He distinguished two types of onomatopoeia: the primary onomatopoeia, in which the connection between sound and sense is more conspicuous, and the secondary type, in which non-acoustic experiences (for example movement, size, emotive overtones) – are represented by sounds. At the level of lexical stylistic analysis, the emphasis is on the expressive resources present in the vocabulary of a language and focuses on "the stylistic implications of word-formation, synonymy, ambiguity, the contrast between vague and precise, abstract and concrete, rare and common terms; the study of imagery."(Ullmann, 1966) At the level of the sentence, the accent falls one the expressive values of syntax: components of the sentence, sentence structure (word order, negation) and the higher units into which sentences combine (direct, indirect, free indirect speech). Beside this type of three-level analysis, we have adopted the key-words analysis, and componential analysis as part of the lexical approach (Emandi, 2018)

5. Findings

What Bram Stoker manages to create through language is atmosphere (pleasant or not), which can be defined as that set of features which the reader expects in a spatial-temporal sphere. Transylvania is therefore an atmosphere world belonging to an imagined geography. No matter how unpleasant this atmosphere may be, its absence causes a feeling of frustration. (Neț, 1999) In order to better outline the characteristics of the landscape, the writer needed a sensitive character: Harker is that reflexive consciousness needed by an atmosphere text. He is the "human agent present, more often than not, in the surface of the text… always standing in-between the Enunciatee and the world evoked…. The presence of this reflective consciousness prevents the transformation of an atmosphere text into travel memoirs, historical literature, realistic literature etc." (Neț, 2000) This reflective consciousness manifests either implicitly or explicitly the attitude of the human being towards the elements generating atmosphere. Harker is therefore, the reflexive consciousness mediating between the reader's identification with the textual world, the passage between the actual world – that of the readers – and the atmosphere world.

In the setting of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, one comes across stock features of the Gothic novel: the mysterious castle with its secret terrors and forbidding isolation in a wild and mountainous

region form a sublime prison for a young lawyer. The local colour serves a clear purpose – that of providing a suitable setting for a vampire mystery. Jonathan Harker dominates the book's opening sequences. His proposed coach journey to Count Dracula provokes local consternation, particularly fear of the *evil eye* (Stoker, p. 15) – the sign of the devil –, which must be averted at all costs. The atmosphere of mystery and suspense is doubled by disturbing dream visions, as well as by high, overwrought emotion, the metonymy of gloom and terror. Defined as "a trope by means of which the cause is given to the effect, or vice versa, or the name of a commonly attributed feature of a subject is given to the subject or thing itself, and vice versa" (Vicco, 1996) or as "emploi d'un mot pour désigner un objet ou une propriété qui se trouvent dans un rapport existentiel avec la référence habituelle de ce même mot" (Ducrot & Todorov, 1972), the metonymy is to be found very frequently along the novel every time the effect of the atmosphere is rendered through the presentation of the elements generating it. There could be distinguished several lexical sets relevant to our topic: the discomfort felt by Harker is rendered by modifiers (when adjectives function as epithets) and by **verbal constructions connoting the idea of uneasiness**: *all sorts of queer dreams* (p. 10), *I did not feel comfortable* (p. 13), *queer words, I must say they were not cheering me* (p.14), *recollection of ghostly fears* (p. 15). The feelings of the other characters are an example of **accumulation** rendered by modifiers accompanied or not by adverbial intensifiers, by verbal phrases expressing the idea of **developing moods**: *looked … in a frightened sort of way* (p. 12), *said in a very hysterical way, she was in such an excited state that, in such evident distress* (p. 13). The modifiers, marked [+Stat], point to the "stative" posture of their referent who is overwhelmed by excitement and painful shock. The gradation expressed by the constructions connoting the idea of increasing in degree is conveyed by the structure "to grow + adjective in the comparative of superiority degree": "When it *grew dark* there *seemed to be* some excitement amongst the passengers, and they *kept speaking* to him, one after another, as though urging him to further speed…. The excitement of the passengers *grew greater*; the crazy coach rocked on its great leather springs…" (p. 18) The verb phrase *kept speaking* shares the semantic traits [+Inchoactive] and [+Durative], expressing an action in its development in time, therefore in a progress foreshadowing a change in the process of becoming / making different. The adverbial *further* [+Adjunct] semantically adds the feature [+Intensifier] to that of the verb *speed,* marked [+Dynamic], emphasizing the energy or forces that produce motion, implicitly connected with the idea of **change of state**. This change of state can also be pointed out by the use of a verb phrase made of a dynamic verb (*grow*) which gets the function of a copulative verb followed by an adjective. Two modifiers – *dark, greater* – are marked [+Gradable], respectively, [+Rising]; the latter highlights the increase (triggered by the comparative transformation). Here the function of the adjectives in different degrees of comparison is intended to mark the gradual development. The two modifiers relate to different comparative elements (darkness, excitement), nevertheless, they are strongly connected: the landscape seems to be the accomplice of evil. The natural elements the young lawyer encounters are wild rivers and forests situated between the steep mountain cliffs.

Accumulation is also rendered through the repetition of the conjunction "and" in the following enumeration together with modifiers from the lexical set of the uncanny : "…one by one several of the passengers offered me gifts, … these were certainly of an odd *and* varied kind, but each was given in a simple good faith, with a kindly word, *and* a blessing, *and* that strange mixture of fear-meaning movements which I had seen outside the hotel at Bistritz – the sign of cross and the guard against the evil eye."(p.18) Trying to analyse the structure of the following quotation, we should mention the tension marking concatenation in the description of the gifts: *of an odd* [+Uncanny] *and varied* [+Mixture] *kind*. The double nature of the feelings underlying the offer of such gifts is masterly explored, the accumulation being created by the use of the pattern

consisting of gradually developed modification: *given in a simple good faith, with a kindly word, and a blessing, and that strange mixture of fear-meaning movements which I had seen outside the hotel at Bistritz.* The modifiers can be classified into two groups: those related to the hospitality – *in simple good faith, kindly word*– and those dealing with mystery and fear: *strange mixture, fear-meaning movements*. The common denominator – the semantic feature [+Mixture] – gives prominence to the complexity of feelings generating **confusion** under the given circumstances.

The expected climax is felt close by Jonathan Harker: "It was evident that *something very exciting was either happening or expected,* but though I asked each passenger, no one would give me the slightest explanation. This state of excitement kept on for some little time; and at last we saw before us the Pass." (p.18) The state of confusion is semantically embedded in the following phrases: *something* [+Indefiniteness] *very exciting, was either happening or expected* (the coordination of two different verbal forms in different voices expressing two different actions), *for some* [+Indefiniteness] little time. Apparently, nothing exceptional happens and the reader is confronted with a gap. The atmosphere in Borgo Pass (a physical gap this time) is described by means of modifiers belonging to the lexical set of the turbulent natural phenomena: "There were *dark, rolling clouds* overhead, and in the air the *heavy, oppressive sense of thunder*. It seemed as though the mountain range had separated two atmospheres, and that now we had got into the thunderous one." (p. 18) The combination of the fricatives /s/, /θ/, /r/ and the alternation of tense and lax vowels create a special euphonic effect meant to suggest strain and anxiety.

The surrounding landscape as perceived by Jonathan is described using nouns and modifiers (sometimes accompanied by intensifiers) having in common the semantic feature [+ Mystery]: *the growing twilight seemed to merge into one dark mistiness, the gloom of the trees, the pine woods that seemed in the darkness to be closing upon us, great masses of greyness, a peculiarly weird and solemn effect, grim fancies, the falling sunset threw into strange relief the ghost-like clouds*. Both alliteration and rhyme suppose a repetition (of the hissing "s" and of the associations "we" and "wei" in: *growing twilight, mistiness, masses of greyness*, a peculiarly weird and solemn effect, falling sunset, strange relief, ghost-like clouds), device meant to sustain the general atmosphere with auditory effects beside the visual ones.

Sound symbolism is masterly exploited: *an endless perspective of jagged rock and pointed crags*, the short vowels in the monosyllabic words suggesting tension or pressure. From the point of view of the visual images evoked mention should be made of the violence of the sharpness of the edges: *jagged rock, pointed crags, mighty rifts* (p.16).

According to the 18th century theorists of taste, **craggy, mountainous landscapes** were supposed to stimulate powerful emotions of terror and wonder in the viewer. The aesthetic category exploited was the **sublime**, associated with grandeur and magnificence. The immense scale of the mountains offered a glimpse of infinity and awful power. Evoking excessive emotion, The Gothic produces emotional effects on the readers, as it evokes excessive emotion, not a rational or cultivated response. Thus, one speaks about the perlocutionary force of the Gothic novel, because it aims to produce a certain effect upon the readers through the illocutionary act. In Gothic writings imagination and emotional effects exceed reason: *I grew dreadfully afraid* (p.22), *I felt a sort of paralysis of fear* (p.23), *I felt a strange chill, and a lonely feeling came over me* (p.20), *I felt a little strange, and not a little frightened* (p.20), *gave me a sort of shock, I waited with a sick feeling of suspense, a horrible feeling of nausea came over me, on the top of so many strange things, was beginning to increase that vague feeling of uneasiness which I always have when the Count is near* (p. 37), *It was with some bitterness in my heart that I answered, my heart grew cold at the thought* (p. 44), *I felt that I was indeed in prison, I am beginning to feel this*

*nocturnal existence, I am full of all sorts of horrible imagining, Again a shock… It was a new shock to see… (*p. 59). The noun phrases have the same function as the verbal ones (they have in common the semantic features [+ Fear], [+Uneasiness]) amplifying or completing their meaning in the description of the hero's moods. Mention should be made here of the metaphors sharing a subjective ground: paralysis of fear, with bitterness in my heart, my heart grew cold. A reflective consciousness, Harker's experience is rendered by means of status verbs: both indicating psychic states, perceptions, marked [+ Perception]: *I felt, I am beginning to feel, a horrible feeling of nausea came over me*, and indicating intellectual or emotional attitudes, marked [+Reason]: I *imagine, made me remember* or [+Emotion*]: I am full of horrible imaginings, it was new shock to see that.*

The Gothic atmosphere is also created by the evocation of religious objects, concepts or behaviour on the verge of mysticism: *crossed themselves* (p. 12), "*queer words*…'Ordog' – *Satan,* 'pokol' – *hell,* 'stregoica' – *witch*, 'vrolok' and 'vlkoslak' both of which mean the same thing, … that is either *were-wolf* or *vampire*" (pp. 14-15), "…all *made the sign of the cross* and pointed two fingers towards me … he explained that it was a *charm* or *guard against the evil eye*" (p. 15), "As I looked back I saw … the figures of my late companions *crossing themselves*" (p. 20). It should be pointed out the fact that religion plays an important part in the economy of the novel as far as the implications of religion and despair are concerned. The function of the Hungarian and Slovak words is that of introducing the reader into the barbarian atmosphere, suggesting a superstitious and mysterious environment. On the other hand, according to Clive Leatherdale (1993), the Hungarian emphasis is due to the fact that Hungarian folklore is richer than Romania's in the expression of vampire superstition.

The encounter with the driver represents another important specific element providing mystery and terror – he is described as having *a hard-looking mouth with very red lips and sharp-looking teeth*, *as white as ivory*, the standard portrait of the vampire. The adjectives in attributive position *hard-looking* [+Opinion], *red lips* [+ Inherent, +Colour], *sharp-looking* [+Shape] together with the simile *as white as ivory* create impressive visual images. It is well known that colour terms can acquire, in specific contexts, specific meanings. Concerning the symbolic force of the colour term red, according to the association families present in the novel, red is connected to blood, fire, love, life, aggression, danger. A semantic feature common to all the members of these association families could be {[+Moving], [+Dynamic], [-State]}. According to Siegfried Wyler, another semantic content that can be ascribed to such associations is that of "being directed towards or against somebody" (Wyler, 1992). The author considers that positive or negative evaluation of the dynamics symbolized by red must be added to the most general common semantic features, thus resulting in the semantic marker {[+Dynamic], [+Directed towards / against], [+Positive]}.

As far as the **feelings** of the guest are concerned, they can be circumscribed to the domain of the shock and terror: "As they sank into the darkness, I *felt a strange chill*, and a *lonely feeling*…" (p. 20), "This gave me a *sort of shock* … I waited with a *sick feeling of suspense*" (p.21). Both nouns and modifiers relate to the sensorial domain of the "reflective consciousness": *I felt* [+Feeling*)*, *strange chill* [+Uncanny, +Feeling], *gave me a short of shock* [+Feeling], *a sick feeling of suspense* [+Feeling]. The sharpness of the senses is due to the strain caused by the unknown and suspense.

The **growing terror** of Jonathan Harker is conveyed through **repetition and accumulation**: "*Then a dog* began to *howl* somewhere … a *long, agonized wailing*, as if from fear. The sound was taken up by *another dog*, and *then another and another*, till, borne on the wind which now sighed softly through the Pass, a *wild howling began*, which seemed to come from all over the country, as far as the imagination could grasp it through the gloom of the night. *At the first howl* the

horses began to strain and rear, but the driver spoke to them soothingly, and quieted down, …
Then, far off in the distance, from the mountains on each side of us began *a loud**er** and sharp**er**
howling* – that of wolves "(p.21). The effect of the repetition "another dog, and then another,
and another" is that of amplification of the sound perceived, therefore implying an impressive
and overwhelming presence of the dogs, foreshadowing the howling of the really dangerous and
ferocious animals – the wolves. The repetition of the closing diphthong /au/ creates an
impressive euphonic effect. The terrible "symphony" is heard in its progress: *at the first howl,
then … began a loud**er** and sharp**er** howling*. The amplification of the sound (and, consequently,
of the fear felt by Harker) is grammatically marked through the adjectives in the superiority
degree form louder and sharper. Another interesting aspect could be that the frightening sounds
are perceived both in their intensity and pitch, but also as far as their **spatial distribution** is
concerned: *then, far off in the distance, … began a loud**er** and sharp**er** howling.*

The threatening feelings Harker describes in his journal are stylistically rendered by
intensification as well as by **repetition**, meant to emphasize their intenseness: "The baying of the
wolves sounded *nearer and nearer*, as though they were closing round on us from every side. I
grew *dreadfully afraid* "(p. 22), "They were *a hundred times more terrible* in the *grim silence*
which held them than even when they howled. For myself, I felt *a sort of paralysis of fear*… to
face with *such horrors*…" (p.23), "This was all *so strange and uncanny*, that a *dreadful fear* came
upon me, and I was *afraid* to speak…" (p.24), "any dream could be *more terrible* than the
unnatural, horrible net of gloom and mystery which seemed closing round me" (p.46), "I am in
fear – in *terrible fear* – and there is no escape for me; I am *encompassed about with terror* that I
dare not think of…" (p.48), "Then the *horror overcame me*, and I *sank down unconscious*. As I
look round this room, although it has been to me *so full of fear*…" (p.54) The common feature of
Jonathan's feelings is **intense fear**: *dreadfully afraid – paralysis of fear – dreadful fear –was
afraid to speak – terrible fear – encompassed about with terror*. We may detect several means by
which the superlative is realized: adverbial modification (*dreadfully afraid*), adverbials connoting
the advanced level of a phenomenon (*a hundred times more terrible*), metaphor (*paralysis of
terror, I am encompassed about with terror, horror overcame me* – in all of them the emotive
ground has an important force of expression), metaphor with a developed abstract vehicle (*any
dream could be more terrible than the unnatural, horrible net of gloom and mystery which
seemed closing round me*), repetition + modification (*I am in fear – in terrible fear*). The paroxysm
of Harker's fear is betrayed by the way he perceives the sounds around him: *the baying of the
wolves sounded nearer and nearer, as though they were closing round on us from every side.* The
repetition of the adjectives in the superior comparative degree (*nearer and nearer*) enters into
combination with pleonastic phrases (*they were closing round* [+(coming) From all directions] *us
from every side* [+ From all directions]), suggesting the excitement and terror of the protagonist.
The lexical set of the modifiers is that of intense fear and uneasiness: *dreadfully afraid, grim
silence, all so strange and uncanny, horrible net of gloom and mystery, dreadful fear, terrible fear.*
The hero describes his state as a shocking and appalling entrapment, the verbal and nominal
phrases sharing lexical features such as [+Enclose]: *horrible net of gloom, I am encompassed
about with terror*; [+Render incapable]: *I felt a sort of paralysis of fear, Then the horror overcame
me*; and [+Shock]: *a dreadful fear came over me, encompassed about with terror that I dare not
think of.*

The general ambience in Dracula's castle is intensified through **sound symbolism**: *A key was
turned with the loud grating noise of long disuse, and the great door swung back.* As a remark
concerning the use of double modifiers, we may identify the fact that the former epithet is
related to an objective quality of the noun while the latter makes reference to features that
contribute to the creation of the Gothic atmosphere (e.g.: *vast ruined castle, tall black windows,*

loud <u>grating noise</u>, long <u>quivering shadows</u>).

The state of mind of Dracula's guest is defined in **free direct thought style**: "I am all in a sea of wanders. I doubt. I fear. I think strange things which I dare not confess to my soul. Good keep me, if only for the sake of those dear to me!" (p. 29), "What shall I do? How can I escape from this dreadful thrall of night and gloom and fear?" (p.61) The dramatic character of his situation is made evident through the use of short sentences, of exclamatory constructions, and of rhetorical questions. Attention should also be paid to the rhetorical effect of the **accumulation** on which is based the construction of the metaphor *dreadful thrall of night and gloom and fear*. The metaphor *sea of wonders* is developed in the following two short sentences that seem to define more accurately his mood: *I doubt. I fear*, followed by a complex phrase meant to stress the dramatic state of mind of the hero. All the verbs denote mental activities or feelings: *I am in a sea of wanders, I doubt. I fear. I think things which I dare not confess*. The traumatic and claustrophobic nature of the Gothic experience is voiced by Harker in the same free direct thought style: *The castle is a veritable prison, and I am a prisoner!* The opposition castle / prison renders more evident Harker's status, that of guest and in the same time prisoner. Such feelings are in accordance with other characters' description of the place: "The very place, where he have been alive, Un-Dead for all these centuries, is *full of strangeness of the geologic and chemical world*. There are *deep caverns and fissures that reach none know whither*. There have been volcanoes, some of whose openings still send out *waters of strange properties*, and *gases that kill or make to vivify*. Doubtless, *there is something magnetic or electric in some of these combinations of occult forces* which *work* for physical life in *strange way*; and in himself were from the first some great qualities." (p. 326) Here Dr. Van Helsing "closes the circle" started by Jonathan Harker, that is, he completes and offers weight to the conclusions as far as the features of landscape are concerned: the main key words are **strangeness** (as in the epithets *waters of strange properties, strange way)*, **indefiniteness** and **mystery** caused by inability to rationally explain (as in *gases that kill or make to vivify, deep caverns and fissures that reach none know whither, there is something magnetic or electric in some of these combinations of occult forces, etc)*.

6. Conclusion

As the above analysis shows, **ornateness, hyperbole, repetition, violent exclamation, the multiple interpretations** embedded in the text become part of the experience of horror. In designing a topography of Gothic, one should bear in mind the fact that the **spatial relations** rely on the *tropes of inside and outside*, of live burial, or of the **unspeakable**. In keeping with Sedgwick, the Gothic as experience is marked by a **doubleness of** space generatedted violently by the destruction of boundaries. Language accomplisheds the operations of the uncanny and so, the unspeakable is buried alive within the "speakable", generating horror. The **oxymoron** is often involved with aesthetics, the category of the **sublime** appearing embodied in the interplay between sameness and otherness, concealment and revelation, reason and imagination, prohibition and excess. All these coexisting contrary dualities give birth to a continuous undercurrent of cultural anxiety. Other stylistic features worth mentioning are the device of **interruption and fragmentation** (which create and enhance suspense, mystery and dread), the **device of exaggeration** (through hyperboles, metaphors, epithets, etc the response expected is a **sense of extreme fear** and even claustrophobia). Such techniques give the novel a certain **discordant rhythm**. In this context one should also call attention to the **technique of**

disorientation: descriptive passages, repetitions and suspensions working to delay forward progress are "forced" by scenes of a **hallucinatory vividness,** the rapidity of movement (associated to the sublime / the magic), the hectic pace of emotions and events lending an ominously anarchical quality to the narrative. The tempo of the narrative is marked by procedures **of astonishing by shock** and its accompanying arrest of movement.

In the presentation of the landscape, there appear a set of **key words** (strange, fire, fear, terror, horror, dread, horrible, spirits, wild, solitude, dark, despair, evil, grief) whose repetitive character is intended to maintain the framework, while the creation and the "management" of the atmosphere will be criterion of authenticity for each scene. Mention should also be made of the high frequency of the words/ phrases *seemed, looked / looked as if* which suggest the fact that the atmosphere is very much connected to emotional states and sensitivity. Such key words mirror the propensity of Gothic to delve into dark isolated settings, full of supernatural and monstrosity, thus transmitting feelings and ranging from curiosity to fear, terror and horror. These obsessively repeated key words show that the Gothic novel is always connected with the idea of convention, of cliché. Although these conventions are not "meaning rules", Searle finds that their presence disallows serious meaning even as they have no effect on the semantic values of words, the role syntax plays in assigning meaning to sentences, or the identification of what illocutionary commitments are typically invoked. (*Cf* Mayer, 1999)

The myth of Dracula is one of great resistance and perseverance. The repetition is intended to underline the courage and bravery of the historical figure, especially that he would come back alone from the bloody field, where his troops were being slaughtered. The lexical feature characterizing the deeds of his glorious past [+Murderous] must be seen both within the background of his birth place and as a hint prefiguring his future actions. A sublime "synthesis of the human and supernatural terrors of Gothic writing," (Botting, 2000) the vampire is more than rational, serving to elicit rather than dispel superstitious belief, demanding, not a return to reason and morality, but a reawakening of spiritual energies and sacred awe.

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