A Ghost 'Dressed in Deepest Black'? Evoking *Dracula* through Victorian Gothic and Gender Archetypes in Susan Hill's *The Woman in Black*

¿Un fantasma que 'viste del negro más profundo'? Evocando a *Drácula* a través de arquetipos victorianos góticos y de género en *La mujer de negro* de Susan Hill

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Resumen

Susan Hill ha publicado una serie de novelas de fantasmas que rinden homenaje a las narraciones clásicas victorianas. La crítica neo-victoriana investiga obras contemporáneas que evocan el pasado victoriano con el propósito de revisitar y reinterpretar este periodo histórico desde una perspectiva actual. La novela *La mujer de negro* (1983) de Susan Hill presenta importantes paralelismos con la novela victoriana tardía de Bram Stoker, *Drácula* (1897), especialmente en la caracterización de la Mujer de Negro, puesto que, pese a tratarse de un fantasma, este personaje muestra una similitud reveladora con la mujer vampiro Lucy Westenra e incluso con el propio Drácula, a la par que rememora arquetipos victorianos de género, como la mujer caída o la figura del dandi que el arquetipo gótico del vampiro simboliza. Este artículo pretende aproximarse a ambos textos desde una perspectiva comparatista, centrándose en el análisis de los arquetipos góticos del fantasma y del vampiro, así como de los arquetipos de género de la mujer caída y del dandi, con el propósito de probar la intertextualidad existente entre ambas obras, mostrando así el efecto hipnótico que el pasado victoriano aún ejerce en las narraciones góticas contemporáneas y la necesidad de recuperar las voces que todavía permanecen en los márgenes de las obras clásicas victorianas.

Palabras clave: Neo-Victorianismo, Goticismo, fantasma, vampiro, género, mujer caída, dandi, estudios comparatistas.

Abstract

Susan Hill has published a series of ghost novels which pay homage to classic Victorian narratives. Neo-Victorian criticism looks into contemporary works that evoke the Victorian past with the purpose of revisiting and reinterpreting this historical period from a current perspective. Susan Hill's novel *The Woman in Black* (1983) presents important parallelisms with Bram Stoker's late Victorian novel *Dracula* (1897), especially in its characterisation of the Woman in Black, since, despite being a ghost, this character bears significant resemblance with the female vampire Lucy Westenra and even with Dracula himself, together with Victorian archetypes of gender, such as the fallen woman and the figure of the dandy, which the gothic archetype of the vampire symbolises. This article aims to approach both texts from a comparative perspective, focusing on the analysis of the gothic archetypes of the ghost and the vampire, along with the gender archetypes of the fallen woman and the dandy, with the purpose of proving the intertextuality existing between both works, thus showing the hypnotic effect that the Victorian past can still exert on contemporary gothic narratives and the need to recover voices which still remain in the margins of Victorian classic works.

Keywords: Neo-Victorianism, Gothicism, ghost, vampire, gender, fallen woman, dandy, comparative studies.

1. INTRODUCTION

From our contemporary perspective, the Victorian past is often approached through a blending of the familiar and the ghostly, since, as Cora Kaplan admits, in contemporary narratives which seek to invoke the Victorian period, there lies "the mix of familiarity and strangeness which Freud theorised as the uncanny" (1). Nonetheless, any attempt at evoking the Victorian past can only aspire to obtain a mediated image, which Simon Joyce describes as that which is reflected in a rearview mirror and that gives away "a recognition of a surprising closeness" (3), thus paving the way for considering the Victorian past through either its otherness or rather through those traits that look more familiar to us and resemble our own time more faithfully. Since the fact of re-examining the past necessarily implies conjuring it up in spite of its absence, Neo-Victorian theorists, such as Rosario Arias and Patricia Pulham, have resorted to gothic tropes which metaphorically regard the

Victorian past as a spectre that haunts us, in the same way that John Kucich and Dianne Sadoff also consider Neo-Victorian textualities as "ghostly forms of the past in fictional pastiche" (xxiv). Bearing in mind how critics often resort to the figure of a ghost as a metaphor to refer to Neo-Victorian textualities, the contemporary writer Susan Hill has given rise to a series of ghost novels which are not only rooted in the classic nineteenth-century ghost story, but which are also frequently set in this historical period. As David Stevens admits, her ghost narratives have turned Hill into a writer influenced by classic gothic trends, as well as into a contemporary author deeply interested in evoking the Victorian past. In an anthology of ghost stories which she edited in the same year that her ghost novel *The Woman in Black* was published, Hill acknowledges that "the traditional classic English ghost story […] has its origins in the nineteenth-century," arguing that it is, in fact, "really Victorian" ("Introduction" 9). As far as this genre is concerned, Hill also contends that ghost stories ultimately "tell us about things that lie hidden within all of us, and which lurk outside all around us" (15), thus complying with Julia Briggs's proposition that the figure of the ghost in most narratives symbolically represents the return of the repressed, which, in Neo-Victorian gothic fiction, can be interpreted as the personification of the haunting Victorian past, along with those latent Victorian voices that still remain to be heard.

Even if she has mostly become a prolific writer of ghost stories since the turn of the century, it was in the year 1983 that Hill published her first ghost novel, *The Woman in Black*, which granted her immediate public acclaim. So far the story lying behind *The Woman in Black* has been adapted to the stage through Stephen Mallatratt's play in 1987, and it has also been turned into two successful films, such as Herbert Wise's British television film in 1989 and James Watkins's blockbuster film adaptation in 2012, together with Tom Harper's sequel in 2014, thus giving evidence of its prevailing popularity extending well into the twenty-first century. Hill's first ghost novel, *The Woman in Black*, exhibits a self-conscious will to evoke Victorian times, as its narrator, Arthur Kipps, admits to himself at the commencement of his narrative that "the business was beginning to sound like something from a Victorian novel" (31), thus disclosing the author's explicit awareness of the pervasive influence that the Victorian past exerts as an underlying presence all through the novel. Taking into consideration this eloquent metatextual reference, to use Gérard Genette's terminology, Donna Cox argues that it is possible to identify reverberating echoes existing between *The Woman in Black* and classic Victorian textualities. In particular, from its beginning, Hill's novel is deeply evocative of Bram Stoker's novel *Dracula* (1897), insofar as, like Jonathan Harker, who is summoned to visit Dracula in his castle, the narrator in *The Woman in Black*,

Arthur Kipps, recollects that, as a young solicitor, he was also requested to leave London and set off on a long journey to look into Mrs Drablow's legal papers, which eventually led him to encounter the Woman in Black. Owing to the characters, narratological features and plot development that both novels have in common, it can be argued that *Dracula* frequently arises as a paradigmatic Derridean trace within *The Woman in Black*, insofar as Stoker's novel can be considered, to use Derridean terms, as a mark of the absence of a presence in Hill's novel. The dyad of the ghost and the vampire that the character of the Woman in Black personifies, as she amalgamates features pertaining to these two gothic archetypes, also gives evidence of the Derridean concept of *différance*, since, as a Neo-Victorian reinterpretation of *Dracula*, *The Woman in Black* is rooted in Stoker's novel, but it also necessarily differs and defers in time from this Victorian classic.

The fascination that Stoker's seminal novel still exerts on contemporary readers may find its justification in Ronald Thomas's thesis whereby he claims that *Dracula* retains "its special power for us 'moderns' because it functions in historically specific ways as a mechanism of reversion and preservation, one that both divides and connects our modern present and our Victorian past" (307). Given Hill's overt purpose to bring back to life the 'ghost' of the Victorian past in her novel and its blatant parallelisms with Stoker's late Victorian novel, this article aims to identify the intertextuality existing between *The Woman in Black* and *Dracula*, which is not only rooted in significant narratological similarities, but especially in the portrayal of the Woman in Black, as it bears an acute resemblance with the archetype of the vampire —particularly, with the characters of Lucy Westenra and Dracula himself in Stoker's novel— in spite of the fact that the Woman in Black is a ghost. The figures of the vampire and the ghost can be considered recurrent myths in popular gothic fiction that share a series of mythemes based on their liminal nature and ambivalent quality which form a dyad in Hill's novel, even though the archetype of the ghost, in its spectral condition, has often been associated with the subconscious part of the psyche, whereas the archetype of the vampire, which conventionally acquires more physicality in comparison, has frequently been related to sexuality. As Mark Llewellyn claims, Neo-Victorian textualities are consciously set in the Victorian era with the aim to "rewrite the historical narrative of that period by representing marginalised voices, new histories of sexuality […] and other generally 'different' versions of the Victorian" (165). In this respect, the pervasive intertextuality existing between the ghost of the Woman in Black and the vampire characters of Lucy Westenra and Dracula also paves the way for analysing the character of the Woman in Black as engaging in dialogue with the Victorian gender archetypes of the fallen woman and the dandy that Lucy Westenra and Dracula respectively epitomise. The

gothic archetypes of the ghost and the vampire, along with the gender archetypes of the fallen woman and the dandy, personify the repressed past that is brought back to life, as these Victorian gothic and gender archetypes arise as tropes which blend together to refer to the latent and uncanny influence that Victorian textualities still exert on contemporary gothic narratives.

2. *THE WOMAN IN BLACK* AND THE TRADITION OF THE VICTORIAN GHOST STORY

The Woman in Black comprises a series of features which have traditionally been interpreted as pertaining to the Victorian ghost story and, as such, Hill's ghost novel contributes to updating its classic literary formula. As Julia Briggs claims, figuratively emulating Mister Scrooge's encounter with the three ghosts of Christmas in Charles Dickens's novella *A Christmas Carol* (1843), Victorian families would sit, bunched around the fireside on Christmas Eve, to tell each other ghost stories, first beginning in a placid way and then introducing disturbing elements that blended the familiar and the unknown, with the symbolic purpose of reinforcing family solidarity, but also of disclosing its vulnerability. Clearly evoking the classic Victorian ghost story, at the beginning of *The Woman in Black*, it is Christmas Eve and, as an aging man, the narrator, Arthur Kipps, declares that, after tragically losing his first wife Stella and his son Joseph, and having been a widower for twelve years, he lives with his new family, Esmé and her sons, who entice him to tell them a ghost story. Resorting to this frame narrative, which underlines family unity, but also reveals its fragility given Kipps's personal misfortune, the homodiegetic narrator starts disclosing the tragedy which befell his family as a result of the ghostly intrigues of the Woman in Black, thus ultimately finding himself telling a ghost story in which he plays a major role.

As Briggs further argues, the traditional Victorian ghost story often addresses the tension between the familiar world of life, which symbolically stands for domesticity and the home, and the mysterious world of death, which is considered the embodiment of the uncanny that, for Freud, represents everything that remains concealed and must eventually come to light. In this respect, in Victorian times, the ghost story unveiled that traditional institutions, such as the family, could also become a source of hidden secrets veering between reinforcing family values and disclosing their latent deceptive quality. Similarly, in Hill's novel, upon commencing his narrative, Arthur Kipps presents himself as a young lawyer whose journey from London to the rural town of Crythin —which propitiates his encounter with the ghost of the Woman in Black— not only challenges the rational order in which he has been raised as a Victorian man, but it also enables him to gain insight into the secrets of

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the Humfrye family and its dishonest past actions to preserve its alleged propriety and respectability, when one of its members, Jennet Humfrye, gives birth to a child out of wedlock.

As a gothic archetype, the spectre in Victorian ghost stories symbolises a series of prevailing cultural concerns and anxieties which menace to disrupt the cements of Victorian standards and values. In particular, threatening to distabilise the *status quo* and being expunged as a result, the ghost usually personifies a function related to "the most primitive, punitive and sadistic impulses" (Briggs 128), which is that of revenge. The Victorian archetype of the ghost that the Woman in Black represents is precisely rooted in reprisal after being exposed to injustice, since, in her lifetime, Jennet Humfrye is obliged to abandon the family home and forbidden to disclose her real identity to her illegitimate child, who is adopted by the Drablows and eventually perishes in a tragic accident. After Jennet dies in utter ostracism and destitution, she returns to the world of the living as the ghost of the Woman in Black to take revenge for the wrongs she was made to suffer and with the malevolent purpose of depriving all the villagers of their children to vindicate herself for what they had done to her own son.

According to Mackenzie Bartlett, the archetype of the ghost in nineteenth-century ghost stories mainly stands for a symbol of emotional and psychological distress, tormenting the protagonists of such narratives, since apparitional encounters are considered "highly individualistic and subjective" (36) and bring to the surface the individual's latent subconscious drives. When Arthur Kipps sets off on a personal journey into the unknown, he is a young man engaged to his fiancée Stella, but his anxieties and fears about marriage and domestic life begin to take shape once he is away from home. His encounters with the ghost of the Woman in Black, who ultimately personifies his dormant fears and desires, stir Kipps's dread and interest on equal terms, revealing his insecurities about commitment and family life. The character of the Woman in Black thus appears to respond to classic functions of the figure of the ghost in Victorian narratives, insofar as she is mostly conceived as the product of the subconscious and, in particular, of subliminal latent dreads which materialise in a spectral shape, thus turning into a symbolic double which personifies cultural anxieties that are eventually brought to light despite any attempt at repressing them.

Hill's novel *The Woman in Black* thus presents many features pertaining to the Victorian ghost story, as its frame narrative evokes the Victorian Christmas tradition of telling each other ghost stories, while it brings to the fore Victorian anxieties about the institution of the family and its hidden secrets. Besides, the primary function that the ghost of the Woman in Black acquires remains inherently related to primitive impulses of the psyche, which

associate the gothic archetype of the ghost with the collective and individual subconscious, as the figure of the ghost personifies those latent fears that not only haunt the protagonist, but also the whole of the Victorian society. The Victorian concern about repressing those elements that could destabilise the fundaments of the *status quo* ultimately contributes to strengthening social anxieties which materialise in the figure of the ghost. In this respect, Hill's reinterpretation of the Victorian ghost story pays homage to the classic formula of the Victorian ghost narrative, but as a Neo-Victorian novel, it gives major centrality to the figure of the ghost as well as significant weight to its vindications in comparison with classic Victorian ghost stories, which mostly conceived the figure of the ghost as the materialisation of discordant social voices that had to be silenced and were exorcised when the narrative came to a close. In comparison, the ultimate triumph of the ghost of the Woman in Black ratifies Hill's intention as an author to vindicate those voices which were only allowed to remain latent in Victorian narratives and which are not only recovered, but granted prominent attention, in Hill's contemporary reinterpretation.

3. A GHOST IN A VAMPIRE'S FOOTSTEPS: AN INTERTEXTUAL GOTHIC DYAD

The characterisation of the Woman in Black in Hill's novel appears to comply with Bartlett's classic description of an apparition as "a sudden visual manifestation of an ethereal and transient figure" that responds to "someone who is deceased" (35). As a ghost, the portrayal of the Woman in Black highlights her spectral and insubstantial traits, since individuals become aware of her presence only through the senses of sight and hearing, but never through the sense of touch. When the narrator first sets eyes on the Woman in Black upon attending Alice Drablow's funeral in church, he perceives the Woman in Black exclusively through the sense of sight, stating that he "caught a glimpse of another mourner, a woman," while he discerns she was "not holding a prayer book" (48), thus hinting at her impious nature, but also suggesting that the Woman in Black is merely an apparition and, as such, she is deprived of the sense of touch. As representative of the classic figure of the ghost, the presence of the Woman in Black is also often described by means of resorting to synaesthesia, which involves sense transference, since, it is by means of appealing to one sense, hearing, in terms of another, sight, that the narrator infers the visual appearance and disappearance of the ghost through the subtle sounds that she produces, as Kipps admits that he "heard the slight rustle of clothing […] and realised that the unknown woman had already slipped away" (49), thus contributing to underscoring the ghost's ephemeral quality, along with her capacity to suggest her appearance by means of appealing to the sense of hearing. Nonetheless, despite her evident intangible condition, along with the fact

that she can merely be perceived through sight and hearing, the characterisation of the Woman in Black betrays a series of iconic characteristics that are mostly evocative of another Victorian gothic archetype, which is that of the vampire.

In comparison with the ghost, the gothic archetype of the vampire is mostly portrayed through traits that bring to the fore its physicality, along with the discourses of gender and sexuality, which stand in sharp contrast with the ethereal and spiritual quality that traditionally characterises the ghost as a gothic archetype mostly connected with the psyche and the subconscious. According to Anna Chromik, Stoker's *Dracula* is frequently considered the most "influential piece of vampire fiction ever written" (708), as it introduced the attributes that have traditionally characterised the gothic archetype of the vampire, mostly in terms of its distinguishing appearance, primarily its black attire and pale complexion. In Hill's novel, it is significant to notice that, when the narrator first sets eyes on the Woman in Black, he describes her as "dressed in deepest black" (48) in spite of the fact that she is a ghost. In the collective unconscious, spectres and apparitions have traditionally been associated with white, as is customarily established in classic ghost stories, but in Hill's novel, even if it pays homage to the Victorian ghost tale, the figure of the ghost is always clad in black clothes. Besides, the title of Hill's novel is clearly evocative of Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White* (1859), whose title refers to the character of Anne Catherick, who is precisely mistaken for a ghost because she is always dressed in white. By means of her intention to match the title of her novel with that of Collins's and then modify it, Hill is drawing attention to the explicit change in the colour of the title of Collins's novel, thus implying some divergence between the character that gives name to her novel, the Woman in Black, and the image that is customarily associated with the figure of a ghost. Moreover, Hill also seems to be taking advantage of Collins's own strategy to induce the reader into thinking that the character in his novel, Anne Catherick, must be a ghost, even though it is ultimately discovered that she is not, as it is only in appearance that Anne matches the iconic image of a ghost. The characterisation of the Woman in Black as a spectre peculiarly dressed in black is thus thoroughly evocative of the gothic archetype of the vampire.

Correspondingly, in Stoker's novel, attired with her bridal gown, which also turns into her shroud according to Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, Lucy Westenra's first appearance as a vampire closely resembles that of a ghost, as Lucy is portrayed as "a dim, white figure, which held something dark at its breast" (175). A significant intertextual link can thus be established between the description of Lucy Westenra shortly after turning into a vampire and the characterisation of the Woman in Black as a ghost, insofar as Lucy as a vampire

looks like a ghost, while the Woman in Black as a spectre is described in such terms that are suggestive of the figure of the vampire. Lucy is dressed in white although she is a vampire, whereas the Woman in Black is a ghost in black clothes, which, in turn, necessarily brings to mind the character of Dracula himself. When Jonathan Harker beholds Dracula for the first time, he sees a figure "clad in black from head to foot," while he also points out that "the general effect was one of extraordinary pallor" (17). In clear analogy, when Arthur Kipps first sets eyes on the Woman in Black in Hill's novel, he admits that she looks "extremely pale, even more than a contrast with the blackness of her garments could account for" (49). The respective descriptions of Dracula and the Woman in Black underscore both their black attire and their astonishing pale complexion, which bring them definitely close to each other, while Lucy's portrayal as a female vampire resembling a ghost presents an equivalent intertextuality with the Woman in Black as a ghost whose traits are evocative of those of a vampire.

As Chromik further argues, the gothic archetype of the vampire also possesses the distinguishing quality of not betraying its vampiric condition, as its outstanding physicality and corporeal features allow the vampire to "easily pass as a human […] under the façade of an eccentric aristocrat" (708). The characterisation of the Woman in Black often accentuates her physical traits, as Arthur Kipps immediately notices that she is "suffering from a terrible wasting disease" (48), in spite of the fact that she is a spectre and, as such, she is presumably deprived of corporeal features. Similarly, in Stoker's novel, although the figure of the vampire is mostly characterised by its physicality as its corporeal traits are exhaustively portrayed, as liminal beings, the appearance of vampires is also sometimes depicted through oxymoronic descriptions, which bring to the fore some ethereal quality in them in spite of their outstanding physicality given their vampiric condition. As a case in point, when Lucy Westenra makes her appearance as a female vampire, it is declared that such a being is "her body, and yet not it" (177), thus stressing her corporeal quality, but also her lack of it, while, when Jonathan Harker first shakes hands with Dracula, he encounters "more like the hand of a dead than a living man" (15), hence underscoring his physicality as an apparent living being, but also his lack of it, as his liminal condition ultimately relates him to the undead. This oxymoronic component characterising the figure of the vampire is recaptured in the depiction of the Woman in Black, since she is mostly described through her corporeal traits, which allow her to pass as a human being, as if she were a vampire, but her spectral condition is also accentuated owing to her fleeting and transient nature. As Arthur Kipps concedes, he aims to escort the Woman in Black when he sees her in church as a result of her apparent illness, and thus he admits to himself that "he intended to look

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for the sick-looking woman" (50), thus stressing her corporeal features, even if he also states that "she was nowhere to be seen" (50), hence also emphasising her ephemeral quality and spectral condition allowing her to vanish into thin air.

Its ability to defy the dictates of aging in spite of its outstanding physicality is also a feature commonly associated with the gothic archetype of the vampire. Even though she is a spectre, the Woman in Black also shares this feature with the vampire since, despite her remarkably wasted facial traits, Arthur Kipps declares that "nor did she look old" and that although "the effect of her illness made her age hard to guess, […] she was quite possibly no more than thirty" (49), thus unveiling that she looks ostensibly younger than her actual age. In Stoker's novel, the young and aging traits of the vampires are also often juxtaposed, as Lucy's body is frozen in youth and she is described as "a dark-haired woman" (175) when she turns into a vampire, even if some of her physical features, such as her "distorted face" and the fact that her "brows were wrinkled" (176), already betray that her youthful appearance does not truly reflect her age. Besides, upon meeting Dracula, Jonathan Harker describes him as an "old man […] with a long white moustache" (17), even though the young man also stresses Dracula's "astonishing vitality in a man of his years," while, later on, when Harker meets him again in London, he is astonished upon realising that the Count "has grown young" (143) and remains unscathed by the effects of old age. The liminal characterisation of the vampire in terms of aging is also brought back in the portrayal of the Woman in Black, as Arthur Kipps refers to her as "the young woman with the wasted face" (51), thus accentuating her youthful appearance, but also her inherent protracted age, in a description that once more resembles the classic archetype of the vampire more faithfully than that of the ghost.

In relation to the youthful appearance that is usually representative of the vampire, Gina Wisker puts forward that vampires nourish on the youth, as they are endowed with "child-draining" qualities that deprive children of their life ("Horror Fiction" 330), so that vampires can retain their infamous condition. In analogy, in Hill's novel, a curse unleashes every time that someone catches sight of the ghost of the Woman in Black since, one of the villagers, Samuel Daily, divulges that "whenever she has been seen […] in some violent or dreadful circumstance, a child has died" (149), thus implying that the Woman in Black nourishes on the lives of young children to preserve her infamous preternatural condition. Similarly, in Stoker's novel, when Lucy Westenra turns into a vampire, she is witnessed in the company of "a fair-haired child […], growling over it as a dog growls over a bone" (175), thus insinuating that Lucy intends to drain the child's blood in order to sustain her condition as a vampire. In the course of his captivity in Dracula's castle, Jonathan Harker also notices

that, when Dracula agrees to satisfy the demands of his brides to feed them, "there was a gasp and a low wail, as of a half-smothered child" (34), which denotes that vampires nourish on young children to retain their eternal youth. This characteristic feature pertaining to the archetype of the vampire is explicitly elicited in the characterisation of the Woman in Black, as her apparition always anticipates the death of one of the children in the village, which arises as the infamous motivation that brings her back as a ghost, but also the reason that enables her to remain in the world of the living.

As Wisker further claims, the figure of the vampire is also inextricably connected with blood, both literally and figuratively, since vampires are creatures that resort to "blood-drinking" ("Horror Fiction" 330) to preserve their vampiric condition, but this intrinsic association of vampires with blood also brings forward issues related to unorthodox sexuality and, by extension, as William Hugues claims, issues involving "the complexity of sanguine relations" ("Blood" 74), such as legitimacy and heredity. When Arthur Kipps is requested to look into Alice Drablow's legal documents, he is obliged to leave behind his fiancée Stella and, instead, gain insight into the Woman in Black's malevolent intentions to raise her family of ghostly children, after being forbidden to act as a mother of her own illegitimate child. Similarly, in Stoker's novel, Jonathan Harker must also abandon his fiancée Mina to travel to Count Dracula's castle and make arrangements so that Dracula will be able to spread his lineage beyond his native country. In both cases, their respective acquaintance with the Woman in Black and Dracula implies that the prospects of getting married and raising their own family on behalf of the male protagonists, Arthur Kipps and Jonathan Harker, is gradually put in jeopardy, since they adopt such ambivalent attitude of attraction and repulsion towards the preternatural creatures that they must confront that their former beliefs about marriage and domesticity remain at stake. In relation to the Woman in Black, although Arthur Kipps notices that her appearance is "pathetically wasted, so pale and gaunt with disease," he cannot help observing that "there was still some faint trace on her features, some lingering hint, of a not inconsiderable former beauty" (49-50), which underlines the narrator's ambiguous feelings towards the Woman in Black, who arises as a personification of the abject, but also as a latent figure of potential temptation.

In analogy, in Stoker's novel, when Lucy Westenra turns into a vampire, she is depicted as a temptress, as a fallen woman "with outstretched arms and a wanton smile" who lures her former fiancé, Arthur Holmwood, to approach her to embrace her, while it is stated that he "fell back and hid his face in his hands" (175-6) in order to be able to repel her tempting and sinful charms as a female vampire. Besides, when Jonathan Harker meets Dracula, the male protagonist declares that he "found him of a very marked physiognomy" (16) and begins to

indulge in a significantly detailed portrayal of Dracula's physique, paying special attention to his red lips and long nails, thus highlighting Dracula's remarkable androgynous features, and finally declaring that "as the Count leaned over me and his hands touched me, I could not repress a shudder" (17). Given its outstanding physicality, which comes hand in hand with sexuality issues, the gothic archetype of the vampire often contributes to destabilising beliefs about orthodox sexuality which had to be preserved according to Victorian standards. The tempting and voluptuous portrayal of Lucy Westenra as a vampire marks her as the Victorian gender archetype of the fallen woman, while Dracula's depiction accentuating his androgynous and even effeminate traits brings him closer to the Victorian gender archetype of the dandy. Given her strong association with the gothic archetype of the vampire, the Woman in Black also amalgamates features pertaining to the archetypes of the fallen woman, as well as of the dandy, which bring to the fore Victorian concerns about gender and sexuality that are further elaborated in Hill's novel.

4. FROM LUCY TO JENNET: VINDICATING THE VICTORIAN FALLEN WOMAN

As Maureen Moran argues, in Victorian times, middle-class women who stepped outside social conventions and engaged in sexual activity outside marriage became outcasts in need of reform, inasmuch as their conduct threatened to destabilise established social and moral conventions. The figure of the Victorian fallen woman became an issue which raised outstanding public concern, as it is evinced by the proliferation of literary manifestations which revolved around this character in Victorian times, mostly in novels with patent gothic undertones. In particular, the characterisation of the fallen woman in literature often sought to explore prevailing cultural and social anxieties in relation to fears of sexuality and even moral degeneration. Critics such as Val Scullion argue that, set in the decade of the 1860s, *The Woman in Black* brings to the fore Victorian hypocrisies as regards the figure of the unmarried woman. In this respect, the character of the Woman in Black can be claimed to be based on the Victorian archetype of the fallen woman, personified by the female vampire Lucy Westenra in Stoker's novel, since, like Lucy, the Woman in Black must also face the ostracism that women had to bear upon defying the established dictates of gender in Victorian times. Hill's evocation of Lucy Westenra in the characterisation of the Woman in Black responds to critics such as Wisker who claim that contemporary women writers have often resorted to the potential of the figure of the female vampire for "radical re-appropriation" ("Love Bites" 167), especially given her defiance and subversion of conventional roles assigned to women.

Although Stoker never spoke in favour of the women's movement explicitly, his mother was a fervent advocate who might have drawn her son's attention to gender issues, which remain so latent in *Dracula* that contemporary interpretations have often reassessed the novel from a gender perspective. In this respect, critics like Jean Lorrah claim that the character of Mina Murray, who has traditionally been considered as the heroine in *Dracula*, personifies "the positive aspects of the New Woman" (32), given her intelligence and intellectualism. As Moran argues, the archetype of the New Woman was exemplified by Victorian women who resisted conventions and rejected the repressive roles imposed on them, struggling to attain equality and emancipation in all spheres of life. In fact, Mina refers explicitly to the figure of the New Woman when she reflects upon men's prerogative to offer marriage proposals, as she states that "I suppose the New Woman won't condescend in future to accept; she will do the proposing herself", even concluding that "a nice job she will make of it" (75). Nonetheless, in spite of Mina's approval of some of the ideals pertaining to the archetype of the New Woman, as Lorrah further argues, Mina represents "none of the sexual promiscuity that men feared the New Woman would exhibit" (35), since, she also often displays features pertaining to the more orthodox archetype of the Angel of the House, whereby Victorian women were conceived as having an inherent tender and pious nature, which propitiated that they had to be protectively enclosed in the home and subordinated to male figures (Moran 36). In fact, when she receives Sister Agatha's letter informing her that her fiancé Jonathan Harker is safe and sound, Mina exclaims that "I have cried over the good Sister's letter till I can feel it wet against my bosom," as she declares that "it is of Jonathan, and must be next my heart, for he is in my heart" (83), thus accentuating Mina's mainly pious and devoted qualities as a Victorian woman.

Conversely, as Carol Senf argues, Mina's friend, Lucy Westenra, displays more generally deprecated features according to the prevailing Victorian discourses of gender, such as rebellion, overt eroticism and even sexual initiative, which stand in contrast with those that Mina represents ("*Dracula*: Stoker's Response" 35-37). All of these traits, which have traditionally been connected with the male, were considered, to use Senf's term, "absolute evil" ("Daughters of Lilith" 204) if associated with women in the nineteenth-century, hence relating sexually liberated women like Lucy Westenra to decadence and turning them into epitomes of the archetype of the fallen woman. In the 1890s, the aesthetic philosophy of decadence sought to explore what was perceived as exotic and anomalous, since, as Moran declares, decadents achieved fulfilment by cultivating sensations arising from "bizarre experiences, sometimes including sexual perversity" (144), which contributed to the popularity of female characters in gothic literature, such as *la morte amoureuse* and the

female vampire. In Stoker's novel, through subtle allusions, it is implied that Lucy's fall from grace unleashes her eventual transformation into a female vampire, as Mina explains that Lucy "has lately taken to her old habit of walking in her sleep," stating that "her mother had spoken to me about it, and we have decided that I am to lock the door of our room every night" (61), thus unveiling Lucy's propensity to indulge in an alternate sensuous and forbidden existence at night. Bearing in mind these premises, the character of Lucy Westenra can be interpreted as Mina Murray's rebellious double, in analogy with Susan Gubar and Sandra Gilbert's seminal reading of the character of Bertha Mason as Jane Eyre's double in Charlotte Brontë's novel, hence paving the way for interpretations which would draw more attention to the character of Bertha Mason to the detriment of Jane Eyre. Similarly, in *Dracula*, although Lucy Westenra has not traditionally been granted much critical weight, theorists such as Nina Auerbach have noticed the chameleonic and potential quality pertaining to this female character, in comparison with the actual heroine Mina Murray. In fact, it is not Mina, but Lucy, who presents more features in common with Dracula himself, insofar as she is also aristocratic in origin, eccentric, and sexually licentious, while she also eventually turns into a vampire, even though she is not granted the literary relevance that Dracula enjoys. In correspondence with contemporary readings of Stoker's novel, through her Neo-Victorian reinterpretation of *Dracula*, Hill draws attention to the archetype of the fallen woman, the Woman in Black, by turning her into the protagonist of her novel and giving her the critical relevance that Lucy Westenra lacks in Stoker's novel.

Lucy Westenra begins to fall from grace as a woman when she indulges in her frivolous ways and gives free vent to her sexual instincts. Upon receiving several marriage proposals on behalf of different suitors, Lucy displays her turn for promiscuity; a feature only associated with the male according to prevailing Victorian discourses of gender, as she feels unable to choose among them, wondering "why can't they let a girl marry three men, or as many as want her, and save all this trouble?" (51). Besides, when Lucy falls prey to Dracula's charms, Van Helsing feels obliged to give her blood transfusions, stating that "that poor creature that we all love has had put into her veins within that time the blood of four strong men" (126), thus subtly implying Lucy's symbolic intercourse with different men. In analogy with Lucy Westenra, in Hill's novel, the character of Jennet Humfrye, who eventually transforms into the Woman in Black, also personifies the archetype of the fallen woman, as she is envisioned following Victorian gender discourses whereby women who dare step outside the established conventions of appropriate sexual behaviour can only face utter ostracism. Upon reading Jennet's letters, the narrator, Arthur Kipps, realises that "the writer, a young woman and apparently a relative of Mrs. Drablow, was unmarried and with child," while he

also finds out that, "at first, she was still living at home, with her parents" and "later, she was sent away" (113). In Hill's novel, Jennet Humfrye becomes a single mother at a time when women's sexuality was restricted to marriage and deviation from the customary rules necessarily involved social exclusion. As a woman with a child out of wedlock, Jennet is ostracised from her family and is even obliged to forsake her own son to avoid disgracing her family.

Lucy's ultimate surrender to Dracula's charms in Stoker's novel is sanctioned by her transformation into a vampire, which echoes the blatant alteration that has taken place in her inner nature. Her moral disgrace immediately involves that she is repudiated by her fiancé, as Arthur Holmwood catches sight of "Lucy's eyes unclean and full of hell-fire, instead of the pure, gentle orbs," ultimately admitting that "at that moment the remnant of my love passed into hate and loathing" (175). Similarly, in Hill's novel, Jennet's social ostracism, together with the eventual death of her son in a tragic accident, shows patently in her altered appearance owing to a mysterious skin disease with which she becomes afflicted. As is stated in Hill's novel, Jennet "contracted a disease which caused her to begin to waste away," which involves that "when she went about the streets, people drew back" and "children were terrified of her" (149). Even before her death and her eventual transformation into a ghost, Jennet already turns into a symbolic source of the abject for all the villagers. The illness which she contracts following her fall from grace as a woman, which stirs fear and rejection from all the residents, is interpreted by her neighbours as a providential retribution resulting from her sins, even though it is implied that her physical alteration also reflects her inner ordeal and responds to utter suffering as a mother who has lost her child.

As fallen women, both Lucy Westenra and Jennet Humfrye also illustrate anomalous experiences of motherhood according to prevailing gender conventions. In the passage in Stoker's novel in which Lucy is witnessed to hold a child in her arms shortly after turning into a vampire, it is implied that she is eager to infuse new life into a baby through her newly-acquired condition as a vampire, thus indulging in an alternate kind of motherhood, since she was unable to get married and become a mother in the established orthodox manner. In analogy, when Jennet turns into a ghost and becomes the Woman in Black, she also intends to deprive the children in the village of their mortal life and adopt them metaphorically as a mother, with the purpose of making up for the tragic loss of her own child. Both female characters thus stand for symbolic experiences of motherhood gone wrong, especially in contrast with their respective counterparts, Mina Murray and Alice Drablow, who exemplify motherhood according to conventional Victorian standards. Upon

her engagement to Jonathan Harker, Mina admits to herself that "I was the happiest woman in all the wide world, and that I had nothing to give him except myself" (89), thus representing the female embodiment of Victorian values, such as chastity and compliance with marriage and motherhood. In resemblance with Mina, in Hill's novel, Alice Drablow also epitomises tenets related to the Victorian ethics of morality and traditional femininity, which contribute to preserving the dictates of established gender roles for women. As Jennet's elder and more mature sister, Alice takes care of Jennet's son, Nathaniel, pretending to be his actual mother and, thus, seeking to defend the respectability of their family name after her sister, Jennet, has conceived a child out of wedlock and has been deserted by her lover. In contrast with Lucy Westenra and Jennet Humfrye, who subvert the *status quo* as personifications of the fallen woman, Mina Murray and Alice Drablow rather contribute to preserving the values pertaining to the conventional Victorian discourses of gender.

In her recent analysis of the female ghost, Robin Roberts claims that this gothic archetype often challenges gendered assumptions and roles, as it stands for a metaphor of the feminine. Hill's conception of the Woman in Black as a ghost who brings back to life the Victorian archetype of the fallen woman —which Lucy Westenra represents in Stoker's novel— takes a contemporary and vindictive approach, since, in Hill's novel, this archetype is granted the centrality of which it was generally deprived in many Victorian representations. At the end of Hill's novel, the narrator, Arthur Kipps admits that he "had seen the ghost of Jennet Humfrye and she had had her revenge" (160). Consequently, the Woman in Black ultimately responds to a Neo-Victorian purpose of vindicating those Victorian figures that had to be silenced according to the prevailing discourses of gender, especially attending to the harsh treatment that the figure of the fallen woman, personified by Lucy Westenra, receives in Stoker's novel. Besides, the character of Lucy Westenra plays a minor role in Stoker's novel, since the sexual liberation that she personifies is quickly put to an end when a gang of men, who defend the Establishment and the preservation of conventional gender roles, slay her soon after she becomes a vampire. As is explicitly stated in the novel, it is significantly her former fiancé, Arthur Holmwood, who "took the stake and the hammer, and when once his mind was set on action his hand never trembled nor even quivered" (179), thus indulging in a cruel punishment inflicted upon her former fiancée for having trespassed the established boundaries of decency and having turned into a fallen woman. Conversely, in Hill's novel, as a contemporary reinterpretation of this Victorian gender archetype, the Woman in Black arises as a central character, in analogy with the pivotal role that Dracula plays in Stoker's eponymous novel. By means of personifying the archetype of the fallen woman who is finally given the prominence she deserves, the Woman

in Black is brought back to life as a defiant and ever haunting ghost, willing to take revenge for the injustice she was made to suffer both as a woman and as a mother as a result of the Victorian conventions of gender.

5. FROM DRACULA TO THE WOMAN IN BLACK: THE DANDY AND THE VICTORIAN SPECTRE OF ANDROGYNY

The popularity that the gender archetype of the fallen woman gained in Victorian cultural manifestations came hand in hand with a latent and pervasive menace to established standards of traditional masculinities. As Moran claims, the rise of aestheticism, which rebuked a moralistic and dogmatic function of art, was often condemned because its opponents detected that aestheticism was connected to what they considered "a sexually ambiguous, possibly homoerotic, sub-culture" (121). In the context of the *fin de siècle*, the decadent movement, rooted in aestheticism, found beauty in artifice and sensuousness, as decadents rejoiced in dandyism; an eminently aesthetic philosophy defined by Oscar Wilde in his novel *The Portrait of Dorian Gray* (1890), which featured the figure of the dandy as a sophisticated intellectual aristocrat deeply concerned with elegance to the point of flamboyance and exhibiting exquisite mannerisms that verged upon effeminacy. If the female vampire often embodied the gender archetype of the fallen woman, the figure of the male vampire often personified the aesthetic and decadent tenets of the *fin de siècle* which gave rise to the Victorian gender archetype of the dandy. In particular, the characterisation of Dracula in Stoker's novel closely matches the archetypal characterisation of the decadent figure of the dandy, while it also underlines his androgyny, which is recaptured and adjusted to devise the prominently androgynous portrait of the Woman in Black provided in Hill's novel.

When Jonathan Harker first beholds Dracula, the young man pays close attention to a series of features that highlight his host's effeminate traits and are highly evocative of the Victorian gender archetype of the dandy. Harker notices the Count is "clean shaven" (15), he has a "thin nose" (16), his lips possess a "remarkable ruddiness" (17), his nails are "long and fine, and cut to a sharp point" (17), while he also catches sight of Dracula's "cloak spreading out around him" (30); all of them features that accentuate Dracula's concern about aesthetics and suggest some sense of taste for androgyny and even effeminacy. In analogy, upon looking at the Woman in Black, Arthur Kipps also notices that she is dressed in a stylish and refined manner, stating that her clothes are in the style of "court circles on the most formal occasions" (48). Kipps also observes that the Woman in Black's wasting illness has erased any feminine traits on her face, as he detects that a "thinnest layer of flesh was tautly

stretched and strained across her bones" (49), while her extreme slenderness, "as though she had been a victim of starvation" (49), also prevents Kipps from distinguishing any corporeal features that may betray the Woman in Black's femininity, which contributes to accentuating her androgyny. The Woman in Black's menacing presence is also highlighted through features like vehemence and determination, which sanction her deviance from the prevailing ethics of femininity, as Kipps notices that she acted "as though she were searching for something she wanted, needed, 'must' have, more than life itself" (65), thus underpinning some sort of fervour and insolence which was often associated with traditional patterns of masculinity in Victorian times and, conversely, excluded her from conventional standards of submissive femininity. Moreover, it is also significant to notice that, owing to the Woman in Black's sudden and unexpected appearances, Kipps often resorts to the use of unmarked gender to refer to her presence, simply declaring that he "caught a glimpse of someone standing" (131), thus subtly suggesting the narrator's latent incapacity to define her in terms of gender.

According to Christopher Lane, the prevailing Victorian discourses of gender compelled men to identify with rigid sexual categories under culturally established premises which defended that "virility" had to be exalted to the detriment of "effeminacy" (37). Given the cultural anxieties arising from the haunting spectre of effeminacy in Victorian times, Hughes contends that the gothic archetype of the vampire emerging at the time represented the liberation of those sexual practices which were "censored in society or repressed within the self" ("Fictional Vampires" 145), as the vampire preys upon both genders, thus subverting conventional patterns of desire and sexual behaviour, and suggesting, to use Hughes's terms, "a thoroughly Victorian displacement of the traditional sex act" ("Fictional Vampires" 145). During his vampiric intercourse with three female vampires in Dracula's castle, Jonathan Harker notices that two of them "had high aquiline noses, like the Count" (34), while he also mentions that, at all time, he "was conscious of the presence of the Count" (34), hence explicitly stating that, through his intercourse with these female vampires, Harker is rather envisioning Dracula in a symbolic homoerotic encounter, which is ultimately confirmed when the Count makes his appearance and exclaims to the female vampires that "this man belongs to me" (34). In a similar passage in Hill's novel, Arthur Kipps also gives evidence of his symbolic unfaithful intercourse with the Woman in Black, as he declares that she "seemed to haunt me, even here, to sit on the end of my bed, to push her face suddenly close to mine as I lay asleep" (152), thus betraying latent forbidden desires and even homoerotic impulses, given the Woman in Black's androgynous characterisation, thus

visualising an allegedly unorthodox encounter which would allow them to join together in a homoerotic embrace.

As a result of the prevailing discourses of gender, the latent homoerotic tendencies that haunt Jonathan Harker and Arthur Kipps turn into a source of unfathomable fear and apprehension for the heroes of both novels. When Jonathan Harker encounters the Count again in London, Mina describes Dracula's face as "sensual" and observes that his lips are "so red" and "pointed like an animal's" (143), while she empathically notices that her husband "kept staring at him" (143) until she feels obliged to ask Jonathan why he feels so disturbed, ultimately concluding that "the poor dear was evidently terrified at something" (143), which, given Mina's description, is indicative of Harker's subtle homoerotic attraction towards the Count and the covert anxiety he feels upon trying to quench his homoerotic sexual drives. In analogy, in Hill's novel, Arthur Kipps also seems at a loss to give voice to the source of the feelings of ire and dread that he experiences as a result of his encounters with the Woman in Black, as he admits that "I was angry, yes, *angry*, with her for the emotion she had aroused in me, for causing me to experience such fear" (66), thus giving evidence of both his attraction and revulsion toward the Woman in Black and the haunting spectre of veiled homoeroticism that she symbolises.

As Lane further claims, Victorian thinkers such as William Hazlitt contended that effeminacy of character was grounded in the prevalence of "sensibility over the will" (48), while, similarly, Thomas Carlyle considered that the philosophy of dandyism, which was intrinsically related to effeminacy, "depleted men's vigour" (Lane 48) and could be interpreted as unbridling a relentless process of symbolic emasculation. At the beginning of Stoker's novel, in a letter addressed to Dracula, Mister Hawkins refers to his apprentice Jonathan Harker as a man "full of energy and talent" (16), although when Harker comes back from Dracula's castle, in a letter that Mina addresses to her friend Lucy, Harker's wife describes her husband as "so thin and pale and weak-looking" that "he is only a wreck of himself" (87), which indicates Harker's symbolic process of emasculation as a result of his encounters with Dracula. Harker's sensibility and delicacy following his encounter with the Count stand in sharp contrast with the model of traditional masculinity that Van Helsing embodies, as he is depicted by his disciple, John Seward, as a man endowed with "an iron nerve," "indomitable resolution" and "self-command" (94). In clear resemblance, before meeting the Woman in Black, Arthur Kipps is portrayed as a man with "a schoolboy's passion for everything" (26), whereas, after his encounters with the Woman in Black, Kipps confesses that he often finds himself "near to weeping tears of despair and fear, frustration and tension" (125), which he struggles intensively to suppress, thus giving evidence of his

personal fight to defend his manhood so as to comply with the established conventions of gender. As happens with Harker and Van Helsing, Kipps's refined sensibility differs significantly from Samuel Daily's initiative and sagacity, as he is a villager whom Kipps befriends and describes as "a big man, with a beefy face and huge, raw-looking hands" (36). Kipps's portrayal of Samuel Daily categorises this villager as the epitome of traditional manhood according to prevailing Victorian standards in contrast with Arthur Kipps's more sensitive and vulnerable qualities.

The respective encounters of the heroes, Jonathan Harker and Arthur Kipps, with Dracula and the Woman in Black bring to the fore male anxieties about effeminacy and emasculation which subvert the discourses of traditional masculinities that were upheld in Victorian times. In Stoker's novel, immediately following his return from Transylvania, Jonathan Harker marries Mina Murray, in an attempt to exorcise any latent homoerotic impulses that Dracula has stirred in the hero. Such interpretation of this pressurised marriage to soothe these impulses is educed in Hill's novel, since, when Arthur Kipps returns to London, he explicitly admits in relation to his marriage to Stella that their "original plan had been to wait at least until the following spring but my experiences had changed me greatly" (156), which lead him to get married in scarcely few weeks after his symbolic encounters with the Woman in Black and the uncertainties about his sexual identity that she has roused in him. Nonetheless, in Stoker's novel, the ultimate defeat of Dracula paves the way so that the Harkers have a son who ensures the perpetuation of the family lineage and contributes to upholding conventional gender dichotomies, even though the haunting memories of Dracula —and, by extension, the latent homoerotic impulses that the figure of the vampire personifies— still haunt Jonathan Harker in his late years, as his incapacity to forget them is conceded in his journal. Conversely, in Hill's novel, although Arthur Kipps and Stella raise a family and have a son, the memories of the Woman in Black still literally and metaphorically haunt the hero and, as a result of one eventual spectral apparition of the Woman in Black, Stella and Joseph perish in an emblematic narratological twist which sanctions the hero's impossibility to raise a family of his own after his symbolic encounters with the Woman in Black and the hesitations about his sexuality that she has incited. When Arthur Kipps gives voice to his narrative, which acquires significant confessional undertones, he still feels tormented by the memories of the past and it is concluded that, although he has joined a new family and he lives with Esmé and her sons, he has been barred from raising his own family, hence once more evoking his troubled sexuality and the homoerotic impulses that he feels unable to release owing to the pervasive Victorian

discourses defining sexuality and the constraining preconceptions of gender prevailing at the time.

6. CONCLUSION

Critics such as Marie-Luise Kohlke claim that Neo-Victorian novels revise and rewrite Victorian textualities with the ultimate aim of reinforcing as well as subverting the Victorian period. Bearing this premise in mind, it can be argued that Hill's *The Woman in Black* engages in dialogue with Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, as it unveils a self-conscious purpose of addressing the Victorian past, but also offers a new interpretation drawn from current critical readings of this late Victorian novel. In this respect, as Ann Heilmann and Mark Llewellyn also argue, Neo-Victorian novels, as is the case with *The Woman in Black*, are "self-consciously engaged with the act of (re)interpretation, (re)discovery, and (re)vision" (4), acting a mediators of the experience of reading Victorian textualities and producing, to use Mark Llewellyn's term, a sense of "critical f(r)iction" (170). As representative of the gothic archetype of the ghost, the Woman in Black is rooted in Victorian characterisations of spectres and apparitions, which personify cultural anxieties and the individual's subconscious and, as such, she evokes as well as pays homage to the Victorian ghost story and, by extension, to the Victorian past from a contemporary perspective. Nevertheless, the Woman in Black is mostly characterised through evident features pertaining to the gothic archetype of the vampire, which is inextricably linked to the discourses of gender and sexuality. In this respect, drawing on current interpretations of Stoker's novel that focus on gender, Hill's *The Woman in Black* resurrects from oblivion the Victorian gender archetype of the fallen woman, personified by a female vampire, Lucy Westenra —a rebellious woman who defies the dictates of gender assigned to women in Victorian times— while it also revisits the Victorian gender archetype of the dandy, represented by Dracula, whose androgynous and effeminate traits menace to subvert the Victorian standards of conventional masculinities. Nonetheless, unlike Lucy Westenra and Dracula, who are finally defeated as vampires, the Woman in Black cannot be destroyed owing to her ghostly condition and rather arises as an eternal entity which, no longer constrained by the conventions of gender, threatens to perpetuate her dominion and make up for all those fallen women and dandies whose voices were silenced in Victorian times. The diverging conclusions of both novels —Lucy's death and Dracula's defeat as opposed to the Woman in Black's triumph— display the different points of view of both writers, as Hill's revision of the dialectics of gender at work in *Dracula* aims to give prominence to the Victorian gender archetypes of the fallen woman and the dandy. If vampires had to be defeated in *Dracula* to

protect the prevailing Victorian discourses of gender, Hill rather allows the eternal ghost of the Woman in Black to hold dominion, take revenge, and vindicate the Victorian gender archetypes that she brings back in this contemporary reinterpretation of Stoker's late Victorian novel.

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