

Drink of Me, and You Shall Have Eternal Life:

An Analysis of Lord Byron's *The Giaour* and the Greek Folkloric Vampire

by

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## ABSTRACT

This paper contains an examination of the impact of the Vampire Hysteria in Europe during the 1700's on Lord Byron's "The Giaour." Byron traveled to the continent in 1809 and wrote the poems that came to be known as his Oriental Romances after overhearing what would become "The Giaour" in "one of the many coffee-houses that abound in the Levant." The main character, the Giaour, has characteristics typical of the Greek vampire, called *vrykolakas*. The vamping of characters, the cyclic imagery, and the juxtaposition of life and death as it is expressed within the poem are analyzed in comparison to vampiric folklore, especially that of Greece.

In memory of my two angels, Rowena Vice and John Anthony Fitzpatrick Sr.

I know you would both be so very proud of how far I've come.

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*Macbeth: How does your patient, doctor?  
Doctor: Not so sick, my lord,  
As she is troubled with thick-coming fancies  
That keep her from her rest.  
Macbeth: Cure her of that!  
Canst thou not minister to a mind diseas'd,  
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,  
Raze out the written troubles of the brain,  
And with some sweet oblivious antidote  
Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff  
Which weighs upon the heart?  
Doctor: Therein the patient  
Must minister to himself.  
--Macbeth, Act V, Scene III, 37-46*

The seventeenth and eighteenth century European intellectual mindset was one of Enlightenment—reason, science, and progress were valued as the most contemporary theology. However, just as the Romantic movement—which emphasized the power of the imagination, creativity, and nature—rose to counter the Enlightenment, so did old superstitions among the masses. Having suffered through the European witch craze in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, not to mention war, revolution, plague, and socio-cultural change throughout the whole continent (Roper 1), the masses once again turned against the cold logic of science and looked to the supernatural to explain the world around them. In so doing, the general population sparked hysteria over a “new” unworldly monster preying on the common man. Translations of accounts about this creature spread from Eastern Europe and terrorized the imaginations of its readers. It was into the dregs of this new craze that George Gordon, Lord Byron, arrived on the continent from England in 1809.

Along with his friend, John Cam Hobhouse, Byron had departed from his native England to tour Spain, Portugal, Malta, Albania, Greece and Turkey. It was this voyage that inspired him to compose the first two cantos of a “long, semiautobiographical poem he called ‘Childe Burun’s Pilgrimage,’” (McConnell 24). These cantos were published a year after his return to England in 1811, and were now titled ‘Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage,’” (McConnell 24). The public reception of this work was an overwhelming success. As Byron stated in one of his letters, he awoke one morning in 1812 and “found myself famous,” (McConnell 24). Thus fortified by his new-found fame, Byron quickly followed the publication of ‘Childe Harold’ with a series of poems that have come to be known as his “Oriental Romances,” which were in turn eagerly devoured by the public. Among these oriental poems was *The Giaour*, a poem that contained only 406 lines in its initial form, (McGann 143). According to one of Byron’s letters, the story in the poem was a tale he’d overheard “by accident recited by one of the coffee-house story tellers who abound in the Levant,” and he blamed the fragmented style on a “failure of memory,” (McGann 143).

*The Giaour* distinguishes itself from its sister poems, however, by remaining one of the only poems Byron ever revised after the initial drafting. As previously stated, the original poem contained only 406 lines. The first publication saw it expanded to 685, with each new edition containing more additional lines until the seventh edition, in which the poem reached its final length of 1,334 lines (McGann 143). This poem is also famous for its invocation

of the monster which created such hysteria in Europe (especially Western Europe) during the seventeenth century, and that creature upon which this analysis will place great focus: the Vampire.

Most ironically, Byron and the vampire were doomed to be linked, and this union would create the basis of the prototype for the Byronic hero, a literary character motif that would leave its impact in later literature. In the spring of 1816, Byron once again departed on a tour of continental Europe, this time choosing as his companion the young doctor John Polidori, a man of medicine with ambitions to become a writer. These two gathered in Geneva that year for the famous house party that included Claire Clairmont (an old flame of Byron's), and Percy and Mary Shelley. Days after their arrival, Byron decided to break up the tedium from the restrictions of bad weather and proposed a "ghost" story writing contest. It was here Mary Shelley wrote her famous gothic story, Frankenstein. Though hers is the most famous work to have come from the party, it was not the only attempt. Polidori kept a detailed journal of everything that happened on the tour, including the plot of Byron's story. Byron had written what would become "Fragment of a Novel," but had abandoned it. Polidori took Byron's fragment, reworked it, and published his own short story based on it. In April 1819, New Monthly Magazine ran *The Vampyre*, but published it under Byron's name, which, according to critics, meant that it received far more immediate attention than it would have under Polidori's name, especially in the wake of Byron's continuous success at the time.

Polidori named his vampire Lord Ruthven, a deliberate swipe at Byron, whom he had come to greatly dislike and envy. The name Lord Ruthven was the name that Byron's former mistress, Caroline Lamb, had given him in her less-than-complimentary novel. Byron in turn wrote a scathing letter to Galignani's Magazine, in which he denied all authorship and connection to "that trash," but it was far too late to undo the connection (McGann 143). The German writer Goethe pronounced it Byron's best work and the publication of *The Vampyre* created a new vampire craze in Europe, this one of a literary variety. A flurry of vampire tales and "penny dreadful" novels exploded all over the continent, especially in France, where Polidori's story became a three-act play adapted by Charles Nodier, and Lord Ruthven became a character that reappeared periodically in stories until Dumas' work in 1852 (Bartlett 31). Ruthven, based satirically on Byron himself, was "a shadowy, sinister figure waiting to feast on the blood of innocents. He is aristocratic, haughty, and superior. Those that came into contact with him fell under a spell, as they were hypnotized by the sheer evil that emanated from his presence," (Bartlett 31).

According to Frank D. McConnell, Byron's "other" vampire work, published years earlier in 1813, "gave the image of the Byronic hero its most striking articulation," (McConnell 84). *The Giaour* emerged during Byron's years of fame, and as previously stated, underwent numerous revisions. As suggested by Mark Lussier, it is a bit ironic that Byron should, in a sense, "live off" this poem because of its many re-publications into new editions, much as the vampire



lives off the blood of others. However, it must be stated that the vampire of literature, including *The Giaour*, was based on the folklore and superstitions of the masses. It is no coincidence that Byron included the term “vampire” in his poem. His tour in 1809 took him to the Balkan Peninsula, where most of the old tales upon which literary vampire myths originated. These original folkloric vampires are not aristocratic lords or strong anti-heroes of epic tales. Rather, the folkloric vampire is a common, coarse creature that terrorizes the peasantry and nobility indiscriminately as a monster often wearing a human form. Paul Barber writes that “[...] rich and important people tend to be buried properly, and their families have sufficient influence to prevent them from being dug up again. Consequently, the classic vampire—in folklore, at least—...tends to be a peasant with a drinking problem,” (Barber 132). The sheer volume of vampiric creatures and incidents in this region prior to Byron’s arrival assure the probability that this folkloric monster impacted Byron’s writing of *The Giaour*, for reasons that will be discussed in more detail later.

Having thus established an overview of Europe prior to Byron’s 1809 tour, Byron’s ties to the vampire, and the introduction to the poem of interest in this paper, *The Giaour*, it is now time to determine the purpose of such an analysis. In the wake of *Dracula*, Anne Rice, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, and a myriad of other popular culture depictions of the vampire, the vampire underwent a metamorphosis from the nineteenth century on. In essence, the twenty-first century has undergone another literary vampire craze, but of a different sort.

Now, in series such as *Twilight*, Christine Feehan's Carpathian novels, and television shows such as *True Blood* and *The Vampire Chronicles*, vampires have changed from the malevolent folkloric beast apathetically sustaining its own existence at the expense of others, to a romantic hero who can save and be saved by the love of a special woman. Though still dangerous, such facsimiles are mere shadows of their folkloric ancestors, and the threat the vampire used to pose is muted and restricted by the reader's expectations and the author's eagerness to provide a safe thrill. However, the original Romantic vampire—that is, the creature whose motif pervades the Romantic movement—was tied much more closely to the folkloric vampire myths that predate the movement. *The Giaour* is no exception. While in recent times, the Oriental Tales have been revived from the relative obscurity they were cast into in the wake of Byron's later work, little is said about the famous vampire curse embedded within *The Giaour's* poetic structure.

755 But first, on earth as Vampire sent,  
Thy corse shall from its tomb be rent:  
Then ghastly haunt thy native place,  
And suck the blood of all thy race;  
There from thy daughter, sister, wife,  
760 At midnight drain the stream of life;  
Yet loathe the banquet which perforce  
Must feed thy livid living corse:  
Thy victims ere they yet expire  
Shall know the demon for their sire,  
765 As cursing thee, thou cursing them,  
Thy flowers are withered on the stem.  
But one that for thy crime must fall,  
The youngest, most beloved of all,  
Shall bless thee with a *father's* name---

770 That word shall wrap thy heart in flame!  
 Yet must thou end thy task, and mark  
 Her cheek's last tinge, her eye's last spark,  
 And the last glassy glance must view  
 Which freezes o'er its lifeless blue;  
 775 Then with unhallow'd hand shalt tear  
 The tresses of her yellow hair,  
 Of which in life a lock when shorn  
 Affection's fondest pledge was worn,  
 But now is borne away by thee,  
 780 Memorial of thine agony!  
 Wet with thine own best blood shall drip  
 Thy gnashing tooth and haggard lip;  
 Then stalking to thy sullen grave,  
 Go---and with Gouls and Afrits rave;  
 785 Till these in horror shrink away  
 From Spectre more accursed than they!  
 (Byron, "The Giaour," 755-785)

This curse (up to line 766) is reprinted in every work published about the poem, but analysis often encompasses only a few lines, or perhaps a paragraph at most. These analyses often look to a metaphoric or ironic interpretation of the vampire, with barely a nod in the direction of the folklore that inspired it.

Therefore, I am undertaking the task of examining the vampire's history and evolution, discussing one particular vampire creature-type Byron may have been exposed to on his 1809 tour; analyzing this creature's impact on *The Giaour*; and explicating the vampiric elements within the poem. In doing so, it is my hope to provide a new avenue for Byronic analysis, and continue the vampire's connection to Romanticism as previously undertaken by James Twitchell and other such Romantic vampire enthusiasts.

In order to examine the history of the vampire of folklore, it might be prudent to uncover—or, might I say, “unbury”—the origin of the term. According to Katrina M. Wilson, the definitive origin is as of yet unknown, but there are four main schools of thought regarding the word’s birthplace. The etymologic schools of thought advocate Turkish, Slavic, Hungarian, and Greek, each as the original language from which the word emerged. It is the Slavic theory that has garnered the most acceptance among linguistic scholars, and the root noun underlying the word “vampire” is considered to be the Slavic word *bamiiup* (Wilson 4). A convincing case for the Bulgarian origin of the term has been presented by A. Bruckner, who stated in his 1934 article entitled *Etymologien* that “The Serbian term *vampir* is only borrowing from Bulgarian via Greek. Thus, the Serbian *bamiiup* appears to have served merely as a transmitter, but is not the root of the term,” (Wilson 4).

The introduction of the term “vampire” into the recorded English vocabulary, and that of other western European tongues, is just as controversial as the etymology. It has been determined that the term made its first appearance in England in the seventeenth century (during the vampire hysteria). According to Todd and Skeat, Paul Ricaut first used the term in *State of the Greek and Armenian Churches*, which was published in 1679 (Wilson 4). Wilson goes on to state that “Ricaut does not mention vampires by name here; he only describes the phenomenon as a superstition resulting from the reproachable overuse of excommunications in the Greek church,” (Wilson 5-6). Ten years later, Forman

used the term in a metaphorical footnote without additional explanation in his *Observations on the Revolution in 1688* (written in 1688 but published in 1741). The Oxford English Dictionary credits the *Travels of 3 English Gentlemen from Venice to Hamburg, Being the Grand Tour of Germany, in the Year 1734* as the first use of the word “vampire” in English. However, Wilson calls this a “mistake” and goes on to point out “*Travels* postdates both Ricaut and Forman by half a century,” and was not published until 1810, when the manuscripts in the Earl of Oxford’s library were printed in the *Harleian Miscellany*, (Wilson 6). Most interestingly, Wilson notes that the appearance of *Travels* in the *Harleian Miscellany* “was followed by extremely popular works on the vampire theme, such as Byron’s “The Giaur”, Southey’s “Thalaba,” and Polidori’s *The Vampyre*,” (Wilson 8). Therefore, we can conclude that the introduction of the term “vampire” into English might have had an effect on the creation of *The Giaour*.

The *Travels* was only one of the accounts of vampirism translated into English and other western European tongues at this time. The vampire hysteria of the seventeenth century was a direct result of the translation of Slavic and Balkan accounts of vampire activity and disposal into other European languages, thus bringing the vampire into contact and into the consciousness of people who, prior to the seventeenth century, had had little experience with a creature of this form.<sup>1</sup> While Portugal did have a vampiric creature called the *bruxa* that drank blood, the *bruxa* was classified as a witch. The Celtic people also had legends of the restless dead and blood-drinkers or creatures associated with blood (such as the Bean

Sidhe), which might have resulted in some English exposure to such creatures. In any case, this new creature sparked panic and led to extreme paranoia about corpses. It would be incorrect to say that the vampire is a singular creature of definite characteristics, however—on the contrary, during the course of my research into the subject, I documented over seventy-five creatures and incidents in the Balkan Peninsula alone that occurred during or before the year 1809 (when Lord Byron arrived on the continent). Granted, some creatures and myths within that count may be slightly or even remarkably similar. However, each cultural group has a distinct flavor to add to the vampire’s repertoire of tricks and appearances. Given this, a definition of what characterizes a vampire (common identifiers) would be prudent.

Given that *The Giaour* is set in Greece, it would perhaps be the obvious conclusion that the analysis of the vampiric elements of the poem should be filtered through the lens of Greek vampire lore. It is indeed fortunate that these elements most closely resemble the Greek vampire, and therefore, my discussion of vampires henceforth shall focus specifically on this one creature. Especially in regards to Greek vampires, there is a clear distinction between “vampires” and “revenants.” Vampires are usually defined as a “being which derives sustenance from a victim, who is weakened by the experience. The sustenance may be physical or emotional in nature,” (Oinas 47). Felix Oinas does recognize that, “more commonly, however, the term ‘vampire’ is used in a more restricted sense to denote a type of the dead, or, more accurately, undead. It is a living corpse or

soulless body that emerged from its grave and drinks the blood of the living,” (Oinas 47). A revenant, by contrast, is a general term for one of the “restless dead,” but such corpses may not necessarily be associated with blood drinking. Therefore, the vampire is a specific type or class of revenant. In regards to this analysis, the focus will be on a Greek vampiric creature. Though Greece is home to at least five such distinct vampire types, it is the *vrykolakas* that most closely mirrors the vampiric elements in *The Giaour*.

This sort of vampire assumes various spellings, depending on the source, author, and geographic location. The form I have selected to use, “*vrykolakas*,” seems to be the commonly accepted spelling among scholars who study this creature. Alternate spellings include *vorvolakas*, *vrykolatios*” (Santorini), *bruko’lakas* (which some scholars call the trans-literated form), *brucolaques* and *vrykólakoi*, (Summers 25; du Boulay 87). For the sake of simplicity, I am restricting myself to the common spelling to avoid confusion.

Accounts of *vrykolakas* vary greatly in details such as how a body becomes one, deeds associated with this creature, and how to dispose of it. However, given that most of these varying details occur because of regional differences, it can be determined that the essence of the creature is rooted in some generally accepted characteristics. Paul Barber, author of *Vampires, Burial and Death: Folklore and Reality*, states in regards to the plethora of variances in *vrykolakas* tales, “It must be said that in considering the nocturnal activity of vampires and revenants, even of the Slavic variety, it is difficult to find a clear

pattern. Vampires and revenants, it would appear, are not specialists at all in their chosen profession of tormenting human beings but are more in the way of general practitioners,” (Barber 25). According to Juliette du Boulay, this sort of vampire is thought to be “...a person taken over by the Devil...[and] involves not only the body but also the soul—the soul becoming in some way so crucially involved with this demonic influence that it ‘becomes a demon,’ and, thus implied, reanimates its own body,” (du Boulay 87). Therefore, to destroy the creature, both the Devil and the soul must be destroyed, (du Boulay 87). John Cuthbert Lawson provides a list of nine ways in which a corpse can become *vrykolakas*.

- 1.) Those who do not receive the full and due rites of burial.
- 2.) Those who meet with any sudden or violent death (including suicides), or in Mania, where the vendetta is still in vogue, those murdered who remain unavenged.
- 3.) Children conceived or born on one of the great Church festivals, and children stillborn.
- 4.) Those who die under a curse, especially the curse of a parent or one self-invoked, as in the case of a man who, in perjuring himself, calls down on his own head all manner of damnation if what he says be false.
- 5.) Those who die under the ban of the Church, that is to say, the excommunicated.
- 6.) Those who die unbaptized or apostate.



- 7.) Men of evil and immoral life in general, more particularly if they have dealt in the blacker kinds of sorcery.
- 8.) Those who have eaten the flesh of a sheep which was killed by a wolf.
- 9.) Those over whose dead bodies a cat or other animal has passed.

(Lawson, 375-376)

In regards to my purpose for this study, I have determined that the triangle of main characters (Leila, Hassan, and the Giaour) each exhibit at least one of Lawson's symptoms, thus "vamping" all of them and forming an unholy trinity, or anti-trinity of sorts. Therefore, I will focus most of my efforts on numbers 1, 2, 4 and 5 of Lawson's list.

According to Lawson, the "uncorrupted revenant" was, to traditional Greek understanding, a "reasonable and usually harmless" being (375), which was eventually replaced by the vampire, as it is known by the Slavs (blood drinking and life-destroying). Anthony Masters believes that both the legend of the vampire as a blood/life sucker and that of the werewolf were introduced to Greece from its Slavic neighbors, (Masters 71). Prior to this Slavic influence, Greeks believed in "the incorruptibility and the re-animation of the bodies of certain types of men—but these men returned with dignity and had no such vampiristic notions as revenge, or a thirst for blood," (Masters 71). Masters then goes on to admit—and therefore contradict himself—that a revenant might actually seek revenge on occasion, but only in the rare case when the said revenge was justified, (Masters 71).

The evolution from revenant to brutal vampire occurred, according to Masters, because of the imported werewolf legend.<sup>2</sup> In Slavic werewolf lore, werewolves become vampires after their death. “The werewolf legend was considered to be infinitely more panic-making and therefore, once this link was established, the vampire image took on a more sinister colour,” (Oinas 51). In fact, many of the Slavic words for “vampire” either mean or can be associated with the werewolf, (Summers 21). Agnes Murgoci writes, “It is curious that the word *vârcolac*, or *vrykolaka*, which is the general name for a vampire in Macedonia and Greece, is only exceptionally used to mean a vampire in Roumania,” and usually refers instead to an animal which consumes the moon (Murgoci 25). *Vârcolac* means “werewolf,” and “in Roumania it is the wolf or animal significance which predominates; in Macedonia [or Greece], the human significance, the idea of devouring not being lost in either country,” (Murgoci 25).

As far as a description of this particular creature (*vrykolakas*), I mean, its physical characteristics, the *vrykolakas* is not gaunt and pale like its fictional and literary counterpart—rather, it is the exact opposite. This creature is described by Barber as flushed and dark (this is thought to be because of its gluttonous diet of blood) (41), and according to a treatise on the *vrykolakas* from the seventeenth century Greek folklorist Leo Allatius, “such bodies do not like those of other men suffer decomposition after burial nor turn to dust, but having, as it appears, a skin of extreme toughness become swollen and distended all over, so that the joints can scarcely be bent; the skin becomes stretched like the parchment of a drum,

and when struck gives the same sound,” (Masters 73). In fact, the word “*vrykolakas*” translates to something roughly similar to “drum-like,” in reference to the phenomena Allatius describes above. Summers traces *brucolaques* (*vrykolakas*) to the Greek word *tumpaniaîos*, which means “drum-like,” and this translation is then confirmed by du Boulay (Summers 21; du Boulay 88). Barber discusses this “symptom” at great length, stating such a swollen state results from normal decomposition. “In Greece, the swelling of the body is viewed as an ‘unmistakable sign’ that the deceased is a *vrykolakas*. The bloating occurs because of the microorganisms of decomposition produce gas, mostly methane, throughout the tissues, and this gas, lacking an escape route, collects both in the tissues and body cavities,” (Barber 108).

Depending on the local traditions, the corpse will be exhumed a significant number of days after burial to confirm decomposition. Often it is forty days, because forty is a “holy” number, and the Church plays an important part in the legend of the *vrykolakas*, (Murgoci 12). According to Barber, some places in Greece wait up to three years to do the ritual exhumation, (Barber 59). The exhumation date obviously depends on geography. However, this date may be hastened if symptoms point to the destructive presence of a *vrykolakas* among the villagers. *Vrykolakas* are blamed for illness, epidemics, and other misfortunes—in fact, such misfortune seems to be interpreted as a “symptom” of *vrykolakas* infestation. This is a medieval attitude, which Barber identifies and discusses as a supernatural instead of scientific view of the world, (Barber 108). As Barber

points out, one of the main reasons the “*vrykolakas*” kin often follows them into death soon after is infectious disease that spread to the caretaker of the inflicted, or those in close proximity.

When one considers that vampires commonly infect others with their condition, it will become obvious that, even if a single vampire escapes the ministrations of the local people, vampirism may increase in geometric proportion. In a short time there may be more vampires than normal people. This was believed to explain epidemics of plague, although it was sometimes thought necessary to find and destroy only the original vampire, not his every victim, to end the plague, (Barber 80).

This fear of the restless dead has led to a distinct preference for cremation as a cure for *vrykolakas* infestation and prevention. Barber confirms this by stating, “some scholars suspect that the custom of cremation may have originated as a preemptive strike against the revenant. But because of the high water content of the average adult human body, the energy requirements are high,” (Barber 76). Without a special furnace, “the problem...lies not in creating a hot enough fire—that is easy—but in conveying enough of that heat to the body and for a long enough time to bring about its destruction,” (Barber 76). This furnace is required because “combustion can take place only in the presence of oxygen, and this means the body will not burn on the side that it lies on or where the combustible material is actually against it,” (Barber 76). The discovery that burning a body on a pyre is impractical and difficult probably led to the practice of attempting

cremation within the grave itself, a practice confirmed by du Boulay (Barber 78). Barber also reminds us that burial and cremation are “extremely time-consuming procedures,” which can be inadequate in times of epidemic or plague, when the body count rises faster than the holes or fires to dispose of them can be produced (Barber 78).

According to du Boulay, once the presence of the *vrykolakas* is suspected, proof is sought in the graveyard “in the [form] of a hole in the grave about the size of two cupped hands held together, around the region of the corpse’s head and chest,” (du Boulay 93). The presence of the hole or holes is a common identifier for most of the Slavic and Balkan vampire creatures—it is believed such a hole is the entry and departure place for the vampire, who either shape shifts into an animal (snake, moth, ect.) or mist, or sends a part of themselves from the grave to torment the living (similar to astral projection)(Krauss 15). Du Boulay states that once the vampire/*vrykolakas*’ presence and identity have been confirmed, “the remedies [...] then have to be practiced, between the hours of vespers on Saturday and the end of liturgy on the Sunday morning (since between those hours the vampire is compelled to remain in his grave),<sup>3</sup> consist of ‘boiling’ (*zimatóo*) the vampire by pouring a mixture of about four kilos of boiling oil and vinegar into the hole in the grave, and ‘reading’ (*dhiávasma*), that is to say exorcism, by the priest. The effect of these actions is dramatic, for they cause the soul, with its demonic power, immediately to ‘burst,’ (*skázei*) or ‘be lost’

(*bánetai*); it is extinguished in a moment, and neither Heaven nor Hell knows it thereafter,” (du Boulay 93).

The concept of freeing or extinguishing the soul through destruction of the body is pervasive. Veselin Čajkanović states that, “the true purpose of burning was to destroy the corpse or, more exactly, to destroy those parts of it in which the soul might remain...when [...] there remained only bones, and we are thus secure from the eventual return of the departed,” given that, according to custom, the soul cannot be bound to the bones (Čajkanović 78). Thus, according to Čajkanović, by “burning the body, we can accomplish two things: we can free the soul of the departed from his body, which hinders it in its journey, and we can personally protect ourselves against the possibility of its returning to attack us,” (Čajkanović 78). As Čajkanović states, it is the popular Greek—and also Slavic—belief that the deceased’s soul was tied to the body for a set amount of time (usually seven days, but such a limit differs geographically) before it was freed by the process of decomposition. Thus, in an undecayed body, the soul is trapped and festers with malice, which causes the body to rise again. As Montague Summers comments:

A weaver of exquisite prose has written: ‘death must be so beautiful. To lie in the soft brown earth, with the grasses waving above one’s head, and listen to silence. To have no yesterday and no tomorrow. To forget time.’ So we see that [...] the ideal is oblivion and rest. How fearful a destiny

then is that of the vampire who has no rest in the grave, but whose doom it is to come forth and prey upon the living, (Summers 14).

Barber observes, “the vampire inhabits an in-between world, inaccessible to salvation. [...] That the revenant’s condition is accursed is demonstrated by the tendency of our informants to equate ‘killing the vampire’ with ‘giving him peace,’” (Barber 58). Friedrich S. Krauss writes that “the vampire is a dead person who comes to life during the night-time. So one destroys him just as one would annihilate any living being, namely by killing it, in this case usually either by driving a stake through its body or burning the corpse,” (Krauss 68). The disembodied spirit “is freed or takes flight and is thus no longer able to cause harm to anyone,” (Krauss 68). Oinas states that such rising from the grave is prompted by either of two basic emotions—love, or hate, (Oinas 58). The emotions are “motives which are projected to the dead and urge reunion and return from the grave. Love motivates vampires to always visit relatives first, particularly their marital partners. On the other hand, an unconscious feeling of guilt causes people to fear being the targets of a vampire’s hatred and revenge,” (Oinas 58).

How does one go about becoming a *vrykolakas*, then, and what habits in particular are most often associated with the creature? According to du Boulay and Barber, the *vrykolakas* must remain in the grave on Saturdays, and Lawson’s list of nine methods or prerequisites for the body to become one apply. The Greek people also display a value for the power of the spoken word (the idea of a

curse, either self-inflicted or uttered by another, being able to condemn one to a “life” as *vrykolakas*, is an example of this). The belief that prayers might be enough to exorcise such a creature, or that sorcery (spells and invocations) could affect the physical world, are all related pieces of this thought. The will isn’t nearly as effective as the spoken word. To will damnation on another is to have such a wish known only to the willer, and any related outcome’s cause is only associated with the wish by the willer. However, to verbally wish damnation on another is to immediately allow the receiver to feel the impact and for others to both witness and recognize the curse. Thereafter, the receiver will associate all negative events with the curse, thus empowering the spoken word. To hear is to know, and to know is to believe—therefore, to believe is to create. Once the curse is heard, the receiver knows the willer’s ill feelings and feels the impact. The receiver then begins to believe in the curse and the power of words to inflict harm, and in so believing, allows all actions and effects to become tainted by the lens of the curse, and be interpreted as such, thereby making the willer’s desire come to pass.

This belief in the power of verbalization carries into naming and identity. It is believed that the *vrykolakas*, upon rising, returns to its home, and knocks on doors late at night, calling out to the occupants within by name. Should one be foolish enough to either call back an answer or open the door after only one call by the night traveler, death or mutilation is for certain. For it is known by the Greek people that the *vrykolakas* cannot ever call out too many times—in some



regions, it can only call out once, while other areas claim it is twice or thrice. Murgoci states, "At any time of the year it is well, especially, at night-time, never to answer until anyone calls you three times, for vampires can ask a question twice but not three times. If you reply when they speak to you, they may turn your mouth askew, make you dumb, cut off your foot, or kill you," (Murgoci 23). That is why the people in Greece never answer a summons until the second or third call—to answer before is to be slain, maimed, or become mute.

This tie of names and verbalization into identity directly affects the Giaour, who seems to have neither. Because the Giaour no longer exists anywhere except his own mind, he suffers from a loss of identity. "Such is my name, and such my tale...He passed-nor of his name and race / Hath left a token or a trace," (lines 1319-1330). At the end of the poem, he still has no name or title beyond the label given to him by the Moslems. He also has no life outside the memory of Leila and what they were to one another. He is simply the Giaour, known to no one, not even himself.

If names hold such power, then what does this mean for the Giaour, who bears no name or identity save vague references to the past and the label of a foreigner? To be nameless is nearly equal with not existing—a name gives a sense of identity, and designates a particular person and that person's kin. A saying goes that heroes live on in stories of their deeds, but those without a name are lost to memory. Those who are nameless become caught in a web of memory—no one can keep the Giaour alive, because "he pass'd—nor of his name

and race/ Hath left a token or a trace, / Save what the father must not say/ Who shrived him on his dying day./ This broken tale was all we knew/ Of her he loved, or him he slew,” (lines 1329-1334).

Given that the *vrykolakas* (and, for that matter, the vampire) occupies a liminal place in space and time, Byron’s continuous juxtapositions of life and death within the poem throw the *vrykolakas*’ disruptive presence in nature—an un-natural presence—into stark contrast with both mankind and nature—a part of which the undead is neither, and can never be again. Byron’s opening stanzas are a mournful backward glance to Greece in her former glory, when the heroes stood proud (a Greece which is now “dead”). The current Greece of the poem, in which the action takes place, is enslaved and broken, accepting her chains and servitude to the Ottoman Empire. The poem’s foreword<sup>4</sup> provides a very short and vague synopsis of the events that led to this imperial domination by the Ottomans (and therefore, Islam), and provides a deeper reason for the Giaour’s unnatural status in this place—unlike the dominantly Muslim population in the poem, he is pale (like death) and has an evil eye all those who encounter him fear to meet, believing he possesses a frightening power to cause harm or death with it.<sup>5</sup> He is also a Venetian, so his race makes him a target, but if we accept the Giaour’s unnatural status and read him as a vampiric character (or a *vrykolakas*), then he is also an object of loathing and fear by the whole *human* race (emphasis mine).<sup>6</sup> It is—to be blunt—a clash of black and white. What—or who—is good and evil in this clash is not clearly delineated: rather, Byron seems inclined to paint mankind as a

whole as imperfect and flawed, carrying the capacity for both good and evil, making both male main characters neither hero nor villain, but liminal. James Kennedy argues that Byron as the poet “seemed to delight in imagining and delineating all that was bad in human nature. Impetuous, stormy, and violent passions; insatiable revenge...and the ungovernable and unlawful omnipotence of love, seem subjects which engaged his thoughts and his pen,” (Kennedy, 330). Thus, both the Giaour and Hassan carry at least some vampiristic characteristics, setting them apart from the other imagery of nature, life and death in the rest of the poem.

The second stanza of the poem is a celebration of life, of nature, and of love. Byron states of Nature that “...where Nature loved to trace, / As if for God, a dwelling place, / And every charm and grace hath mixed / Within the Paradise she fixed...” (lines 46-49). However, this follows the first stanza, which is riddled with the language of death. In this stanza, Byron describes the sea below the “Athenian’s Grave,” and how “that tomb which, gleaming o'er the cliff, / First greets the homeward-veering skiff,” (lines 2-4). Byron also states that no “breath of air break the wave,” (line 1). A lack of breath is a physical condition we associate with death, which is confirmed by Byron’s last line in the stanza, a lament about “when shall such hero live again?” (line 6). Here, Byron tells the reader that the hero of the tale is obviously no longer living, and thus, the very poem begins with death, and then moves into life in the second stanza.

However, this lengthy reference to life is cut short when, during the next line of the second stanza, Byron complains man is “enamored of distress / shall mar [Nature] into wilderness / and trample, brutelike, o’er every flower...” before moving on to evoke the image of Hell (lines 50-52). By comparing man to a brute and then in a larger conceit, comparing man to nature, Byron clearly states his opinion about the consistency of life and death. Man will do his best to conquer nature if he can, but man’s life is—or should be—finite, while nature is infinite, as demonstrated by the overgrown hall, in which nature has reclaimed the land Hassan built his home on. However, this does not mean that nature is immune to pain at the hands of men, nor does it mean that the natural cycle will encompass all living things.

Byron further embodies this idea with the image of the butterfly “rising on its purple wing / the insect queen of eastern spring,” being chased by a boy—either the butterfly will rise high enough out of reach to be safe, or be caught by the human and suffer “with wounded wing, or bleeding breast,” (*George Gordon* 41). In Greece, and especially in Ancient Greece, the butterfly was linked closely to the idea of the soul. The word *psyché*<sup>7</sup> was used for both, and meant that the myth of Eros and Psyche could literally be translated as Eros and Soul, or Love and Soul. It was believed that when a person died, their soul emerged from their mouth in the form of a butterfly. Murgoci scoffs that “A small, graceful thing which flutters in the air like a butterfly or moth is as near as these peasants can get

to the idea of pure spirit,” (Murgoci 15). Therefore, if one looks at this particular majestic specimen Byron invokes, it is the idealized embodiment of the soul, and what happens to it after it leaves the body. Either the soul rises out of the body and out of the reach of the physical world (represented by the boy), or it is torn asunder and suffers the pain of death. However, for one caught in the liminal space between life and death, this cannot be death, but merely a form of life-in-death. If the soul is thus caught in limbo, it is permanently trapped and left to fester in a world it was never meant to permanently inhabit. The butterfly is also a symbol of transformation from one form to the next, and in light of the current analysis, the transformation from earth-bound to flight (the body releases the soul, which is free to fly away to the afterlife). Therefore, the transformation of the butterfly nods at the transformation of the boy into a man. Someday, this boy will also transform, but if he is not careful, he will senselessly wound his soul and restrict his ability to fly, as it were, once his body is dead.

Murgoci, Krauss, Jaffé, and DiCataldo also link the butterfly-as-soul phenomenon to the vampire specifically, as it was believed the vampire could transform into a butterfly and escape those attempting to destroy it. Thus, the peasantry would “tend to the body of the vampire [while] the others present anxiously watch for the appearance of a moth (or butterfly) flying away from the grave. If one does fly out of the grave, everyone runs after it in order to capture it. If it is caught, it is thrown onto a bonfire so it will die. Only then is the

vampire completely destroyed. If the butterfly escapes, however, then, alas, woe to the village...” (Krauss 68). Thus, the boy chasing the butterfly can also be read as the soul attempting to flee from destruction at the brutish young man’s hands, as the undead is attempting to escape the living and the natural cycle. Certainly, the idea that man is inherently malevolent towards what is natural in the world and towards other men comes into play here. However, Byron also provides a way for the natural world to combat this inherent malevolence.

After establishing man’s belief in the human dominance over nature, Byron then goes on to present the reader with Hassan’s ruined house and a casual mention of Hassan’s death, even before we know exactly who Hassan is and what part he will play in the poem. Ironically, the reader knows exactly where and how Hassan will die before the character ever appears. Thus, even before the character of Hassan is given life, he is dead. Byron describes the result of his death, saying:

There lingers life, though but in one-  
For many a gilded chamber there...For courtesy and pity died  
335 With Hassan on the mountain side.  
His roof, that refuge unto men,  
Is desolations hungry den.  
The guest flies the hall, and the vassal from labour,  
Since his turban was cleft by the infidels saber!”  
(Byron, “The Giaour,” lines 333-350).

In this stanza, Byron provides a correlation between the “linger[ing] life” of nature and the sudden death of man. Hassan used to have a palace here, but

this once glorious house is now overgrown and only ruins remain. This image stands as one of Byron's most vivid commentaries on life and death.

Given all the wars and bloodshed going on in Europe<sup>8</sup> during Byron's lifetime, he would have held a bleak view of man's ability to survive, and man's destruction at his own hands seemed imminent. In this stanza, Byron suggests that though man may destroy himself (all of the gilded halls lie in ruins), life will go on (nature has overgrown those ruins). The stone and building materials used on Hassan's home are all dead materials—most likely concrete, wood, plaster, and paint. These all crumble and give way before the living substances of nature, whose wood overtakes the dead materials and thus reintroduces life there.

Another image delineating the paradox of life and death within the poem comes from the very setting of the story.<sup>9</sup> Byron set this story in the east, far away from his homeland in England. The east has always been traditionally associated with the birth of new life, given that the sun rises in the east every single day. Byron associates animals (the butterfly above) with life and the east (the eastern spring).<sup>10</sup> The west, on the other hand, is associated with death because that is where the sun sets and "dies" as the light from it fades away into darkness. Hassan himself is an easterner, and symbolizes life, while the Giaour is most likely a westerner, and is a harbinger of death. Had the Giaour never arrived in the east, he would not have brought so much death to Hassan, Leila, and himself. In fact, when the Muslim fisherman first describes him, he is riding a

“raven charger,” and the raven is traditionally a symbol of death (line 246). And according to apocalyptic literature, Famine rides a black horse and carries a set of scales. Does not the Giaour bring a sort of famine in his wake? The fountain at Hassan’s house has run dry, and the vampiric Giaour thirsts not only for blood (that of Hassan, to avenge Leila), but also for death and oblivion. Caught in a vacuum of memory, the Giaour starves himself by feeding off memories of guilt, thereby consuming him and creating in his own mind a famine of memory. The Giaour is also described as “the curse for Hassan’s sin...sent / to turn a palace into a tomb; / ...that harbinger of fate and gloom,” (lines 281-284). What is most ironic is that Byron himself is a westerner who has gone east, though he is fleeing from the one he loves above all others, not riding to her rescue, as the Giaour does.

As has been previously mentioned, the reader foresees Hassan’s death before ever meeting the character. However, in possibly ending the life of Leila, Hassan has ultimately caused his own death. The assumed death of Leila sparks the remainder of the controversies between life and death for the rest of the poem. Jerome J. McGann observes, “...Leila is the fundamental source of both life and death. Both Hassan and the Giaour live only for her love, but it is their love for her which makes them both murderers and...results in both their deaths” (McGann 158). When Leila is thrown in a sack into the water, she is cast into nature (which is a life symbol) and now “sleeps beneath the wave,” (line 675).



Given that the reader never gets direct confirmation of her death one way or the other, it seems that the certainty of her life/death is as fluid as the water itself. Combining this image with that of the overgrown palace, the logical conclusion is that nature will eventually lead to man's death. And once this death has been achieved, man will return to nature (a grave in the earth) so that new life can burst forth, thus continuing the natural cycle of death and rebirth, for which the butterfly is a prominent symbol and spring a classical embodiment.

However, the supposed death of Leila is not deadly only to her—it sparks a series of other, non-physical deaths within the character of the Giaour. Upon realizing that she will not be coming to him so that they can escape together, any hope he harbors for a future with Leila dies, as does any chance he may have had for happiness in his lifetime. These deaths then also create new life, but not in the manner the reader might expect. Before now, the life symbolism has come from nature, and is a positive image. Here, the symbolism comes from within the Giaour's psyche, and it is a violent image. His rage bursts into life, along with his thirst for revenge, which ultimately leads to Hassan's death and to the Giaour's loss of purpose after he has killed Hassan. Karen Willis makes a correlation between this self-destructive quality within the Giaour, and the self-destructive tendency of Byron himself. In the case of Byron, this self-destructive tendency had much to do with his manic depression (Bloom 41). For the Giaour, the death

of Leila results in the death of love. However, this love is reborn into a self-destructing force within him. He simply cannot exist without her.

Once the hope of a life with Leila is gone and Hassan is dead, the Giaour suffers an end of memory and of forward motion through the remainder of his life. He becomes trapped forever in his recollections of Leila, and agonizes over the loss of that potential life with her. “And she was lost – and yet I breathed, / But not the breath of human life: / A serpent round my heart was wreathed, / And stung my every thought to strife. / Alike all time, abhorred all place, / Shuddering I shrunk from Nature’s face / Where every hue that charmed before / the blackness of my bosom wore,” (lines 1192-1199). Instead of embracing the cycle of life in nature and moving on, the Giaour is unable to move forward in a life without Leila, and all color and joy within and around him dies. He now exists only within the time capsule in which his love for Leila survives, and not even nature’s endless cycle of life and death can save him from it. Like the vampire he is cursed to be, he does not live or die after this point, but merely exists, though instead of draining blood from others, he drains himself.

What is most significant in this death of self is how differently the two opposing forces—the Giaour and Hassan—view time. According to Mark Lussier, “...*The Giaour* begins with the chronological binaries of synchronism and diachronism, but these binaries exist as the characters of the Giaour and Hassan, the former locked in a closed loop of time (‘It was Eternity to Thought’)

and the latter equally ‘fixed’ within clock-time (“‘I’ve scaped a bloodier hour than this’”),” (Lussier 106). For Hassan, viewing time as hours and minutes means that he has a stronger recognition of the finite length of life a man has, and simply gets on with things. In fact, he was on his way to find another bride when he lost his life to the Giaour. The Giaour, on the other hand, lives in cyclical time. This is natural time—nature changes with the seasons. However, the supposed death of Leila ends the cycle, and like a scratched CD, he can never get past that point of trauma, and must constantly replay his anguish up to that point before suffering through it again (much in the way of Coleridge’s *Ancient Mariner*). Thus, the Giaour is caught in his own memory, nearly incapacitated—a living death, as it were.

In reference to death, this cyclic imagery is further explicated by Juliette du Boulay in her investigation into the *vrykolakas*, and burial customs. According to du Boulay, the corpse is laid out for the wake so that it is “‘facing the sun’ (*prós tón ílio*), that is to say with the feet, and thus the face, toward the east,” (du Boulay 95). Once again, this reference to the east and to life resurfaces. The eyes are then closed, the hands are crossed, and an uneven number of candles are placed around the body. Then,

...the candle known as the *ísou* is placed over the navel. *Ísou* derives from *ísos*, meaning “equal” or “equivalent,” and this candle is made soon after the moment of death by someone who rubs wax around a collection of

threads cut to the same length as the height of the dead person. This long candle is then coiled round and round, anticlockwise, spiraling outwards from the center, in a flat circular mat—and when this is done the center of this coil is pulled up and lit, so that in its burning the candle consumes itself in the direction according to which it was made. During the night of the wake it must be allowed to burn itself down to one-third of its original length only, before it is extinguished and an ordinary candle lit in its place. The second night it is lit and burns down through the second third of its length, and on the third night it is lit again and entirely consumed. The placing of the *ísou* on the navel reinforces the symbolism of the spiral with which the *ísou* itself informed, since the navel is conceived by the villagers as being the center of the body and itself formed into a spiral. [...] Just as the shroud is, of the clothes, the one indispensable article, so the *ísou* is, among the candles, the most essential, for it is the *ísou* which is supposed to give the soul of the dead person light for the forty days during which it is said that it remains in touch with the earth, and it is with the *ísou* before it that the soul, finally, at the end of this period, appears before God (du Boulay 95-96).

This “death spiral” of the candle is meant to represent the spark of life within the person burning down in memorandum of their life. In the case of the Giaour, his

spark continues, but the candle is no longer burning, as he has become stagnant in the cycle of life, a stranger to time and change.

The label “Giaour” is ironic, since Moslems apply the term to anyone who does not believe in Islam. The Giaour is not Moslem, but at the end of the poem, he is not Christian, either. When it comes time for his final confession and declaration of faith to save himself in the afterlife, he tells the priest who has come to hear this confession to “save the cross above my head, / Be neither name nor emblem spread, / By prying stranger to be read, / Or stay the passing pilgrims tread,” (lines 1325-1329). In regards to Lawson’s list of nine ways to become *vrykolakas*, without a name or a gravestone, the Giaour cannot be given the full and due rites of burial. Thus, on top of all the other losses the Giaour suffers after Leila is gone, he also loses any chance of religious salvation. The loss of religion in this case is a voluntary excommunication from the Church, and thus, the Giaour qualifies for requirement number five on Lawson’s list. This is the end of his faith in this form of salvation, as well as the death of any forgiveness he might have earned by confessing. And by not requesting the absent forgiveness of Hassan before death, the Giaour dies under Hassan’s curse, thereby making the curse come true, according to Lawson (requirement number 4). Since he is too deeply ensnared within his own memory, he cannot confess and absolve himself, and thus condemns himself to having no life after death. Such a loss of religion also means a loss of community—he can belong to neither side, but is now

isolated and must exist in a vacuum of memory. As the Giaour himself states at the end of the first part of the poem, “My wrath is wreak’d, the deed is done, / And now I go—but go alone,” (lines 687-88). There is nothing left for him—Hassan and Leila are both gone—and therefore he is the last character, but he has also finished his revenge, and therefore, there is nothing left for him to do but wait to die.

Meyer Howard Abrams compared this deathbed scene to that of Manfred, and found that the crucial difference between the two was that the driving need behind the deathbed confession of the Giaour’s vendetta is not because of “guilt from sinning,” but rather a way to shift blame off himself (Abrams 276). Abrams then goes on to compare the Giaour with Byron, because both “chose their own pain,” (Abrams 280). In this scenario, the Giaour does indeed make his own fate, true to the Byronic hero prototype. He refuses to yield to God for forgiveness, or to give up his isolation and choose both a religion and a community in which to belong. Thus, though he is a sympathetic character in regards to his existence within his own mind after killing Hassan, readers cannot connect their emotions to a person who has essentially chosen this path and refuses to leave it. Thus, the Giaour chooses that which is unnatural—to linger, neither living nor dead, inside his own head.

However, this is not the only way the Giaour lingers, nor is it the only unnatural state he abides in. As Hassan lies dying, he curses the Giaour to

become a vampire—the undead. According to the terms of the curse, the Giaour will eventually rot in Hell. “But first, on earth as vampire sent, / Thy corse shall from its tomb be rent: / Then ghastly haunt thy native place, / And suck the blood of all thy race; / There from thy daughter, sister, wife, / At midnight drain the stream of life; / Yet loathe the banquet which perforce / Must feed thy living corse,” (lines 755-762). The Giaour cannot rest even in the final death of his body—he will rise from his tomb and live off of those around him. Such a creature must suck the life from others to continue his existence, and thus the vampire can cause death, but never experience it. This is also a characteristic of the Byronic hero, who seeks oblivion of self or a final death to escape his over-experienced life. According to Anne Williams, the Byronic hero and vampire have a common tread with love. “The object of their passion is always the unattainable woman they are fated to destroy,” (Williams 5). In fact, Williams refers to the vampire as the Byronic hero’s “dark double: like him, the vampire is always doomed to kill the thing he loves. If Byronic heroes sometimes transgress that most “natural” of laws, the incest taboo,<sup>11</sup> the vampire merely enacts a more material version of a similarly “unnatural” compulsion: not the consummation of a forbidden love but the consumption of the beloved’s blood,” (Williams 6).

This is precisely the point Byron aims at by invoking the vampire. A vampire violates the natural cycle of life and death, and therefore is unnatural—rather, it exists outside of nature, rather than in it (beyond good and evil, as

Nietzsche suggested). Such a creature is a parasite that takes life without exchanging anything in return, and thus must be destroyed. Byron classifies such a monster as even more “accursed” than the ghouls and afrits, both creatures of nightmares that worried people of the east and west. The afrit is an eastern demon believed to be the spirit of a murdered man seeking to avenge his death, and which rises like smoke from the spilled blood (Guiley 1). The ghoul is also an eastern demon that eats the flesh of humans, and comes out only at night and waits for prey in ruins or graveyards (Guiley 140). Ironically, both demons shrink away from the vampire, as Byron describes it as more evil than they. The vampire is a western invention, and thus is more closely associated with death because of those western ties.

Thus, in *The Giaour*, Byron gives his readers a poem filled with the cycles of life and death found both within and outside of man, often resulting in those found in nature. Byron clearly displays nature as the dominating force that man brutally resists but cannot overcome, resulting in the never-ending cycle of life that guides the world...and bypasses the Giaour. Having cut him off from the release such a circle offers, the Giaour remains in a half-life until the end, a mysterious and restless force that can find neither happiness nor roots. Like the vampire, he exists but does not live.

Perhaps the largest unanswered question in this analysis is that of the correlation between the *vrykolakas*' blood-drinking habits and the lack of



sanguine-consuming characters in the poem. According to the curse, the Giaour must sustain his life by draining the blood from the living, especially his kin (even more specifically, his daughters). Previously, the three main characters were decided to be vampires, forming an unholy trinity, but this lack of blood (both metaphorically and in regards to familial bonds) would seem to suggest that this cannot be. Hassan's death seems to be the only blood connecting the three. It was shed because of Leila, and seals the Giaour's fate. Earlier analysis compared the Giaour to a harbinger of death. In Greek beliefs about death, "The theme of blood is paramount at many of the rituals connected with death...for it is believed that at the moment of death Cháros, or the Angel, sent by God to bring the soul to judgment, with his drawn sword cuts the victim's throat, and drenches with blood not only the dead person but also the house and everyone in it," (du Boulay 91). There can be no doubt that in this poetic context, the Giaour is indeed Cháros, for he cuts Hassan's throat and spills his blood all over Hassan and the rest of the people gathered there (the attendant who comes to Hassan's mother is wearing some of the blood spots). The Greeks call this act of Cháros slitting the dead's throat "slaughter (*spházo*)...it means precisely "to cut the throat of," an association [that leads to] the custom on St. Michael's Day which forbids the killing of any animal, because on that day, the villagers say, 'only one slaughters' (*móno énas spházei*), that is to say, the Angel of Death himself," (du Boulay 91). In fact, Hassan's mother calls the Giaour "Angel of Death" when the Tartar

messenger brings out Hassan's bloodstained crest (line 716). The Giaour/Cháros also is sending Hassan's soul to the afterlife to be judged for his sins.

735 Yet died he by a stranger's hand,  
And stranger in his native land;  
Yet died he as in arms he stood,  
And unavenged, at least in blood.  
But him the maids of Paradise  
740 Impatient to their halls invite,  
And the dark Heaven of Houris' eyes  
On him shall glance for ever bright;  
They come - their kerchiefs green they wave,  
And welcome with a kiss the brave!  
745 Who falls in battle 'gainst a Giaour  
Is worthiest an immortal bower.  
(Byron, "The Giaour," lines 735-746).

This entrance into Paradise is followed immediately by the judgment of the Giaour's soul, which is rejected from heaven.

But thou, false Infidel! shalt writhe  
Beneath avenging Monkir's scythe;  
And from its torment 'scape alone  
750 To wander round lost Eblis' throne;  
And fire unquenched, unquenchable,  
Around, within, thy heart shall dwell;  
Nor ear can hear nor tongue can tell  
The tortures of that inward hell!  
(Byron, "The Giaour," lines 747-754).

It is after these lines that the vampire curse is uttered. Hassan first damns the Giaour to eternal inner torment before condemning him to eternal torment of others as well as himself.

Juliette du Boulay continues the analysis of Greek death rituals and beliefs about how to treat the body as so to prevent it from becoming *vrykolakas* by saying “It seems, then, that while the crucial action of the dying person is to deliver up his soul, the action which brings this about is the sudden and violent spilling of his blood,” (du Boulay 92). As soon as the death occurs, all of the women of the house, relatives, and neighbors wash the body with soap and wine, then wash themselves and change their clothes (these clothes are not allowed into the house for three or five days). These clothes must be washed according to specific customs, and this tradition is strictly kept, for the idea behind it is “It seems as if there is blood everywhere,” (du Boulay 92). Du Boulay goes so far to call this idea of blood all over everything “the pollution of death,” which lingers for some time and can only be cleansed by the preparations of the dead for burial—care must be taken so that the corpse does not come back as a *vrykolakas*, and such preparations follow Lawson’s list. “The achievement of this state of holiness (the cleansed body), however, is until burial essentially unstable, and must be kept in equilibrium by continual care against a sudden catastrophic revival of the original blood pollution, and the transformation of the soul into a vampire,” (du Boulay 92).

du Boulay also states it is the express belief of Greek villagers that the *vrykolakas* will come back to torment its kin and neighbors (“Thy corse shall from its tomb be rent: / Then ghastly haunt thy native place”), rather than wander

the countryside and attack strangers (lines 756-757). It is this link to kinship established in her work and by Oinas that make the vampire curse so horrifying. Hassan curses the Giaour to drain the “stream of life” from “thy daughter, sister, wife,” and to hate himself for it, but remain unable to stop himself (lines 759-760). “But one that for thy crime must fall, / The youngest, most beloved of all, / Shall bless thee with a father’s name / [...] Thy victims ere they yet expire / Shall know the demon for their sire,” (lines 764-769). However, how can the Giaour, who has no known kin save for one nameless friend mentioned on his deathbed, drain the life from his daughter, sister, or wife? In this sense, Byron is verbalizing the absolute worst crime any man can be driven to commit, thereby showing how completely damned the Giaour is. Hassan has cursed him to destroy women he loves, those who would look to him for protection—a betrayal of the worst sort. There is no fate worse than being driven to destroy those you love most, especially regarding a father’s bond with his daughter—a fate worse than death.

The invocation of “midnight” in the curse is no accident, either. The *vrykolakas*’ hours of operation are, generally, between midnight and noon every day except Saturday, when he is forced to remain in his grave. Midnight is also called “the witching hour,” because of its association with dark magic and the meetings of witches in their sabaats. This specific mention of time goes back to Mark Lussier’s analysis of how the characters of the poem live through time. The Giaour, according to Lussier, is locked in an unnatural time, or a time-less

existence. “It was Eternity to Thought! / For infinite as boundless space,” (lines 272-273). He is now beyond time’s reach, for he is undead, unable to be, once again, a natural part of mankind’s cyclic existence, nor does the passing of hours, years, and minutes matter to him any longer. This timeless existence the Giaour suffers comes about because of his vamping by his lady-love, Leila.

Though she is never introduced to the reader—nor does she have any part at all in the poem—it is Leila who drives the action and is the central part of the entire tale. She is described idealistically by the dying Giaour thusly:

Her eye's dark charm 'twere vain to tell,  
But gaze on that of the gazelle,  
475 It will assist thy fancy well;  
As large, as languishingly dark,  
But soul beamed forth in every spark  
That darted from beneath the lid,  
Bright as the jewel of Giamschild.  
480 Yea, Soul, and should our prophet say  
That form was nought but breathing clay,  
By Allah! I would answer nay;  
Though on Al-Sirat's arch I stood,  
Which totters o'er the fiery flood,  
485 With Paradise within my view,  
And all his Houris beckoning through.  
Oh! Who young Leila's glance could read  
And keep that portion of his creed,  
Which saith that woman is but dust,  
490 A soulless toy for tyrant's lust?  
On her might Muftis might gaze, and own  
That through her eye the Immortal shone;  
On her fair cheek's unfading hue  
The young pomegranate's blossoms strew  
495 Their bloom in blushes ever new;  
Her hair in hyacinthine flow,  
When left to roll its folds below,

As midst her handmaids in the hall  
 She stood superior to them all,  
 500 Hath swept the marble where her feet  
 Gleamed whiter than the mountain sleet  
 Ere from the cloud that gave it birth  
 It fell, and caught one stain of earth.  
 The cygnet nobly walks the water;  
 505 So moved on earth Circassia's daughter,  
 The loveliest bird of Franguestan!  
 As rears her crest the ruffled swan,  
 And spurns the wave with wings of pride,  
 When pass the steps of stranger man  
 510 Along the banks that bound her tide;  
 Thus rose fair Leila's whiter neck:-  
 Thus armed with beauty would she check  
 Intrusion's glance, till folly's gaze  
 Shrunk from the charms it meant to praise:  
 515 Thus high and graceful as her gait;  
 Her heart as tender to her mate;  
 Her mate - stern Hassan, who was he?  
 Alas! That name was not for thee!

(Byron, "The Giaour," lines 474-518).

The Giaour here tells the priest and the reader that Leila had a compelling gaze, much reminiscent of Keats' *La Belle Dam Sans Merci*, whose "wild eyes" draw in the helpless knight. This gaze—as previously mentioned—causes the Giaour to fall under her spell, as it were. Her gaze leads the Giaour to state that she has a soul, despite the belief that women are nothing but "breathing clay." The invocation of the soul here definitely ties back to the butterfly image—she is just as beautiful, just as delicate, and just as fleeting a presence as that butterfly.

The Giaour also compares her to other symbolic death images. The pomegranate is, obviously, referenced in the ancient tales about Hades and Persephone, in which the God of the Underworld tricked his bride into eating the

seeds so that she was forced to spend part of the year with him. And the extended metaphor of the birds (cygnet, swan, ect.) all both reference water, as well as death. According to Greek tradition, the dead can reappear as birds. However, the fact that these are *water* birds is even more significant, considering Leila's method of death. The repeated imagery of water, waves, tides, and the sea pervades the entire poem. Water is the main substance necessary to sustain life, and its fluid nature makes it the perfect metaphor for strong love (that which does not stand rigid, but is flexible and endless). In this case, however, the water is sea water, or, salt water. While the water of the ocean is plentiful, it is deadly—to drink of it means death. Therefore, the association of Leila with salt water means that her love is toxic, and now that the Giaour has drunk of it, he will wither away and die. In this way, the salt water is, by way of transubstantiation, transformed into blood, much as it is in Communion ceremonies. However, this is an unholy communion, and instead of granting the consumer eternal life, it grants a hellish life-in-death. Therefore, both the Giaour vamps himself, and also the projection of Leila his memory is unable to release and whose image haunts him, as Leila consumes the salt water because of her love for the Giaour, and the Giaour consumes the blood of Hassan (and continues to metaphorically consume the sea water in which Leila rests) as a result of his love for Leila, and her death because of his love.

The link between blood, guilt, and visualization also proves the mutual vamping of the characters. The Giaour, in his guilt, becomes the embodiment of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. After the murder of Duncan, Macbeth confesses to his wife, "O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!" (*Macbeth*, III:II line 36). The Giaour invokes the same image as he laments,

The mind that broods o'er guilty woes,  
Is like the scorpion girt by fire;  
In circle narrowing as it glows,  
425 The flames around their captive close,  
Till inly searched by thousand throes,  
And maddening in her ire,  
One sad and sole relief she knows,  
The sting she nourished for her foes,  
430 Whose venom never yet was vain,  
Gives but one pang, and cures all pain,  
So do the dark in soul expire,  
Or live like scorpion girt by fire;  
435 So writhes the mind remorse hath riven,  
Unfit for earth, undoomed for heaven,  
Darkness above, despair beneath,  
Around it flame, within it death!<sup>12</sup>

(Byron, "The Giaour, lines 422-438)

The poison of guilt—not over killing Hassan, but over Leila's death because of her love for him, the Giaour—stings at the mind until death would be a welcome escape. Then the Giaour tells the priest that there's "blood upon that dinted sword, / A stain its steel can never lose: / T'was shed for her, who died for me," (lines 1032-1034). This determination that there absolutely is a blood stain upon that sword that will never come out invokes Lady Macbeth's "Out, damned spot!"



in which the hands that shed blood will never come clean. And lastly, like Macbeth, the Giaour visualizes the one who died.

'Tell me no more of fancy's gleam,  
No, father, no, 'twas not a dream;  
Alas! the dreamer first must sleep.  
1260 I only watched, and wished to weep;  
But could not, for my burning brow  
Throbb'd to the very brain as now:  
I wished but for a single tear,  
As something welcome, new, and dear-;  
1265 I wished it then, I wish it still;  
Despair is stronger than my will.  
Waste not thine orison, despair  
    Is mightier than thy pious prayer:  
I would not if I might, be blest;  
1270 I want no paradise, but rest.  
'Twas then, I tell thee, father! then  
I saw her; yes, she lived again;  
And shining in her white symar,  
As through yon pale grey cloud the star  
1275 Which now I gaze on, as on her,  
Who looked and looks far lovelier;  
Dimly I view its trembling spark;  
Tomorrow's night shall be more dark;  
And I, before its rays appear,  
1280 That lifeless thing the living fear.  
    I wander, father! for my soul  
Is fleeting towards the final goal.  
I saw her, friar! and I rose  
Forgetful of our former woes;  
1285 And rushing from my couch, I dart,  
And clasp her to my desperate heart;  
I clasp - what is it that I clasp?  
No breathing form within my grasp,  
No heart that beats reply to mine,  
1290 Yet, Leila! yet the form is thine!  
And art thou, dearest, changed so much,  
As meet my eye, yet mock my touch?  
Ah! were thy beauties e'er so cold,  
I care not; so my arms enfold

1295 The all they ever wished to hold.  
 Alas! around a shadow prest,  
 They shrink upon my lonely breast;  
 Yet still 'tis there! In silence stands,  
     And beckons with beseeching hands!  
 1300 With braided hair, and bright black eye -  
 I knew 'twas false - she could not die!  
 But he is dead! within the dell  
 I saw him buried where he fell;  
 He comes not, for he cannot break  
 1305 From earth; why then art thou awake?  
 They told me wild waves rolled above  
 The face I view, the form I love;  
 They told me - 'twas a hideous tale!  
 I'd tell it, but my tongue would fail:  
 1310 If true, and from thine ocean-cave  
 Thou com'st to claim a calmer grave;  
 Oh! pass thy dewy fingers o'er  
 This brow that then will burn no more;  
 Or place them on my hopeless heart:  
 1315 But, shape or shade! whate'er thou art,  
 In mercy ne'er again depart!  
 Or farther with thee bear my soul  
 Than winds can waft or waters roll!  
                     (Byron, "The Giaour," lines 1257-1318).

This fever-image of Leila beckons the Giaour to toss himself into the sea and join her. "Much in his visions mutters he / Of maiden whelm'd beneath the sea; / [...] On a cliff he hath been known to stand, / And rave as to some bloody hand / Fresh sever'd from its parent limb, / Invisible to all but him, / Which beckons onward to his grave, / And lures to leap into the wave," (lines 822-832). Much as the Macbeths are haunted by visions of Duncan and Banquo, the Giaour sees both Leila and Hassan at the end, both driving him toward death. The Giaour confesses that "Ah! Had she but an earthly grave, / This breaking heart and throbbing head / Should seek and share her narrow bed," (lines 1124-1126).

Thus, the Leila the Giaour sees in his visions (a figment of his memory of her and his guilt over her death), “vamps” the Giaour by continuing to lure him, like a siren, to his death in the sea. This image of “Leila” as a siren is most appropriate, as in some tales, the sirens are classified as vampires that lure men to their deaths with their beautiful songs, causing them to drown. Leila’s siren song from beyond the grave (her love and her memory, which torment the mind of the broken Giaour) tempts the Giaour to drown himself and join her beneath the waves, but he is doomed to be apart from her, as he is buried in the earth, away from the reach of the waves and her metaphorical song. Ironically, in this case, the Giaour is vamping himself, as Leila carries no vampire characteristics herself. The vision of her the Giaour carries, however, does, because when the Giaour’s forward movement stops, he idealizes her and allows that idealization to materialize as the siren who lures him to what he wishes would be the end of his torment in death, and a sharing of both Leila’s fate and her grave (the ocean).

It is in these last fevered ravings about Leila and her perfect love that the priest attending to the dying Giaour realizes that the lure of death and escape from an existence without Leila is far more desirable to the Giaour than life, and that the Giaour is all but willing himself to die to join his beloved. The Giaour has now, in the words of the Rom or Gypsies, become *muladi*—one haunted by a dead person, because the dead person’s spirit is trapped between worlds, as the living loved one’s grief is too strong to allow closure. Adelaide

Ann Procter wrote in *Life and Death* “See how time makes all grief decay,” (Mead 444). In this case, grief has made all time decay (for the Giaour), and this decay has led only to death. This state allows for Leila to reach him in his fevered visions and tempt him to follow her. Having been sentenced by Hassan to a death-in-life, existing in the vacuum of his own memory, the Giaour is already mentally gone from this world, and all that is left is for his body to catch up. It is the inability for the Giaour to do so that creates his tortures, and his fragmentation.

This shape-shifting, as it were, of the characters into various vampire types, including the *vrykolakas* and siren, is a small but significant slice of the larger pan-global shape-shifting of the vampire in literature, well into the twentieth century. Nina Auerbach states that it was Byron's "Fragment of a Novel" that set such a flurry in motion. In this unfinished story, the vampire Darvell's menace lies in the offered "intimacy, or friendship," (Auerbach 14). Nina Auerbach continues in this vein by stating:

Intimacy and friendship are the lures of Romantic vampirism. In Polidori's amplification of Byron's fragment, the vampire, now more euphoniously named Lord Ruthven, seals his bond with his traveling companion by his repeated admonition, "Remember your oath." In the first half of the nineteenth century, these words were as inevitable a vampire refrain as Dracula's "the children of the night. What music they make!" became in the twentieth. Dracula, however, proclaims his vampirism by pledging allegiance to wolves, while Ruthven's is his human bond. This oath—to preserve Ruthven's honor by concealing his predatory life and apparent death—has absolute binding power in Polidori's *The Vampyre* and its many offshoots. The oath is frightening because it involves not raw power, but honor and reciprocity (Auerbach 14).

Once again, the oath—or spoken word—has, as in Greek culture, taken on a transcendental meaning in which words have power. It is a binding contract in which honor and salvation become intermixed, and in the case of the vampire, the fate of their souls lie with the honoring of an oath. To perjure oneself or curse another is to bring about the damnation inherent in the words, and cause the dead to become *vrykolakas*. Byron—and later, Polidori—understand the power of words exchanged between men of honor, and use the oath as a literary motif to create an innate sort of humanity within the vampire—it is not a creature apart from humans, as Dracula is, but rather one who can create the friendship and intimacy found with Darvell and Ruthven with their human companions. It is this loss of human connection in the twentieth century that characterizes the monster.

Looking back at the historic and folkloric vampire examined here, the biggest threat lies in the fact that such creatures come back to those they had the closest ties to in life—family and friends. Auerbach comments, “In Slavic folklore, the main repository of vampires before the Romantics began to write about them, vampires never ventured beyond their birthplace,” (Auerbach 16). There was no need, because the birthplace and its people were home—not just a house, but a sense of connection and belonging so lacking in the Giaour, who belongs nowhere. That the folkloric vampire returns to its home, reinforces the idea of the bond. This bond, unbreakable by death (or un-death) holds such power because, as Auerbach said, it is not magic, but honor that forges such ties between

creature and human. Though such unbreakable ties are, in and of themselves, frightening given that such humans unlucky enough to be “caught” as it were by vampires and held just as transfixed as the Wedding Guest in Coleridge’s *Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner*, and Christabel from the poem with the same name, cannot find it within themselves to break away. Byron greatly admired Coleridge, and might very well have found inspiration for the character of the Giaour in the *Mariner*. Like the Ancient Mariner, the Giaour breaks away from the mold of the previous vampire types because he is unable to form human connections—the only human connection he makes, besides the unnamed friend from the past, is Leila, and her loss destroys him. This isolated status within the poem’s structure—making him a literal foreigner to the other characters and the reader—connects him more closely with his future relative, Dracula.

As this analysis has hopefully proved, the vampire’s metamorphosis has been emerging into the creature of contemporary literature long before it appeared in poetry during the Romantic era. This movement from historical to literary, then from literary to contemporary is summed up in Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* during the Victorian period. Unlike the Romantic vampires, Dracula is not a part of humanity, but a mere observer. He is not a friend, but a master (as demonstrated by the fact that he claims Renfield “belongs” to him). He can cast no reflection in the mirror, which, to Auerbach, creates the timelessness for which the story is famous.

In his blankness, his impersonality, his emphasis on sweeping new orders rather than insinuating intimacy, Dracula is the twentieth century he still haunts. Not until the twentieth century was he reproduced, fetishized, bequeathed, and obsessed over, though many of his descendants deny his lovelessness—and perhaps their own as well. Dracula's disjunction from earlier, friendlier vampires makes him less a specter of an undead past than a harbinger of a world to come, a world that is our own (Auerbach 63).

This disconnection from humanity is further emphasized by his kinship with animals, especially wolves. This de-humanizing and animalization of the vampire distances the reader from the horror of the vampire as personalized by the Romantics and in folklore. Instead of being one of us morphed into a monster, now the monster is not one of us, but a foreigner, a Giaour, if you will, to humanity and is a distant, faceless bogeyman with the cape, medals, and impeccable manners of Dracula. This animalistic vampire personified in Dracula made way, in turn, for German Expressionism and for films such as *Nosferatu*, in which there is nothing left to recognize of the vampire besides the outward evil implied by the elongated ears, fingers, and fangs that distance the reader or viewer from a human connection or sympathy with the creature. This is no friend, but an object created to hate and be hated by all humanity as an apathetic consumer of human life through blood.



Therefore, the movement of the vampire through time and literature, starting from the “Fragment” and moving to Polidori, Bram Stoker, and later the German Expressionists creates more and more distance between man and monster, until it is something we can no longer recognize as a former self, metaphorically speaking. Much in the same way, the reader cannot connect to the Giaour, who is unable to make himself vulnerable enough to human emotion beyond that of Leila, for empathy, or even sympathy, to emerge and make him memorable. Much like the Ancient Mariner, he is an object of fear for achieving a state beyond life, but also an object of revulsion for refusing to either be a friend worthy of intimacy, or remain locked in his metaphorical castle and avoid contact with humans, as we have come to expect of our vampires. If they must exist, then they should exist at a safe distance. This safety is a demand of the modern vampire consumer, that the vampire be exciting, but unable to touch the consumer with un-muted danger so inherent in the modern bloodsucker’s distant ancestors.

These said ancestors, who sparked the pan-global shape-shifting of the vampire, also sparked the imagination and poetry of the Romantic poets. Had Lord Byron never taken it upon himself to journey to the Continent, this tale from the coffee-house would never have brought about the “Fragment of a Novel” and, of course, *The Giaour*. And so the cyclic image of the vampire—both within the natural setting and the historical/literary one—comes to its conclusion back at *The Giaour*, where the analysis first started. Within these pages, it is my most fervent

hope that connections between the vampires and the folklore of the Greeks, and the poem have been established, and that the vampiric presences within its structure have been explicated in such a way that a new understanding of how the vampire influenced the work of Lord Byron has been attained. As my conclusion demonstrates, vampires in all their forms are a timeless entity that lingers in the minds and pens of society.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Katrina Wilson traces the translations of vampire activity in Southeastern Europe into Western European languages (French, German, English) to the Serbian vampire epidemic of 1725. Barber continues the explanation by pinpointing the Peace of Passarowitz in 1718 (in which parts of Walachia and Serbia were turned over to Austria) as the beginnings of one aspect of the hysteria. According to Barber, the occupying forces noticed the peculiar local custom to dig up some bodies and “kill” them. “Literate outsiders began to attend such exhumations. The vampire craze, in other words, was an early ‘media event,’ in which educated Europeans became aware of practices that were by no means of recent origin, but had simply been provided, for the first time, with effective public-relations representatives.” Barber then states that the account of Peter Plogojowitz’s vampirism in 1725 set off the so-called vampire craze, sparked the flurry of corpse mutilations and vampire tales such as “The Giaour.”

<sup>2</sup> Felix Oinas writes “In Yugoslavia, the vampire has merged with the werewolf (usually called *vukodlak*, and only occasionally *vampir*). The term *vukodlak* means “wolf’s hair” and originally denoted “werewolf”—a man turned into a wolf. There are only traces of the *vukodlak*’s werewolfism (lycanthropy) in Yugoslavia. [...] Most often...the *vukodlak* appears as a vampire. As such, it comes out of the grave at night and visits people at home or in the neighborhood. He either drinks their blood or has amorous relations with his former wife, or his former girlfriends or young widows,” (Oinas 51).

<sup>3</sup> Also confirmed by Paul Barber

<sup>4</sup> The foreword reads, “The tale which these disjointed fragments present, is founded upon circumstances now less common in the East than formerly; either because the ladies are more circumspect than in the ‘olden time’, or because the Christians have better fortune, or less enterprise. The story, when entire, contained the adventures of a female slave, who was thrown, in the Mussulman manner, into the sea for infidelity, and avenged by a young Venetian, her lover, at the time the Seven Islands were possessed by the Republic of Venice, and soon after the Arnauts were beaten back from the Morea, which they had ravaged for some time subsequent to the Russian invasion. The desertion of the Mainotes on being refused the plunder of Misitra, led to the abandonment of that enterprise, and to the desolation of the Morea, during which the cruelty exercised on all sides was unparalleled even in the annals of the faithful.”

<sup>5</sup> Felix Oinas mentions how the eyes of the deceased must be closed at the time of death because “there is a belief that the open eyes of a corpse can draw someone into the grave,” (Oinas 53). Therefore, it is ironic that after his sudden death, Hassan lies with “His back to the earth, his face to heaven, / [...] his unclosed eye

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/ Yet lowering on his enemy. After all, it is Hassan's death that sends the Giaour into the tomb of his mind.

<sup>6</sup> I emphasize the "human" here because in a discussion of racial differences (Venetian Giaour vs. Ottoman population), I am playing on different meanings of the word "race." In the first half of the sentence, I'm using race in regards to the appearance of the Giaour versus the Ottoman population. However, I then use the word "race" to designate humanity, regardless of racial designation. To make the distinction clear between "race" and "race" and therefore add depth of my analysis, I used the word "human" as a key to the reader.

<sup>7</sup> Veselin Čajkanović also cognately links the words soul (*düsa*) and breath (*duvati*) together etymologically (Cajkanovic 79).

<sup>8</sup> The zone of contact between Europe and the Ottoman Empire consisted of the very countries where the vampire was most prominent.

<sup>9</sup> The contrast of East and West is further enhanced when one considers that the East, according to Orientalism, represents decadence, while the West represents the Enlightenment.

<sup>10</sup> All of the animals mentioned in the poem—the wolf, the owl, the bat, and butterfly—are animals associated with the vampire, most of which the vampire was believed to be able to transform into.

<sup>11</sup> In the case of the poet, Byron did indeed love the one woman he could never have. He fell in love, and engaged in an affair, with his half-sister, Augusta Leigh. When news of this incestuous relationship (and the birth of his daughter from this union) became public knowledge, Byron became a scorned and shunned persona in England. It was this affair and its disastrous results that drove Byron into voluntary exile from England and eventually led him to Greece, where he eventually died. Therefore, it is logical to state that while Byron did not drink of Augusta's blood, he DID crave his blood—he craved his half-sister, who shared blood with him. Therefore, much in the way of the Giaour, Byron was unable to fulfill his desire for Augusta and it drove him into deep depression he never recovered from.

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