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ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEET

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<b>Declaration</b>	<p><i>I know that plagiarizing other writers' words and ideas is wrong and is a serious academic offence. I declare that this essay is my own work, with the exception of those quotes and paraphrases which I have clearly indicated in the text.</i></p> <p><b>Signature:</b> <u>ZondiFN.</u></p>

This essay aims to compare and contrast Dracula with a focus on the East vs. West cultural divide. Let start with two characters from the novel the Englishman Jonathan Harker and the Transylvanian Count Dracula. The story opens with a young lawyer, Jonathan Harker, travelling to Transylvania to help the mysterious Count Dracula purchase a home in London, Count Dracula is not only a bloodthirsty killer, but an existential threat to modernity and progress.

Let's start with the character of Jonathan Harker. In the novel, Harker represents the ideals of rationality, punctuality, and science. He's a lawyer, so he's a man of reason and facts. He also values his time and is frustrated by the late coming of Eastern Europeans, He complains on his trip to Transylvania after he had rushed to get to the station only to find that he had to wait for an hour. This shows that he sees time as something to be controlled and managed, whereas Dracula and other Eastern characters are more accepting of the flow of time.

So, Harker's way of thinking is very much a product of Western culture. It's also worth noting that Harker's views on gender are very traditional. He sees women as delicate creatures who need to be protected, which is reflected in his relationship with Mina. On the other hand, Dracula represents a different kind of masculinity, one that's more sensual and dangerous.

It's also important to look at the setting of the novel, Transylvania, and how it's portrayed. Stoker portrays Transylvania as a wild and untamed place, full of superstition and mystery. This is shown as Harker describes his journey "As we drove, the same tall mountains, with a great, dark forest in the valleys below, shut us in. The road was rugged, but still we seemed to fly over it in the light of the bright moon." This description of the landscape as "rugged" and "dark" create a sense of mystery and danger.

In contrast, England is seen as civilized and modern. This difference highlights the tension between the East and West, with the East representing the irrational and the West representing the rational. "Here I am in London, where I have a snug room all to myself in a quiet part of the city, and can write by my window, which overlooks a cheerful yard full of chirping little birds, and a plot of green grass." This is Harker's reflection on his comfortable, ordered existence in London, in contrast to the wild, foreboding landscape of Transylvania.

Dracula's supernatural powers also highlight the fear of the unknown. The Count represents the hidden or repressed aspects of human nature, and he challenges the rational and scientific worldview of the West. While Christianity is seen as a source of protection against the forces of darkness, and it's associated with rationality and science. The crucifix, for example, is a powerful symbol that can ward off evil. In contrast, Dracula represents the pagan or pre-Christian past, which is seen as a source of danger and superstition.

The character of Mina represents the idealized "angel of the house" in her selflessness and loyalty to her husband, Jonathan. However, she also embodies the qualities of the "New Woman" in her intelligence and independence. Mina's character highlights the tension between these two versions of womanhood and suggests that it is possible to be both traditional and modern at the same time.

The novel explores the different understandings of family and community. 

Dracula, the characters of Lucy and Mina represent the "angel of the house," a Victorian ideal of femininity that is self-sacrificing and nurturing. This is contrasted with the idea of the "New Woman," represented by the character of Lucy's friend, Mina's cousin, and Dracula's other victim, Lucy. The "New Woman" is a woman who is more assertive and independent and is seen as a threat to traditional gender roles and power dynamics. As in the Victorian society, women were expected to be passive and submissive. It is worth noticing that Lucy's transformation into a vampire amplifies her sexual nature. After her transformation Lucy is described as having a "reckless grace" and a "voluptuous horror" which suggest a dangerous allure that is at odds with her previous behavior. This transition frees her from the constraints of Victorian society but also dooms her to eternal damnation.

East is not entirely portrayed negative. The character of Dracula, for example, is also portrayed as seductive and attractive. This suggests that the East has a dangerous allure, which can draw people in and make them lose their way. Even Harker, the embodiment of Western rationality, is not immune to Dracula's charms.

This shows how Stoker is exploring the tension between the rational and the irrational, the East, and the West, and the old and the new. The novel seems to suggest that it's not possible to separate these different forces. In fact, they're often intertwined and dependent on each other. Consider the character of Van Helsing, who represents the

"civilized" European, in contrast to Dracula's "uncivilized" Easterners. The character Van Helsing is motivated by rationality and scientific knowledge, while Dracula is driven by instinct and emotion.

England's position as a global colonial power is symbolized by its dominance over Transylvania which is portrayed as a primitive and vulnerable country ripe for exploitation. The contrast between the scientific, rational England and superstitions, folkloric Transylvania reflects the tension between religion and science in Victorian society, with Dracula embodying both super natural and the science.

