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**VAMPI(Y)RES IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY:
OLD AND NEW VERSIONS IN THE NOVEL *MARKED*, BY P. C.
CAST AND KRISTIN CAST**

TRABALHO DE CONCLUSÃO DE CURSO

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por

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Este Trabalho de Conclusão de Curso foi apresentado em 21 de junho de 2017 como requisito parcial para a obtenção do título de Licenciado em Letras Português-Inglês. A candidata foi arguida pela Banca Examinadora composta pelos professores abaixo assinados. Após deliberação, a Banca Examinadora considerou o trabalho aprovado.

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- O Termo de Aprovação assinado encontra-se na Coordenação do Curso -

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RESUMO

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Este trabalho discute antigas e novas versões dos vampi(y)ros no romance *Marcada*, escrito por P. C. Cast e Kristin Cast, em 2007. O objetivo é verificar como as autoras mantiveram ou adaptaram características vampí(y)ricas no romance *Marcada*, especificamente, traçando rápidos paralelos com os outros livros da saga, que possam somar à discussão, seja do mito ou da literatura, e por vezes comparando-a com outras obras literárias, trazendo essa criatura ao século XXI. A discussão segue um quadro teórico formado principalmente a partir de Todorov (2014), Furtado (*apud* CAMARANI, 2014) e Ceserani (2006). Esse texto analisa o trabalho literário à luz da teoria da literatura fantástica, fornecendo e comentando evidências textuais do romance para demonstrar as argumentações, sempre que necessário. A análise realizada indica que P. C. Cast e Kristin Cast mantiveram algumas das características dos vampi(y)ros, como cabelo e unha grandes, por vezes adaptando-as, como no caso do sangue, bem como renovaram outras características, como a sociedade desses seres e sua forma de transformação. Elas ainda criaram novas características, como no caso da religião. Essas mudanças adequam essa criatura a um mundo contemporâneo e permitem que obras consideradas best-sellers sejam analisadas à luz da academia, juntamente com os clássicos.

Palavras-chave: Marcada. Cast. Vampiros. Literatura Fantástica. Novas versões.

ABSTRACT

SILVA, Raquel Braz de Azevedo da. **VAMPI(Y)RES IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY: OLD AND NEW VERSIONS IN THE NOVEL MARKED, BY P. C. CAST AND KRISTIN CAST**. 2017. 54. Trabalho de Conclusão de Curso Licenciatura em Letras Português/Inglês - Federal Technology University - Paraná. Curitiba, 2017.

This work discusses old and new versions of the vampi(y)res in the novel *Marked*, written by P. C. Cast and Kristin Cast, in 2007. The objective is to verify how the authors maintained or adapted vampi(y)ric characteristics in the novel *Marked*, specifically, establishing brief dialogue with the other books of the saga that can add to the discussion, be it of general myth or literature, and sometimes comparing it with other literary works, bringing this creature to the 21st century. The discussion follows a theoretical framework informed mainly by Todorov (2014), Furtado (*apud* CAMARANI, 2014) and Ceserani (2006). This text analyzes the literary work in light of fantastic literature theory, providing and commenting on textual evidence of the novel to demonstrate its claims whenever necessary. The analysis indicated that P. C. Cast and Kristin Cast retained some of the characteristics of the vampi(y)res, such as large hair and nails, sometimes adapting them, as in the case of blood, as well as renewed other characteristics, such as the society of these beings and their form of transformation. The authors also created new features, as in the case of religion. These changes suit this creature to a contemporary world and allow works that are considered bestsellers to be analyzed in the light of the academy, along with the classics.

Keywords: Marked. Cast. Vampires. Fantastic Literature. New versions.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The vampires' myth can be found in history since the ancient days, going back to the old Egypt, but the first record of any of those myths in literature was *The vampyre*, written by John Polidori, in 1819. It was the beginning of the vampires' adaptations. The most famous one is probably *Dracula*, from Bram Stoker (1897). Several changes have been made in the vampires' mythology since then in order to adapt it to the theater, cinema and new public or interests that emerge. In the late 20th and early 21st century it could not be different. In literature, theater and cinema lots of variations can be seen (and indeed have been), such as *Interview with the Vampire* (book and movie), the series *Twilight* (books and movies), *Blade*, *The Underworld* and the new adaptation in cinema of *Dracula* (2014). These series of new versions indicate the permanent curiosity and interest regarding vampi(y)res in popular culture.

Recent changes show that the myth regarding the vampire that has prevailed until now can, in reality, be reshaped or recreated in different manners – and this fact is, precisely, the focus of my interest in this study. With a wide range of so many adaptations, this research will take the approach of the Vampi(y)res in the 21st century by analyzing *Marked*, a novel from the series *House of Night*, by P. C. Cast and Kristin Cast. Specifically, the recreation and modernization in vampi(y)re customs is observed, and how they differ from previous literature. In other words, at the center of this investigation lie new possibilities for these old creatures, in a contemporary literary work. Whenever necessary, cross-references may be made to aspects of the other books of the series, for the purpose of better elaborating and understanding specific claims. Yet, the sole object of the analysis is, as stated, the novel *Marked*.

This work will not only respond to the still prevailing interest in vampi(y)res. It will also increase the body of research on contemporary English literature; as well as provide an academic investigation on a bestseller, demonstrating that bestsellers can be considered a literature worth reading, not only by its commercial success, but especially by its content and thematic possibilities. The present research will, therefore, offer an analysis of a type of literature that is highly consumed but perhaps not sufficiently studied, academically speaking. Besides, the study should also shed light on certain topics, through literature, which include society, gender, and religion, and which are themselves relevant issues to be continually addressed and problematized.

The vampires in literature have some differences of those in the myths. For that reason, the differentiation of these two supernatural entities will be made in the spelling.

As the authors use *vampyre* in their novels, this will be the spelling for the literature entity, whereas for the mythological entity will be used *vampire*.

The objective of this work is to analyze the novel *Marked* in the light of Fantastic Literature and to observe how the authors changed/adapted versions of the vampi(y)res in the novel *Marked*

The present investigation is organized in three main chapters, in addition to this brief introductory one. The following chapter first present the definitions of the fantastic literature, with a review of the ideas put forth by the leading theoreticians in the field. Next, in the same chapter, conceptions of myth and legend and their differences will be approached, in an attempt to define these terms and provide a more solid foundation for the analysis conducted. Following, a differentiation of the mythological vampire and the literary vampire is established, and a brief revision of the main vampi(y)re literatures from the late 19th century until contemporary times is then presented.

In the sequence, chapter 3 focus on the analysis of the novel *Marked*. Initially there is an overview of the saga *House of Night*, followed by a brief summary of the first work of the series, *Marked*. Then, we conduct an analysis of why the novel can be considered fantastic literature, by discussing what characteristics of this literary genre it presents.

Next, the study progresses to discuss how the novel approaches and maintains the old vampi(y)re characteristics, with or without modifications, as well as what are the new vampi(y)re characteristics that the authors created and their relation with the previously published works. Three characteristics will be addressed more specifically, due to their importance in this type of literature: blood, society and religion, respectively. Finally, features that are modified or adapted, but with less content in this novel, will be explored, as well. The study is then concluded with chapter four, offering final considerations about the research.

2. OPENING THE CRYPT: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND PREVIOUS VERSIONS OF VAMPI(Y)RES

This chapter develops the theoretical foundations for this study, starting with the concepts, understandings, and characteristics of the fantastic literature, of which the novel being analyzed can be seen as representative. Then, there comes a discussion on the theoretical differences between myth and legend, so as to better understand how the vampyres in the novel *Marked* should be seen. Finally, drawing on the discussion between myth and legend, we look more thoroughly at the literary (legend-related) vampyre, offering a variety of examples from previous versions of vampyres to help illustrate the views. These topics are all relevant to shape and guide the subsequent analysis and commentary on the novel under investigation.

2.1 FANTASTIC LITERATURE

When we come across an event that does not belong to the world we know and our science cannot explain, we know that we have entered in the world of the supernatural. The supernatural, in a nutshell, can be defined as something beyond what is considered natural or physically possible, that cannot be explained by the laws of science. In literature, when we meet the supernatural, we enter the genre¹ of fantastic literature. Attempts to define the fantastic literature were made by Nodier, Castex, Vax, Caillois, among others, before Todorov formulated a more widespread and critically accepted definition.

Camarani (2014), in her studies of Nodier, points one of his attempts to define one of the characteristics of the fantastic: it does not come “as the fruit of disturbed, visionary or hallucinated minds, but comes from the rational, the development of the human mind”² (*ibid* p.14). That is to say, it has to originate from the so-called “real” because it is the “imbalance or disturbance of the recognized laws that determines the fantastic” (*ibid* p.15). It means that the fantastic is created in an attempt to explain what people do not understand in the real world.

Pierre-George Castex (1962), in turn, affirms that the fantastic is an “existence

¹Although many critics do not consider the fantastic literature as a genre, I base myself on the definition of Furtado, as stated by Camarani: "a literary text constitutes a type or class of discourse performed, more or less complete, by a set of texts whose specific characteristics and organizational forms clearly distinguish them from the rest of the literature." (CAMARANI, 2014, p.107). She also claims that Furtado organizes his appointments “in order to make it clear that the fantastic narrative can and should be considered a literary genre.” (2014, p.111)

² All translations were made by the author of this research, unless otherwise noted.

of the order of the supernatural that opposes the order of the real” (1962, *apud* CAMARANI, 2014, p.31), that is, the supernatural will be contrary to the real in the sense that the fantastic is something imaginary. So he says that:

Le fantastique, en effet, ne se confond pas avec l’affabulation conventionnelle des récits mythologiques ou des féeries, qui implique un dépaysement de l’esprit. Il se caractérise au contraire par une intrusion brutale du mystère dans le cadre de la vie réelle.³ (*apud* CAMARANI, 2014, p.31)

In the same direction of Castex, Vax (1972) affirms that:

the fantastic narrative [...] likes to introduce to us, inhabiting the real world where we meet, men like us, suddenly thrown into the presence of the inexplicable. [...] The fantastic feeds on the conflicts of the real and the possible. (1972 *apud* CAMARANI, 2014, p.43)

In our reading of these ideas, we understand that, while mythology and fairy tales cannot be situated in the world as we know it for being impossible, the fantastic actually finds its space in our world, because in these stories people are put in situations that we can relate with our own experiences, and they create in the reader the conflict of thinking if the supernatural effects can be possible or not. In fact, fantastic literature works the dichotomy of supernatural and real as entities that, actually, meet. That is, not all elements of the fantastic narrative are indeed of a supernatural order, but it is precisely this encounter/confrontation that puts in check that which is considered normal, ordinary, through the interference of the non-ordinary. Although dualities can be criticized for risking oversimplifying matters, it is still useful to think of the fantastic in terms of a supernatural space opposed to the so-called 'real' space, in a dynamic relationship in which the two forms actually interact.

Callois (1966) has a similar view of the fantastic as a supernatural presence/interference in real life, although his position is more obscure:

In the fantastic [...] the supernatural appears as a rupture of universal coherence [...] While the fantastic narratives unfold in a climate of terror and end almost inevitably by an ominous event that causes death, disappearance or damnation of the hero; then the regularity of the world resumes its rights. The fantastic terrifies because it breaks and disregards an unchanging, inflexible organization that seems to be the guarantee of reason; so the fantastic assumes the solidity of the real world, to better devastate it. (*apud* CAMARANI, 2014, p.55)

The understandings so far presented may indicate that the human being enjoys, or even needs a way to flee the sometimes harsh reality, and such reality can be one of

³ The fantastic, in fact, is not to be confused with the conventional affabulation of mythological narratives or faeries, which implies a change of spirit. On the contrary, it is characterized by a brutal intrusion of mystery into real life.

the reasons why fantastic literature has always found its space and audience. People with some type of mental disturbances do not have to face the harsh reality, while the one who does not suffer from that, in order not to become crazy or simply find relief from mundane disturbances, may find a solution in creating a fantasy, a supernatural world, or in seeking this type of world in the literature to read. Indeed, after quoting Vax (1965), Camarani reaffirms that there must be a relation between the reader and the text, otherwise the text will not be part of the fantastic:

Thus, for the spectator or reader to take the monster seriously, the monster must seduce him, gradually put his critical spirit to sleep, and immerse him in a magical atmosphere where the expected ghost will manifest itself almost naturally. It is necessary that the sorcery become plausible and that the incredible, the impossible acquire the traces of the evidence. A well-made tale, says Vax (1965), is often a seduction venture. (CAMARANI, 2014, p.45)

In other words, for the fantastic to be recognized as such, it is mandatory that the reader accepts the realm of the fantastic as reasonable, in spite of its impossibility of actually taking place in what is known as the real world. That is to say, the reader is to be seduced and accept the fantastic portrayal and events, and the fantastic itself is, therefore, something to be experienced, felt, and ultimately, welcome.

On this regard, Camarani proceeds:

In thinking fantastic as fiction, Vax points out that the list of combinations of the terms "true" and "imaginary" with the other two terms "believable" and "unlikely" offers little interest. For him it is better to distinguish: a) scientific certainty based on reasoning and experience; b) the conviction based on the will to believe and the refusal to doubt; c) the affective evidence. In other words: knowledge, faith, feeling. According to Vax, the person who cultivates the fantastic is not interested in the conclusions of psychology, nor in the dogmas that define the existence and power of devils, but in the power of enchantment of the contists. The naive narrative that a man of good faith considers true, though unlikely, is more convincing on the plane of knowledge than the most genial narrative, which is both imaginary and internally believable. (2014, p.49)

After an overview of all of his predecessors, Todorov, in 1970, offered a comprehensive and solid examination on the fantastic, which is broadly adopted to the present day. He defines the fantastic literature as “the hesitation experienced by a being who knows only natural laws in the face of a supernatural event” (2014, p.31). Todorov says that “the absolute faith, as the total unbelief take us out of the fantastic; it is the hesitation that gives it life” (2014, p.36). This means that when a person who is familiar with the “rules” of our world faces some event that those rules cannot explain, there are two ways: if the person easily believes or mistrusts, it is not fantastic; but if there is any doubt, a hesitation on what is happening, then this is fantastic. In order for a text to

maintain the fantastic characteristic, it must have the hesitation common to the reader and the character. And to be considered “complete” in terms of fitting this genre, the text must fulfill some requirements:

1. It must compel the reader to consider the world of the characters as a world of living people and hesitate between a natural versus supernatural explanation;
2. The reader must identify him/herself with the main character, feeling the hesitancy the character feels in the story; and
3. He/she must refuse allegorical and poetic interpretations. (TODOROV, 2014, p.38,39)

Vax’s own conceptions of the fantastic narrative and the second requirement in Todorov’s concept lead us to consider the narrator of the story and how this communication develops, that is, the narrator’s discourse. Todorov (2014), Ceserani (2006) and Furtado (*apud* CAMARANI, 2014) seem to agree that, in order for the reader to identify with the main character, it is preferable that the narrative discourse belongs to a first-person narrator, although it does not occur in all narratives. It is important because usually the third-person narrator is omniscient of what happens or is just observing, and if he gives a fact, it makes very difficult for the reader to argue whether it is true or not. The first-person narrator, the main or a secondary character, on the other hand, can have an altered perception of the events taking place, and the facts told by the character cannot be the corresponding “truth”, for he does not know it, or because he is lying, or simple has his own subjectivity and partial access to information and facts (“partial”, by the way, both in the sense of limited, incomplete, as well as in the sense of favoring or not something or someone). “Because it belongs to the narrator, the discourse is closer to the proof of truth; to belong to the character, it must undergo the test” (TODOROV, 2014, p.91,93).

The previous theorists do not point specific characteristics in the fantastic narrative, thoroughly and specifically, but Furtado (*apud* CAMARANI, 2014) has organized his ideas in a brief account that may prove helpful for our purposes, and which seems to dialogue with the contributions offered by Todorov. Following such account, a fantastic narrative should have the following characteristics:

1. The emergence of the supernatural in a daily and familiar environment (CAMARANI, 2014, p.107)

For Furtado, the fantastic literature demands the manifestation of the supernatural, not necessarily an evil one, but it has to have in its narrative any mystic

element for keeping the coherence with the elements of the genre. This logic leads us to the second characteristic.

2. The ambiguity, because “[...] only the fantastic always gives an extreme duplicity to the meta-empirical occurrence” (CAMARANI, 2014, p.110).

This ambiguity refers to the simultaneous presence of the real and the supernatural and the relation between them until the resolution of the intrigue. The meta-empirical occurrence refers to the supernatural phenomena, considered inexplicable and unrelated to the real world only due to errors of perception or ignorance of these principles by whoever witnesses them.

In a different (though not excluding) view of the fantastic, Ceserani presents Rosemary Jackson’s definition, which has a more sociological and psychoanalytic approach: “The fantastic is certainly a form of language of the unconscious, but it is also (...) a form of subversive social opposition, which opposes the dominant ideology in the historical period in which it is manifested.” (CESERANI, 2006, p.62). Her view leads us to analyze not only the text, but the context in which it is written, especially because it is very difficult for the writer to produce a text out of his/her context. It means that, unconsciously, the author can create a narrative that resembles reality by criticizing it, but with supernatural elements. For Jackson, this created world will be empty because it just projects the real world but builds nothing - in our own view, that is not the case; we hold that a fictional portrayal of a certain society or the literary treatment of any given theme, even if under a fantastic and supernatural fashion, can still be very helpful and illuminating for other (more “real”) scenarios.

In conclusion, it seems that, for all the theorists above, the supernatural is one of the recurrent and necessary aspects of the fantastic literature. In this type of literature, named fantastic and marked by the supernatural, a frequent figure is that of the vampi(y)re. But what is, exactly, this mysterious being? How has it been conceived, portrayed, and changed through times? We turn now to this discussion.

2.2 MYTH OR LEGEND?

In order to discuss the entity of the vampi(y)re, it is first necessary to address the difference between a myth and a legend. Although myth and legend can be roughly treated as synonyms, they actually carry different and specific meanings. Although some theorists have approached the myth and tried to give concepts about it, there is not a precise definition for it.

Eliade (1989a, 1989b, 1989c, 1988, 1980 *apud* VIANA, 2011) affirms that myth tells a true story, which is always a narrative of some kind of creation, and has a magic power. Lévi-Strauss (1970 *apud* VIANA, 2011), by comparing myth and language, deduces that “myth may belong to both language and word domain” (p.81). After an analysis, he himself realizes that this is not enough, because of the consequences for linguistics. For Godelier (1985 *apud* VIANA, 2011) myth represents a reality in which men cannot control, especially when it relates to “superior beings”.

Joseph Campbell (1990), in his interview for Bill Moyers, says that myth helps people to find a meaning for life. He claims that the motives of the myth are and will always be the same. He affirms that each society had its own myths, and every time they collide, the myth changes or is adapted. With the modernization and evolution of contemporary society, these myths are changing fast and need to be adapted too, and one of the reasons for that is that what was acceptable decades ago is not necessarily acceptable now. Campbell points that the myth has four functions, which the individual has to find which one is more relevant for his own life: mystical, cosmological, sociological, and pedagogical functions.

As Viana (2011) argues, the conceptions of the scholars such as those presented above are unsatisfactory because most of them do not give specific definitions and their analyses are not complete, and even leave problems unsolved.

When questioned about myth and legend, Luiz Yagjo Gino (*apud* POLO, 2010) makes a distinction between both notions. For Gino, a legend is a narrative that “would be a commonplace story, probably invented” (p.531) and the myth “would be a truth, a serious story, that tells the beginning of the world” (p.531). In this concept, Polo (2010) says that the myth is based “on the ancestry and identity of a population” (p.531). Gino’s view proves more discernible for our own understanding and treatment of the issue, and is complemented by other similar perspectives.

For Martins (*apud* SILVA, 2013), for instance, a legend is

A mixture of reality and fantasy, not just fantasy, as is generally supposed. Every legend has a real nucleus, around which are incorporated additions from the popular imagination. If there were no reality in the legend, it would cease to be as such. (p.3)

This discussion is to show the relevance of the concept to this work and not to discuss the dichotomy between the terms. After these conceptions, the definition of myth adopted in this work is that they are stories that tries to explain facts of the reality and natural phenomenon that people cannot understand and science does not have

enough evidence to explain, and tell some kind of society creation and represents a population identity. And legend, in its turn, can be conceived as a narrative orally transmitted about people and events, mostly mysterious and supernatural ones, that have a mixture of reality and fantasy, that are easily accepted in a society, and can be adapted according to the people, region and time.

2.3 THE LITERARY VAMPYRE

With the definitions above, it can be argued that vampires were initially understood as myths, once the societies in the Dark Ages did not know how a human body decomposes after death (no scientific explanation), that have later become seen as a legend, for the adaptations in the stories and their acceptance. Carvalho says “Neither the folkloric vampire is *a* vampire, but several; its characterization presents great variation, according to the regions and the people whose image it inhabits.” (CARVALHO, 2010, p.498). In his texts we can see an overview of the history of the vampire⁴, approaching those several regional variations, such as the Slavic regions, Greco-Latin, Greece, Arabic, European Central Eastern, and it also “can be traced back to the tribal era” (*id* 2013, p.164). The oral narratives researched by Carvalho (2010, 2013) present similar characteristics that can be settled as the main characteristics of the vampire, such as:

1. They are cursed creatures who live as undead: they resist to the death or return from it;
2. They act mostly at night: the sunrise or the cockcrow represents the end of the vampire activity or his death, but some of them can act during the day. The presence of the moon seems important in some cultures (especially in the full moon, moment when some fantastic creatures, like the vampire, can appear);
3. They have associations with animals: the dogs/wolves howl at its presence; if an animal crosses over the corpse it becomes a vampire; the vampire can turn into animals (bat, wolf, others);
4. They usually attack their relatives or the community;
5. There are forms of annihilation, presenting some exotic elements, that vary according to the culture;
6. And they need to feed on the vital fluid of the victim (the soul, the blood, *etc.*),

⁴ For a better reading and understanding of concepts, from this point on in the text, every time I refer to the myth I will use the word *vampire*, and for the legend, *vampyre*.

which can create an association of dependency, represented by a parasitic relationship.

Fangs, sharpened teeth, the intense look and the hypnosis, aversion to garlic and religious objects are characteristics, as Carvalho (2010) points out, that are not inherent to the vampire, but they were some that appeared in the twentieth century as the *legend* of the vampyre consolidated itself.

Several literary vampyres maintain those main characteristics of the vampire (not only in literature, actually, but in all types of media), but most of them vary according to the author and the historical period of their creation, either affirming or contradicting the characteristics of that period. This is noticeable in *Interview with the Vampire* (book and movie), the series *Twilight* (books and movies), *Blade* (comic books and movies), *The Underworld* and even a new adaptation in cinema, released in 2014, of *Dracula*. Below are some examples of those changes and varied historical representations.

Dracula (STOKER, 1897) is probably the most prominent vampyre of the last two centuries, and was the precursor of several vampyres created since then, from literature to cinema as well as other sorts of media. It kept all the main characteristics of the vampire, and created more, all of them have influenced the composition of the popular characteristics known nowadays: the vampyre dies when exposed to the sun or when stabbed in the heart by a wooden stake; his victims become vampyres themselves; he has sharpened teeth and fangs; he feels aversion toward garlic, the Christian Cross and Holy water; he can manipulate the weather (mist); can turn into a bat; his image does not reflect in the mirror; and he sleeps in a coffin, to recall a few of the typical traits.

Dracula can be seen as if Stoker was questioning the precepts of the Victorian Era (1837-1901). This was the period of the Second Industrial Revolution, a moment when several scientific advances occurred, the cities had grown bigger and societal organization was also under severe transformation. It was a period of “Intense sexual repression, rigid rules of morality and flourishing of the bourgeois family” (VIEIRA, 2013b, p.2). In this sense, though this is not our focus of investigation, it may be argued that Stoker developed a remarkable creature, *Dracula*, so as to comment on the fact that he represents Eastern Europe, which is behind time, uncivilized, and when he contacts someone from Western Europe, he subverts them. Be it as it may, the fact is that *Dracula* was a precursor and influential work for subsequent versions of the vampyre,

and therefore is relevant to be considered in the present discussion. We briefly review, in what follows, a few features of the novel that have been perpetuated in other vampires through times, given that our focus in this research is, as stated before, precisely the discussion about old and new versions of the vampire in a recent literary work.

In the beginning, Lucy represents the model of a Victorian woman: chaste, obedient, busy with domestic obligations, without sexual appeal, obscene thoughts and passions. As Vieira (2013b) points out, after being vampirized, Lucy becomes completely the opposite: a *femme fatale*, a woman who owns her own desires, a symbol of a sexually active woman, something reprehensible at that time. This last image can also be seen in Dracula's wives.

Van Helsing, in turn, represents and protects the new world, the industrialized, rational and scientific realm, but with the knowledge of mysticism and supernatural forces, characteristics of the old world (MARQUES, 2011). Meanwhile, Jonathan Harker is a man who seems to embody the Victorian Era "spirit": he was a man of the church, of conservative mind and conduct, and with heteronormative ideals. Dracula, on the other hand, aligns with the old world, and is conceived as individualistic, selfish, sexually active, with some homosexual affairs⁵, living in a moment when those characteristics were unacceptable.

Carmilla (FANU, 1872) brings another literary vampire which was also conceived in the Victorian Era. While it seems to make similar criticisms to the time, in the manner of *Dracula*, other characteristics of that period are criticized in this story. Differently from *Dracula*, the story is focused on the female vampire, Carmilla. As Boyles (2014) points out, Carmilla is more subversive than those women in *Dracula* because "she does not simply refuse to lie passively beneath a man, she refuses to lie with men at all, instead preferring the company, and blood, of beautiful young women." (p.26).

Like Dracula, Carmilla has the power to make the sexual desires of her victim's bloom, in this case, the homosexual desires. As she feeds only in women, her constitution as vampire can be read as a threat to patriarchy, in which everything is somewhat under some kind of male control, and in her own relationships, men not only

⁵Although it is not explicit, Dracula's advances on his wives lead to this interpretation. For instance, in chapter 3, he says: "How dare you touch him...? This man belongs to me!" (STOKER, 1897, s/p). Another possible point of view is that Dracula feeds from men in an indirect way, as if by feeding from his wives he feeds the male blood they drank. (BOYLES, 2014, p.28).

did not interfere or participate, but were also actually powerless.

Another characteristic from the nineteenth-century criticized in some vampyre narratives is how “noble” women should physically be. Accordingly to Boyles (2014): “the fashionably thin, anorexic aesthetic was the ideal for wealthy women” (p.17). She also says that:

the decorative, useless woman who was so fashionable during the nineteenth-century was, on some basic level, a parasite that sucked resources from her father and husband. Significantly, this kind of elite woman was also expected to emphasize her angelic self-negation through her weak body and dainty appetite. (p.16)

These women did not use to eat much during meals, and for this reason they were always eating, because they were always hungry, as if they were insatiable. Both in *Dracula* and *Carmilla*, the vampyres are described as thin and slender, as if they never eat enough. In this sense, they can be seen as parasites, once they need to feed constantly from human for surviving. This never-satisfied appetite, at least in the case of *Dracula*, relates to the parasitization noble women had to their male figure, once all they did was to use their spouses’/fathers’ gains, as mentioned above.

The Vampire Chronicles, by Anne Rice, also features among the remarkable achievements in the field of the literary vampyre, particularly in more recent times, and contributes to understandings of various versions of the legend. The *Chronicles* consist of a series of over ten novels, the first of them published in as early as 1976, and the latest, in 2016. Particularly *Interview with the Vampire* (RICE, book published in 1976, movie released in 1994) was probably the first world renowned literature written after *Dracula* that gained worldwide attention (in part due to the Hollywoodian version of it, with famous actors Tom Cruise, Brad Pitt and Antonio Banderas among the cast). It called attention for recreating most of the characteristics of the mythological vampyre as well as those created by Stoker.

Vieira (2013a) gives us an overview of the sixties and seventies, decades with several concerns at stake at the time of the author’s writing the novel, and which can be seen to dialogue with some of the decisions related to the supernatural creatures’ portrayal in *Interview*. Drug consume had increased; sexual diseases were growing, especially AIDS, and the homosexual groups were considered the main transmitter; murder and violence rates were also intensifying. In this context, Rice’s story humanized vampyres: “The vampyre not only identifies himself with the human being, with his anguishes, loves [sic] sufferings, frustrations, his struggle with evil within him,

struggles and moral dilemmas...” (VIEIRA, 2013a, p.71), they are also concerned about their place in the world, seeking an identity and recognition. The fact that a vampyre wants to tell his story to the world can be symbolically seen as related to the growing concern, in the sixties, of giving voice to the minorities (*ibid* p.73).

Louis, the main character, is filled with guilt because he believes that life is important and should not be taken away, so he decides to feed from animal blood. Lestat, on the other hand, does not have this sentimental guilt, and has no concern regarding whom he kills. After Lestat transforms Claudia into a vampyre, a child who gains Louis’ affections, they became a family - not a traditional, “standard” one, but actually a homosexual one - characteristic that represents one of the changes in the traditional and heteronormative society of the end of the twentieth century. Other relations can be seen in the story, both hetero and homoaffective.

When travelling through Europe, Louis seeks other vampyres, trying to find a group he can relate with, vampyres that have common ideals. This is a timeless characteristic: men and women seeking for inclusion, for a group to be part of, for not to be alone in the world (VIEIRA, 2013a, p.84, p.85). In light of the success of Rice’s books and filmic versions, which is not to be further explored here due to time and space constraints, one may claim that the vampyres developed by Rice are important for more contemporary versions of this creature which, indeed, is being recreated in yet newer versions, for twenty-first century audiences.

A case in point, evidently, is the blockbuster success, the *Twilight* saga (MEYER, published between 2005-2008), which gives new forms to the vampyre. In Meyer’s depiction, Christian objects do not affect the creatures, neither does the sun (when exposed, they shine as if they were composed by thousands of small diamonds). Feeding from human blood is an option, as they can survive feeding from animal blood, as well. And, in a fashion similar to *Interview with the Vampire*, vampyres are humanized, again.

The series can be seen as a commentary on, at least, three issues widely at stake in the twenty-first century society: women empowerment, sexual relations outside the marriage, and adolescent pregnancy. That is to say, in spite of certain literary criticisms received by these novels, they do bring a positive contribution in that they engage with relevant and updated themes. As the object of this work is not to analyze the *Twilight* saga and those issues, these are points that can be taken in consideration in other work and will not be defended or attacked in this paper.

Regarding the issue of women empowerment, since at least the nineteenth century, women have been fighting for independence, whether in decision-making, financially, sexually, or physically speaking, among other realms. Before meeting Edward, Bella is an independent girl, who makes her own decisions and sometimes is more mature than her mother⁶, even though she is only seventeen. Yet, when Bella and Edward's relationship establishes itself, Bella becomes dependent on him. As Silver says "in the context of Edward and Bella's relationship, her gracelessness provides numerous opportunities (...) to demonstrate the dynamic in their relationship of perpetual rescuer and rescued" (2010, p.125). Their relationship brings to mind the old fairy stories in which the princess always needed a "prince in a white horse" to rescue her. The concept that a woman always needs a man to help her in everything is one of the views that women have been trying to change. In this sense, one should turn to specific studies on the novels by Meyers, to verify whether and how the author endorses or actually criticizes this type of behavior and mindset.

The second concept has a connection with the first one. With women empowerment, came the sexual liberation: the power to decide whether to have sex or not, even if the sexual intercourse happens outside marriage. On the first three books of the Saga, Bella tries to engage in sexual relations with Edward, but is constantly repelled by him. Kokkola numbers their sexual tension through the saga,

a tension that remains unresolved throughout the 1,500 pages of the first three volumes before the couple are married. The pair are [sic] so chaste that it takes 250 pages of brooding tension and constant fantasising [sic] before their first kiss, and over 1,000 pages of romantic narrative before they can confidently open their lips when kissing (because the scent of Bella's breath excites Edward beyond his powers of control)⁷. (2011, p.166)

This tension was not only because of Edward's fears of hurting Bella, but also by his beliefs in marriage. Kokkola says that "despite Bella's third millennium reluctance to marry, Edward insists on taking her back to the morals of his Edwardian childhood and marrying her before he will agree to have sex" (idem). Again, it is not the scope of the present study to analyze these novels by Meyers, in order to grasp if the works criticize either Bella or Edward's attitudes towards sex. But what is a fact is that the theme is there, present in the story, and offers a change in terms of vampyre's behavior, in comparison to previous versions of the being. And, to recall once more, it is

⁶ "I was a very different person from my mother. Someone thoughtful and cautious. The responsible one, the grownup." (MEYER, 2009. p.42). As the novel is in first-person narrator, Bella's speech has to be taken in consideration in reliability.

⁷ The pages will vary according to the edition.

useful to briefly review older versions of vampires, here, so as to prepare the reader to proceed with the focus of our own study, which is that of discussing new and old aspects in vampires' portrayals, specifically in the novel we chose to analyze.

To briefly address the third and last characteristic mentioned, one of the consequences of sexual intercourse can be pregnancy. The problem is when it is not planned and it comes in teenager years. Although married, Bella (who is still eighteenth) gets pregnant, an unplanned pregnancy. In her article, Kokkola (2011) points out three "didactic conventions" that *Breaking Down* (MEYER, 2009) brings us. Firstly, that pregnancy can happen with any woman, so the use of contraceptive methods is very important. Secondly, the possibility of early abortion, a matter widely discussed by contemporary societies. And finally there is the matter of motherhood. Kokkola (2011) says that "by presenting teenage pregnancy as a horror story, and Bella's body as object, Meyer paints a grim image of the process of becoming a mother" (p.176), in a way to try to give teenagers the notion of what really is motherhood. Kokkola (2011) points out that Bella's transition to motherhood was something simple, once she does not have to breastfeed, but presents the parasitic relationship between Bella and her baby during the pregnancy period, something that happens in real life in mother-child relationships. Although concepts are changing, one could claim that, in parenthood in Western societies, the mother seems to continue to carry the biggest share of responsibility in raising a child.

Next, we concisely recall some of the main points explored in this chapter, in an attempt to summarize matters, before moving to the next section of our study. The fantastic literature, as stated before, involves the hesitation experienced by the reader and it is such hesitation what gives life to the text. The hesitation must be common to the reader and the character. It must also compel the reader to consider the world of the characters as a world of living people, and hesitate between a natural versus a supernatural "explanation"; the reader must identify him/herself with the main character. Its characteristics are the emergence of the supernatural in a daily and familiar environment, and the ambiguity of the real/supernatural in the story.

Before the analysis of the novel under investigation, in terms of the old and new versions it offers of the vampire, we find it useful to offer, also, a brief review of the main characteristics of the vampire (that is, the myth): they are undead; they act mostly at night; the presence of the moon seems important in some cultures; they have associations with animals; if an animal crosses over the corpse it becomes a vampire;

the vampire can turn into animals; they usually attack the relatives or the community; there are forms of annihilation, presenting some exotic elements, that vary according to the culture; and they need to feed on the vital fluid of the victim which can create a relation of dependency, represented by a parasitic relationship. The vampire, in many occurrences, changed in the way they are civilized and humanized, resistant to Christian symbols and the sun.

After a brief glance at the myth of the vampire and the legend of vampyre in different works of literature, how they relate to the period in which they were created, and the definitions and characteristics of the fantastic literature, we will now proceed to the analysis of old and new versions of the vampi(y)re in the novel *Marked*, the first book of the saga *House of Night*.

3. BEASTS IN THE ORDINARY WORLD: THE VERSIONS OF VAMPI(Y)RE IN THE NOVEL *MARKED*

The novel *Marked* (2007) is the first of twelve books in the series *House of Night*, by P. C. Cast and Kristin Cast, a saga written between 2007 and 2014. The world in the series is almost like ours, but the difference is that in their world vampyres always existed and people are aware of them. The book is written in a first-person narrator, characteristic that follows all the series when the point of view belongs to Zoey Redbird, the main character. After the sixth book, *Tempted* (2009), the point of view changes and each chapter that does not belong to Zoey's perception is in third-person narrator.

Zoey is a sixteen-year girl, descendent of Cherokees, who lives a normal, regular life. One day she is marked (hence the name of the novel) in her forehead by a tracker vampyre, and has no other choice but to leave behind her friends, her almost-boyfriend and her family and move to the House of Night. This place functions as a preparatory school for fledglings vampyres in the process of becoming such creatures. There she begins to learn about the vampyre society, religion and costumes, and learns that she will either finish her transformation into vampyre or die, if her body rejects it. But she is not a normal fledgling vampyre. While normal fledglings have their crescent moon outlined, her mark was already complete. She learns that the Goddess Nyx marked her for specific purposes and gave her affinities with the five elements (wind, fire, water, earth and spirit), which makes her unique and even envied by some of her colleagues. She becomes friend with Stevie Rae, Erin, Shaunee and Damien and together they fight Aphrodite, the leader of "The Dark Daughters" and a High Priestess's trainee, who was conducting the group in a path that did not please the Goddess. Meanwhile the ghosts of the two dead fledglings, Elizabeth and Elliott, appear for Zoey. Aphrodite (who has the affinity of visions of the future) sees the dead in one of her visions, and lets Zoey aware that their ghosts are just the beginning of something bigger, to be continued in the next book of the saga.

This chapter begins with the analysis of the characteristics that make the novel be considered fantastic literature; then the old and new versions of the vampi(y)re will be discussed, in specific and separate sections, in accordance with the reviews developed in the previous chapter.

3.1. *MARKED* AS A CASE OF FANTASTIC LITERATURE

As required by Todorov (2014), Furtado (*apud* CAMARANI, 2014) and Ceserani (2006), the discourse of the narrator in first-person is a way for the reader to identify with the main character, and this is what we encounter in the novel *Marked*. The entire story in this part of the series *House of Night* is presented through Zoey's perspective.

In this novel this is important because the events seen through Zoey's eyes do not allow us to see the entire picture of Neferet and Aphrodite's acts. By seen through Zoey's eyes, we cannot tell if Aphrodite is so unpleasant as Zoey thinks:

She was a tiny blonde and darn near perfect. Actually, she reminded me of a young version of Sarah Jessica Parker (who I don't like, by the by—she's just so...so...annoying and unnaturally perky).

"Hi Zoey. Welcome to your new home." The SJP look-alike's smile was warm and genuine, and she was clearly making an effort to make eye contact instead of gawk at my darkened-in Mark. Instantly I felt bad for making a negative comparison about her. "I'm Aphrodite," she said.

Aphrodite? Okay, maybe I hadn't been too hasty in my comparison. How could anyone normal choose Aphrodite as her name? Please. Talk about delusions of grandeur.

(...)Was that anger I saw flash through Aphrodite's eyes? No, I must have imagined it—or at least I would have believed I'd imagined it if that weird new gut feeling of mine hadn't told me otherwise. And I didn't need my new intuition to clue me in that something was wrong, because Aphrodite laughed—and I recognized the sound of it. (2007a, p.76, 77)⁸

Similarly, we cannot know what goes on in Neferet's mind or if it really is Zoey's imagination: "I watched her eyes darken as she talked. The expression in them suddenly made me very nervous and I shivered. Then Neferet blinked and her eyes changed back to normal. Or had I just imagined their weird darkness?" (2007a, p.223) That is to say, not only Zoey but the reader, too, needs to make an effort to try and understand what is (or is not) happening, being aware of the limitations intrinsic to the subjectivity and partiality of a first-person narrator.

Due to the first-person narrative, it is also difficult to state if Zoey is hallucinating when she sees Elizabeth's ghost:

It was Elizabeth! The Elizabeth No Last Name kid who was supposed to be dead. When she saw me her eyes, which were a weird, glowing red, widened and then she made an odd shrieking sound before whirling around and disappearing with inhuman speed into the night.

At the same instant, Nala arched her back and hissed with such

⁸ The quotations are in their original English version, of the digital versions of the novels *Marked*, *Betrayed*, *Untamed*, *Hunted*, *Tempted* and *Nyx in the House of Night*, which offer no page numbers. In order to leave the reader well located, the page numbers we cite here refer to the Portuguese version of the books, published by Novo Século Editora, SP: *Marked* (2009), *Betrayed* (2009), *Untamed* (2010), *Hunted* (2010), *Tempted* 2010 and *Nyx in the House of Night* (2012).

ferocity that her little body shook.

"It's okay! It's okay!" I said over and over, trying to calm the cat and me. Both of us were shaking and Nala was still growling low in her throat. "It couldn't have been a ghost. It couldn't have been. It was just...just...a weird kid. I probably scared her and she— (2007a, p.182)

and Elliott's ghost, too:

A terrible chill fingered its way down my spine even before I turned to look in the direction my cat was staring. Later, I couldn't figure out why I didn't scream. I remember my mouth opening so I could gulp air, but I was absolutely silent. It seemed I'd gone numb, but that was impossible. If I'd been numb there's no way I could have been so thoroughly petrified.

Elliott was standing not ten feet from me in the darkness that shadowed the space next to the wall. He must have been heading in the same direction Nala and I were walking. Then he'd heard Nala, and half turned back toward us. She hissed again at him and, with a frighteningly quick movement he whirled around to fully face us.

I swear I couldn't breathe. He was a ghost—he had to be, but he looked so solid, so real. If I hadn't watched his body rejecting the Change, I would have thought he was just looking especially pale and...and...weird. He was abnormally white, but there was more wrong about him than that. His eyes had changed. They reflected what little light there was and they glowed a terrible rust red, like dried blood.

Exactly as the ghost of Elizabeth's eyes had glowed. (2007a, p.278, 279)

Is it something in Zoey's mind or were these situations real? Are the changings affecting her in a way that she may be seen as becoming crazy? These are questions that, connected to other traces soon to be discussed, make the novel a piece of fantastic literature, because we cannot really answer those questions, and if it was a third-person narrator maybe we had the answers and could not doubt or be sure of Zoey's sanity and impressions. Obviously, though, a lot more is needed to consider a work as a sample of fantastic fiction.

The first-person narrator also makes it easier to the reader to identify with Zoey, and such feeling of identification is another relevant aspect for the fantastic literature, as explored in the previous chapter. In Zoey's case, in the initial portrayal of her life before being marked, she seems rather unsatisfied with her ordinary problems, and experiencing troubles socializing and finding herself in the world. She lives with a family which does not support her, she has afflictions regarding school and tests, and feels a permanent urge to "fit" the world she inhabits, as if she was misplaced or unsuitable for the environment she experiences:

I just wanted to attempt to be normal, despite the burden of my mega-conservative parents, my troll-like younger brother, and my oh-so-perfect older sister. I wanted to pass geometry. I wanted to keep my grades up so that I could get accepted into the veterinary college at OSU and get out of Broken Arrow, Oklahoma. But most of all, I wanted to fit in—at least at school. Home had become hopeless, so all I was left with were my friends and my life away from my family. (2007a, p.17)

And then she gets marked by the tracker vampyre and has to abandon everything. Maybe one could not identify with all of the problems she faces, but who never wanted to have an opportunity of leaving everything behind, to leave his/her problems and move to a different place? Or, as Browning considers,

how many of us have dreamed of leaving behind the boring day-to-day life we know for another, more fantastical one: a life in which we may pick for ourselves a new name and identity, and embrace our individual differences as a means of unity? (BROWNING⁹, 2011, p.46)

To be clear, then, Zoey's personal issues and struggles may be recognizable by the reader, specially the teenage reader, the most probable target audience of this saga. Consequently, once the reader finds familiar some (or even many) of the protagonist's problems, the fantastic feature of identification takes place, and it helps the reader to be seduced by the story and consider it as something believable. Supernatural and impossible elements are also part of the story - in precise alignment with what was discussed before regarding fantastic literature precepts.

As stated before, the emergence of the supernatural in a daily and familiar environment (FURTADO *apud* CAMARANI, 2014) is necessary to provide to the novel the fantastic view. As being a vampyre is already something supernatural, and the overall environment has become familiar during the reading, the ghosts' apparitions aforementioned bring to the text another supernatural manifestation, breaking with the new routine established by the reading.

The second characteristic defined by Furtado (*apud* CAMARANI, 2014), the ambiguity, can be seen in the presence of the elements of the real world in the novel: it is seen in Zoey's life in school, in that even after she is marked the school life remains, but this time in the House of Night school; in the need of "fitting in", that some characters, including Zoey, experience; as well as in the Cherokees' rituals Silvia describes to Zoey, just to name a few of these references.

When it comes to the hesitation¹⁰ that must be experienced by the audience, that Todorov (2014) considers important, Zoey's attitude regarding the tracker surely gives this hesitation to the reader:

Then I saw him. The dead guy. (...) There was no mistaking what he was and even if I hadn't felt the power and darkness that radiated from him, there was

⁹ The book *Nyx in the House of Night* (CAST, 2011) can be seen as a commercial move, but it will be used with critical views, nonetheless, due to several interesting insights provided by the essays in the volume.

¹⁰ For Todorov, hesitation is the doubt in whether something can happen in the real world. In this work, hesitation is wider, is the doubt, but is also the perplexity, the maze, face a situation that is not common.

no frickin' way I could miss his Mark, the sapphire-blue crescent moon on his forehead and the additional tattooing of entwining knot work that framed his equally blue eyes. He was a vampyre, and worse. He was a Tracker. Well, crap! He was standing by my locker. (2007a, p.12)

The hesitation here resides in the fact that every time a tracker appears, someone will necessarily be marked and, consequently, have to leave everything behind and be considered a freak, or a misfit. For the fact that he is standing by Zoey's locker and the text has the first-narrator speech, one may feel that it is by the reader's own locker that the tracker is standing, and so the reader can even feel that he/she is one of them, a fledgling vampyre, the person who will be marked. Or, to put it more simply, the reader may simply understand and feel the hesitation of the protagonist (the locker's actual owner), and be sorry and worried for her.

Still regarding hesitation, another instance occurs when Zoey sees her face for the first time, soon after she was marked, and seems to see a face of somebody else:

It was like staring into the face of a familiar stranger. You know, that person you see in a crowd and swear you know, but you really don't? Now she was me—the familiar stranger.

She had my eyes. They were the same hazel color that could never decide whether it wanted to be green or brown, but my eyes had never been that big and round. Or had they? She had my hair—long and straight and almost as dark as my grandma's had been before hers had begun to turn silver. The stranger had my high cheekbones, long, strong nose, and wide mouth—more features from my grandma and her Cherokee ancestors. But my face had never been that pale. I'd always been oliveish, much darker skinned than anyone else in my family. But maybe it wasn't that my skin was suddenly so white...maybe it just looked pale in comparison to the dark blue outline of the crescent moon that was perfectly positioned in the middle of my forehead. (2007a, p.18, 19)

In troubled times, who never looked to the mirror and had the sensation of being looking at another person? The experience may be familiar to many of the readers, if not all. And what is particularly interesting is that this case not only gives the reader a feeling of hesitation, as it simultaneously makes him/her identify with Zoey. In other words, one may claim that two relevant features of fantastic literature take place at once, here.

The fact that Zoey is marked gives another sensation of hesitation when she declares that she comes from a religious family, a family who believes in God. So how come she is now a fledgling vampyre, if most of this religious group think that vampyres were demons? Furthermore, Zoey is not a normal fledgling, her mark is complete:

"(...) What I mean is that it makes no sense that you were just Marked. The crescent isn't an outline. It's completely filled in."

"That's impossible!"

"Look for yourself, U-we-tsi a-ge-hu-tsa." She used the Cherokee word for daughter, suddenly reminding me very much of a mysterious, ancient goddess. Grandma searched through her purse for the antique silver compact she always carried. Without saying anything else, she handed it to me. I pushed the little clasp. It popped open to show me my reflection...the familiar stranger...the me who wasn't quite me. Her eyes were huge and her skin was too white, but I barely noticed that. It was the Mark that I couldn't quit staring at, the Mark that was now a completed crescent moon, filled in perfectly with the distinctive sapphire blue of the vampyre tattoo. Feeling like I was still moving through a dream, I reached up and let my fingers trace the exotic-looking Mark and I seemed to feel the Goddess's lips against my skin again.

"What does it mean?" I said, unable to look away from the Mark. (2007a, p.55, 56)

Besides, she has the power to feel the five elements: "just moments ago, I'd felt the power of Neferet's calling of the elements. I hadn't imagined it—I couldn't have imagined it" (2007a, p.157), and to invoke them:

Incredibly, it seemed that I was suddenly surrounded by the four elements, that I was in the middle of a whirlpool made up of air and fire, water and earth. But it wasn't scary, not at all. It filled me with peace, and at the same time I felt a surge of white-hot power and had to press my lips tightly together to keep from laughing with pure joy.

"Look! Look at the circle!" Damien shouted.

I blinked my vision clear and instantly felt the elements settle down, as if they were playful kittens who were sitting around me, waiting happily for me to call them to bat at string and whatnot. I was smiling at the comparison when I saw the glowing light that wrapped around the circumference of the circle, joining Damien, Shaunee, Erin, and Stevie Rae. It was bright and clear, and the luminous silver of a full moon.

"And that makes five," Damien said.

"Holy crap!" I blurted, very un—High Priestess-like, and the four of them laughed, filling the night with the sounds of happiness. And I understood, for the first time, why Neferet and Aphrodite had danced during the rituals. I wanted to dance and laugh and shout with happiness. (2007a, p.254)

Although knowing that vampyres drink blood, Zoey hesitates, again, when she learns that she drank blood:

"Yeah, admit it, Zoey. It was obvious. You would have downed the whole thing—you wanted it even more than we did. We saw you licking it off your fingers," Enyo said, leaning forward all into my personal space as she stared at my Mark. "That makes you some kind of freak, doesn't it? Somehow you're fledgling and vamp, all in one, and you wanted more of that kid's blood than just a taste."

"Blood?" I didn't recognize my own voice. The word "freak" kept echoing round and round in my head.

"Yes, blood," Terrible said. (2007a, p.176)

And not only tasted it, she liked it "I drank blood—that horrid Elliott kid's blood—and I'd liked it!" (2007a, p.177)

These are some examples of the hesitation present in the novel. As the novel, and the entire series, has plenty of situations, that give the reader the hesitation feeling,

and to put all of them here would require more space. We hope that the examples brought forth, regarding not only cases of hesitation but also of identification of the reader, first-person narrative issues, and simultaneous supernatural and “real” elements in the same environment suffice to illustrate how the novel fits as a case of fantastic literature. The discussion about such fitting will reappear occasionally throughout what comes next, as we look at the specific characteristics of the vampyre entity developed in the novel, in light of old and new versions of it.

3.2. OLD AND NEW VERSIONS OF THE VAMPI(Y)RE

As seen in chapter two, changes in the characteristics of vampires have been made over time, and in the work of P. C. Cast and Kristin Cast it is no different. Their vampyres have a good recovery power; long and accurate memory; can focus on becoming invisible for humans; can see very well in the dark and can tell the hours without a clock. Their hair and nails grow fast. They do not explode in the exposure to the sun, although it can be uncomfortable for them. They do not fly, have no fangs, no aversion to garlic nor to religious items. Their images do reflect in mirrors and they are very attractive. These are some of the many characteristics that have been changed in relation to the vampire, but some can be seen in other vampyres’ stories. Subjects such as religion, blood, and society are significant in the novel under analysis, and will have a specific discussion in what follows. Other characteristics which are less present, but still revealing, will also be approached, briefly, in the end of the chapter.

Yet, before addressing and analyzing these subjects more thoroughly, it is crucial to discuss the usage of the term ‘vampyre’, with ‘y’, in the novel. It is observed that, in the text of *Marked*, the authors chose to use, only, the expression with ‘y’. There are a few possible understandings for such a decision.

As put forward by Carvalho (2013), the first reference of the word “vampire”, as a supernatural being that returns from the dead, originated in the word *upir*. With data dating back to the medieval era, the etymology of the word evolved (*upyr*, *vampyr*) and both in Russian and in German it derived in the term “vampyre”. In English, the word “vampyre” was used during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in which the novel *The Vampyre* (John Polidori, 1819) was written. But after Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*, in which the word was written with “i”, the word with the “y” fell into disuse. Despite that, nowadays both words can be encountered.

Browning (2011), in his essay about the novel, attests that some real

communities, people who believe they need to get energy from others or from nature to survive (in which drinking blood is included) differ both spellings in a way that “vampire” would represent the literary being and “vampyre” represents the real people who adopt this lifestyle. In this sense, we can assume that, either the Casts wanted to return to the antique form of usage of the term “vampyre”, or it could be a commercial way of getting more public, specifically the real vampire community.

As stated before, the choice of the use of “vampyre” will be for the literary work, to dialogue with what was elaborated by the authors of the novel, that adopted the “y”. Be as it may, it is now time to proceed to the specific themes identified in the novel that explore both old and new versions of vampi(y)res, beginning with the classic connection with blood.

3.2.1. Blood

Vampires are widely known for their need and thirst of blood. In their absolute majority, literary vampyres (and in other media) feed solely and exclusively on blood, whether of humans or animals. As was pointed by Carvalho (2010), the need of the vampyre to feed on the vital fluid of the victim creates a relation of dependency.

In the *House of Night* series, the Casts maintained the vampyre’s need of blood, but the relation of the vampyre with their thirst is quite different. They say that “all vampyres have to deal with their lust for blood” (2007a, p.194), and in *Sociology 415*¹¹ a theoretical explanation on how the vampyres’ thirst works can be found: “Though the frequency of need differs depending upon age, sex, and general strength of the vampyre, adults must periodically feed on human blood to remain healthy and sane” (2007b, p. 182). In this way we can notice that blood remains the essential part of it, but is not the only food vampyres feed on. Several times in the novel we are presented with fledglings’ meals. Stevie Rae, a friend of Zoey, explains that:

There're fruit and veggies and stuff like that in those two fridges, and lean meat for sandwiches in the other one. They're kept full all the time, but the vamps are pretty obsessed with us eating healthy, so you won't find bags of chips or Twinkies or stuff like that. (2007a, p. 106)

They have cereals for breakfast, Chinese food, pretzels, soda, juices, Spaghetti, and others:

Lunch was a huge build-your-own salad buffet, which included everything

¹¹*Sociology 415* is the book used by the older fledglings to learn about the vampyre society. The *Fledgling Book 101*, the sociology book for new fledglings, was published in 2010 by P. C. Cast in order to complement readers understanding in the saga.

from tuna salad (eesh) to those weird mini-corns that are so confusing, and don't even taste like corn. (...) I piled my plate high and got a big hunk of what looked and smelled like freshly baked bread. (2007a, p.137)

But when it comes to adult vampyres, we are left in suspension. Stevie Rae thinks that:

I think basically just fledglings eating [sic] healthy. I mean, you don't see fat vamps, but you also don't see them chewing on celery and carrots and picking at salads. Mostly they eat together in their own dining room, and rumor has it that they eat well. I heard that they eat a lot of red meat. A lot of rare red meat. (2007a, p.106)

The fact that they eat rare red meat could represent the ingestion of blood in an indirect way and an “alternative” from human blood, as seen in the previous vampyres of *Interview With the Vampire* and *Twilight*. When Neferet calls Zoey to her office, Zoey tries to see the food the adults eat and all she could see was:

the same Vietnamese salad we'd been eating downstairs, and some fancy-looking spring rolls. There wasn't one sign of raw meat or anything that resembled blood (well, except for the red wine). And, of course, I really didn't need to bother about gawking. If they'd been feasting on bloody whatever I would have smelled it. (2007b, p.69)

But what really calls our attention is the fact that it is not normal for fledglings to feel bloodlust until they are sixth formers. “Bloodlust doesn't usually begin until you're a sixth former and you're almost completely Changed. Once in a while you'll hear about a fifth former who has to deal with it early, but that doesn't happen very often.” (2007a, p.192).

Yet, Zoey herself is not a normal fledgling (as explained before), and therefore the relation she has with blood is also different, and Zoey's need of blood so soon in her change gives her the hesitation required in fantastic literature, that can also be felt by the reader. Before even arriving in the House of Night, Zoey smells Heath's blood and feels an “overwhelming surge of white-hot desire that was trying to drown” her (2007a, p.25) and thinks in “how hypnotically beautiful Heath's blood had been, and the rush of desire I'd felt for it. Not Heath, but Heath's blood” (2007a, p.26). She thinks she is a monster for desiring blood, because she has always been lead to think so. Then, again she feels the desire, even if she “didn't want it to, and it grossed me out, but at the sight of the blood my mouth started watering” (2007a, p.68). So far, it was only desire that she felt, and nobody explained anything to her about it. But when she tastes blood for the first time (even though she did not know it was a fledgling blood mixed with wine, no regular human blood), in the Dark Daughters' ritual, she feels as it was the best thing she had ever tasted, until she tasted actual human blood.

It was wine, but it didn't taste like the wine in the other moon ritual. This one was sweet, too, but there was a spice to it that tasted like nothing I'd ever experienced before. It caused an explosion of sensation in my mouth that traveled with a hot, bittersweet trail down my throat and filled me with a dizzy desire to drink more and more and more of it. (2007a, p.174)

By the fact that she is a third former and has liked the taste of blood, Deino and Enyo think that “somehow you're fledgling and vamp, all in one” (2007a, p.176). Not later in that same night Zoey drinks human blood, directly from Heath. Zoey tells Neferet what happened, and then Neferet gives us a better understanding on what the vampyre society thinks about fledglings feeding from humans and also the thinking of the vampyre society in general. We can see very clearly how such thinking in *Marked* differs from previous versions of the literary vampyre:

Imprint (...) It's what often happens when vampyres drink directly from humans, especially if there is a bond that has been established between them prior to the bloodletting. This is why it is forbidden for fledglings to drink the blood of humans. Actually, *it's strongly discouraged for adult vampyres to feed from humans, too. There's an entire sect of vampyres who consider it morally wrong and would like to make it illegal* (2007a, p.223, emphasis added).

The fictional *Sociology 415* gives us an overview of imprint as follows:

An Imprint between vampyre and human does not occur every time a vampyre feeds. Many studies have been performed to try to determine exactly why some humans Imprint and some do not, but though there are several determining factors, such as emotional attachment, relationship between the human and the vampyre pre-Change, age, sexual orientation, and frequency of blood drinking, there is no way to predict with certainty whether a human will Imprint with a vampyre. (2007b, p.183)

When a vampyre and a human imprint, they establish a bond in which the vampyre can feel the human's emotions, call or track him/her if the vampyre concentrates to do so. And this is what happens between Zoey and Heath after she feeds on him for the second time, a scene in *Betrayed*. This imprinting is seen again throughout the series with different characters.

This kind of relation between the vampyre and its “prey” is not exclusive from the *House of Night*, but it seems to be a recast¹² of previous literature, operating in *Marked* and the rest of the series under a unique terminology (that is, as “imprint”). Similar versions can be seen in *Dracula*, when Mina and Dracula can feel each other's intentions after he feeds on her. And it is with this idea that Zoey says that this Imprinting thing “sounds like something out of *Dracula*,” (2007a, p.223), in what could have been a way that the Casts found to connect both novels (a classic and a brand new

¹²Karen Mahoney uses the word *recast* intentionally in order to make a pun with the Casts name, which I use as well. (MAHONEY, 2011, p.26)

version). Neferet says that this well-known book by Stoker had only created problems for the vampyre community, and in the *Sociology 415* we see the following:

Bram Stoker had actually been Imprinted by a vamp High Priestess, but that he had not understood her commitment to Nyx had to come before their tie, and in a fit of jealous anger had betrayed her by exaggerating the negative aspects of an Imprint in his infamous book, *Dracula*. (2007b, p.184)

The Imprint is not recommended because when it breaks both parts of the imprint suffer (vampyre/human; vampyre/fledgling; fledgling/human), and it is the main reason why it is forbidden for fledglings to drink directly from humans, as it is advised in *Sociology 415*:

As discussed in the previous chapter, due to the possibility of Imprint, fledglings are prohibited from drinking the blood of human donors, but they may experiment with each other. It has been proven that fledglings cannot Imprint one another. However, it is possible for an adult vampyre to Imprint a fledgling. This leads to emotional and physical complications once the fledgling completes the Change that are often not beneficial for either vampyre; therefore, blood drinking between fledgling and adult vampyre is strictly prohibited. (...) There was a chapter about breaking Imprints, which I started reading, but it was just too depressing. Apparently it involved the aid of a powerful High Priestess, a lot of physical pain, especially on the part of the human, and even then the human and the vampyre had to be careful to stay away from each other or the Imprint could reestablish. (2007b, p.184,185)

Moving further in the analysis of blood issues, in this investigation of new and old versions for the vampyre, we can observe in *Marked* that the act of drinking human blood has not only feeding characteristics, but also a sexual implication. In fact, Melo (2013) says that “the blood-drinking is orgasmic for the vampyres” (p.8). Browning (2011), in turn, adds that “fewer fangs¹³ in the movies generally meant that viewers could also expect less blood... and sex, since all three are often tied together metaphorically” (p.33). In these views, P.C. and Kristin Cast maintained this blood drinking process, with recast, as something with pleasure, not only for the vampyre, but also for the human, and not only in terms of feeding, but also of sexual enjoyment. As it is explained in *Sociology 415*,

It is, therefore, logical that evolution, and our beloved Goddess, Nyx, have insured the blood drinking process is a pleasurable one, both for the vampyre and the human donor. As we have already learned, vampyre saliva acts as an anticoagulant for human blood. Vampyre saliva also secretes endorphins during blood drinking, which stimulate the pleasure zones of the brain, human and vampyre, and can actually simulate orgasm. (2007b, p.182)

This pleasure they feel is present throughout the series, but it is first explicitly seen in a scene in *Betrayed*, the second book of the series, when Zoey drinks Heath’s

¹³ The fang characteristic will be approached further ahead.

blood for the second time and they engage in sexual activity in Zoey's car, moved by the excitement that arouse from the blood consumption.

The drinking process used by the vampyres in *Marked*, as well as in all books of *House of Night*, is another point that differs from other vampyres. As told before, the vampyre society in the series acts strictly in thinking that the blood feeding should not be done directly through humans, but through blood donors. It is not fully explained, but vampyres have blood banks, and they "are highly secretive businesses very few humans are aware exist at all (apparently those few humans are extremely well paid for their silence)" (2007b, p.183). When vampyres feed directly from his/her donor, it does not happen through bites, but by licking the wound. As mentioned before, their saliva contains endorphins which are similar to the "biology vampire bats" (MAHONEY, 2011, p.41), in which they use their teeth only to make a wound in the victim. In *Marked*, Aphrodite and Zoey wound their blood donors with their long and sharpened nails, something that happens in others scenes in the series.

Another blood-related characteristic seen in *Marked* is the influence adult vampyres have on the human in which they feed. What is shown in the novel is Heath's reaction to Zoey's desire of blood: he got in a trance from the moment Zoey started to hear his blood, and he could not act as himself. Erik says to Zoey that "Only adult vamps can hear that" (2007a, p.197). This may be similar to the way Dracula and Carmilla's prayers felt when they were feeding on them. All in all, we hope to have demonstrated in this section some new versions of the vampyre regarding blood issues, in *Marked*, at the same time that we perceived that a few elements on this matter have not changed much.

3.2.2. Society

In literature so far, such as those in the chapter 2 and others, humans and vampyres lived in a world where humans did not know about vampyres' existence and when they discovered about the supernatural being, they did everything to kill it. In the *House of Night* series, the Casts present us a distinct society, one in which humans and vampyres know about each other's existence and coexist peacefully: "The most successful actors and actresses in the world were vampyres. They were also dancers and musicians, authors and singers. Vampyres dominated the arts, which is one reason they had so much money" (2007a, p.72, 73).

In the novel, humans and vampyres do coexist peacefully, though the acceptance

of vampires is not really a consensus. Most of the ordinary humans actually fear them, as made explicit in this quote: “(...) people were scared of vampyres” (2007a, p.26). In fact, even when two humans knew each other for a long time and one of them got marked, the reaction would not be positive. An example can be seen in this excerpt: “K and I had been best friends since third grade, and now she was looking at me like I had turned into a monster” (2007a, p.15, 16). As mentioned before, the fictional fear of vampyres may be one of the influences Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* has generated in the humans of that society.

This fear led to a lack of human knowledge about the culture of the vampyric society. By the moment Zoey is marked, she starts wondering about how these long-known creatures actually do things in their existence:

Do vampyres play chess? Were there vampyre dorks? How about Barbie-like vampyre cheerleaders? Did any vampyres play in the band? Were there vampyre Emos with their guy-wearing-girl's-pants weirdness and those awful bangs that cover half their faces? Or were they all those freaky Goth kids who didn't like to bathe much? Was I going to turn into a Goth kid? Or worse, an Emo? I didn't particularly like wearing black, at least not exclusively, and I wasn't feeling a sudden and unfortunate aversion to soap and water, nor did I have an obsessive desire to change my hairstyle and wear too much eyeliner. (2007a, p.15)

The thoughts above simultaneously indicate two important points. One is that, as aforementioned, vampyres are familiar and even present ordinarily in the society portrayed in the novel, in terms of there being an acknowledgement of their existence. The other point, connected to this one, is that further details about their “lives” are blurred and *marked* by the many previous versions of vampyres - as seen, for example, in Zoey’s reference to putting on too much eyeliner and wearing black. In other words, humans do not know much about these vampyres, in *Marked*, in spite of coexisting with them, and tend to have misconceptions based on other versions of what a vampyre is and looks like and how it behaves.

The novel also shows how the House of Night school works, and such vampyric school can be compared to human’s regular schools. Again, Zoey manifests lack of knowledge about how the society of vampyres, specifically, works. She thinks to herself: “They probably don't even have normal classes. They probably have classes like Ripping Peoples Throats Out um and...and...Intro to How to See in the Dark Whatever” (2007a, p.30). But in the moment Zoey arrives in the House of Night her concepts begin to change, and she feels some kind of hesitation when she finds out that everything she thought about vampires was wrong. Such hesitation, a feature of

fantastic literature, is also connected to other features discussed in chapter two, namely, the likely proximity between the character and the reader, in that the reader, too, should feel ambiguous or uncertain in being presented to a completely different society of vampyres (one that coexists peacefully with the human beings, and which contradicts the expectations of what a vampyre is), at the same time that the reader recognizes traces of the real world mingled with these unreal creatures. Zoey herself realizes that the students were normal teenagers, as if they were kids in a human high school: “Teenagers wearing uniforms that somehow looked cool and unique while still being similar walked in small groups across the courtyard and along the sidewalk. I could hear the deceptively normal sound of their voices as they laughed and talked” (2007a, p.71).

Zoey realizes that her concepts of what a vampyre kid would be are not real: “I smiled at her. She looked so young and hopeful—so nice and *normal* and not at all what I imagined a vampyre kid would be” (2007a, p.86, emphasis added), and she also perceives that she was used to consider only adult vampyres, not kids:

Did vampyre kids get to mingle with regular kids? I searched my memory. No. I'd never seen kids with crescent moon outlines hanging around the Philbrook or Utica's Gap or Banana Republic or Starbucks. I'd never seen them at the movies. Hell! I'd never even seen a vampyre kid before today. (2007a, p.83, 84)

In *Betrayed*, the second novel of the series, it is explained that the main reason why they are not seen on streets is because they use makeup to conceal their marks and that they cannot stay away from adults vampyres for too long, otherwise their body will start the rejection, an experience that can be seen as a supernatural characteristic as pointed by Furtado (*apud* CAMARANI, 2014). Still, it is significant to observe how limited Zoey’s views are, before turning into a vampyre herself, especially considering her views as representative of typical perspectives of other regular human beings: they coexist with vampyres, but at the same time they fear and know little about these creatures.

To further explore the uniqueness (and the interruption of expectations) of the society of vampyres in the novel, when we turn our attention specifically and only to the vampyric society, that is, putting aside the human coexistence altogether, we perceive a matriarchal culture. P.C. Cast (2011) says that:

For as long as I remember I've revised mythology, created worlds based on history, and then made the stories read the way I wanted them to read - quite often giving unexpected characters happily every [sic] afters and turning patriarchy and misogyny upside down. (CAST, 2011, p.9)

With a matriarchal society, having a Goddess as the divine and supreme being is

nothing but logical. Galenorn (2011) asserts that:

Throughout history, the divine feminine has been worshipped and loved, reviled and vilified, adored and feared. She has been exalted, and she has been defiled. As the patriarchal religions rose, the Goddess went from being the soul of the world on which we walked to wearing the face of Eve, who fell from grace and brought down mankind. She began as Lilitu, an ancient and powerful goddess, and was disempowered and twisted into Lilith, a demoness devouring children. (p.187, 188)

In the same way, Zika (2011) reasserts that “the worship of the female deity is older than that of masculine gods” (p.208). And in the universe of *House of Night*, to adore the Goddess through rituals and lead others to her path are the roles of the High Priestesses and High Priestesses in training, as Zoey. As we can see, this is a society different not only from our own, but from most previous versions of vampyres.

In *Marked* and the entire series of *House of Night*, women seem to rule the whole vampyre society. It does not mean that they despise men, on the contrary, Neferet says that “What we know is that just because a society is matriarchal, as ours is, it does not automatically mean that it is anti-male (...) we respect and appreciate the Sons of Night, and consider them our protectors and consorts” (2007a, p.119,120). Corroborating Neferet’s fictional speech, Mahoney (2011) affirms that a society “being matriarchal - and, by association, pro-female - doesn’t automatically mean that a culture has to be anti-men. Although vampyre society is matriarchal, male vampyres are not treated as second-class citizens” (p.26).

Perhaps, in order to ensure a certain male importance, the Casts may have named the character Erik Night with a homophone¹⁴. When spelled, his name can be heard as *Knight*, which means that he could be a warrior, an important figure in the series. By the end of the novel *Marked* he does act like one, and Neferet congratulates him: “You showed the bravery of a vampyre warrior when you stayed to protect the boy. I am proud of you, Erik Night, as is the Goddess” (2007a, p.305). And indeed, in the sequence of the saga, he has other important roles for the conclusion of the series.

As women have the largest influence in the vampyre society in *Marked*, they have the most important qualities to keep such society, that is, the qualities that seem to matter the most. This can be linked to our patriarchal world in which it is usually (and wrongly) ascribed as “male” features certain attributes that are valued, such as physical power, agility, rationality, and others related with sports and guard - attributes which, obviously, do not depend on one’s gender, but are typically read as traces of

¹⁴ Two words with the same spelling, but with different meanings.

“masculinity” in a dated, limited, and debatable perspective. Still, in *Marked*, we can see that even a male character such as Erik can be important, in spite of the matriarchal society and the powerful positions occupied by the female vampyres. Besides, in the novel *Betrayed*, for instance, we witness Damien being graced by the Goddess Nyx with a supposedly feminine attribute, or as it is called in the text, “affinity”:

He headed to Damien, who was fidgeting at the easternmost part of the circle where the element air should manifest. Erik offered the yellow candle to Damien. Damien didn't touch it. Instead, he peered around Erik to me. The boy looked scared to death.

"It's okay, go ahead and take it," I told him.

"Are you sure it's going to be okay?" He glanced nervously around at what was now a large crowd of fledglings watching him expectantly.

I knew what was wrong. Damien was afraid he would fail, that he would be left out of the magic that was happening to the girls. In Soc class I'd learned that it was unusual for a gift as strong as an affinity for an element to be given to a male. Nyx gifted men with exceptional strength, and their affinities usually had to do with the physical, like Dragon, our fencing instructor, had been gifted with exceptional quickness and visual accuracy. Air was definitely a female affinity, and it would be nothing short of incredible for Nyx to gift Damien with an air affinity. But I had a calm, happy feeling deep inside me. I nodded at Damien and tried to telegraph confidence to him. "I'm sure. Go on. I'll be busy thinking about how cute Erik is while you're calling air to you," I said.

As Erik grinned over his shoulder at me Damien drew a deep breath, and looking a lot like he thought he was grabbing on to a live bomb, he took the candle from Erik.

"Superb! Glorious! Wondrous!" Damien made use of his large vocabulary while his brown hair lifted and his clothes flapped crazily in the sudden wind that surrounded him. When he looked at me again happy tears were running down his cheeks. "Nyx has given me a gift. *Me*," he enunciated carefully, and I knew what he was saying in that one word—that he realized Nyx found him worthy even though his parents didn't, and even though much of his life people had made fun of him because he liked guys. I had to blink hard to keep from bawling like a baby. (2007b, p.212, 213)

The fact that the Goddess chose him, a male vampyre to have such an important affinity, gives to Damien the hesitation required in the fantastic literature: although Zoey has the feeling that he has this affinity, it is his hesitation during the process of discovering if he really is graced until it is completely defined that affects the reader. Also, Damien's affinity corroborates Neferet's speech that men are important in their society, not only for protection.

Yet regarding the character Damien, some readers may identify themselves with him in the sense that he is a homosexual figure in the novel. As his parents despise him for being “what he is”, and that he has always been excluded from groups for being *gay*, the grace that Nyx gives him represents that no matter “what he is” or with whom he decides to relate with, he is special for Her, as are all Her sons and daughters, independently of their sexual choices.

Despite of that, we can see in *Marked* that specifically the character Aphrodite does not think the same way as Neferet, due to the fact that, during the Dark Daughter's rituals, she acts as if men were only for women's pleasure:

"You say 'that group' like you don't belong to it. Aren't you a Dark Son?"

"Yeah, but it's not the same as being a Dark Daughter. We're just ornamental. Kinda the opposite of how it is in the human world. All the guys know that we're just there to look good and keep Aphrodite amused." (2007a, p.232)

In the novel, interestingly, the matriarchal society occurs not only among the vampyres, but it is also seen in the Cherokee tradition, brought to the novel by Zoey's ancestors and her grandmother, Sylvia Redbird. Dane (2011) gives an overview on how their society used to be:

Traditionally, the Cherokee were farming people. (...) Women harvested crops and gathered berries, nuts, and fruit to eat. They also cared for the young and the elderly, and made clothing, instruments, weapons, and tools. Men traded, made war, handled diplomacy, and hunted (though women were known to occasionally hunt buffalo alongside them and even go into battle). (...) Women were landowners. In short, women were in charge of farming, property and family. And while men made political decisions for the tribe, women made social decisions for their clans. (p.119)

Dane (2011) continues explaining that one single Cherokee tribe is divided by clans, and what defines the clan that an individual belongs to is his/her motherhood, "consequently, if a non-Cherokee woman marries a Cherokee man, the children of that union would not have a clan and traditionally would not be considered Cherokee" (p.120). Each clan had a Council of Women led by a "Beloved Woman (*Ghigua*)" (p.120), a woman chosen by her good qualities, which could vary. This position was of great value and she had voice in the "tribe's main political body" (p.120.) Dane concludes by saying that since 1822 there is no *Ghigua* in Cherokee society.

As a result of an ancestry in a traditionally matriarchal society, it is understandable why Zoey possesses a place of respect as a High Priestess trainee within the series, as well as her grandmother to be a *Ghigua*: she was chosen by Zoey and Aphrodite to be the present-day *Ghigua* (UNTAMED, 2008) and this is the term Kalona uses to refer to Sylvia in the sequel, *Hunted* (2010).

All in all, we can observe that matriarchal society/societies is a concern of the *House of Night* authors, since they accentuate matriarchy in two groups, the vampyres and the Indians. Moreover, regarding our actual focus here, which is the vampyres, the matriarchal society in *Marked* certainly is worthy of attention, given that the absolute vast majority of the older versions of vampyres portray male-centered worlds. *Marked* is not entirely alone in emphasizing matriarchy, if we recall Fanu's *Carmilla*, with its

vampyre that can be seen as a threat to male-dominated perspectives, as briefly discussed in chapter 2. Yet, given the fact that *Carmilla* was published in 1872, one may claim that it was surely about time for an updated, contemporary version of vampyres that puts women at the center of the arena.

3.2.3. Religion

When people talk about vampi(y)res one of the main ideas that comes to mind is that they are related with the Devil: they are demonic beings, as vampires were usually associated with dark magic in the ancient communities (CARVALHO, 2013) and this connection was reinforced after Christianity, in order to make the population more controlled by the church. In this context, Zanini (2014) says that “For the catholic, the vampire is obviously linked to the sin, for it makes those who get involved dirty and damned.” (p.98,99). P. C. Cast and Kristin Cast maintained this point of view by creating in the story the “People of Faith”, a group that believed that God was above science and vampyres were not beings created by Him. This is clearly noticeable when John, Zoey’ stepfather, sees her recent moon mark and shouts “Get thee behind me, Satan!” (2007a, p.32). He soon starts to convoke the prayer tree, a group of Elders who gather and pray to God about the matters that appear. The main thought of the “People of Faith” is that “vampyres worshiped a false Goddess and that they were mostly selfish, dark creatures who cared about nothing except money and luxury and drinking blood and they were all certainly going straight to hell.” (2007a, p.65).

Throughout the novel comments on how this group acts are presented. Stevie Rae tells Zoey about Damien’s parents being relieved about him getting marked, once they did not know what to do with a *gay* son, so they would not have to worry about him anymore. When going to her first Full Moon Ritual, Zoey is surprised by the vampyres using pentagrams. Shaunee explains that the sign has been used for centuries and it stands for “wisdom, protection, perfection” (2007a, p.150) and represents the five elements. Zoey then realizes that “People of Faith” use the idea that everybody has to believe in the same things in order to have control over them. Zoey also thinks that they are hypocrites, once they watch vampyres movies, plays, hear their songs, read their books, *etc.*, but claims that they never mix with those “creatures”.

When Zoey arrives in the House of Night we actually learn that this vampyres are very religious. They worship the Goddess Nyx, the personification of the Night, the reason why vampyres and fledgling prefer to sleep during the day and are more

powerful at night. Nyx has been worshiped for centuries in several cultures. In Zoey's first contact with the Goddess, she asks who she is and receives the answer that "I am known by many names... Changing Woman, Gaea, A'akuluujjusi, Kuan Yin, Grandmother Spider, and even Dawn..." (2007a, p.49) "But you, Zoeybird, my Daughter, may call me by the name by which your world knows me today, Nyx" (2007a, p.50), and then continues:

In truth, it was the ancient Greeks touched by the Change who first worshiped me as the mother they searched for within their endless Night. I have been pleased to call their descendents my children for many ages. And, yes, in your world those children are called vampyre. (2007a, p.50)

P.C. Cast, in her introduction for the book *Nyx in the House of Night*, says that her fictional books are made with lots of research, especially in "history, sociology and mythology" (CAST, 2011, p.9), so Nyx's fictional speech is not entirely fictional in the sense of "invented", because Nyx is an entity that is present in Greek mythology,

Born from chaos, Nyx is the primordial goddess of the night. Aether (upper air/atmosphere) and Hemera (day) are her children with Erebus, her consort and brother. Independently, Nyx gave birth to a number of deities, among them the Fates, Eris, and the Hesperides, the female guards of the tree with the golden apples. (CAST, 2011, p.253)

and, in the novel, the other names she had represent some real religions, such as Navajo (Changing Woman), Inuit (A'akuluujjusi), Eastern Buddhism (Kuan Yin), Native Americans (Grandmother Spider), and the Roman mythology (Dawn).

Nyx is present constantly, throughout *House of Night*, not only in images but also in spirit and talking with the characters, which brings to the text the supernatural element of the fantastic literature. The first time her presence is evidenced in *Marked* is when Zoey, looking for her grandmother, falls and hurts her head. Then Zoey's spirit leaves her body and the Goddess's voice calls her into a cave where they first meet. Nyx was "fantastically beautiful, with long straight hair so black it looked as if it had blue and purple highlights, like a raven's wing. Her full lips curved up as she spoke, filling the air between us with the silver power of her voice." (2007a, p.49) After that, Nyx talks to Zoey indirectly, as if her orientations were spoken in Zoey's head: "*Things might be different if a more powerful fledgling took Aphrodite's place as leader of the Dark Daughters.*" (2007a, p.210) Then, in a religious-like interaction, some sensations and intuitions are emphasized, for example, in:

Value them; they are pearls of great price. The familiar voice floated through my mind, and I realized that I shouldn't question the new instinct within me that seemed to have been born when Nyx kissed my forehead and permanently changed my Mark and my life. (2007a, p.238)

As a figure of paramount importance to the vampyres, Nyx's image is present in various parts of the school, too. "The Goddess was so alive here. Her Mark was everywhere. Her statue stood proudly in front of her Temple. I was also starting to notice all over the school little pictures and figurines that represented her." (2007a, p.90). She was present in the silver embroidered teachers had in their left breast with her arms upraised, hands cupping a crescent moon, in a symbology that can be related to religious rituals and typical ornaments.

She is also present in the signs of the formers, in a sort of devotion to this special entity. The third formers' sign is a silver labyrinth of the Goddess Nyx that "stands for our new beginning as we start walking the Path of Night and learn the ways of the Goddess and the possibilities of our new life" (2007a, p.85). The fourth formers' sign are the wings of Eros, as Damien says: "it's because we're reminded of Nyx's capacity to love, and the wings symbolize our continuous movement forward" (2007a, p.101). The fifth formers' symbol is the Nyx's golden chariot pulling a trail of stars. "The chariot shows that we continue on Nyx's journey. The stars represent the magic of the two years that have already passed" (2007a, p.102). And the sixth formers' sign are the three Fates, with Atropos holding scissors, which symbolizes the end of their period in school, a moment when they will Change or reject it. All of these symbols carry not only the recast from the Greek mythology, but the Greek mythology itself, as well as deep religious or religious-like connections and references.

Her presence is also felt in the dining hall, almost as an omniscient creature, where the vampyres made a table where they have a "symbolic offering to the Goddess Nyx. There's always a place set at that table for her" (2007a, p.90). Furthermore, the vampyres even performed rituals specifically to adore and salute her: "(...)formal rituals are held twice a week right after school" (2007a, p.7) and the Dark Daughters also made constant rituals, but theirs were of a different focus. Such rituals seem relatable to mundane religious rituals that the readers may experience, and in this aspect we see once more a feature of fantastic literature, that is, the presence of supernatural elements (in the devotion to, specifically, a *vampyre* Goddess) through real-world means, or in a daily and familiar environment, as established by Furtado (*apud* CAMARANI, 2014, p.107).

In the series, Nyx is always watching over her children. Whenever Zoey needs guidance and support, she cries out for the Goddess and She responds to her, either through intuitions or through her affinity with the spirit. It is also noticeable in the series

that the Goddess is always willing to forgive those who have deviated from the Light, giving them a second chance. All these traces, again, resemble religious treatment of problems, in the way they occur in the Cast authors' version of the vampyres.

Another religion-related issue seen throughout the *House of Night* are the affinities that some vampyres and fledglings have, which could be read as types of blessing, a specific one that can be compared to special powers. These affinities can be seen as a recast of the mythological vampire's abilities of mixing and adapting with the nature. Neferet, for instance, explains to Zoey that:

Every High Priestess is given an affinity—what you would probably think of as special powers—by the Goddess. It's part of the way we identify our High Priestesses. The affinities can be unusual cognitive skills, like reading minds or having visions and being able to predict the future. Or the affinity can be for something in the physical realm, like a special connection to one of the four elements, or to animals. (2007a, p.63).

In *Marked*, only three of the characters are presented with affinities, Neferet, Aphrodite and Zoey. Neferet has affinity for felines and as healer, and she is intuitive. Aphrodite has the affinity of visions of the future tragedies and they are very accurate, and for that she was training to be the next High Priestess.

Zoey's affinities appear after her first Full Moon Ritual, and, as aforementioned, her discovery on how she possessed these affinities generates in the reader a hesitation. During this ritual she could feel something during the summoning of the elements. After she talks to her friends, they realize that she may really have this affinity. So they cast a circle and, in the process, they concluded that it was true, she had the affinity for all five elements. With them, Zoey takes Aphrodite's place as leader of the Dark Daughters and became the new High Priestess trainee. It is important to notice that "There hasn't been a priestess with an affinity for all four of the elements for hundreds of years" (2007a, p.211) and, as Damien says, "I don't think there's a record of any High Priestess who has had an affinity with all five elements" (2007a, p.237). All this leads to the belief that Zoey "could potentially be the most puissant High Priestess the vampyres have ever known" (2007a, p.237). This "puissant" is needed for the purpose the Goddess has for Zoey in the following books and for the conclusion of the series.

It is important to see in the whole series the presence of the diversity in religion: the cult to the Goddess Nyx by the vampyres, the "People of Faith" and their belief in God, the Christianity represented by the catholic nuns who believes that Nyx is some kind of incarnation of Mary (UNTAMED, 2008, p.162). Mahoney (2011) highlights that "large parts of the *House of Night* world-building are influenced by other cultures

and religions - in particular Pagan and Wiccan, along with Native American” (p.19). This may represent the diversity our contemporary era has brought, and an attempt to show that it is possible for the religions to interact and coexist without extremism.

And specifically considering the issue of religion and *Marked* in terms of new and old versions, it can be recalled that Dracula and Carmilla were considered as demons by their society for the attitudes they have towards human beings, specifically in terms of subverting their religiosity and transforming them in other vampyres. In recent works, as *Twilight* and *Interview With the Vampire*, the vampyres are not religious beings, although they believe that there is a superior being that can, maybe, forgive them for all the demoniac acts they have made and represent. In essence it is positive to affirm that the old version is present in *Marked*, in the sense of the human belief on a demonic being in contrast with the new and religious vampyre.

3.2.4. Other Characteristics

To think about vampyres is to think about haunted and old castles, in dark places. The House of Night building of the novel is a scenario based on a real college, named Cascia Hall, in Tulsa (STURGIS, 2011, p.99). It is an old building with gothic and medieval characteristics that reminds us of the buildings in the first vampyre’s novels, that have become so strongly present in popular imagination:

The place was like something out of a creepy dream. It was the middle of the night, and it should have been deeply dark, but there was a brilliant moon shining above the huge old oaks that shaded everything. Freestanding gaslights housed in tarnished copper fixtures followed the sidewalk that ran parallel to the huge red brick and black rock building. It was three stories tall and had a weirdly high roof that pointed up and then flattened off at the top. I could see that heavy drapes had been opened and soft yellow lights made shadows dance up and down the rooms, giving the entire structure an alive and welcoming look. A round tower was attached to the front of the main building, furthering the illusion that the place was much more castle-like than school-like. I swear, a moat would have looked more like it belonged there than a sidewalk ringed by thick azalea bushes and a neat lawn. (2007a, p.71)

Other places that Zoey visits during the series present characteristics of an old Europe and its ancient civilizations. It seems that, despite the fact that vampyres are modern in this novel, they like to maintain history alive, at least in some aspects.

A second characteristic that is usually related to the literary vampyres and our popular imagery of them is their appearance. Maybe because of the lack of visual effects (both in cinema and theater, with makeups) in the past, or maybe because it is profitable to make movies with good-looking actors, the vampyre has been seen as a being

that is attractive, strong, tall, and able to seduce. In *Marked*, a male vampyre is described as follows: “here was an excellent example of the stereotype of the gorgeous vamp guy, up close and personal. He was over six feet tall and looked like he belonged on the big screen” (2007a, p.152). In *House of Night*, as a whole, they indeed are charming, good-looking and there are explicit references to these features being in accordance with previous versions of the vampyre, that is to say, with long established stereotypes about the looks of these creatures:

Okay the first thing I noticed was that everyone who had a solid vampyre tattoo was incredibly good-looking. I mean, it was totally insane. Yes, *I knew that vampyres were attractive. Everyone knew that.* The most successful actors and actresses in the world were vampyres. They were also dancers and musicians, authors and singers. Vampyres dominated the arts, which is one reason they had so much money. (2007a, p.72, 73, emphasis added)

Yet, not all vampyres have this good-looking stereotype, in *Marked*:

I guess if you'd asked me what I expected from a male vampyre I would have said his opposite. Honestly, I had the movie-star vampyre stereotype in mind— tall, dangerous, handsome. You know, like Vin Diesel. Anyway, Dragon is short, has long blondish hair that he pulls back in a low ponytail, and (except for the fierce looking dragon tattoo) has a cute face with a warm smile. It was only when he began leading the class through its warm-up exercises that I began to realize his power. From the instant he held the sword (which I later found out was called an epee) in the traditional salute he seemed to become someone else—someone who moved with unbelievable quickness and grace. (2007a, p.135)

The good-looking characteristic is almost exclusive of the adult vampyres. The fledgling vampyres start to be as outstanding as the adults as they approach the Change:

Okay, the kids weren't as gorgeous as the adults. Sure, they were nice-looking—interesting actually, with their crescent moon outlines, and their uniforms that looked more like runway designs than school clothes—but they didn't have the glossy, inhumanly attractive light that radiated from inside each of the adult vampyres. (2007a, p.73)

In addition to their physical characteristics, the vampire¹⁵ is usually expected to show long hair and fingernails. “It's one of the things that happens while we're going through the Change. Vamps' hair grows abnormally fast, just like their fingernails” (2007a, p.112) and as it is noticeable in the novel that “the girls had long hair, the guys had long hair, the teachers had long hair, even the cats that wandered across the sidewalk from time to time were long-haired balls of fur” (2007a, p.74). It seems that the Casts really wanted to retake the vampire myth by using this feature in their novel.

Striking, though, in what can be seen as an opposite direction of the retake of the myth, is that these vampyres in *Marked* do not have the expected and famous fangs, as

¹⁵ In the Dark Ages people did not have the scientific knowledge that the hair and fingernails actually continue to grow for some time, *post mortem*. (BROWNING, 2011, p.32)

we can see in these two passages: “The woman smiled at me and showed amazingly straight, white teeth — without fangs” (2007a, p.56) and, also explicit, “Adult vamps don't have fangs” (2007a, p.180). However, this “no fangs” characteristic does not apply to all scenarios. With the dead fledglings returning to “life”, the fangs appear. For instance, when Elliott’s “ghost” is seen by Zoey, she noticed this detail, shocked at it: “Then he bared his teeth, and I could see that he had fangs!” (2007a, p.279). It is curious that her shock indicates her (now) more mature knowledge about the vampyres of *Marked*, suggesting she has left behind the previously discussed misconceptions she used to have (that is, before being marked to become a vampyre, too). Besides, all the red fledglings (red because their crescent moon tattoo is red) that appear later on in the other books of the series have fangs. As they are fledglings that came back to life through dark magic, another supernatural effect created that improves the fantastic in the saga, they brought with them some of the main characteristics of the vampire. As is seen in further novels, they die when exposed to the sun, differently from the normal fledglings and adult vampyres, who just feel annoyed when exposed to it:

Once you take a moment to think about it you'll understand that having classes at night is only logical. Of course you must know that vampyres, adult or fledgling, don't explode, or any other such fictional nonsense, if subjected to direct sunlight, but it is uncomfortable for us. Wasn't the sunlight already difficult for you to bear today? (2007a, p.64)

As the red fledglings are addressed more emphatically from the novel *Betrayed* and on, these are some features that can be analyzed in future projects.

A final characteristic to be discussed refers to life and death of vampyres in *Marked*. These vampyres do not actually die to later “return” differently. Instead, they undergo a transformation (Change), being permanently conscious of it. Throughout *House of Night*, the Casts do not give complete enlightening on how this transformation from human to vampyre works, but they do explain that:

The whole "if you get bit by a vampyre you'll die and become one" thing is strictly fiction. Scientists have been trying to figure out what causes the sequence of physical events that lead to vampyrism for years, hoping that if they figure it out they could cure it, or at the very least invent a vaccine to fight against it. So far, no such luck. (...) I tried again. "We studied this in AP biology. It's a physiological reaction that takes place in some teenagers' bodies as their hormone levels rise. (...) In certain people the hormones trigger something-or-other in a...a..." I thought harder and remembered: "a Junk DNA strand, which starts the whole Change." (2007a, p.32, 33)

As they are humans who suffered some kind of DNA change, after being “marked”, they carry “improvements” in comparison to ordinary human beings: “she was what all vampyres are, more than human — stronger, smarter, more talented”

(2007a, p.58). Neferet actually states that “A vampyre is not a human, although we are humane” (2007a, p.221), which means that they are not considered humans, in that they have supernatural features, affinities and powers, but they carry inside them a quality of humanity, or a certain skill that may enable them to conduct a humane action, by being able to show sympathy or benevolence.

Even though they are not humans, and do not have to die in order to return as vampyres, the Casts’ vampyres can actually die under other circumstances. Their possible death happens when the person’s body rejects the change, and that event can take place at any moment during the process of transformation. So in order to maintain the fledglings alive as much as possible and successfully change, the adult vampyres encourage the youngers to be as healthy as they can. Stevie Rae explains to Zoey that:

They want us to eat healthy for the same reason they make us exercise every day—so that our bodies are as strong as possible, because if you start getting weak or fat or sick, that's the first sign that your body is rejecting the Change. (...) And then you die. (2007a, p.107)

This is what happens to Elliott. His body rejects the Change and Neferet tries to make sure that the fledglings understand why the adult vampyres care so much about their health. Further, they want to show to the younger ones that death is a natural process of life, even for vampyres (though it is certainly not a requirement to become a vampyre after being bitten, as occurs in many older versions).

Her voice was serene, but filled with commanding strength. "The truth is his body has rejected the Change. In minutes he will die the permanent death and will not mature into a vampyre. I could tell you not to worry, that it won't happen to you. But this would be a lie, too. On average, one out of every ten of you will not make the Change. Some fledglings die early in their third former year, as is Elliott. Some of you will be stronger and last until your sixth former year, and then sicken and die suddenly. (...) I ask that Nyx's blessing comfort you today, and that you remember death is a natural part of life, even a vampyre life. For someday we all must return to the bosom of the Goddess. (2007a, p.267, 268)

The sudden death Neferet speaks about happens in the novel with yet another character, Elizabeth No Last Name:

"A girl died last hour. (...) How they all die. She didn't make the Change, and her body just..." Stevie Rae paused, shuddering. "It happened near the end of Tae Kwan Do class. She'd been coughing, like she was short of breath at the beginning of our warm-up exercises. I didn't think anything of it. Or maybe I did, but I put it out of my mind." (...)
 "But I just saw her in Drama class. She was fine."
 "That's how it happens. One second the kid sitting next to you looks perfectly normal. The next..." Stevie Rae shivered again. (2007a, p.147, 148)

As mentioned earlier, Zoey sees these two fledglings’ ghosts, of Elliott and Elizabeth. In the sequence of the series we discover that they are not just ghosts, but

revival fledglings - the red fledglings, and that their return was not something natural, but with black magic features. This fact brings to the series the long-known characteristic of the vampi(y)re, the undead. As the purpose of this work is to analyze the novel *Marked*, only, this fact can be analyzed in future works, and it is here briefly mentioned just to connect the issue, once more, with the discussion on new and old versions of the vampi(y)re.

4. CONCLUSION

This work has revised that, in a nutshell, the fantastic literature requires that the reader should be able to identify with the main character of a novel, or with some of its characters, as well as feel a hesitation, on the part of the reader, whether it comes from the character him/herself hesitating, or something that the text produces. The text should also contain supernatural features that blend with the real, in a familiar environment, that lead the reader to consider these events as something that might happen.

As exposed in chapter 3, the novel *Marked* possesses the necessary characteristics to be considered an example of fantastic literature. It is important to try and understand the novel under analysis within a category such as the fantastic literature in order to better grasp what the novel can or cannot do, or rather, what expectations one can or should have regarding the work. The reader can identify him/herself not only with Zoey, the main character, but with other characters as well, in several instances, such as the need of belonging, problems with relatives and their different viewpoints, ordinary problems to be solved, *etc.* It has the hesitation lived by Zoey when she is marked, when she does not recognize herself before a mirror, when she discovers her thirst for blood; as well as Damien's hesitation in discovering that Nyx loves him for whom he is. It also presents the supernatural feature in the way the image of the Goddess Nyx appears to Zoey, as well as in the apparitions of the supposed ghosts of Elizabeth and Elliott, to recall some of the examples brought to the discussion.

This work also sought to present specific themes in which vampi(y)res, both mythological and literary, are well-known for, and which characteristics P. C and Kristin Cast have maintained and which ones they have changed. Blood continues to be the main source of strength and power for vampyres, although they can eat normal food, but with restrictions on direct human feeding. Somehow differently from others literatures, when a vampyre feeds on a human, they both experience great sensations of pleasure, and can connect in such a powerful way that the vampyre is able to locate the human when concentrated.

The society in general knows about the existence of vampyres, but does not really know them, for as we perceive with Zoey's initial views, concepts are formed that are not true. In addition, this vampyric society is formed in a matriarchal style, in which women possess the highest powers and do not despise men, who have important roles in this society. Religiousness is another important point changed by the Casts. Instead of demonic monsters that alter the lives of their victims by subverting their religiousness,

these vampyres are religious beings themselves, worshipers of higher entities, taken from Greek mythology and various religions. The Goddess Nyx grants her subjects affinities for them to do good and worship Her, and she is always present in the lives of those who seek her.

As for some of the changes, these vampyres do not have fangs, they live in an environment with Gothic features, most adult vampyres keep the good-looking stereotype, as well as their nails and hair grow fast. These vampyres are not undead, like their predecessors, only undergo a change in their DNA which causes their bodies to adapt to this new life.

Like its predecessors, *Marked* presents adaptations and changes to the characteristics of mythological and literary vampi(y)res. These modifications are important because they renew this creature and are able to attract those readers who were not interested in this mythological/literary being before, as well as attract those who already enjoy vampyric literature and feel eager to read (and watch) yet newer versions about it.

In light of the discussion provided and the insights exposed, it is possible to state that, despite the academy's resistance in considering best-sellers as literature - or at least as literature worth reading/studying -, this kind of work helps new readers to acknowledge the classics. It is useful to add that best-sellers can also significantly contribute to the development of reading habits and the expansion of one's literary experiences, hence, studying them and showing their relevance becomes an important step. Furthermore, this work demonstrates that best-sellers are able to present formal characteristics in their content, such as features of the fantastic literature, and engage with important themes, like matters of the contemporary society (as patriarchal limitations) and ways of thinking and living.

Considering that *Marked* is the first novel of a series of twelve, we hope that this work opens the door for a continuation of the analysis carried out here, in the matter of adding to the vampi(y)ric literature, considering other changes and adaptations made by the authors throughout the entire saga, as well as other possibilities, like those briefly mentioned in this work.

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