

Features of the vampires in films – contrast and comparison

Dracula (Bram Stoker) X The Twilight Saga (Stephenie Meyer)

The idea of vampires appeared in many cultures, mainly from 17th century. However, it is said that people believe in vampires since the beginning of time. In 1897 Irish author Bram Stoker wrote gothic novel Dracula about vampire Count Dracula, who is probably the best known vampire in the world. Nowadays the “vampire topic” is quite popular; there are many authors who are interested in vampires from different points of view, for example Anne Rice’s Vampire Chronicles, Twilight series by Stephenie Meyer or Vampire Academy series by Richelle Mead.

Bram Stoker’s Dracula

In the beginning of this film Dracula was Romanian knight who fought against the Turks in 1462. He survived the battles but the Turks announced his fiancée Elisabeta that he had died. She was so desperate that she committed suicide; she jumped off a cliff into the river. She was Catholic but the suicide was a serious sin, so she could not be redeemed. When Dracula found out what had happened, he renounced God. He swore that he would rise from the grave to avenge his fiancée with all the powers of darkness; he became undead.

The plot of the film takes place in Transylvania in Carpathian Mountains. Count Dracula lives alone (only with his brides) in a strange and horrifying castle, which is full of candles, swords, statues, portraits of Dracula from 15th century. There are also plans, maps and books about London, because Count Dracula is interested in London, he is going to buy 10 buildings around London including Carfax Abbey, where he is planning to move.

At the first sight Count Dracula is very strange; he has eccentric hairstyle, his eyes are changing from normal colour into bloody red. He has long nails and he wears long red cloak. He is able to change his appearance; he can change himself into young handsome man but also into animals or the creature which looks like bat. Count Dracula doesn’t drink or eat, his only source of

energy is human blood. He hates garlic. He is not visible in mirrors, he has strange shadows – his shadows don't reflect the reality. He can come out in daylight, but he doesn't like sunshine.

From the beginning we know under which circumstances Dracula became the vampire, so it is not big surprise that he hates Catholic symbols such as crosses. He is able to move across vertical surfaces like a spider, he can take control of animals (for example wolves) and he is an authority for wind and rain. He appears as a steam, he disappears like a puff of smoke. He is very intelligent and he is able to read the mind of Mina, who he believes is reincarnation of his fiancée Elisabeta.

The Twilight Saga by Stephenie Meyer

The Twilight Saga consists of 4 parts: Twilight, New Moon, Eclipse and Breaking Dawn. The first book Twilight was published in 2005 and the film adaptation of this book was released in 2008.

The Twilight Saga is about Cullen's family – the family of vampires. It is not real family; they talk about themselves as adoptive family, which consists of 7 members: Carlisle and Esme Cullen, Alice and Emmett Cullen, Rosalie and Jasper Hale and Edward Cullen, who falls in love with Bella Swan, who is human in the beginning but becomes vampire in Breaking Dawn.

Opposed to Dracula, Cullens live in a beautiful house in forests near town Forks in the United States. For them it is ideal place for living because Forks is the rainiest place all over the world. Their house is made from wood and glass, there is modern equipment.

Unlike Dracula, at the first sight they look like normal people. But there are some things, which marked that they are not people. Their eyes change the colour from black to gold, their skin is cold, they don't grow old – they are still the same age. They are vegetarian vampires; they drink only blood of animals. They can go out in daylight or even in sunshine, but when the sun is shining, their skin is glittering.

They are intelligent; some of them have special abilities. Edward is able to read mind of people except for Bella; Alice is able to see the future. They all can move very fast and inaudibly. Their enemies aren't Catholics (these vampires are not connected to religion), their enemies are werewolves.

To sum up, there are many different kinds of vampires in books and films. Some of them are the good ones; some of them are the bad ones. People can kill some of them by using silver, garlic, sunshine; some of them – usually the oldest ones – are immune to these things, they are almost immortal. Vampires are famous mythological beings; they are “blood-suckers”. They influence the imagination of many people, so it is probable that this topic will be still popular in literature as well as in films.

Resources

Films: Bram Stoker's Dracula (1992)

The Twilight Saga films (Twilight 2008, New Moon 2009, Eclipse 2010)

Internet resources: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vampire>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dracula>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Twilight_Saga_%28film_series%29