This paper will highlight the fact that vampires follow an act of deconstruction where the concept of vampire as the other has been used and Edward Cullen of Stephenie Meyer’s *Twilight Series* has been portrayed as a deviation from the “normal” vampire. Jacques Derrida’s theory of “Deconstruction” described in his *Writing and Difference* (1978) will be present in the circumstances around the vampire because according to him there is no centre since when the centre is approached it also moves outside of or away from itself. This theory is suitable for a discussion of the vampires since it is a natural deconstructive being in its indeterminable composition. Emphasis has been given to the word deconstruction here; deconstruction in the meaning of taking apart and rebuild, not destruct but deconstruct by considering various options to one possibility. The reason to the use of Derrida’s theory as a source in this paper is that the new vampire is breaking against an old system of beliefs that is generally considered to be the only truth or normality i.e. the vampire is an enemy, evil, feeding on humans, dissolves in sunlight etc, creating the marginalized other and also the view of the new vampire which plays with the limitation between human and monster.

**Introduction**

“Where the vampire’s otherness posed a terrifying threat for the original readers of *Dracula*, however, today the same alien quality is often preferred as an attraction. As rebellious outsider, as persecuted minority, as endangered species, and as a member of a different “race” [...] the vampire makes a fitting hero for late twentieth-century popular fiction” (Gordon & Hollinger, 29). James K.A. Smith, in *Jacques Derrida Live Theory* states that Derrida explains that deconstruction is no method, technique or a master name. However my view of the vampires follows an “act” of deconstruction where I use the concept of vampire as the other and Edward as a deviation from the “normal” vampire. In the first section, the contrast between Count Dracula and Edward Cullen, the reasons for Dracula’s segregation will be examined by discussing how the vampire is described as evil by the narrators for fulfillment of contemporary social ideals. The next section will deal with the assimilation of Edward Cullen, his integration will be examined by viewing how the narrator and the love of the narrator contributes to his humanization together with how and why the reader experiences Edward as attractive instead of horrific as Count Dracula.

**Contrast between Count Dracula and Edward Cullen**

In 1897, Bram Stoker published his novel *Dracula* revealing the story of a vampire myth in Eastern Europe in which he turned to Gothic superstition with contemporary exotic fascination for the darkness as well as the evil. The main vampire of *Dracula* is Count Dracula, a shape shifting and blood sucking vampire described with monstrous characteristics living segregated in a castle in Transylvania. Count Dracula has the wish to move to London and to be integrated into humanity but the integration fails.

Over a century later in 2006, Stephenie Meyer published her novel *Twilight*, a Romeo and Juliet version of teenage relationship between a vampire and a human. The vampire protagonist

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**Key words:** Twilight, deconstruction, Dracula, vampire.
The Assimilation of Edward Cullen

Some factors that made Edward integrated into society and thereby contributed to his humanization needs to be analyzed. The voice of the narrator Bella, how the vampire is presented and how the reader is affected by the vampire in cultural context are the main areas to be examined. Edward seems almost human to us because Meyer has not created a total fantasy; instead she has brought magic elements to reality, creating an otherwise ordinary teenage love story. Teenage love stories about impossible love relations have always been popular and this is only another version of it; a new version which makes the vampire develop into new forms and questioning its own repetitive being. His family is engaged in arrangements which make them mimic man to fulfill societal expectations and thereby succeed in being integrated. For example: Edward’s vampire father Carlisle is working as a physician in a hospital and Edward and his siblings go to school. In this close interaction with humans Edward becomes communal in contrast to Count Dracula in his segregated individuality. Julia Zanger describes the possibilities within this communal development in Gordon & Hollinger “Dracula was confined “to a narrow range of activities – to kill and to plan to kill. The new vampires can be art lovers or rock stars or even police detectives, and this communal condition permits them to love, to regret, to doubt, to question themselves, to experience interior conflicts and cross impulses. Edward gains possibility in his integration and human like behavior. Although when he talks about his vampirism he shows an inner sadness to who, or what, he is which emphasizes the limitations of him e. g. he mourns the loss of his soul. His limitations do not, however, control him as Count Dracula’s limitations control him. They are more of a ‘baggage’ or an inherited disadvantage standing in the way of his human self. As quoted in the epigraph: “But you see, just because we’ve [the vampires] been…dealt a certain hand...it doesn’t mean that we can’t choose to rise above – to conquer the boundaries of a destiny that none of us wanted. To try to retain whatever essential humanity we can” Waltje argues that the vampire is more popular than ever because of their astonishing powers of adaptation to different environments.
Edward is being absorbed into humanity because the connection between the vampire and human makes it easier to identify with him and be attracted to the possibilities that lie within his being. Several critics and writers call this development, according to Gordon & Hollinger, "domestication" of the vampire. This domestication is to a great extent depending on the shift of narration to the inside of the vampire instead of from the outside which, as earlier mentioned, created a safe distance between the reader and the vampire. Gordon & Hollinger suggests that the post modern mirror "does not invent supernatural regions, but presents a natural world invented into something strange, something 'other'. It becomes 'domesticated,' humanized, turning from transcendental exploration to transcriptions of a human condition". Powell argues that the vampire has developed "from external super nature [...] to internal structures". According to Powell, Nietzsche says: "the over man is a model for the extension of human capabilities, the defiance of fearful mortality, and the embrace of life in its potential of becoming". By giving Edward a conscience and a voice to describe how he functions, Meyer has made the vampire break the structures by erasing the boundaries between the oppositions of human and vampire. Count Dracula has no choice but to accept his fate but Edward has the ability to change his fate by making what Powell calls: a "psychoanalytic self cure" by leaving "sickness" and return to the world", and thereby leaving the concept of being an "over man" to return to the "weakness" of being humanlike.

The monstrous features known from Count Dracula are also becoming more humanlike, or turning into human perfection. Gordon & Hollinger points at the fact that in the loss of the vampire as Anti-Christ towards a playfully composed post modern creature the vampire went through some changes in their generally recognizable features. For instance: Edward has "flawless lips", together with "a set of perfect, ultra-white teeth." This perfect smile throws Edward near to human perfection; one might even call his smile angelic or beatific. It is rather his cold breath and the beauty or perfection of his mouth than animalistic features as of Count Dracula's that makes him different; how his features affect humans instead of how they are visualized. Edward's skin is very pale and cold which is an obvious consequence of being dead, or reborn. But when Edward is exposed to direct sunlight his skin sparkles.

He restraints himself from his vampiric impulses and conceals his monstrosity, almost in a mimic of man; being almost man but not quite. This strive to conceal his monstrosity also makes Edward untrue to his vampirism which makes him transparent; almost vampire but not quite. Because when his actions of restraints place him close to being human his transparency also marginalizes him as vampire making him unpredictable. In Edward's transparent mimic of man he is trying to revive what he has once been which is leading to confusion about and loss of identity. Gordon & Hollinger mentions this as "The vampire becomes a symbol for any member of a minority group who loses his own identity but cannot be assimilated into the dominant culture." While discussing post modern vampires as a minority group losing their identity, one cannot avoid noticing the difference of voice in the novels. After the introduction of Count Dracula, and his monstrous features at his castle in Transylvania, he remains silent. Edward's voice is clearly present and explains and overthrows features connected to vampires; that is: the sun is not deadly; they do not sleep in coffins etc and let us recognize him through the love of Bella. Edward has a conscious and is clearly a thinking creature with principles. This creates a level of understanding of him as Other and increases his integration through an emotional recognition of individuality.

Conclusion

The integration of the new vampire Edward has led to a domestication and humanization of the vampire facilitated by the possibility for the readers to identify with it through attraction. The contemporary social structures have contributed to this change of viewing the vampire as a creature with a conscience and individual personality Deconstruction has helped us see that there is more than either/or to these creatures and that their many dimensions all depends on their individualistic features and their surroundings. One conclusion of the contrasting examination of Edward and Count Dracula gives the slightly mind-twisting aspect of Edward as an unpredictable predictability with several possibilities, mimicking man while Count Dracula is a predictable unpredictability, static and limited in his preserved repetitive composition. Stoker never had any intentions of making Count Dracula, Anti-Christ, apart from society therefore he is never given a chance. Meyer, on the other hand, has created a love story where one of the lovers happens to be a vampire and the other a human. Integration is inevitable. Also, by making Edward mimic man, she provides him with a voice, a conscience and a personality which conceal his monstrosity within his superpowers and makes him more attractive to us; his limitations become his possibilities. The adaptability of the vampire and its change in its repetitive composition has contributed to making it domesticated and humanized. That is also contributing to our acceptance of the vampire
as different and thereby explicitly emphasizing the attraction to the vampire as different instead of inspite of being different. The vampire is no longer a threat to us, but a hero-like creature, no longer horrific but attractive, no longer segregated in a faraway castle but walking beside us – the vampire could be our neighbor and companion.

References