

Mexico City and its Monsters: Queer Identity and Cultural Capitalism in Luis Zapata's *El vampiro de la colonia Roma*

Este ensayo investiga los conceptos interrelacionados del vampiro y prostituto, y su aplicación cambiante al protagonista urbano en El vampiro de la colonia Roma. Aunque se considera que la novela de Zapata forma parte del canon literario por ser un pilar principal de la literatura mexicana gay, este estudio propone que "queer" y "queerness" son epistemes más adecuadas para "leer" a su protagonista, Adonis García. "Queer", más que gay, sugiere múltiples redes de resistencia que abarcan esferas económicas, políticas y espaciales, y se relaciona, asimismo, con la ubicación figurativa vulnerable y, al mismo tiempo, privilegiada de Adonis como "historiografeador" y como sujeto nebuloso que consume y/o produce bajo el capitalismo. El protagonista construye su identidad de vampiro y de prostituto de forma performativa y discursiva y, en este proceso, incorpora algunos de los estereotipos asociados a estas figuras, pero, ante todo, re-inventa sus significados y con ello rechaza asimilarse a muchas normas de la sociedad dominante.

"The one duty we owe to history is to rewrite it."
Oscar Wilde, from *The Critic as Artist*

This essay begins with an epigraph by Oscar Wilde, a reliable crutch in homographetic analysis, to invoke disfiguration and figure-making systems, depictions of monstrosity and naturalized identity that continue to be relevant into the late-capitalist era.¹ In the outset of late capitalism in Mexico, the rhetorical logic of representation comes to a literary and historiographical climax in *El vampiro de la colonia Roma* (1979) by Luis Zapata.² In the early sixties, male homosexuality began to permeate tabloids and Mexican narrative fiction alike.³ Such post-auratic narrative comes to a head in Zapata's novel in the form of a psychological, therapy-driven, and stream of consciousness *reportaje testimonial* mediated through the technological device of the tape recorder.⁴ *El vampiro* embodies two appropriate yet "incompatible" literary modalities of the traditional picaresque novel with the street-smart male protagonist at the

helm, and the more in-fashion *testimonio*, two tropes whose combination contributes to defining modern urban life in the novel. Surviving despite “incompatibility”, however, only underscores the eventual possibility of its contradictions becoming compatible. One example of such a perceived contradiction lies in what Sylvia Molloy and Robert McKee Irwin refer to as the “intersection of the national and the homosexual” (1) where sexual subjectivity and embodied practice, particularly in picaresque texts, interact with the State agenda and its desire for legibility.⁵ It is in this contentious relationship between narratives where largely positive subversive power of the queer prostitute, as opposed to the straight citizen, may be garnered.

In positioning *El vampiro de la colonia Roma* within the possibility of subversion, the application of a queer lens or a “re-imagining of narratives” rather than denoting a “gay” reading, as many have argued, is more apt.⁶ Whereas “gay” as a term may work to concretize essentialist roles that are often heteronormatively defined and not applied “from within”, queer imagination can be defined as the “process of escaping heterosexual norms, which implies the search for alternative forms of desire and aesthetic values” (Domínguez-Ruvalcaba 82), can be described as the creation of a less socially-legible identity-as-performance that may catalyze political, economic, and historical effects.⁷ While the argument for a queer reading of *El vampiro de la colonia Roma* has appeared several times throughout the analytical canon, many undervalue or do not consider the implications of being a queer *vampiro*, both in its allusions to prostitution - *vampiro* is a common term used in Mexico City in the 1970s to refer to homosexual streetwalkers - as well as in the more literal reading of vampire as being a monster or something not altogether human. In not being completely human nor completely monster, there is overlap with many prominent perspectives on queer identity, in that the queer and the vampire are both often imagined as quasi-mythical, perverse, forbidden, and feared, as well as not accepted or recognized by history and society at large. Being vampire and queer establishes a duality that allows for a discursive collapse of feminine and masculine, a point where linguistic and visual identification and exclusive categorization of gender are muddled. The vampire component of Adonis García is vital in helping to craft the fictional, spatial, and figurative universe that defies patriarchal, oppressive tactics that dominate gender and sexuality. There also exists an affront to the economy: vampirism interacts with queerness in a dialectical and often phantasmagoric articulation in capitalism. Queer, more than gay, interacts with the multiplicity of meanings of vampire in terms of identity, (metropolitan) space, and economy in *El vampiro de la colonia Roma*.

For those unfamiliar with the novel, *El vampiro de la colonia Roma* follows the trials and tribulations of Adonis García, a beautiful prostitute who is both sexually attracted to and whose clients are men, in late 1970s-era Mexico City. The novel is narrated through oral stream of consciousness, and it is alluded to that the novel *El vampiro de la colonia Roma* itself is a transcribed monologue put together by someone who has recorded Adonis' words on a tape recorder. The stylistic choice to omit punctuation marks in the text serves to remind the reader that Adonis is orally relating his story, as well as serves as a reminder about socio-economic class and profession: Adonis is neither a writer nor does he own the equipment, such as a recorder or a typewriter, to take down his musings. Depending on one's interpretation of the function of the testimony, one could conjecture that a character such as a sociologist or anthropologist may theoretically be the person who assumes the role of the listener, as he or she is interested in his particular story from an academic perspective, or it may be that another, such as a therapist/psychologist,⁸ is being paid to listen to Adonis García and is thus motivated by more capitalist and, perhaps simultaneously rehabilitative, origins. Adonis relates the vicissitudes of his vocation and his passions, which often overlap, to both himself and to the mediator in question. *El vampiro* has been renowned as a historically important work for its unconventional narrative as well as its prominent featuring of gay culture and depictions of an explicit sexual nature in Mexican literature; is largely considered to be the landmark work on Mexican gay culture.⁹

Masculine, muscular Adonis García straddles the line of identifiable or "falsely true" sexual identity in that he does not manifest many of the monolithic or "naturalized" characteristics of "gay", such as being effeminate, that have been determined by hegemonic stereotypes of the Mexican state's workings of power and co-opted in national narrative novels. As Molloy and McKee Irwin argue:

Homosexuality was quickly made safe (in the 19th century) by equating it with effeminacy in men ... Homosocial relations among men remained key to literary Mexicanness in novels of the revolution. But by the fifties, Paz had cast suspicion on male-male relations of all kinds by implying that all Mexican men engaged in symbolic *chingar* battles, homosexualizing half of them in every instance. The queer side of hypermasculinity was revealed. (227)

Adonis embodies a *macho*, rugged *persona* with little desire for a long-term, affective relationship, which defies dominant, societally understood, and institutional expectations of the Mexican homosexual, essentially

defying the 20th century moral of becoming the “Stepford Homosexual.”¹⁰ Adonis is one of the *avant-garde* responsible for catalyzing the possibility of masculinity as able to conform to a wider variety of sexual practices. Queer allows for a more diverse aesthetic that has fewer negative connotations and more chances to define its meaning, whereas the “classic” effeminate gay male in Mexico had already been vilified by the 1920s.¹¹ Rodrigo Laguarda has noted that the novel brandishes aspects of “la experiencia moderna de la homosexualidad” (176), which he describes - rather problematically, I may add - as including ludic character, individualism, the importance of physical appearance and beauty, and the fleeting affective relationships, amongst others. However, this sort of superficial definition of characteristics that are then imposed on others unfairly decides the dimensions of the subjective “gay” experience to the same extent that many hegemonic institutions, such as the government, try to do to establish who forms part of the nation’s citizenry.

Then again, it is important to consider that there is a possibility that many in the gay community, who identify as gay, appreciate that *El vampiro* speaks to their subjectivity; many readers have expressed the possibility of encountering his or her own queerness through a readerly identification with a homosexual author.¹² However, reading *El vampiro* as a strictly gay novel may be problematic, as many may perceive Adonis’ persona to be a misrepresentation of the term. Even in the late 1970s, it was contested whether or not the Anglo-American term “gay” should be adopted by movements that mobilized for homosexual liberation in Mexico, less because of its possibility for categorization and more because such an adoption alludes to a legacy of American imperialism.¹³ Many people may want to use the term “gay” to simply explain their sexual orientation, and not have the term be the all-too-accessible buzzword that categorically sums up their discourse, behavior, social and identity politics, or general lifestyle choices, practices, and culture, a lexical move that, all too often, stagnates the discussion centered around cultural diversity.¹⁴

The term “gayo”, rather than the English term “gay” with all its corresponding and confusing connotations, is used when Adonis observes himself and others in large groupings: “todos conocían a todos y todos este se protegían se ayudaban era como una gran hermandad gaya je hermandad gaya no me medí lo que era chistoso es que parecía como si se acabara de descubrir la homosexualidad, ¿no? todo el mundo andaba en ese rollo” (166). “Homosexual” and “gayo” appear to refer to a group of people that strictly share in common a sexual orientation, and do not necessarily correspond to a particular cultural comportment: “lo madrearon porque se dieron cuenta de que también era homosexual ... ‘y lo dejaron

hecho caca fijate nomás por ser homosexual” (75). It is to say, homosexual/gayo are the terms that Adonis and many of the people in his anecdotes use even in very casual conversation, rather than use the term gay to define themselves, because it appears that the manifestations of “gayness” vary; their word choices reflect such diversity.

Queer identity as a broad concept aspires not to explicitly place one in a specific “category”, as “alphabet soup” acronyms like LGBTQIA attempt to do.¹⁵ Nor, for that matter, is such an identity delimited by certain behaviors - it opens up *otredad* and a power that stems from difference.¹⁶ The concept of *otredad* is a major factor in Adonis’ musings on his youth and his sexual history. He notes that he saw himself as different, without using many negatively charged words like “abnormal”, simply living a lifestyle to which many are unaccustomed or do not realize they have a right to lead:

me sentía diferente yo entonces ni siquiera sabía lo que era la homosexualidad, ¿ves? a mí me figuraba que no no sé ... si hubiera sabido que la homosexualidad es una cosa de lo más normal, ¿no? como pienso ahorita que cada uno tiene derecho a hacer con su vida sexual lo que se le pegue la gana. (27)¹⁷

The opposing scarcity of positively charged words related to concepts of institutionalized “normalcy” and “the stance of accommodation” to judge Adonis’ mannerisms relates to what Lee Edelman refers to as the “paradoxical dignity of queerness [which includes a negative] refusal to believe in a redemptive future, its embrace of the unintelligibility, even the inhumanity inherent in sexuality” (*No Future*, back cover). Narrative on heterosexuality in *El vampiro de la colonia Roma*, for example, is usually framed by a family dynamic, and often represented as cliché. As Adonis remarks, “pero por dentro toda la vida vas a estar solo digo en el momento de morirte nadie te va a acompañar” (100). A negative view, and *not* a “hedonistic celebrative attitude” (281) that Torres-Rosaldo attaches to the protagonist, allows Adonis to see the tantamount importance of accepting his own identity over desiring the acceptance of everyone else, since, as he notes, “por dentro toda la vida vas a estar solo” (100).

Maurice Westmoreland relates to the pessimism about the future of reconcilable gender identity that Edelman highlights and that appears in *El vampiro* that the “hypocrisy revealed and accepted is a common resolution to the conundrum of homosexual pleasure versus heterosexual family duties” (1). Adonis’ diatribes on self-destruction fit in nicely with contemporary nihilistic queer theory, where the very efficacy of being queer lies in the power of denial and negativity, and the rejection of the

heterosexist economy of sexual and emotional trade whereby all humans are expected to be monogamous, be family-oriented, *etcetera*. His negative statements thus provide resistance to views that place personal and social values within the family unit, for it is here that embodied practice and gender hierarchies relating to the traditional view of the exclusive “property-owner” of the bedroom weigh in. Sexual orientation and identity clearly do not reside in a separate sphere from economic definition or dimension, as the state prefers (re)productive citizens, both in the domestic and market-oriented senses of the phrase.

Adonis García, besides being a physical body in resistance, questions other common and intrinsic assumptions of Mexican political and social rule, such as the religious order: “y tú ¿qué vas a hacer cuando dios se muera?” (11). The question of the queer “death drive” that Edelman raises links vampirism and homosexuality, as both practice rites that do not lend themselves to life - in the case of the vampire, it is creating the un-dead out of the living, and in the case of the queer, it is the “sterile” sexual practices that do not create further generations of the human race. As Sue-Ellen Case shows, “striking at its very core, queer desire punctuates the life/death and generative/destructive bipolarities that enclose the heterosexist notion of being” (69). Other critics such as Brandon Patrick Bisbey and Timothy McGovern also point to the related use of refusal, death drive, pathetic suffering, and humor in the creation and resistance of new, modern constellations of sexual-social-political identities, such as queer, in texts like *El vampiro de la colonia Roma*.¹⁸ For example, Adonis often jokes about his trajectory in life: “también pensaba que iba a ser supermán sí en serio pero eso cuando estaba más chico ¿a poco tú nunca lo pensaste? y acabé siendo espermán je” (25). In Adonis’ entertaining one-liners we find the invention of new identity and new means of perceiving oneself in a specific temporal-spatial context, as well as a stark commentary on dreams unachieved in the reality in which he finds himself.

The references to drugs and alcohol further demonstrate the interaction between (unachieved) dream and reality, of separating oneself from the present world to imagine other, perhaps outlandish, possibilities:

me entran unas depresiones muy fuertes cuando estaba solo y me daba cuenta de que no podía dejar de beber ... o sea deprimido porque en el fondo es algo que haces contra ti mismo ¿no? y porque te das cuenta de hasta qué grado dependes del alcohol y también de que no conoces las causas que te obligan a beber tanto entonces es así como complicadísimo y prefieres seguir bebiendo para olvidarte de todo. (182)

Adonis' reflection on his own alcohol dependence is an example of how Adonis is strongly aware of his actions and others' actions in society, and makes for a fantastic queer "historian". Adonis pushes the very boundaries of historiography itself by relating the vicissitudes of his personal history orally,¹⁹ rather than through the traditional lettered city expectation of literature and the "power of the pen." Voice becomes a Saussurian "metaphor of truth and authenticity, a source of self-present 'living'" (Sarup 41); voice becomes a powerful symbol that confronts the silences or omissions that history usually contains in place of including the subaltern. Adonis' contradictory position of looking like a fairly "normal" masculine man amidst the masses commenting on various forms of subalternity makes him a forceful literary device that is "capable of outdoing the omniscient narrator in objectivity and the first-person narrator in intimacy" (Crickenberger 2). Crickenberger's declaration of the *flâneur* as "capable of outdoing the omniscient narrator" can be applied to Adonis' ability to be seemingly everywhere, to take note of a variety of class and sexual behavior for no direct ulterior motive. Adonis does not allow history to be portrayed by the "victor," or in this metaphor, it is to say, a more dominant state of sexuality or profession. His ability to outdo an ever-present observer perhaps embodies a subtle affront to the Mexican religious state, as a marginalized gay prostitute takes on the ability to act almost as the eyes of God. In the most literal terms of outdoing "the first-person narrator in intimacy," Adonis is one of the frankest protagonists to its date of publication in Mexico, listing his sexual escapades and relationships. The narrator Adonis García feels that he has little to hide, nor should he.

The surge of utopia in dystopia that many authors such as Claudia Schaefer observe in the novel is aptly represented in the search for a space, literary or otherwise, to accommodate queerness. The various dream sequences throughout the novel allude to Adonis' particular relationship to identity and space, as he observes "en general no sale la naturaleza en mis sueños así que ríos y montañas y eso ¿no? sino más bien la ciudad cuando sueño siempre sueño cosas de ciudad" (105). The term queer allows for the ultimate crafting of one's identity in the midst of a contextual spatial plane, such as a cityscape like the *Distrito Federal* that was in the process of becoming tolerant, at best, of societal and sexual dissonance.²⁰ That is, unless the identity in question has a visible link with the capitalist market as part of the dichotomy of producers and consumers.

A producer is responsible for making attractive and vending products and services on the market, a practice carried out even by those who form part of the urban detritus, such as male prostitutes. A consumer is

someone who buys products, but more amply who has a legible cultural practice or intelligible behavior that can be marketed to, someone that forms part of a predictable buying demographic. The identification of “queer” largely evades this dynamic. As will be elaborated on further in relation to vampirism, Adonis eventually self-identifies as a *chichifo*, or a homosexual man who sleeps with other men for payment or other benefits. The assumption of the *chichifo* label ultimately relates his identity and his importance to his (productive) articulation in the market and from his ability to accumulate primitively, and less about how he envisions himself as a person “apart” in society. The application of “queer” provides a clear *episteme* for Adonis’ desires and attempts to break free from the shackles of identities defined by the market at large.

The half-alive, half-dead, half-animal, half-monster known as the vampire has quite the prolific literary pedigree.²¹ Victorian writers utilized the vampire character, amongst others, in “gothic horror as a proverbial ‘safe space’ in which to grapple with taboo social and cultural issues ... in an age that was monolithic in its disdain for those who were ‘Other’” (Haefele-Thomas 182). Lustful, hungry, and stealthy, the hybrid character of the other-than-natural vampire relates to being queer, both in its monstrous archetypal form and in its meaning as homosexual prostitute, for queer and vampire both provide transgressive identities in the face of “normalcy” or institutionalization: humanity and heteronormativity, respectively. As is the case of queer, which resists the cut-and-dry characteristics of “gay” determined by a gay elite in which the “obtaining straight privilege over all else [has] become the central goal” (Sycamore 6), Adonis exhibits very few stereotypes of being a traditional vampire yet utilizes the ambiguous term in identifying himself throughout the novel. One of the few examples of possible, literal vampirism that alludes to his “un-seeing” of himself is when he glances in the mirror:

un día por ejemplo que me levanté y me vi al espejo dije “ese no soy yo” ¿verdad? “ese que está ahí en el espejo y que me ve con una cara como de diablo pues no soy yo” como que no sé muy raro como que me desconocía como que me veía cuando me veía en el espejo o en un cristal ¿no? que la persona que estaba ahí fuera la misma que yo. (135)

It is common lore, even into the 19th century, that vampires do not show up in mirrored or reflective surfaces. Adonis’ musings about not seeing himself in the mirror constitutes one of the few possible allusions to a more literal “monstrous” side to Adonis García. The use of the vampire monster as a character may also be linked to the concept of self-

identification and seeing of the “Other” in a mirror that creates a coherent image that the subject him or herself does not feel. As Gabriela Ambríz-Hernández quotes from Culler’s musings on Lacan “the seductiveness of the mirror stage is its offer of totality and a vision of the self as a unified whole. What lies ‘beyond’ the mirror stage is a loss of totality, the fragmentation of the body and the self [or the] the symbolic order.” The vampire stands in as a slippery concept that links to a journey for self-definition and understanding of an “illegitimate” or “partial” person, especially in the Mexican literary tradition of attempting narratives of totality of both the “Mexican” and Mexico City.²²

More literally, vampire is related to the closeted space that homosexuals have occupied, emerging at night and sleeping or assuming a professional identity during the day while obscuring their “real” identities until night falls once more. The vampire Adonis is thus very connected to the concept of “queer space” and the “queering” of space, as he decides to assume his “real” identity in spaces, such as Sanborns, which were historically and officially reserved for other cultural and socio-economic demographics and certain economic experiences disconnected from the economy of pleasure. The *gayos* as a group also use the space for Subject construction: “los sanborns tienen atractivo irresistible para los gayos” (90). Their identities are rather built on the intimate relations potentiated in Sanborns, and less on material gains. It is no coincidence that the space in which Adonis chooses to practice resistance is in an establishment where capitalistic impulses of desiring items and socialization of the middle class of Mexico City resides. The mix of purchasing power and social opportunity that ferments in Sanborns creates the particularly middle to upper-class ideology of *compro, luego existo* “donde la cultura de la cosa transforma el espacio social en un lugar de objetos” (David 14), and which many utilize to construct their identities under the guise of “depoliticized” buying activity that obscures social realities.²³ It is also this sort of poisonous mix in a culture actively encouraging the purchase of material goods that leads Adonis to want luxury items, like a telephone, to bolster his everyday existence.

Franco Moretti elaborates in his essay *Dialectic of Fear* that the vampire *is* capital, and is “cursed” with the power to create more victims in a “monopolist” fashion (91-92). The vampire character of Adonis García in *El vampiro* has a difficult time playing a part in capital circulation, for example becoming disheartened and sick both emotionally and physically as he commits himself more to his profession:

me dio mucha tristeza ver las condiciones en que estaba todo tirado todo sucio todo dejado a la dejadez me puse a chillar ... estaba formada por puros huecos ¿no? por puras necesidades que nunca se habían llenado en fin el pozo de las tristezas ¿verdad? Pero lo que más me apuraba lo que más me dolía era darme cuenta de que poco a poco había ido perdiendo a todas las personas que quería ... por lo del talón. (81)

In this physical and mental rejection of the “necessity” of paying clients/victims, Adonis flouts some of the norms of a vampire *stricto sensu*, and by extension flouts the grip of money on livelihood. Moretti also discusses the dialectic in terms of the vampire’s sexual and psychological state, observing that the metaphor of the vampire simultaneously inspires fear and desire (98;105); fear of being sucked dry by a “monster,” and yet a wanton desire for the ideal physical form of the vampire. Adding on to Moretti’s contention, I would say that Adonis García’s queerness and/or attraction to men in *El vampiro* could sub-in for “the bite” as a contemporary catalyst for fear. The threat of his queerness entreats the reader to renegotiate and transform her or his own relationship with queerness. Moretti also mentions the importance of linguistic and cultural codes in coping with our fears of the vampire, which relates to Adonis’ use of slang and its place in literature. The placement of slang in a literary work, with its lack of contextual fluidity, impedes understanding and changes up the reader’s expectations. Just as the term “vampire” seems to carry a variety of meanings, the reader must undergo a voyage of sorts through code-switching and the novel’s “‘negative’ function” (Moretti 105) to see the element of fear as a part of reality in order to finally arrive at conclusions about Adonis and his circumstance.

Queerness, the prostitute *vampiro*, as well as the more traditional vampire “monster” are all clearly tied to sexuality and seduction. The vampire trope has been associated with the alluring, aesthetically pleasing killer, exciting because of his or her mystery and because being involved with a vampire is to flirt with the dire consequence of incurring the transformative bite.²⁴ Even at the level of Adonis’ name, which is a nickname applied by his clients and actively adopted rather than imposed at birth, he is an attractive, sexualized icon intrinsically connected with the countenance of the beautiful vampire. The prostitute *vampiro* is also a character that clearly deals in sex as trade, pleasure and the intermingling of bodily fluids being the currencies of intersubjectivity. Brad Epps comments on the possibility of the prostitute as a wonderful figure of resistance, as she or he employs her or himself in a vocation usually

considered one of alienation (104) and is able to separate the boring routine of work from the delight of pleasure and desire.

The separation between pleasure and work situates itself contentiously within the normal order of civilization. Desire, as Freud declared, must be repressed in order to have civilization and societal conformity. That which is repressed by capitalism, an economic order of civilization, is that which can truly demythologize its dimensions, assume the form of resistance, and potentially destroy or reform the overarching structure. Adonis as a sexualized vampire and as a queer embodies that which our ordered society aims to repress, namely the embodiment of unrestrained sexual desire. In examining the norms of the vampire, we can find aspects of humanity and vice versa: the vampire suggests itself to be a theological abstraction born of the negative dialectic of normative, "modern" civilized humanity. The present negative dialectic is constituted by vampire norms such as sensuality or, said another way, human "abnormality" read as weakness or being tempted by desire. The vampire is the fetishized or fantastical form of insatiable desire, and thus the quasi-human quasi-imagined character embodies a profound contradiction that contains both what we sublimely aspire to and what we experience internally but limit every day.²⁵ Adonis the subject becomes a "desiring machine", embodied in the term "vampire", that has the potential to take down the hegemony of the "capitalist machine" (Deleuze and Guattari) that Adonis dislikes and that goes against his ideal lifestyle.

The vamp queer relates well to Dianne Chisholm's concept of "countersites" as constructed by Adonis García, such as his "takeover" of exclusive spaces as the restrooms at Sanborns for his liberating sexual encounters. Gordon Brent Ingram adds a dimension by noting that "a queer space is an activated zone made proprietary by the occupant or *flâneur*, the wanderer ... how desires [of the observer] fold into the passive space of Eros ... a space where desire intertwines with visceral sensibility, in the space of the everyday" (27). The theatrics of vampirism overlap with more normative performativity of gender in space: Adonis "performs" his own "livable life" of vampirism and sexuality. Despite being a vampire, Adonis García ventures out during the day and interacts smoothly with regular humans in public space. Far from being a representative of hegemonic traits of masculinity, the figure of the *flâneur* represents an "unsettling version of a feminized masculinity" (McDowell 156). Despite the fact that Adonis embodies a phenotypically "masculine" gender performance, he takes an interest in other men and likes to spend time in the updated "arcade" of the shopping mall, as women are stereotyped as wont to do.²⁶ Further, Adonis goes against "heteronormative power and

inequality"²⁷ by occupying public spaces like Sanborns that are not explicitly open to gay trysts, or being in spaces during times, such as daylight hours, that are usually off-limits to traditional vampires and *vampiro* prostitutes alike who are rumored to perish in the daylight or do not work in certain districts during the day, respectively.

Adonis occupies and infuses the "space of the everyday" with desire through his plethora of sexual experiences, despite not having any "official" approval to do so. The novel's *vampiro* protagonist utilizes "his body and its homosexual desires to plot a new kind of subjective, fragmented image of the city that undermines previous discursive attempts to present a homogeneous, totalizing metropolis that obeys masculine, phallic efforts to control and order it" (Schulenburg 85). In this vein, the vampire, prostitute, and queer all occupy a similar space of relative illegitimacy, occupy metaphoric heterotopias. The vampire could pass for human yet has other facets that determine her or his belonging in a more mythical or "different" space, while the prostitute is a present and known facet of the (informal) economy, yet is shunned in dominant circles appealing to religious or moral tendency. The queer "looks" the same or can pass for "normal", yet simultaneously is situated in a quasi-fantastical space where the dimensions of identity and sexuality are not pre-determined and are often deemed "inappropriate" by State officials or societal authority, like the Church. Queer turns "difference back into identity" (Jameson, "Notes on Globalization" 76) by creating a catch-all term that allows people to proudly signify themselves as "Other" without more information than he or she would like to proffer. The identities of these "different" bodies dialogue with dominant paradigms of the acceptable body of the citizen, as well as problematize some efforts to map the city as transparently as possible. Just like the borders of a city that may easily blur, these complex, fairly illegible identities do not mimic well "their" built environment.

The *flâneur* quality of Adonis García is obvious, as he easily traverses the city on motorcycle to size up the modern urban plane and his place in the larger cityscape: "empecé a ligar con la moto ¿verdad? más de acuerdo con la época modernicé mis métodos de trabajo ¿no?" (215). The concept of easily mobility and modernizing one's "trade", however, has its restrictions in class distinctions, for Adonis does not ascend the social ranks to join the middle class. As Walter Benjamin noted, the death of the *flâneur* was at the utter chokehold of capitalism and the resulting collapse of the *intérieur-extérieur*.²⁸ Adonis' personal objections to accepting money for his sexual ventures towards the start of the novel relates to the paradox of the historical figure of the *flâneur*, who becomes worn out as she or he begins

to seek a buyer for his or her goods. In Benjamin's logic, such a good was usually poetry or small pocket prose novels; for Adonis, the good is sexual services.

Adonis' mixed positioning as the queer *flâneur* and prostitute, and his mixed relationship with the market in terms of vacillating on accepting money evokes Benjamin's 'Now-time' of history: Adonis is privy to dystopia, heterotopia, and utopia all in the same instance, and is able to see the "idealization and ruination of what the city could become, as well as the fetishization and fossilization of what it never really was" (Chisholm 32). His homosexuality as a "privileged position" allows for Adonis to be a good historian on tape, seeing the variety of angles of interpersonal relations, as much observing those pushed by the State, such as the strong nuclear family unit, and the spaces that hinder or facilitate these encounters. The use of the tape recorder especially propels Adonis' historiography into a new level of primacy, as cassettes in the early 80s and even today could be reproduced relatively cheaply and accessed by a multitude of people without having to go through an intermediary, such as a production company, that may try to censor or profit off of his private musings. The trope of a therapy tape turned historical narrative, seen as a repertoire for "contentious politics"²⁹, acts like a revolutionary precursor for the modern blog. A similar format to the traditional diary, the blog can be accessed and processed by followers and does not necessarily need a publisher or other middleman to get word out.

The presence of a therapist to carry out recording and listening to Adonis' voice in return for payment is also feasible. The hypothetical listener may be more of a therapist than an anthropologist because of the primacy of capitalistic exchanges highlighted in the novel. Just as Adonis makes a living in the pleasure business, the remedy for his problems exists in the formal medical economy of therapy, an often privatized service made available to those who can pay in a system that is not socialized (DeSchill). It is plausible that there is some type of health professional recording the protagonist's thoughts because of Adonis' repeated use of a psychiatrist, whose occupation is to offer therapy as a service: "debido a ir a ver al siquiatria me di cuenta de que en realidad no podía volver a beber el día veintisiete como había pensado ... me pelié con el siquiatria y me cambié con otro siquiatria ... me pelié porque le dije 'mire estas pastillas no es la dosis adecuada'" (149). It is clear that Adonis has a history of searching out a listening ear for the anxieties and multitude of problems that plague him.

Other references to psychiatry pop up throughout the novel where homosexuality is subtly labeled as a disease of the mind for which its

“sufferers” look for treatment: “ella ya sabía que yo era gayo o por lo menos se lo imaginaba ps si era siquiatra debería saber todo eso” (54). Perhaps the novel itself is an excerpt from yet another session of therapy, whether the session were actively sought out by Adonis or mandated from within an institution that commits him for homosexuality, drug or alcohol addiction, or for hallucinations, such as the alien abduction Adonis envisions at the end of *El vampiro de la colonia Roma*. The fact that the therapist does not pass judgment or make his or her voice heard throughout the narrative, however, puts this potential actor in a different position than someone representing the State or a private business who perhaps would have nefarious motives for monitoring Adonis’ behavior. Here, Adonis speaks for himself and perhaps for those that actively choose to associate.

Adonis’ engagement with and inherent resistance to authority and official discourse is epitomized in his musings about a friend’s declaration that he be memorialized in the form of a monument:

tanto me paraba ahí que un cuate me decía que me iban a hacer una estatua ¿no? imagínate yo ahí en el cine las amélicas como la tigresa ¿tú has visto la estatua de la tigresa que está en su teatro encuerada? ... pues así iba a estar yo en el cine las amélicas pero con la verga bien parada y con la mano haciendo una seña así mira je y abajo mi nombre en una plaquita adonis garcía vampiro de la colonia roma. (113)

Statues are a very common urban ornament, and they relate to the order and logic of the city. By suggesting that Adonis - both due to physical beauty as much as to his importance as the “urban observer” or *flâneur* - is deserving of a statue suggests a Monsiváis-esque commentary on the efficacy of official message, and just who, or what values, represent the “real” Mexico. As Monsiváis claims in reference to the importance of statues and civilian vigilance, “En México, todavía, el valor de caudillos, mártires, artistas notables y valores del hogar sólido se determina por el número de estatuas que consiguen ... proyecto meditadoísimo que es transmitirle a los paseantes, por si lo necesitasen, el sentido de insignificancia. ¡Mide tu pequeñez frente al Estado!” (148; 153). Other references in *El vampiro* to Greek statues in client Zabaleta’s home dialogue with the concept of permanence and the concretization of values through stone, as the State often attempts to do through public monument, and that Monsiváis ultimately parodies. Néstor García Canclini connects the use of “conmemoraciones”, such as statues or parades in public space, to the reproduction of the “authentic” version of identity. He notes that “tener una *identidad* sería, ante todo, tener un país, una ciudad o un barrio,

una *entidad* donde todo lo compartido por los que habitan ese lugar se vuelve idéntico o intercambiable” (*Culturas híbridas* 177), highlighting the homogenizing power of patrimonial or national concepts of identity politics when pitted against individual identity performance.

It is clear that more and more, order “on the street” is determined less by a top-down order than by those like Adonis himself who form part of the chaotic order of the city by exercising political identities and - Monsiváis would say - consumer/producer identities. In terms of the latter, Adonis has expressed that having to identify as a *chichifo*, a paid cruiser and a producer identity, and not a regular cruiser who picks up lovers for the experience and not for money, has left him unfulfilled and depressed. Adonis’ mapping of Mexico’s capital through capital changed his relationship to space, and thus changed his relationship with his identity and with self-applied nomenclature. It is clear that queer interventions reveal the autonomous sense of capital and economics upon which critiques of the global depend, and further that there can exist a producer/consumer, a laboring subject that is not defined by the hierarchies of the family.

Embodying the vampire trope is related to the dialectical historiography of queer, which has been claimed by prominent queer theorists as responsible for “extending our perception of the world of capitalism that is otherwise impossible to grasp in its expansive diffusion and mythic progress” (Chisholm 34). Vampire is clearly a category that also manifests within the economy, both in its connotation of prostitution as well as its positioning as a mythologic character. It should not be lost on the reader of today that the character of vampire is featured particularly in contexts where global and local markets, as well as liberalist economic doctrine, are being contested or questioned due to its potential to endanger the livelihood of certain communities in society.

Mexico in the 1960s and 1970s in particular gave rise to interesting and contradictory currents of political and economic change that would provide the perfect breeding ground for protest ostensibly taken up by the vampire. Wide categories of political and social identity of both liberal and conservative tendencies were co-opted by the PRI leadership in a zig-zag pattern to give the allusion of a Mexican totality represented in the country’s one-party autocracy, as well as to ensure that rifts particularly at the level of the elite would not occur that would weaken the political structure.³⁰ A hegemonic party - with hegemonic values - generates the reputation of total “invincibility ... and a public message that only by joining the party could a politician stand a chance of attaining office and that outside of it there is nothing” (Magaloni 5). The Mexican Communist

Party was not even allowed to run until it was legalized with 1978 electoral reform, an “opening-up” that occurred a year before *El vampiro* is staged. The profits generated by oil under the López Portillo administration, as well as the hosting of the Olympics in Mexico City brought Mexico to the world stage as an up-and-coming developing country, yet this ascent to international renown led the Mexican government to use repressive tactics, such as during the Tlatelolco Massacre, to control the image they wanted to give off: ironically, one of a democratic, free society of capitalistic innovation and “progress.”

One form of dealing with an impending capitalist threat is often through narratives of fear, where the aggressive force is embodied in monsters, such as the vampire. The imagery of the “blood-sucking” beast representing capitalist exploitation and sapping of resources appears throughout many cultures’ mythologies, such as the *pishtaco* in Peru, the *sharakiri* in Bolivia, or the *chupacabra* in Mexico. These creatures appear in the midst of contexts where selling commodities on the market -selling the victims’ fat as fuel to governments in the case of the *pishtaco*, livestock in that of the *chupacabra* - is of importance in order to survive, to “stay afloat” in the (inter)national economy. Mary Weismantel notes in the same vein that we see the desire of the *pishtaco* for victims and fat “as an illusion, a metaphor for something else: ... the exacerbated contradictions of capitalism” (11). The vampire may also powerfully develop into a symbol of negation of the capitalist system by embodying zero-sum accumulation and greed.³¹ Queer as an identity of economic, sexual, and biopolitical contestation and, even further, a generator of fear, thus links directly with the similarly resistant and multifaceted archetype of vampire.

Fearful figures mostly appear as a means of giving a face to an unknown force, of applying some shape and dimensions of legibility to a mysterious threat. A similar threat of “queerness” exists, since the borders of this gender-nebulous and quasi-political identity are fluid. As Alain Badiou surmises, “capital demands a permanent creation of subjective and territorial identities in order for its principle of movement to homogenize its space of action” (10). In the sense that the vampire is not quite human but may still have the potential to navigate “human” society without being suspect, the queer is similarly subversive. The queer is a particular affront to the capitalist system due to the difficulty of “marketing” to or “capitalizing” on queer identity, which is not amenable to the distillation of consumer identity based on socio-normative “categories” that dictate what products “legible” demographics will buy. Meanwhile, marketing and public relations agencies in the 21st century have begun to target gay consumers and the “legible” cultural practices the label “gay” now carries

with it. Companies such as Target-10 claim to be able to broadcast messages that “resonate” with the gay and lesbian community, effectively changing the primacy of such labels originally meant to identify sexual orientation to be indicators of a homogeneous, predictable, or “rational” market.³² Because queer is often individually self-determined rather than norm-based, it makes it more difficult for capital penetration to determine queer consumer identity. Adonis manages to change constantly his situation, tires of his unconventional relations easily, and so in this sense he is also hard to “track”: “yo no puedo coger más de tres veces con el mismo cuate al cabo de dos o tres cogidas su cuerpo me empalaga me aburre” (51). In being queer and also not a *vampiro* in all senses of the word, Adonis avoids the deterministic powers of a “rational” market that attempts to “read” him normatively as they would the normal citizen-consumer. Instead, *el vampiro* takes the complex shape he desires and flies like a bat under the hegemonic radar.

The relationship between vampirism and queerness is also visible when perceiving the prostitute vampire character as responsible for the parody³³ and thus, in a way, the *exposé* of some more obscured truths of business ethics and the capitalist system at large: “Para Adonis el talonear es ‘su verdadera vocación’, su profesión ... producción y consumo que deben verse en una suerte de dialéctica si se quiere paródica” (Ruiz 334). The humorous subversion of such tenets in the primitive accumulation of capital may be seen in the protagonist’s declaration of a negative correlation between the financial and material gains from prostitution, a “sinful” occupation, and his spiritual or moralistic satisfaction: “el hecho de cobrar a alguien por coger era pus [sic] no pecado ¿verdad? Porque yo no creo que existan los pecados pero sí injusto digamos o no sé pero me sentía bastante mal por cobrar me sentía un vil puto y me empecé a aplanar bastante me sentía deprimido tomaba mucho” (80). The parodical capacity of the vampire is related to what critics such as Brandon Patrick Bisbey have outlined in *El vampiro* as the prominence of gender-based humor and its ability to disturb dominant narratives of comportment. The concept of queer and parody also work together, further affirming Adonis’ role as a queer vampire.

Adonis’ eventual shift in his “personal utopia” from being loathe to accept money to relishing money’s place in his interpersonal relationships links both concepts of the vocation (prostitute) and the myth (monster) of *vampiro* in the economy. Both manifestations often arise in the midst of economic necessity, as was discussed earlier, and both participate, both figuratively and literally, in the “consumption of bodies and merchandise” (Medina 509). Marjorie Griffin Cohen describes the modern condition of

“vampire capitalism” as the “inevitability of the market as the main regulator of social life” (30). The market is clearly engaged as a tool of biopolitics, regulating human (sexual) behavior by *de facto* allowing sex to enter as a taboo - and yet marketable - product. Though the figure of the vampire often arises in a plethora of contexts to mitigate the fear of economic exploitation, in *El vampiro de la colonia Roma* the vamp protagonist is rather subjected to exploitation and is susceptible to disease, loss, and hunger in times of poor business. The vampire *vampiro* is vulnerable to and unprotected by a shifting market despite being self-employed, is entrenched in a particular social class, and continues to struggle to find the available economic channels in order to subsist in the variety of (in)appropriate social circles of such a sexualized, urban subaltern.

The primacy of the queer narrative for the vamp prostitute exposes itself most of all at the conclusion of the novel, in which Adonis realizes that his earlier rejection of cruising, as well as his prior capitulation to the overarching economic system and bourgeois propriety is what most encumbers his happiness: “como que siempre el ... estar jodido económicamente te chinga otros aspectos de tu vida te chinga en tus relaciones con los demás” (73). Being queer allows one to confront the dominant system as well as reappropriate the nomenclature of vampire as a symbol born out of capitalism that turns against such origins. The *flâneur* is related to the vampire, because he or she is a figure who is physically manifest in the material world, but not altogether completely. In the case of Adonis, his notable, nomadic personality haunts his own narrative, leaving parts of himself in a universe that can be as ambiguous as the spaces in which a queer *vampiro* may be found circulating.

The new queer vampire narrative values the political economy of the body’s more nebulous desires and longings in the creation of potential utopias.³⁴ It appears as though the queer vampire *flâneur* is the ultimate anti-hero of late capitalism and the hero of a more empowering political economy of identity and the vanguard of, as Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari say, “a new politics which will match and outwit capitalism both in its macro-structures and its control over the ‘molecular’ interior life of the subject” (323). Dianne Chisholm similarly discusses the representatives who embody the intersection of space, economy, and identity in today’s age:

If, for Benjamin, the female prostitute of the arcades is the supreme allegorization of capitalism’s commodity-captivated, interiorized street life, for Delany it is the cruising gay man of Times Square’s porn cinemas who figures as the hero of late

capitalism - who absorbs the aura of urban sensuality and uses commercial space for public sex. (6)

The queer vampire *flâneur/cruiser*, in particular the character Adonis García, combines both the absorption or “sucking up” of the aura of urban sensuality and the occupation of public commercial space for sex, but attempts to imagine a more liberated world where one’s identity is not co-opted by economic or hegemonic categorical definitions. Adonis García as disruptive relator of pasts and inventor of futures is the subaltern *angelus novus*, speaking from the (present) rubble of the modern city and imagining points of departure.

Adonis’ tirade at the novel’s close about an alien abduction is a metaphor for the magnitude of his own re-imagining of the world and desire for unique experiences. His ideal situation embodies Edelman’s refusal to “accept a redemptive future” on earth to such an extent that the corresponding imagery is a lengthy departure to another world:

desde la nave espacial iría viendo cómo se iba haciendo chiquita la ciudad de México y adiós ángel de la independencia y adiós caballito y adiós monumento de la revolución ¿verdad? como si fuera un barco que se fuera alejando poco a poco y después la república y el continente americano hasta que quedara la tierra nomás como una bolita de billars. (222)

Adonis is “far out”, to use a term that simultaneously invokes the extraterrestrial as well as that which breaks the gendered, sexualized, economic mold: for enjoying sex in unconventional spaces, for wanting to be with new consensual partners more than clients, for proffering his own unique histor(iograph)y, and for not apologizing for differences that many, including the State and capital, may *try* to label predictable or “immoral” behavior or identity, and in the face of queer identity, will come up short of categorical definition. Adonis shows us that freedom from identity and political categorical definition through the nebulous label of queer comes with much power. It has implications for the “practice of everyday life,” as citizen-consumers can ponder what identity categories they have boxed themselves into and what tactics may be employed to escape or redefine their own limiting definitions. Such liberation also has implications for future literature and its use of literary archetypes; perhaps more protagonists will be given the free range of the multiform identity of queer.

At last, the close of this essay will parallel its beginning by evoking Oscar Wilde, who was also responsible for conceiving the queer, transgressive kiss and the resulting vacuum outside of natural creation

where the stars and moon go dark in *Salomé*.³⁵ Darkness descends upon the earth just as the alien abduction descends into the normal order: The queer, streetwalker vampire in *El vampiro de la colonia Roma*, just as in *Salomé* eighty-seven years prior and in other literary depictions of the queer, evokes the same sort of break, or puncturing, or penetrating, of our worldly, ontological order.

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NOTES

- 1 I borrow Lee Edelman's term of "homographesis" - or the assigning of certain discourses of "difference" to and a "strategic essentialism" (Spivak) of permanent sexual inscription on gay bodies - as well as his allusion to Oscar Wilde's impact on queer theory.
- 2 The term 'late capitalism' was coined by Fredric Jameson in his article-turned-book *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* and applied to the epoch of the 1950s onward (9), ergo encompassing the time period in which Zapata's novel was written.
- 3 As Robert McKee Irwin describes, "suddenly, in the sixties, male homosexuality was coming to pervade Mexican narrative fiction ... that the famous 41 (a variety of middle class men dressed in women's clothing) were 'bailarines estilo nuevo siglo'" (199). McKee Irwin furthers his argument about the visibility of homosexuality in 20th century literature by underscoring the sensational news article about the 1901 "famous 41." Such a move implicates homosexuality as a fact, not mere fiction, despite the Porfiriato's desire to sweep the ordeal "under the rug" and maintain social control over its subjects.
- 4 See Covarrubias, Alicia, "*El vampiro de la colonia Roma*, de Luis Zapata: La nueva picaresca y el reportaje ficticio."
- 5 "Legibility" is a contextual term coined by James C. Scott's, *Seeing Like a State* (ix).
- 6 For analysis of *El vampiro de la colonia Roma* as a novel of "gay literature", please see the work of Bisbey, Brandon Patrick; and Westmoreland.
- 7 Judith Butler's productive theory is that "identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results" (33). Identities that are uniquely "performed" are less likely to become static, stock forms of self-recognition that create limiting stereotypes.
- 8 Claudia Schaefer, amongst other academics, has noted that the interlocutor in *El vampiro* may be a psychiatrist (49).

- 9 Prominent critics such as David William Foster (49) and Rodrigo Laguarda have declared the importance of the novel in the development of gay literary culture.
- 10 The term “Stepford Homosexual” originates with Mattilda Sycamore.
- 11 See Irwin 117 for more history of the persecution of gay individuals and groups in Mexico under the Porfiriato.
- 12 See Sue-Ellen Case’s chapter on “Tracking the Vampire” in the book *Feminist and Queer Performance: Critical Strategies* for a discussion of Rimbaud and impact on readership.
- 13 See Bisbey, Brandon Patrick for a discussion of the neologism “gayo” and its allusions to North American imperialism in Mexico.
- 14 As queer advocate Carol Queen notes, “queers are here to culturally diversify every society into which we emerge. We are here to expand the very notion of what ‘being ourselves’ can mean ... Instead of raising it [the next generation], we help birth the alternative ways of seeing that the next generation (or the one after that) will embrace” (qtd. in Sycamore 109).
- 15 See the *New York Times* article “Generation LGBTQIA” by Michael Schulman for a more in-depth discussion of the term “alphabet soup” in reference to gender and societal identity.
- 16 Otredad is a concept linked to *El vampiro* that I credit to Domínguez-Ruvalcaba; for an in-depth conversation about the difference inherent in queerness, see page 82 of his article “Gloria Anzaldúa and the Meaning of Queer.”
- 17 Another example includes “no es que yo me avergüence del talón sino más bien son ellos los que se avergüenzan digamos que yo no tengo prejuicios pero la gente sí” (55).
- 18 See Bisbey, “Humor and Homosexuality in Contemporary Mexican Narrative;” McGovern, “Visions of Mexican Cinema and the Queer Film Script.” “Constellations” is a term coined by Dianne Chisholm to denote a complex of identity rooted in metropolitan historicity that includes not just sexual orientation, but a myriad of cultural practices and behaviors that occur in relation to the space they occupy (ix).
- 19 I credit Chris T. Schulenburg for the connection between orality and transgressive historiography.
- 20 The text *Mexico se escribe con J* follows the rise of gay culture and media in a Mexico City in a “culture that was still under construction” (Schuessler and Capistrán, back cover), with many gaps in cultural representation, and where, as Elena Poniatowska has noted, it was common for gays to be the subject of ridicule.

- 21 For an extensive study of the variety of vampire tales that have arisen since the early 19th century, primarily as personification of the national fear *Zeitgeist*, see Nina Auerbach's, *Our Vampires, Ourselves*.
- 22 See Santa (Gamboa), *La región más transparente* (Fuentes), *El laberinto de soledad* (Paz) and *Los rituales del caos* (Monsiváis) amongst others, for the Mexican literary canon that attempts to address the concept of Mexican society as a cohesive whole, tied together by strong nationalism and a certain "Mexican" identity or "Mexicanness."
- 23 See Néstor García Canclini's *Culturas híbridas* for a discussion about the industrial bourgeoisie and their imposition into the "mercado cultural" (86) of museums, galleries, and other centers of society, such as the shopping mall.
- 24 *El vampiro de la colonia Roma* obviously predates the AIDS crisis, so I would like to preempt readings based on a pandemic that does not coincide with the historical period in which the gay vampire Adonis García finds himself.
- 25 Peter Thompson astutely sums up the idea of the Freudian dialectic that I see as apt in imagining the vampire: this figure resides "between what is and what might be that allows us to overstep the boundaries with which we are constantly presented" in order to create our potential utopic endpoints.
- 26 Matthew Gutmann in his book *The Meanings of Macho* (2006) notes that Mexican men and women have increasingly begun to realize the mutability of gender identity, signaling a change in monolithic gender categories in Mexico. Men and women are beginning to approximate the Foucaultian "'happy limbo of a non-identity'" (243). These sea changes of gender identity in contemporary Mexico could make up the material of another article in itself.
- 27 These terms are credited to Jelke Boesten, who describes the importance of sexual performance within "normative frameworks that are historically and culturally formed ... that reconfirm binary orders and thus heteronormative power and inequality" (3).
- 28 "Intérieur-extérieur" is a loose reference to Walter Benjamin's musings on the metropolis and the *flâneur* in his *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet*, in which he regards all spaces in 19th century Paris as battlefields of society and history that have surpassed the interior-exterior binary.
- 29 "Inherited forms of collective action (our term for this is *repertoires*), and invented new ones ... Contentious politics involves interactions in which actors make claims bearing on someone else's interests, leading to coordinated efforts on behalf of shared interests or programs, in which governments are involved as targets, initiators of claims, or third parties. Collective action brings together three familiar features of social life: contention, collective action, and politics ... Most contention also occurs outside politics" (Tilly 4).
- 30 See Beatriz Magaloni's *Voting for Autocracy: Hegemonic Party Survival and its Demise for Mexico*.

- 31 Claudia Schaefer explores in *Danger Zones* that in the case of the character of vampire, “despite being a strong figment of imagination under capitalism, emerges as other subcultures are opposed to contemporary society and its capitalist system” (41).
- 32 See www.target-10.com for an example of a neoliberal corporation whose expressed mission is to cater to gay consumers.
- 33 For more information on the power of parody as a form of revealing truths, see Bakhtin’s work on heteroglossia.
- 34 Paraphrase of Claudia Schaefer, page 90 of her work *Danger Zones*.
- 35 I credit Sue-Ellen Case for the reference to *Salomé* and the queer vampire.

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