

***Dracula: An International Perspective*, ed. by Marius-Mircea Crişan**
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Dracula: An International Perspective (2017), edited by Marius-Mircea Crişan, is an insightful anthology which delves into the world of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), the renowned gothic novel which tells the story of the Transylvanian vampire Count Dracula and his attempts to colonise England by spreading the undead curse. Throughout this anthology, the novel's complex navigation through the ever-evolving gothic genre is skilfully followed in fourteen captivating interdisciplinary essays. Analysing the novel through the lens of literature, tourism, and film, Crişan's anthology demonstrates complex international and cultural influences rooted deep within the vampire myth. The chapters of this anthology are organised into three thematical sections. The first six chapters by William Hughes, Donatella Abbate Badin, Lucian-Vasile Szabo and Marius-Mircea Crişan, Sam George, Hans Corneel de Roos, and Clive Bloom focus on the connections between Stoker and his predecessors such as Charles Maturin, Edgar Allan Poe, and J. Sheridan Le Fanu. This is followed by three chapters by Duncan Light, Marius-Mircea Crişan, and Kristin L. Bone, which explore the connections between *Dracula*'s association with nineteenth-century understandings of tourism, and the effect that the vampire myth has had on current popular culture. The final five chapters of the anthology by John Edgar Browning, Nancy Schumann, Magdalena Grabias, Dorota Babilas, and Carol Senf explore how Stoker's vampire has spawned over a century of literary and film adaptations. This review will take one chapter from each section that best introduces new and relevant discussions within the overall theme.

Szabo and Crişan's 'Representation of East-Central Europe in Edgar Allan Poe's Gothic Short Stories' in the anthology's first section convincingly explores the 'Poesque' style of *Dracula*. This is contextualised with *The Lost Journal of Bram Stoker* (2012), a journal written between 1871 and 1881, in which Poe's influence on young Stoker is evident. Through such links, Szabo and Crişan offer thought-provoking insights into Stoker's upbringing. Finding extensive similarities between the Transylvanian setting of *Dracula* and Poe's Hungarian tale 'Metzengerstein' (1832), Szabo and Crişan suggest that both writers portray East-Central Europe as a terrifying and primitive land, a sharp contrast to Western Europe, a place of refinement. The final section of the chapter analyses how many of Poe's tales feature far more positive connections with a number of innovations from across the globe. For example, Poe's 'The Swiss Bell-Ringers' (1844), references musical inventions by Johann Nepomuk Mälzel, in addition to predicting humanity's later dependency on

electricity. For the most part, Szabo and Crişan's chapter remains balanced in its exploration of Poe's influence on Stoker. However, this closing section focuses primarily on the inventions referenced solely in Poe. While Szabo and Crişan's conclusive paragraph does mention Stoker's characters' use of innovative means to fight Count Dracula (taking advantage of new developments in medicine, transportation, and communication such as phonographs and telegrams), it could benefit from some expansion. Regardless, this opens up an interesting line of enquiry for future readings of *Dracula* that could extend beyond Stoker's use of the traditional gothic setting of remote and barren lands to acknowledge his contrasting incorporation of more advanced technologies.

From the second section, Light's 'Tourism and Travel in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', offers particularly interesting and new perspectives on how tourism and travel are explored in the novel. Light reveals that while current research has acknowledged this connection, it has only touched upon the issue in passing. Tracing tourism to the eighteenth-century upper class who often visited seaside towns, Light suggests that tourism evolved into a well-established practice in the late nineteenth century when Stoker was writing. The novel's exploration of tourism is organised into four different categories: business, health, political, and dark. He defines the first two with ease: business tourism encompasses travelling for reasons related to work, such as Jonathan Harker's initial journey to Transylvania to meet his client, Count Dracula; and health tourism involves travelling away from home to improve health, such as Lucy Westenra's travels from London to Whitby, 'one of Britain's first spa and seaside resorts, having become popular in the early eighteenth century for its mineral springs and as a place for sea bathing' (p. 144). The difficulties that Light has, and acknowledges, are demonstrated in the discussions on political tourism and dark tourism. In relation to the former, Light focuses on the novel's men when they pursue the Count with the intent to destroy him. Detailing a number of their motives and actions, Light struggles to place them within a clear category, although he does rightfully recognise that their means of travel differ from previous standard categorisations of tourism. Turning to dark tourism, Light ponders why Jonathan and Mina return to Transylvania at the end of the novel, as it is a place associated with death. While Light expresses his difficulty in defining the latter two categories, all four are of equal importance in opening the door to new scholarly analysis.

In the final section of the anthology, Schumann's 'Vampiric Emotion and Identity in *Dracula* and *Interview with the Vampire*' compares the expression of emotions and identity through the characters' gender in *Dracula* with those in Anne Rice's *Interview with the*

Vampire (1976) and *The Vampire Lestat* (1985). For Schumann, Count Dracula embodies the aristocratic imperialist. He is a self-confident, self-assured, domineering businessman who expects and demands obedience. While the novel explores many emotions, predominantly fear, these are never exhibited by the Count himself. Even in death, he displays no emotions. In contrast, the vampiric women are unpredictable, uncontrollable, and full of emotion. Thus, despite his own emotionless demeanour, Dracula has the ability to inspire uncontrollable emotion and sexual desires in the women he turns into vampires. For the novel's men, these vampiric women are a dangerous force indeed, a reflection of the Victorian threat of the 'New Woman'. After a detailed analysis of these issues in relation to *Dracula*, Schumann shifts her attention to Rice's novels, suggesting that, despite clear structural similarities and the direct influence of *Dracula*, they reverse the stereotypical gender roles that structure Stoker's novel. Focusing primarily on the three main characters, Louis, Lestat and Claudia, Schumann argues that both male characters are ruled by their emotions – specifically grief, desperation, and a yearning for companionship. It is the female vampire, Claudia, however, who most resembles Count Dracula as she is assertive and emotionally guarded. Schumann's approach convincingly demonstrates the impact of the vampire myth, a myth which has transformed over time to reflect the changing world around us. Female characters who once embodied the fears of Victorian men, while 'still presented as objects [...], have stopped identifying themselves by their relation to a male (vampire or otherwise) and become self-assured individuals' (p. 223), an interesting line of enquiry for future studies.

Delving into the world of *Dracula* and how the novel and its influence have transformed literature, tourism, and film, Crişan's *Dracula: An International Perspective* succeeds in meticulously analysing a range of material across multiple disciplines, while consistently maintaining focus in its exploration of the imagological construction of gothic place. From William Hughes' exploration of the hybrid nature of English, German, and other Continental cultural differences in the Irish Gothic formed by Maturin, Le Fanu, and Stoker, to Senf's examination of the traditional concept of the 'Other' through remote locations, and its evolution into a vehicle for familiar fears in modern, urban settings, this anthology brings to light an array of innovative and thought-provoking topics. Rejuvenating an already-dense field of Stokerian analysis, Crişan's anthology provides a stimulating discussion for both academics and members of the general public with an interest in the vampire myth.

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