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Isabel Ermida, ed. *Dracula and the Gothic in Literature, Pop Culture and the Arts*. Brill, 2016. 356 pp. \$126.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-90-04-30806-0.

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Dracula and the Gothic in Literature, Pop Culture and the Arts is an interdisciplinary collection of articles put together by Isabel Ermida that focuses on the development of the vampire figure from its early inception as a literary personage and a representation of the demonic East European Other in the eyes of Victorian society to its ever-evolving symbolism in contemporary fiction, film, and other media. It contributes to the growing number of works written on the vampire theme, as seen in a recently published anthology of the vampire scholarship, *The Vampire in Folklore, History, Literature, Film and Television: A Comprehensive Bibliography*, compiled by J. Gordon Melton and Alysa Hornick (2015).

The volume under review grew out of a 2012 conference held at the University of Minho (Braga, Portugal), which traced the impact of *Dracula* (1897) on the subsequent modifications of the Gothic genre to commemorate the centenary of Bram Stoker's death. While the collection takes up an ambitious goal to "look at the Gothic phenomenon in its cinematic, theatrical, and televised facets" (p. 12), it mostly focuses on a subbranch of Gothic fiction, namely the vampire literature inspired by Stoker. Such a narrow focus does not diminish its scholarly value because, through a thorough, multilayered interpretation of the vampire theme, the book succeeds in throwing light on the Gothic genre as a whole.

The collection consists of an introduction, penned by Ermida, fourteen articles, a comprehensive bibliography, notes on contributors, and an index. Structurally, it is divided into three equal parts. Part 1 focuses on the location of *Dracula* and other texts that draw on it, linking the alterations in the Gothic and vampire genre conventions

to a change in locale. Part 2 examines artistic adaptations of the Gothic beyond literature, and part 3 traces the ongoing evolution of the modern vampire figure.

The first section of the book consists of five articles that offer insight into the relationship between the vampire character and the setting. "The Son of the Vampire: Greek Gothic, or Gothic Greece?" by Álvaro Garca Maran, one of the most interesting contributions to this collection, asks why *Dracula* was not made Greek by Stoker, given the presence of this creature in Greek folklore and its Greek ties in John Polidori's foundational short story "The Vampyre" (1819). Through this research question, Maran generates a sophisticated argument, based on two points: Greece as a cradle and the cultural core of Western civilization and the vampire's status as an outsider in the early examples of vampire literature. Since *Dracula* could not be perceived as a Greek (i.e., a cultural core) and an outsider at the same time, the vampire is denied its Greek origins and moved to a more eastern locale in order to be used as a tool to reflect on the imperial fears of the colonial other. Two subsequent articles, "The Old and New *Dracula* Castle: The Poienari Fortress in *Dracula* Sequels and Travel Memoirs" by Marius-Mircea Crian and "Dracula Orientalized" by Raphaella Delores Gomez, examine the symbolic meaning of the Gothic castle and its locale in Stoker's novel and provide insight into the relationship between *Dracula*, Britain's imperial politics, and Britain's fears of an imagined East European power (seen symbolically in *Dracula*) with its threat of reverse colonization. The next article ("Empire, Monsters and Barbarians: Uncanny Echoes and Reconfigurations of Stoker's *Dracula* in Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*") by Rogers

Asempasah) continues Gomez's analysis by offering a revisionist reading of Stoker through the novel of South African author J. M. Coetzee and discovering the barbaric, monstrous features within the imperial core. Finally, Flannery O'Connor's *Wise Blood: An Anatomy of the American Gothic* by Carlos Azevedo looks at the Gothic satire as a means to unveil the flaws of America's South and the modern culture of consumerism. Although it stands somewhat aside from the rest of the articles by not being intertextually linked to Stoker, it offers an interesting take on the abundance of violence in O'Connor's fiction. Combined, these articles succeed in arguing that the locale in *Dracula* and its change in subsequent texts that are linked to it expose not only the development of the Gothic genre, but also the ability of Gothic texts to adjust their conventions to respond to the needs of the region in question.

The second part of the book contains four articles that deal with representations of the Gothic outside of traditional literary forms and the adaptations needed to convey the Gothic atmosphere and tone in nonliterary media. It opens with Dorota Babilas's "Tod Browning's *Dracula* (1931): The Vampire Wears a Dress Coat," which promises to analyze how sartorial choices helped to render the novel into a motion picture. While more discussion of the dress would have been welcome, the article's analysis of a film adaptation of *Dracula* as a whole and the modification of its title character deserve attention. The next two articles, "Aurally Bloodcurdling: Representing *Dracula* and His Brethren in BBC Radio Drama" by Leslie McMurtry and "Land of Apparitions: The Depiction of Ghosts and Other Supernatural Occurrences in the First Gothic Plays" by Eva Åoupková, analyze the effects needed to create the Gothic tone within radio and theatrical adaptations of Gothic texts. "Gothic Architecture, Castles and Villains: Transgression, Decay and the Gothic *Locus Horribilis*" by Fanny Lacôte studies the evolution that the Gothic house undergoes on TV. The article explores the link between the Gothic locale and the owner/villain. By evaluating this relationship and the imagery used to convey it, Lacôte concludes that the Gothic locale and the villain are inseparable, and in some cases may function as one symbol. Overall, these selections show that to appeal to an ever-changing audience and artistic media, and to convey an authentic, integral voice relatable to the zeitgeist of a particular epoch, new modes of the Gothic genre had to be developed.

Part 3 consists of five works that focus on the vampire figure in modern media. "Postmodern Gothic: Teen Vampires" by Joana Passos opens this section and dis-

cusses the vampire as an attractive lover. "Vampires On a Special Diet: Identity and the Body in Contemporary Media Texts" by Lea Gerhards continues the discussion with its analysis of the domestication that the vampire image undergoes through diet and self-control. By examining the new, vegetarian diet of contemporary vampires, Gerhards shows how the vampire rids itself of its traditional monstrous features and represents a new, postmodern, politically correct image that attracts young adult readers. "Forever Young, Though Forever Changing: Evolution of the Vampire" by Maria Antónia Lima examines the vampire's controversial image in contemporary fiction as something attractive and repellent, seeing it as a symbol of human insecurities and of the postmodern, conflicted self. "Who's Afraid of Don Juan? Vampirism and Seduction" by Maria Do Carmo Mendes contrasts Romantic and Gothic sensibilities through a comparative reading of Don Juan and *Dracula* myths. Mendes examines the trope of a *homme fatale* in contrast to a *femme fatale* archetype and points to the similarities and differences in the cultural and social applications of these two images. While both *Dracula* and Don Juan "emancipate themselves from the common morals of their time" (p. 291), Mendes sees Don Juan as more of a political rebel and symbolically less sexual than *Dracula*. Finally, "Destroying and Creating Identity: Vampires, Chaos and Society in Angela Carter's 'The Scarlet House'" by Inês Botelho offers a feminist take on vampirism and presents a close reading of the text and a thought-provoking conclusion that vampirism can be defeated through acceptance. Overall, the emphasis on evolution of the vampire myth seen in this section brings the topic into a modern lens. The combined effect of the articles presented here suggests that in making the modern vampire more human, society is embracing the idea of the other, showing it as equal to the norm.

By examining alterations in the vampire myth in regard to setting, media, and time frame, *Dracula and the Gothic in Literature, Pop Culture and the Arts* represents the Gothic genre over three periods of change in which the vampire image developed according to the ever-changing needs of society. The contributing articles read *Dracula* not only through the interpretative framework of genre studies, but also through cultural studies, examining its influence and interpretation in non-British contexts and adding new dimensions to *Dracula* studies. What these reviewers found wanting is a more in-depth analysis of vampire origins in East European folklore and historical tractates on the eighteenth-century vampire epidemics in the Balkans. Since *Dracula* has his roots in

Slavic folklore, where the vampire originally had nothing in common with bats, the fifteenth-century Wallachian prince Vlad Țepeș, or the literal drinking of blood, it would have been beneficial if this collection had offered an overview of the changes the vampire has undergone as it moved from Slavic lands to British Gothic literature.[1] Such background could have helped the reader to move from the introduction into the themes of the articles and see the continuities and inconsistencies in the development of the vampire image over the past two hundred years. This criticism notwithstanding, the analytical framework and overview of the ever-evolving vampire literature that this collection offers is an important contribution to Gothic (and Dracula) studies as

a field, and will be beneficial to scholars, students, and those who have a general interest in the vampire figure or the Gothic genre as a whole.

Note

[1]. On the origins of the vampire myth in Slavic folklore, see Jan Louis Perkowski, *Vampire Lore: From the Writings of Jan Louis Perkowski* (Bloomington: Slavica Publishers, 2006); Bruce A. McClelland, *Slayers and Their Vampires: A Cultural History of Killing the Dead* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2009 [2006]); and Thomas J. Garza, comp., *The Vampire in Slavic Cultures*, rev. ed. (San Diego: Cognella Academic Publishing, 2010).

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