

*Dracula: An International Perspective***Marius-Mircea Crişan (Ed.)**

Matthew Crofts, University of Hull

London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017.

ISBN: ebook 9783319633664 £55, hardback 9783319633657 £70, 280pp.

While much criticism has been devoted to Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) there remains a dearth of scholarship that engages with it as the truly international phenomena it has become and the masses of iterations it has spawned. *Dracula* is chiefly understood through its Anglo-Irish contexts, or through the trajectories of American horror cinema. This is the gap in scholarship which *Dracula: An International Perspective* goes some way to addressing.

The collection is comprised of fifteen distinct chapters. Though not explicitly named as such the first chapter, “‘Welcome to My House! Enter Freely and of Your Own Free Will’: *Dracula* in International Contexts”, acts as an introduction, written by volume editor Marius-Mircea Crişan. The chapter does an excellent job in identifying why the volume is so badly needed, exploring the idea that *Dracula* ‘may be constructed from several good stories, from different perspectives and various places in the world’ (Crişan, 2017: 2). Crişan continues by arguing that Stoker’s ‘research will shape the worldwide success of the story’ as he drew on ‘accounts of vampires from many different places such as Hungary, Romania, Serbia, Czechia, North and South America, etc’ (2). This global legacy has continued, with ‘translations of Bram Stoker’s novel into most major languages of the world contribut[ing]

considerably to the success of *Dracula*' (4). The chapter is a worthy inclusion in itself, acting as a treatise that clearly sets out the volume's goals, with compelling examples, before providing an overview of the ensuing chapters, drawing on the research of an international community of *Dracula* scholars from Italy, Poland, Holland, the United States, the United Kingdom and Romania.

The first four chapters clearly state the 'International Perspectives' they concern themselves with. Hughes' 'The Casework Relationship: Le Fanu, Stoker and the Rhetorical Contexts of Irish Gothic' locates the shared cultures behind both authors to inform the genre. Badin's 'The Discourse of Italy in Nineteenth Century Irish Gothic: Maturin's *Fatal Revenge*, Le Fanu's *Exotic Tales*, and *The Castle of Savina*' argues that portrayals of the Italian Other in Irish Gothic mirror the Irish self. "'Bloodthirsty and Remorseless Fangs": Representation of East-Central Europe in Edgar Allan Poe's Gothic Short Stories' by Szabo and Crişan explores the influence of Poe in Stoker's work. George's 'Spirited Away: Dream Work, the Outsider, and the Representation of Transylvania in the Pied Piper and *Dracula* Myth in Britain and Germany' adopts a historicist method to show the significance of Transylvania to both stories.

As the volume continues, subsequent contributions are less overt in signalling their 'Internationality', with titles that instead place emphasis on under-explored and original aspects of the novel. In 'Count Dracula's Address and Lifetime Identity' Corneel de Roos offers a theory of Stoker's vagueness in order to obfuscate historical reality, while Bloom's 'Dracula and the Psychic World of the East End of London' uses the 'lost' version of *Dracula*, *Powers of Darkness* (2017), to link Dracula and Jack the Ripper. Light's 'Tourism and Travel in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*' is one of the real assets of the volume, getting to the core of the collection's themes through its reading of the text as different forms of tourism – including nods to contemporary *Dracula* tourism. In 'Castle Hunedoara and the Dracula

Myth: Connection or Speculation?’ Crişan returns to the historical basis and geographical location of Dracula’s castle, which serves as an excellent companion to Corneel de Roos’ earlier piece. Bone’s ‘Location and the Vampire: The Impact of Fictional Stories upon Associated Locations’ discusses different tourism sites with vampiric associations, while Browning’s ‘In Search of Dracula’s Oracular History’ traces Dracula’s narrative voice across subsequent adaptations and in their chapter, Schumann analyses ‘Vampiric Emotion and Identity in *Dracula* and *Interview with the Vampire*’.

The final three chapters brings the collection up-to-date with more contemporary texts. *Twilight* (2005-8) and *Underworld* (2003-16), among others, are covered in Grabias’ ‘Gothic and Horror in Contemporary Cinema and Television: Aesthetic Experience and Emotional Impact’. Another highlight of the volume comes from Babilas’ ‘Papa Dracula: Vampires For Family Values?’ which covers the often overlooked paternal aspect to the reformed Dracula that argues that ‘the concept of presenting Count Dracula as a good, protective father is relatively new’ (243). Finally, Senf’s ‘The Evolution of Gothic Spaces: Ruins, Forests, Urban Jungles’ analyses a shift in settings from *The Castle for Otranto* (1764) through to texts like *Fear The Walking Dead* (2015-).

One of the chief limitations of this volume is its omissions. The introduction itself notes that *Dracula* ‘has been the subject of countless stage adaptations, literary and film sequels made all over the world’ (3) - but there are many cultures and national cinemas not represented. The volume could have been much enhanced with more diverse contributions, truly shifting Stoker’s novel away from its Anglo-Western perspective. As efforts to decolonise the curriculum and our own research and publication practice continue apace hopefully there will be further volumes to continue the work that this volume has made some start in.

It is perhaps an issue with the title rather than any shortcoming of the fascinating contents; it equally does not do justice to the range of other texts and themes under scrutiny within. As expressed by the summary above, there is a real wealth of different topics here that often strays beyond strictly *Dracula* and would be a suitable resource to vampire or Gothic studies in general. This book would be highly useful to students or researchers examining either *Dracula*, its legacy or to a lesser degree its adaptations, as well as anyone interested in international Gothic influences and how texts are mediated across the world. For those teaching *Dracula* it would be a great text to set on the reading list for courses that focused on any of the above. Individual chapters would also be a fantastic resource for anyone looking for more information on topics like Le Fanu or Irish Gothic (Hughes), Gothic Space (Senf) and Vampire Cinema (Grabias, Babilas) to name but a few.