

Editors' Note: Reimagining the Gothic – Dracula, Vampires, Adaptations, and 19th-Century Legacies

*Od Redakcji: gotyk na nowo – Dracula, wampiry,
adaptacje i dziedzictwo XIX wieku*

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This issue of “Culture and History” brings together six original essays that explore the enduring vitality of Gothic literature and culture from fresh interdisciplinary perspectives. While four of the contributions focus directly on Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* and its many cultural afterlives, the volume also broadens its scope to consider other influential vampire narratives and the wider nineteenth-century literary tradition. Collectively, these essays demonstrate that Gothic texts continue to generate new questions about history, geography, adaptation, visual culture, religion, and popular reception.

A recurring concern throughout the issue is the remarkable capacity of Gothic narratives to transcend their original historical and textual contexts. Whether through archival investigation, media adaptation, film, marketing, or theological interpretation, the contributors reveal how canonical works continue to be rediscovered, reinterpreted, and reimagined for new audiences. The articles illustrate the richness of contemporary Gothic scholarship, combining close textual analysis with historical research, adaptation studies, film criticism, media theory, and cultural history.

The issue opens with Hans de Roos's "Bram Stoker's *Dracula*: The True Location of 'Lake Hermanstadt' and How to Get There. With Notes on Contemporary Publications. Part 1: 'Lake Hermanstadt,' Its Location in Emily Gerard's Writings and in the Cindrel Mountains. With a Travel Report." Drawing on Emily Gerard's travel writings, 19th-century Habsburg military maps, and the author's own field research in Romania, de Roos reconstructs the likely location of the mysterious "Lake Hermanstadt" associated with the legendary Scholomance. By combining archival scholarship with first-hand exploration, the article offers new insights into one of the most enigmatic geographical references underpinning Stoker's novel.

Enrique A. Palafox's "Dracula Transmedia: From Page to Experience. Expanding the 1897 Epistolary Novel through Faithful Transmedia Strategies" shifts attention from geography to media. Challenging conventional notions of adaptation, Palafox argues that *Dracula* functions as a distributed documentary system whose narrative architecture anticipates principles now associated with transmedia storytelling. Through the case study of *Dracula Legacy*, the author proposes a notion of faithful transmedia expansion that preserves what he identifies as a structural and epistemological integrity of Stoker's novel while opening new possibilities for contemporary engagement.

Questions of representation and visual identity continue in Diganta Roy's "Uncanny Resemblances: Studying Dracula's Likeness across Literary and Film Adaptations." Examining both Stoker's novel and Francis Ford Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992), Roy investigates how physical resemblance and facial identity contribute to the construction of Dracula's monstrosity. The article demonstrates how cinematic techniques – including prosthetics, make-up, lighting, and performance – create and manipulate uncanny resemblances that shape the Count's multiple incarnations on screen.

Moving beyond Stoker, Philippe Met's "Vampirism in/as Family: Filmic Avatars of the *Vourdalak*" explores the cinematic afterlives of Aleksey Konstantinovich Tolstoy's influential novella introducing the Slavic *vourdalak*. Surveying Italian, French, and late Soviet adaptations, Met examines how the figure of the vampire who preys upon members of its own family becomes a powerful vehicle for exploring familial disintegration, social anxiety, and changing historical contexts through diverse cinematic traditions.

Nancy Schumann's "True Love Never Dies, But It Might Just Kill You: Why Audiences Love the Toxicity of *Twilight*" turns to one of the 21st century's most commercially successful vampire narratives. Revisiting *Twilight* two decades after its publication, Schumann analyses the series' targeted marketing as a romance while revealing the Gothic traditions and darker narrative structures that underpin its enormous popular appeal. The article argues that *Twilight* consciously mobilises familiar Gothic archetypes alongside capitalist marketing

strategies to attract readers whose expectations of romance gradually become entwined with horror.

Finally, John Schaff's "Providence: Interpreting Charlotte Brontë's Depiction of God in *Jane Eyre*" broadens the issue's engagement with 19th-century literature beyond the Gothic vampire tradition. Reassessing longstanding debates surrounding the novel's religious outlook, Schaff argues that *Jane Eyre* presents a profoundly Christian vision centred on divine love and providence rather than punitive judgment. By situating Brontë's theological convictions within her personal and literary context, the article offers a compelling reinterpretation of one of the Victorian period's most enduring novels.

Taken together, these contributions demonstrate the notable breadth of contemporary research into Gothic and 19th-century literature. By bringing together a wide range of interpretative perspectives, the issue highlights the continuing relevance of Gothic narratives and their incessant capacity for reinvention across cultures, media, and generations. We hope that readers will find in these essays both new insights into familiar texts and fresh avenues for future scholarship.