Tragedy of Monsters: Vampire Fears, Melodrama, and the Modern Horror

Stefan BAGHIU & Anca Simina MARTIN
Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu
Corresponding author emails: stefan.baghiu@ulbsibiu.ro; anca.martin@ulbsibiu.ro

Abstract: The contemporary understanding of the vampire trope is not solely a literary construct but also the outcome of its theatrical adaptations, often following closely after the publication of the seminal works that shaped the myth. Despite the occasional reading of vampires as tragic figures, works featuring these creatures have yet to be staged as tragedies, translating instead to melodramas and musicals. This article examines theatrical renditions of John Polidori's "The Vampyre" (1819), Bram Stoker's Dracula (1897), and Anne Rice's Interview with the Vampire (1976) and The Vampire Lestat (1985), demonstrating that although these literary works offer varying interpretations of the vampire trope, they consistently diverge from the tragic form once thet are adapted for the stage. At the same time, vampires represent a world of post-tragic plots, where tragedy is impossible since they live too long after the tragic event had already occurred. Our theory is that the staging of vampire narratives coincides with historical contexts in which audiences experience disillusionment with tragedy's promise of catharsis, opting instead to look to other dramatic formulas for a reflection of their times. While tragedies often depict the protagonist's downfall due to an internal fatal flaw, vampire melodramas and musicals, in most cases, explore the collective trauma caused by external flaws, thus resonating more with the social and cultural milieu of their times.

Keywords: tragedy, modern novel, modern drama, horror, Dracula, The Vampyre, vampires

Citation suggestion: Baghiu, Stefan, and Anca Simina Martin. "Tragedy of Monsters: Vampire Fears, Melodrama, and the Modern Horror." *Transilvania*, no. 5 (2024): 42-54. https://doi.org/10.51391/trva.2024.05.05.

In his essay on Balzac's novels, "Homo Palpitans" (1983), Franco Moretti stresses out that the main difference that the novel brings in respect to "tragic flaw" and the typical "fall" of the hero in tragedy relies in the presence of multiple determinants:

> "In tragedy everything conspires concertedly *in only one direction.* In Balzac, although the basic tendency is clear, the high number of variables inherent to the systems of the city and the novel brings about the conclusion through a continuous and highly unpredictable series of ups and downs. In this way, suspense and surprise encourage city dwellers to believe that only rarely is '*everything* lost'."[1]

Of course, in many ways, this *loosens* the plot and diminishes the catharsis. Tragedy—as theorized by Aristotle and further developed by classical and modern theorists—structured its plot in a specific way to ensure that the spectator focuses on the tragic development: it is short, confined to a limited space, and involves few characters. This approach ensures, on the one hand, that *the plot is there in its entirety*, and on the other hand, that once the hero's fall occurs, *everything is irrevocably lost*. However, within the evolution of the epic, from Homer to Balzac, tragedy also functioned as a kind of

1. Franco Moretti, *Signs Takes for Wonders: Essays in the Sociology of Literary Forms*, trans. Susan Fischer, David Forgacs and David Miller (London and New York: Verso, 1997), 118. Original emphasis.

short circuit. The grand narratives of Homer were transformed by Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, among others, into tragic stories drawn from what was once a "continuous and highly unpredictable series of ups and downs": Greek mythology.

In modern times, the "polysemy of multiple paths" has marked a very strong difference between tragedy and the novel.[2] The character networks of *Antigone* and *Les Misérables* illustrate the different narrative quests that emerge from this evolution: "While Sophocles's system is small, tight, and visibly centered around the fatal figure of Creon, *strategos* of Thebes, Hugo's crowded network shows dozens of figures with a single link to the body of the text, evoking the 'minor-minor' characters of Alex Woloch's *The One vs. the Many*."[3] The more enclosed the world of the tragic is, the greater the damage, and the more powerful the activation of a narrative claustrophobic strategy—at least for the ancient Greeks. The internal network of tragedy is small because it must suffocate its plot. This explains the overwhelming fear of fate that pervades ancient and classical tragedy. The evolution of tragedy, however, involved the enlargement of the network—Shakespeare's world is larger both in tragedies and historical dramas. To secure its powerful representation of absolute power, tragedy had to build more and more complex relations. This is also why the novel moved away from this claustrophobic narrative form: the "rise of the novel," as described by Ian Watt and others, is a story of the rise of individual agency, meaning individual openness—open possibilities and multiple determinants again. If tragedy is claustrophobic, the novel is an extroverted celebration of expansion: the hero builds a world in "Do It Yourself" fashion, celebrating the open world of liberal development.[4]

Yet, the rise of the modern novel in late eighteenth-century Western Europe coincided with a renewed and fruitful interest in the theory of tragic form and the reshaping of tragedies themselves.[5] Schiller, Schlegel, Hegel, and others were "inventing" a new theory of tragic from 1782 to 1820, while Goethe published *Faust. / Eine Tragödie* [*Faust/ A Tragedy*] in 1808—with a first fragment in 1890. At the same time, in England, a new kind of modern fear was emerging:

> "The fear of bourgeois civilization is summed up in two names: Frankenstein and Dracula. The monster and the vampire are born together, one night in 1816, in the drawing room of the Villa Chapuis near Geneva, out of a society game among friends to while away a rainy summer. Born in the full spate of the industrial revolution, they rise again together in the critical years at the end of the nineteenth century, under the names of Hyde and Dracula."[6]

New theories of tragedy from German Romanticism, new forms of modern drama (particularly the "bourgeois" ones), and new fears—all emerged together during the early development of what Eric Hobsbawm labeled the "Age of Revolution," continuing through the "Age of Capital."[7] They all, in a way, reflected later in the historical materialism of Marx and Engels, in the modern drama of Ibsen, and Stoker's *Dracula*. It is therefore legitimate to ask how these new theories, forms, and fears intersect. In the works of Karl Marx, one can already see them converging, particularly in the *Manuscripts of 1844* and later in *Capital* (1867–94): the theory of tragedy helps illustrate how money distorts reality, as seen in *Antigone* or *Timon of Athens*, which are his main examples in his chapter on "Money" and "Hoarding": "[t]he ancients therefore denounced money as subversive of the economic and moral

2. Franco Moretti, *Modern Epic: The World-system from Goethe to García Márquez*, trans. Quintin Hoare (London and New York: Verso, 1996), 86.
3. Franco Moretti, "Two Theories," *Daedalus* 150, no. 1 (2021): 16.
4. "From the Renaissance onwards, there was a growing tendency for individual experience to replace collective tradition as the ultimate arbiter of reality; and this transition would seem to constitute an important part of the general cultural background of the rise of the novel." Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1957), 9.
5. The difference between tragedy and tragic has been put forward here by Andrei Terian: "In other words, most of the Romanian critics cited above confuse *tragedy*, a literary (dramatic) genre formalized almost 2,400 years ago, with *the tragic*, an aesthetic-existential category produced by German idealist philosophy around 1800. Admittedly, the idea of *the tragic* was developed out of *tragedy*, hence it always retains an inextricable link to its prototype." Andrei Terian, "Tragedy in Romanian Literature: Some Conceptual Delimitations," *Transilvania*, no. 5 (2024).
6. Moretti, *Signs*, 83.
7. Hobsbawm, Eric. Age of capital: 1848-1875 (London: Hachette, 2010). Hobsbawm, Eric. Age of revolution: 1789-1848 (London: Hachette, 2010). DEVINE Eric Hobsbawm, Age of capital: 1848-1875 (London: Hachette, 2010). Eric Hobsbawm, Age of revolution: 1789-1848 (London: Hachette, 2010).

order of things"[8]; while Goethe's *Faust* aids in explaining how "dead capital" attracts labor: "[i]n their difficulties our commodity owners think like Faust"[9]; finally, vampires are central to his vision of capitalist accumulation: "[c]apital is dead labour, that, vampire-like, only lives by sucking living labour, and lives the more, the more labour it sucks. The time during which the labourer works, is the time during which the capitalist consumes the labour-power he has purchased of him."[10] Tragedy, modern drama, and modern fears all together in the quintessential world view of modern revolutionary thought.

What we argue here is that, although vampires are far removed from traditional tragedies—since the fall of a tragic hero hinges on human flaws—the evolution of vampire narratives draws heavily on the modern reinterpretations of tragic form and tragic fear. Although written in prose, John Polidori's "The Vampyre" and Stoker's *Dracula* pay more tribute to tragic form than to the rise of the novel.

Tragedy and Horror

The presence of monsters in tragedies is limited. As Ruth Scodel demonstrates, monsters were largely excluded from the world of epic in Ancient Greece, and since tragedies often rely on epic plots, monsters are similarly foreign or marginal to tragedy: "The epic presents a world in which gods frequently intervene in the lives of individuals; so does tragedy. Ghosts appear but not Lamias; monsters, following Homer, tend to be kept at the periphery."[11] This exclusion also stems from the main principle of tragedy, *mimesis*, which required the tragic plot to confront the viewer with the believable. While supernatural beings such as gods, furies, and centaurs appear, monsters in the modern sense do not. However, monstrosity is deeply connected to the human. What is monstrous is often defined as inhuman or non-human, but this only serves to highlight the uncanny aspects of humanity—Marx's monsters are human accumulators, for instance.[12] The monstrous cannot be conceived without reference to the human, and yet it cannot be fully considered as human either.

Among all monsters, vampires have captivated modern imagination the most. From period dramas to contemporary television, vampires have dominated Gothic drama, repeatedly transforming it into a world of tragedy.[13] The most compelling example of the connections—always present in some form—between tragic form and vampires is the 1920 expressionist movie *Genuine, die Tragödie eines seltsamen Hauses* [*Genuine: The Tragedy of a Vampire*], directed by Robert Wiene. *Genuine* tells the story of a succubus, the dream projection of the protagonist who, in typical late eighteenth-century Romantic fashion, paints the portrait of a high priestess and dreams ekphrastically. The movie followed Wiene's 1920 horror *Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari* [*The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*], which Siegfried Kracauer interpreted as a critique of "the madness inherent in authority."[14] Its plot revolves around Dr. Caligari, who uses hypnosis to make the sleeping Cesare prophesy and then commit crimes. As Lorna Jowett notes, Kracauer—arguably the most compelling advocate for realism in German cinema at the time—believed it is an outspoken "revolutionary story," whose meaning "reveals itself unmistakably at the end, with the disclosure of the psychiatrist as Caligari reason overpowers unreasonable power, insane authority is symbolically abolished."[15]

8. Karl Marx, *Capital. A Critique of Political Economy*, vol. I, *Book One: The Process of Production of Capital* [1867]. First English edition of 1887, translated by Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling, edited by Frederick Engels (Moscow, USSR: Progress Publishers, 1887), 86. https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/Capital-Volume-I.pdf.

9. Ibid., 61.

10. Ibid., 163.

11. Ruth Scodel, "Tragedy and Epic," in *A Companion to Tragedy*, ed. Rebecca Bushnell (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 189.

12. See more on the general metaphors of vampirism in Anca Simina Martin, "The Trope of the Vampire (and *Strigoi*) in Romanian Culture and Cultural Products Imported to Romania (1839–1947)," *Transilvania*, nr. 7 (2023): 17–25.

13. See Lorna Jowett, "Horrible Histories? Vampire Television, Period Drama and Spectacle," *Horror Studies* 8, no. 2 (2017): 313–328.

14. Siegfried Kracauer, "Caligari," in *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari, a film by Robert Wiene, Carl Mayer and Hans Janowitz*, ed. and trans. R. V. Adkinson (New York: Lorrimer Publishing, 1972), 11.

15. Kracauer, "Caligari," 9. For the general "transmedial triangulation" of vampire stories through cinema see Anca Simina Martin and Stefan Baghiu, "The transmedial triangulation of Dracula: how cinema turned the Gothic bloodsucker into a Gothicized serial killer," *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* 11, 1015 (2024). https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-03531-2.

When discussing the connections between tragedy and horror, Robert I. Levy argued that the rise of monsters in modern times must be linked to the social enactment of morals, since "life as theatre" involves "the problems of the wings of the social stage and the problems of the social drama itself":[16]

> "Shame, shyness, and embarrassment have to do with the presentability of an individual, the properness of his or her entrance into a situation or to a role, his or her general competence to engage in social action, the adequacy of his or her very existence as a social person. Guilt, empathy, and certain aspects of fear are specifically related to the regulation of the playing of the role once one is engaging in it."[17]

Tragedy, Levy claims, represents the center of social life and social performance, while horror represents the margins. *Antigone* and *Dracula* exemplify two ways in which action influences social life; they are metaphors for "entering or (more properly) of not entering, of trying to escape *any* society."[18] The comparison is apt because the character networks in both are limited. Unlike the modern novel, with the realist ambitions of Hugo, Balzac, and Eugène Sue, Polidori's "The Vampyre" and Stoker's *Dracula* rely on a small cast of characters. Here, as in the Greek tragedy, there is no need for extensive representations of a populated and diverse external world. Twelve characters are too many for Stoker; five are enough for Polidori. In this respect, Dracula aligns more with the world of tragedy than with that of the grand epic.

The aristocracy of the vampire is the next point to consider. The world of tragedy—from Sophocles to Shakespeare and Racine—is the world of aristocracy, not of the common people. As Lukács once noted, it was only with modern bourgeois drama that the middle class entered the scene, and only with Ibsen did the common man become central. Until modern times, tragic destiny was reserved for the noble. Lord Ruthven in Polidori's "The Vampyre," a portrayal of Lord Byron himself, is an aristocrat, just as Dracula is—although the latter coming from the "haunted" space of the periphery. Yet the horror presents vampires not as tragic heroes, but as tragic settings. Neither Ruthven nor Dracula are tragic figures themselves; instead, they create tragedies around them. This makes them ambivalent figures of tragic destiny, at the same time horrible and sympathetic:

> "Harker is tempted to sympathize with Dracula, and to yield to him. To yield means not to be destroyed in one's essential being (Antigone's essential being, her social reputation, is something else) but to become like Dracula in his power, his transcendence of time and space, and of morality. One lives forever and is blessedly released from moral constrains. This promised escape is the great evil for it is the negation of the civic system of logic and morality. It is a matter of rejecting the system rather than making an error within it."[19]

Vampires die hard. However, the connection between everlasting life and the desire never to have been born at all is crucial in vampire drama. "Rejecting the system" has its ultimate desire in living forever against. In their *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1944), Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer suggest that monsters possess a kind of "legal" presence in mythology: "The mythical monsters under whose power he falls represent, as it were, petrified contracts and legal claims dating from primeval times."[20] To fully grasp the solemnity of tragic destiny, a tragic hero must be positioned far enough from life to reflect on its insignificance. As Nina Auerbach notes when describing the "reproach to humanity" embodied by Chelsea Quinn Yarbro's Count Saint-Germain,

> "her vampire [...] is the only character strong enough—because he has learned from the tragic centuries he has lived in, because it is difficult though not impossible for him to die—to provide a humane perspective on the mass carnage that finds its domestic epitome in the degradation of women. Her mortal characters are too corrupt or too weak to appreciate the human tragedy."[21]

16. Robert I. Levy, "Horror and Tragedy: The Wings and Center of the Moral Stage," *Ethos* 13, no. 2 (1985): 176.
17. Levy, "Horror," 176.
18. Levy, "Horror," 179. Original emphasis.
19. Levy, "Horror," 180.
20. Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Stanford: Stanford University Press), 45.
21. Nina Auerbach, *Our Vampires, Ourselves* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), 148.

It takes an eternity to grasp the tragedy of the human. If one is "human," one cannot fully appreciate the human tragedy. As Anne Rice's 1976 *Interview with the Vampire* suggests, "it was detachment that made this possible, a sublime loneliness with which Lestat and I [Louis] moved through the world of mortal men."[22] But this is a modern perspective—the myth of calm and serene everlasting life, the myth of the undead's wisdom. If we examine the history of the undead in tragedies, their unrest becomes clear: the ghost of Hamlet's father is a specter of revenge, and the undead in Voltaire's *Sémiramis* (1746) seeks retribution.[23] There is no wisdom here, only the hauntology of vengeance. Death is distressing because *it is unjust* in the cases of Hamlet's father and Ninus, Sémiramis' husband. Had they died by their own doing, by a "good death," would they be tragic specters at all? Probably not. This is the fundamental difference between Gothic vampire drama and contemporary vampire stories:

> "Frequently ghosts are capable of engaging sympathetic effects insofar as their return is not motivated exclusively by their thirst for revenge but also by their determination to right a wrong. This topos, already central to Greek tragedy and subsequently reworked by Elizabethan and Jacobean Revenge Tragedy, is still recurrent in fictional and filmic elaborations of the discourse of haunting."[24]

Vampires live long. By living long, they become wise and elegant: "This was New Orleans, a magical and magnificent place to live. In which a vampire, richly dressed and gracefully walking through the pools of light of one gas lamp after another might attract no more notice in the evening than hundreds of other exotic creatures."[25] Their disguise is not one of extravagance but of common elegance, at least in Anne Rice's *Interview with the Vampire* (1976). "With the aged is wisdom, and with long life is understanding," says the Book of Job (Jb 12:12). Here, Job is a tragic hero with an anti-tragic development. When the Devil tells God that Job will lose faith and curse Him if he loses all his possessions and loved ones, God agrees to put Job to the test. Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens* presents a similar story of downfall. Timon loses all his wealth after generously spending and lending it to those close to him. In *Timon of Athens*, as Sartre might put it, "Hell is other people." For Job, Hell is God Himself—this is the theodicy. Job does lose faith, but never in God, and ultimately, he is restored to his wealth and family. This is how the Bible diverges from tragedy: it restores individual faith through immutable belief, whereas tragedy traditionally implies a seamless submission to overwhelming destiny.

Timon, like Job, embodies *absolute tragedy*, as George Steiner suggests when he argues that it is better never to have been born, echoing Job: "Here lies a wretched corpse, of wretched soul bereft."[26] But Timon, unlike Job, never returns from this despair, just as Oedipus does not. This despair, specific to tragedy, is where the family is lost forever, where the family is the center of this loss. Consider Sophocles: Oedipus kills his father, Antigone loses her brothers, Deianeira kills her husband, Electra drives Orestes to kill their mother, and so on. The despair of not being able to reclaim one's life, the insignificance of the individual before a higher will, and the impossibility of resolving conflict—this is *tragedy*. The rest, as most philosophies of tragic form suggest, is *drama*. Yet vampires, in a way, have already "lost" everything by gaining eternal life. They are figures of after *anagnorisis*, figures of after tragedy. This difference is crucial between tragedy and horror, and it also illuminates the tragic elements within horror:

> "While Harker is tempted to lose his social identity to preserve his physical and emotional and passionate existence (for the 'death' of the horror story is a transformation rather than an annihilation of the self), Antigone chooses annihilation of the experiencing self, to preserve the social residue, redounding on her lineage, of fame. She, choosing family duty, is destroyed but gains fame. Creon, choosing civic duty, is also destroyed. What he gains is more mysterious: it is the possibility of wisdom, some kind of understanding transcending the terrible logic of the moral paradox. Creon's choice, to ignore family ties for what he takes to be the good of the city, causes him to lose his son and his wife. Broken at the end he leaves the city to wander (note this movement ends the drama, in *Dracula* it initiated it)."[27]

22. Anne Rice, *Interview with the Vampire* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2010), 38.
23. See the political metaphors of this specters in Mihai Iovănel, "Hamlet at the End of History: the specter of capitalism haunting communism," *Transilvania*, no. 5 (2024).
24. Dani Cavallaro, *Gothic Vision: Three Centuries of Horror, Terror and Fear* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2002), 162.
25. Rice, *Interview*, 40.
26. William Shakespeare, *Timon of Athens*, ed. John Jowett (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 5.
27. Levy, "Horror," 183.

Just like vampires, Job and Timon of Athens are presented as already being "vampires"—that is, already wealthy and possessing accumulated wealth. However, unlike vampires, they still have something crucial to lose: their life. They are in deep grief, in tragic grief, since everything is lost, yet they don't have to live forever with their grief. Vampires do, so grief is pacified by eternal life: it becomes static, non tragic, lifeless. Lifeless grief is no grief at all. If the modern myth of vampires implies accumulation, then the modern perspective on pre-modern tragedy could place characters like Oedipus, Lear, and Timon of Athens in the realm of "accumulators." They appear on the scene in their full splendor and then experience their downfall. They have accumulated much because they are rulers, kings, or heroes. The Greek principle of tragedy—as codified by Aristotle, who defined tragedy for centuries, both directly and indirectly—established that the hero should be noble or aristocratic. This model influenced Shakespeare, Racine, Voltaire, Byron, and others. Job and Timon follow this pattern. The essence of *absolute tragedy* lies in the stark contrast between their initial status and their subsequent fall. If one has everything, their fall is more devastating. If one has nothing, the fall is less significant. An important exception to this pattern is Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* (1592/3), and later Goethe's *Faust*., which emerges during the era of the birth of modern vampire myths: Doctor Faustus is bored to death and needs life again—his tragedy is that he rediscovers life.

Tragedy, Melodrama, and Horror

Despite its modern developments, tragedy outlines a self-contained world that is quintessentially human. When the protagonist commits an error of judgment leading to their downfall or succumbs to a tragic flaw, it is a consequence of their human nature. In other words, by its very definition, tragedy draws a clear line of demarcation between the flawless non-human and the flawed human. In this context, monsters—both human and non-human, embodying the anxieties and flaws that define humanity while existing in a state that is neither alive nor dead—are an anomaly. This explains their limited presence in the world of tragedy. However, time and again, the monstrous, particularly vampires, are described as tragic figures. Dracula, the most recognizable of bloodsuckers, was, in life, a defender of his homeland and, in death, a shadow of his former self, helpless in the face of the technology wielded by his opponents. Yet, just like Faust, the vampire also must become a tyrant, a mass killer, in the setting of absolute power. Three-quarters of a century later, Anne Rice constructed entire universes around tragic vampires who struggle with immortality—whether because they cannot adapt to changing times, as with Armand, or due to the guilt associated with relying on human suffering for sustenance, as seen in Louis de Pointe du Lac. Yet neither Bram Stoker's nor Anne Rice's works have translated into tragedies, despite their plots conveying the two primary emotions traditionally associated with tragedy: pity and fear—for and/or because of their vampires. In fact, their monster narratives evolved from the very beginning away from tragic form into melodramas and, more recently, into musicals. While tragedies tell the story of an individual's undoing due to a fatal internal flaw, vampire melodramas and musicals, in most cases, speak of collective trauma inflicted by external forces.

The altering of tragic form through vampire stories is also visible in the general desire of Polidori and Stoker to create vampires for drama—not for prose. Long before the commodification of violence through infamous figures such as Peter "The Vampire of Düsseldorf" Kürten, who inspired cinema masterpieces the likes of Fritz Lang's *M* (1931) and reformulated the Gothic bloodthirsty vampire as Gothicized "real/reel serial killer,"[28] there had existed the "commodification of personality," Lord Byron's to be precise, whereby "[t]he Byronic had come to take precedence over Byron, the creation over the creator."[29] As the irony would have it, however, the "creation" was not Byron's, or at least not entirely, as it was John Polidori's "The Vampyre" (1819), a novella authored by his physician, that set into motion

28. In their 2003 article on "gothic criminology," which "connects reel worlds with the look of the 'real' world, while still mythologizing the serial killer as a gothic construction," Caroline Joan Picart and Cecil Greek suggest that "[t]here appear to be two monstrous figures in contemporary popular culture whose constructions blur into each other, and who most powerfully evoke not only our deepest fears and taboos, but also our most repressed fantasies and desires: the serial killer and the vampire as creatures compelled to kill." According to the authors, one of the earliest conflations of the two came in Fritz Lang's *M* (1931). Caroline Joan Picart and Cecil Greek, "The Compulsion of Real/Reel Serial Killers and Vampires: Toward a Gothic Criminology," *Journal of Criminal Justice and Popular Culture* 10, no. 1 (2003): 45; 39.

29. Ghislaine McDayter, "Conjuring Byron: Byromania, Literary Commodification and the Birth of Celebrity," in *Byromania: Portraits of the Artist in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Culture*, ed. Frances Wilson (Houndmills: Macmillan Press, 1999), 56.

the mass consumption of Byron's persona. Based in part on the unfinished short story "Fragment of a Novel," which Byron penned in 1816, Polidori's work, initially attributed to Byron as well, takes Augustus Darvell of the "Fragment," reminiscent still of the folk creature Byron read about in Joseph Pitton de Tournefort's account of the Greek *Vroucolacas*, and refashions him in Byron's image as Lord Ruthven.[30] The story was an instant success; "[t]wo London book editions appeared very swiftly, followed by a French and a German translation, all in 1819 and all attributing authorship to Byron."[31] Moreover, "Goethe pronounced it the finest thing Byron had ever written,"[32] and "Amédée Pichot in 1824 declared that the story did more to popularize Byron in France than all his other works put together."[33]

Polidori's efforts to correct this false attribution—a day after the story was published, he wrote to Henry Colburn, the owner of the magazine which had printed it, that "The Vampyre is not Lord Byron's, but was written entirely by [him]"[34]—and Byron's denial of authorship—in a letter he sent to Colburn some two weeks letter, he labelled the story a "bookselling imposture"[35]—"were of little consequence where money was to be made: Byron's name was infinitely more profitable."[36] Thus, the rise of the cult of Byron, or Byromania as the phenomenon is also known, occurs, as Ghislaine McDayter aptly notes, along with the development of capitalism,[37] giving rise—directly or indirectly, in English, French, and German—to at least twenty adaptations for paper, stage, and opera, which spanned over half a century, from Uriah Derick D'Arcy's 1819 parody *The Black Vampyre: A Legend of St. Domingo* to Jules Dornay's 1865 *Douglas Le Vampire* [*Lord Ruthven Begins*].[38]

For reasons of space, we will focus here only on *Le Vampire* [*Lord Ruthven the Vampire*], Charles Nodier, Adolphe Carmouche, and Achille, Marquis de Jouffrey d'Abbans' dramatic adaptation, which premiered in Paris in 1820. The reason for choosing this reworking lies not only with the fact that it inspired, two months after its opening on Boulevard du Temple, James Robinson Planché's *The Vampire, or the Bride of the Isles*, the English dramatization of Polidori's story staged at the Lyceum in London,[39] or that it achieved tremendous success—it "[inspired] no less than six parodies within a few weeks" and was "revived [...] with the same cast in 1823"[40]—, "making vampires the rage of Paris for the next several years."[41] Rather, the most important contribution of *Le Vampire* is that this adaptation established a tradition of portraying the modern—read: the "urban" rather than "rural"—vampire as an antihero of melodrama, "one of the first forms of mass entertainment."[42] And the connection to tragedy is there, in plain sight, when taking into account Robert I. Levy's take on "Horror and Tragedy."

30. Byron's note to *The Giaour*, a poem published three years before he wrote "Fragment of a Novel," contains a reference to this creature, the exhumation of which also appears in what Conrad Aquilina considers to be a source of inspiration for both Byron and Polidori: Robert Southey's 1801 poem *Thalaba the Destroyer*. Conrad Aquilina, "The Deformed Transformed; Or, from Bloodsucker to Byronic Hero – Polidori and the Literary Vampire," in *Open Graves, Open Minds: Representations of Vampires and the Undead from the Enlightenment to the Present Day*, ed. Sam George and William Hughes (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 25. However, if Darvell's "body [is] rapidly altering," Ruthven's is left conveniently vague, with Polidori thus "encourag[ing] readers to see Byron between the lines." Erik Butler, *The Rise of the Vampire* (London: Reaktion Books, 2013), 28.

31. Ronald E. McFarland, "The Vampire on Stage: A Study in Adaptations," *Comparative Drama* 21, no. 1 (1987): 20.

32. Roxana Stuart, *Stage Blood: Vampires of the 19th-Century Stage* (Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1994), 38.

33. Stuart, *Stage Blood*, 38.

34. Quoted in Nick Groom, "Polidori's 'The Vampyre': Composition, Publication, Deception," *Romanticism* 28, no. 1 (2022): 47.

35. Quoted in Groom, "Polidori's 'The Vampyre,'" 48.

36. Stuart, *Stage Blood*, 38.

37. "[T]he many and competing publishing houses, recognising a massive market for this new commodity, were anxious to keep a steady stream of the Byronic flowing onto that market [...] – no matter whether the text was Byron's, was about Byron, or was merely *thought* to be by or about him." Original emphasis. McDayter, "Conjuring Byron," 53.

38. The figure represents the twenty adaptations by Kevin Dodd in the two-part article "Plot Variations in the Nineteenth-Century Story of Lord Ruthven" and it does not take into account the comedies inspired from Polidori's work. See Kevin Dodd, "Plot Variations in the Nineteenth-Century Story of Lord Ruthven, Pt. 1," *Journal of Vampire Studies* 1 no. 1 (2020): 19; 22.

39. Stuart, *Stage Blood*, 65.

40. Stuart, *Stage Blood*, 57.

41. Stuart, *Stage Blood*, 41.

42. Stuart, *Stage Blood*, 253.

Taking as a starting point two of the most important characteristics of the genre, as defined by Guilbert de Pixérécourt in the early nineteenth century, it is easy to understand why the plot of "The Vampyre" was best suited for melodrama. According to the French playwright, productions of this genre propose "[a] powerful and fascinating villain who is the moving force of the plot,"[43] which, in the context of Polidori's story, is Lord Ruthven, "a nobleman, more remarkable for his singularities, than for his rank,"[44] with a "winning tongue"[45] and "irresistible powers of seduction," [which] rendered his licentious habits more dangerous to society."[46] Then there is Aubrey, "[a] virtuous [hero] persecuted by the villain," who is "an orphan left with an only sister," "handsome, frank," and endowed with the "high romantic feeling of honour and candour."[47] Another factor is the historical context in which the adaptations of Polidori's work were staged, which mirrors the one in "The Vampyre," characterized by a fragile socio-political balance. Greece, where Aubrey travels alone after his first falling-out with Ruthven and where he discovers the nobleman's true vampire nature, is under Turkish control and far removed from the classical period. Let us remark that Voltaire's earlier takes on vampire stories in his *Philosophical Dictionary* of 1764 connect well with this geography:

> "It was in Poland, Hungary, Silesia, Moravia, Austria, and Lorraine, that the dead made this good cheer. We never heard a word of vampires in London, nor even at Paris. I confess that in both these cities there were stock-jobbers, brokers, and men of business, who sucked the blood of the people in broad daylight; but they were not dead, though corrupted. These true suckers lived not in cemeteries, but in very agreeable palaces. [...] The Greeks are persuaded that these dead are sorcerers; they call them *'broucolacas',* or *'vroucolacas',* according as they pronounce the second letter of the alphabet. The Greek corpses go into houses to suck the blood of little children, to eat the supper of the fathers and mothers, drink their wine, and break all the furniture. They can only be put to rights by burning them when they are caught."

Unlike Byron, who, like many Romantics, believed in the liberation of Greece, "Polidori [understood] that the modern Greek peasant culture," embodied by Ianthe, Ruthven's victim and Aubrey's paramour, "is perfectly adequate and sufficient to itself under Ottoman rule, and that the philhellene is the potential ruiner of [the] calm,"[48] which, in fact, ended with the 1821–32 War of Greek Independence. Similarly, Nodier, Carmouche, and d'Abbans' *Le Vampire* premiered during the Royalist Reaction of 1820, "a watershed" between the assassination of Charles-Ferdinand de Bourbon by a Bonapartist, "and a subsequent phase wherein ultra (extreme) royalists pursued policies that ultimately would trigger [the] revolution" of 1830.[49] In Christopher Prendergast's words, "in melodrama we simultaneously pay homage to the idea of moral order and yet secretly enjoy the violence which threatens it."[50] Enjoying *the violence which threatens the order* is no longer *the violence of the order itself* that tragedy entailed. The modern myth of the vampire takes its drive from tragedy (political conflict and fear) and dissolves it in melodrama. In such a context, melodrama, with its "thrilling stage action" and "[e]mphasis on ocular," distracts from the unknown lurking around the corner and simplifies the complex forces at play in the political arena, envisioning "a world of black and white."[51]

However, in vampire melodramas, this violence is, by and large, abstract, and this is also true for Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), which resurrected the vampire myth back home, in *fin-de-siècle* London. Intended for stage—"the original scenario is laid out in four acts of seven scenes each"[52]—and read at the

43. Quoted in Stuart, *Stage Blood*, 42.
44. John William Polidori, *The Vampyre: A Tale and Ernestus Berchtold; Or, The Modern Œdipus* (Claremont: Broadview Editions, 2008), 39.
45. Polidori, *The Vampyre*, 40.
46. Polidori, *The Vampyre*, 43.
47. Polidori, *The Vampyre*, 40.
48. Matthew Gibson, *Dracula and the Eastern Question: British and French Vampire Narratives of the Nineteenth-Century Near East* (Houndmills and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 25.. For tragedy & war see also Franco Moretti's article on "The Moment of Truth" in Signs Taken for Wonders. Also see Radu Vancu, "Tragic Poetry and the Cultural Foundation of Power: A Re-examination of Franco Moretti's Theory of Tragic," Transilvania, no. 5 (2024): 55-63
49. R.S. Alexander, "Assassination, Politics and Miracles: France and the Royalist Reaction of 1820 (review)," *Univeristy of Toronto Quarterly* 74 no. 1 (2004), 429.
50. Christopher Prendergast, *Balzac, Fiction and Melodrama* (London: Edward Arnold, 1978), 11.
51. Quoted in Stuart, *Stage Blood*, 42.
52. Stuart, *Stage Blood*, 190.

Lyceum, which had hosted Planché's adaptation of "The Vampyre," "Stoker's story has all the hallmarks of Victorian melodrama: simple characters in adverse circumstances; the trials of temptation; the triumph of good over evil; emotional tumult, sacrifice, reconciliation and finally redemption."[53] By then, "Lord Ruthven had at last exhausted himself, and was now a figure of fun," in the sense that Polidori's satire of the Byronic hero no longer resonated with late nineteenth-century anxieties and fears. A new fall had to be represented. Released a little over a month before Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, *Dracula* "enacts the period's most important and pervasive narrative of decline" in relocating the origin of the vampire to Europe's "feudal" periphery and with it, the fear that "the 'civilized' world is on the point of being colonized by [the] 'primitive' forces."[54] Paradoxically, however, this context proved auspicious for Stoker's Gothic vampire, who gained depth from the "guilt characteristic of reverse colonization narratives."[55] Here, the "wings" become central. If in the melodramas inspired by "The Vampyre," Ruthven is overall a conscienceless monster,"[56] resembling in this respect the reanimated bloodthirsty corpse of East European folk tales, Stoker's Count was, in life, "the bravest of the sons of the 'land beyond the forest',"[57] and, in death, an almost equal opponent to the Western posse determined to destroy him. This duality, the mark of the Byronic hero, did not carry over into the novel's stage productions; neither Stoker's own 1897 dramatic version nor Hamilton Deane's 1924 adaptation or its 1927 reworking, which Deane co-authored with John Balderston, move past the "typical black villain out of melodrama,"[58] who meets his end before the curtain falls. The socio-political context may, once again, be responsible for this: the year 1897, which saw Dracula's birth as both a dramatic and literary character, and the interwar period, when it was brought on the English and American stages, reflect the liminal historical context of Stoker's novel, in which, at least at surface level, "[t]he warlike days are over."[59]

From the Tragedy of Vampires to the Sociology of the Vampire World

Dracula's first (unauthorized) cinema adaptation,[60] which spurred the emergence of Deane's initial stage version, "contains a hint of the sympathetic vampires to come as Orlok," Dracula's counterpart in F.W. Murnau's *Nosferatu* (1922), "seems at times to be a victim of his own bloodlust, trapped by a desire that figures in his own demise"[61]—Orlok (Dracula), lured by the beautiful, self-sacrificing Ellen/Mina in her bedchamber, falls prey to the deadly powers of sunlight. However, it would take half a century for the postmodern Byronic vampire to properly incarnate, and for this metamorphosis to occur, "Dr [John] Seward's phonograph in *Dracula* [had to be superseded] as the medium of transcription by the tape recorder, [...] with the vampire's own voice dictating" the story.[62] This focal inversion was fully realized in Anne Rice's "Vampire Chronicles" series, which debuted with *Interview with the Vampire* (1976). Here, the journey that the vampires undertake is also one of self-discovery, the milestones of which coincide with important stages in the evolution of the trope. For instance, "[i]n the *Vampire Lestat* [1985], partly set in the late 18th century, the protagonist Lestat, while still mortal, becomes an actor [...] on the Boulevard due [sic] Temple,"[63] where, in real life, *Le Vampire* by Nodier, Carmouche, and d'Abbans premiered in 1820. In *Interview with the Vampire*, vampires Louis and Claudia's travels in search of others like them carries them to Transylvania, where they encounter "a kind of Neanderthal offshoot of the vampire race," "mindless animals" reminiscent of the bloodsuckers in folk tales—they go to the tragic world from which vampires came.[64] This is a complex vampire world, where the vampire tropes across history form a sociology of tragic developments.

53. Catherine Wynne, *Bram Stoker, Dracula and the Victorian Gothic Stage* (Houndmills and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 2.
54. Stephen D. Arata, "The Occidental Tourist: *Dracula* and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonization," *Victorian Studies* 33, no. 4 (1990): 623.
55. Arata, "The Occidental Tourist," 626.
56. Kevin Dodd, "Plot Variations in the Nineteenth-Century Story of Lord Ruthven, Pt. 2," *Journal of Vampire Studies* 1 no. 2 (2021): 207.
57. Bram Stoker, *Dracula* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997), 212.
58. Stuart, *Stage Blood*, 205.
59. Stoker, *Dracula*, 35.
60. The first one to render on screen a relatively faithful recreation of Stoker's plot.
61. "Nosferatu," *Irish Film Institute*, accessed July 28, 2024, https://ifi.ie/film/nosferatu/.
62. Aquilina, "The Deformed Transformed," 33.
63. Stuart, *Stage Blood*, 354.
64. Stuart, *Stage Blood*, 354.

Both Neil Jordan's cinema adaptation of *Interview with the Vampire* (1994), whose screenplay was written by Rice, and AMC's 2022 TV series of the same title give a nod to Murnau's *Nosferatu*, yet to different effects: if in the former, it symbolizes "humane" vampire Louis' nostalgia for mortality, in the latter's Episode 4, it becomes the subject of an inside joke among Lestat, Louis, and their vampire-child, Claudia. On stage, however, "Rice's world is brittle in the commercial hands of [...] adaptation."[65] This "humane" vampire represents a shift in horror. Through Anne Rice, the worlds of vampires transition from tragic form to the epic—from tragedy as melodrama to the vampire novel proper. While both Polidori and Stoker wrote in prose, their works were tributary to tragedy, or, more specific, to the specters of after *anagnorisis*. It is only with Anne Rice that the vampire enters the realm of the epic: featuring numerous characters, a high number of variables, and multiple ups and downs. A sociology of the vampire world becomes possible only after vampires have moved beyond the domain of drama—the network of Anne Rice becomes the network of Hugo and Balzac. This transition marks a broader transformation of the vampire.

Three years after Jordan's movie version of *Interview with the Vampire*, Roman Polanski was reported to have been offered the chance to direct a musical adaptation of the novel by Vienna's Theater an der Wien.[66] What resulted was *Dance of the Vampires* (1997), "a camp musical loosely based on Roman Polanski's 1967 motion picture *The Fearless Vampire Killers*,"[67] a horror comedy movie taglined "Who says vampires are no laughing matter?," which, in its composer's words, translated into a reworking with "[a] lot of [...] pure Mel Brooks, and a lot of [...] Anne Rice."[68] Laughter is, here, read as desublimation. Sociology as well. The vampire needed to rebecome human-like in order to survive postmodern times. When it opened on December 2022 in New York, it "was reviled by most critics, [...] [losing] its entire investment of $12 million."[69] This, however, did not discourage Warner Brothers Entertainment to invest, just two years later, in a Broadway musical based on Rice's "The Vampire Chronicles" and composed by Elton John. That Warner was willing to make this best is all the more surprising as it was its first foray into the theater and Michael Rymer's *Queen of the Damned* (2002), the sequel to Jordan's movie, bombed at the box office a little over a year earlier, despite being "'[g] host-voiced' with distinction by Korn's lead-singer Jonathan Davis."[70] According to Elton John, *Lestat* (2006) was intended as "a classically-based show that is stripped of gothic clichés and that shows the vampire dealing with his damnation on a more realistic and human level."[71] Like Polanski's *Dance of the Vampires*, it flopped, "clos[ing] within two months after a string of negative reviews,"[72] but unlike its predecessor, it failed to be successfully resurrected outside of the United States.[73]

In her study on stage adaptations of vampire literature, Roxana Stuart notes in relation to Polidori's "The Vampyre" and Stoker's *Dracula* that "musical adaptations [...] followed the original melodrama."[74] In both England and France, this genre served as a means of expressing distrust in Enlightenment reason, as seen in the case of Ruthven, or of sublimating the anxieties and cultural guilt associated with imperialist expansion, as is evident from Dracula's dramatization. That Rice's work jumped on the evolutionary scale of dramatic form directly to musical may be attributed to a historical context that diverges from the pattern described by the stage productions of Polidori's and Stoker's prose. As Nina Auerbach aptly remarks,

---

65. Sorcha Ní Fhlainn, *Postmodern Vampires: Film, Fiction, and Popular Culture* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 199.
66. Cathy Meils, "Rice Novel Getting Musical Treatment," last modified January 28, 1997, https://variety.com/1997/legit/news/rice-novel-getting-musical-treatment-1117432956/.
67. Amnon Kabatchnik, *Horror on the Stage: Monsters, Murders and Terrifying Moments in Theater* (Jefferson: McFarland and Company, 2023), 88.
68. Quoted in Michael Riedel, "'Vampires': New Musical Blood," last modified May 23, 2001, https://nypost.com/2001/05/23/vampires-new-musical-blood/.
69. Kabatchnik, *Horror on the Stage*, 88.
70. Ní Fhlainn, *Postmodern Vampires*, 200.
71. Ernio Hernandez, "Elton John and Bernie Taupin Will Bring *The Vampire Lestat* to Life as a Musical," last modified May 6, 2003, https://playbill.com/article/elton-john-and-bernie-taupin-will-bring-the-vampire-lestat-to-life-as-a-musical-com-113037.
72. Ní Fhlainn, *Postmodern Vampires*, 199.
73. Kabatchnik, *Horror on the Stage*, 88.
74. Stuart, *Stage Blood*, 2005.

> "[t]he AIDS epidemic, widely publicized by the early 1980s, infected the decade's [...] vampires. The blood that had gushed out of Hammer[75] movies was no longer a token of forbidden vitality, but a blight. Once the etiology of AIDS became clear, blood could no longer be the life; vampirism mutated from hideous appetite to nausea. AIDS bestowed nostalgic intensity on Anne Rice's eternally young, beautiful, self-healing men, whose boredom with immortality looked like a heavenly dream to young men turned suddenly mortal."[76]

However, the musical *Lestat* (2006) did not engage with the AIDS-aware world which shaped Anne Rice's perspective on vampires, and perhaps this was what the audience expected of its composer, Elton John, who had been involved in the fight against AIDS ever since 1992, or of a stage adaptation which debuted in San Francisco, one of the first cities to host a Pride celebration. "[T]he literature of terror is born precisely *out of a terror of a split society*, and out of the desire to heal it,"[77] and in removing Rice's "complicated healing message,"[78] the hallmark of her vampire literature, the musical vampire, "no longer uncanny or whose uncanniness has become a commodity, represents the normalization (or delusive remetaphorization) of a simulation commodity culture whose substitution of nothing for something reverses metaphorical law's substitution of something for nothing."[79] The more "human" vampires become, the less capable they are of enacting a tragedy of immortality. This is the world of the epic at last.

In postmodern times, vampires have evolved to a point where they do all the things that mortals do to acquire "living" capital: they "drink, buy books, go to the theatre, go dancing, go drinking, think, love, theorize, sing, [and] paint."[80] In other words, mortals no longer provide "value-creating power"[81] to vampire narratives, which, in Rice's work, materializes in the figure of Louis, who avoids consuming human blood. This, in turn, explains why the trope's dramatic development has moved away from tragedy, which resides in the very quality of "possessing a human sensuous nature."[82] Vampires such as Louis, "who [have] the clearest perception of human sensuous nature as a whole [do not see] tragedy in it, but cautionary myth."[83] The postmodern myth of the vampire takes its drive from the horror and dissolves it in the domain of the human.

Acknowledgement: This work was funded by the EU's NextGenerationEU instrument through the National Recovery and Resilience Plan of Romania – Pillar III-C9-I8, managed by the Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digitalization, within the project entitled *Measuring Tragedy: Geographical Diffusion, Comparative Morphology, and Computational Analysis of European Tragic Form* (METRA), contract no. 760249/28.12.2023, code CF 163/31.07.2023.

75. Auerbach refers here to Hammer Film Productions, a British studio whose 1960s vampire movies explored "a version of "vampirism [that] amounted to a coded counterculture of sexual liberation and female empowerment." David J. Skal*, Hollywood Gothic: The Tangled Web of* Dracula *from Novel to Stage to Screen* (New York: Faber and Faber, 2004), 250.
76. Nina Auerbach, *Our Vampires, Ourselves* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), 148–9.
77. Moretti, *Signs*, 83. Original emphasis.
78. David J. Skal, *The Monster Show: A Cultural History of Horror* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1993), 346.
79. Judith Roof, *Reproductions of Reproduction: Imaging Symbolic Change* (New York and London: Routledge, 1996), 147.
80. Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1977), 112.
81. Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, vol. 1, trans. Ben Fowkes (London: Penguin Books, 1976), 716.
82. Stanley Cavell, *The Claim of Reason: Wittgenstein, Skepticism, Morality, and Tragedy* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 454.
83. Cavell, *The Claim of Reason*, 454.

Bibliography

"Nosferatu." *Irish Film Institute*. Accessed July 28, 2024. https://ifi.ie/film/nosferatu/.

Adorno, Theodor W., and Max Horkheimer. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Translated by Edmund Jephcott. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969.

Alexander, R.S. "Assassination, Politics and Miracles: France and the Royalist Reaction of 1820 (review)." *University of Toronto Quarterly* 74 no. 1 (2004), 429–430.

Aquilina, Conrad. "The Deformed Transformed; Or, from Bloodsucker to Byronic Hero – Polidori and the Literary Vampire." In *Open Graves, Open Minds: Representations of Vampires and the Undead from the Enlightenment to the Present Day*, edited by Sam George and William Hughes, 24–38. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016.

Arata, Stephen D. "The Occidental Tourist: *Dracula* and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonization." *Victorian Studies* 33, no. 4 (1990): 621–645.

Auerbach, Nina. *Our Vampires, Ourselves*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1995.

Butler, Erik. *The Rise of the Vampire*. London: Reaktion Books, 2013.

Cavallaro, Dani. *Gothic Vision: Three Centuries of Horror, Terror and Fear*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2002.

Cavell, Stanley. *The Claim of Reason: Wittgenstein, Skepticism, Morality, and Tragedy*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Dodd, Kevin. "Plot Variations in the Nineteenth-Century Story of Lord Ruthven, Pt. 1." *Journal of Vampire Studies* 1 no. 1 (2020): 19–43.

Dodd, Kevin. "Plot Variations in the Nineteenth-Century Story of Lord Ruthven, Pt. 2." *Journal of Vampire Studies* 1 no. 2 (2021): 192–209.

Gibson, Matthew. *Dracula and the Eastern Question: British and French Vampire Narratives of the Nineteenth-Century Near East*. Houndmills and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.

Groom, Nick. "Polidori's 'The Vampyre': Composition, Publication, Deception,." *Romanticism* 28, no. 1 (2022): 46–59.

Hernandez, Ernio. "Elton John and Bernie Taupin Will Bring *The Vampire Lestat* to Life as a Musical." Last modified May 6, 2003. https://playbill.com/article/elton-john-and-bernie-taupin-will-bring-the-vampire-lestat-to-life-as-a-musical-com-113037.

Hobsbawm, Eric. *Age of capital: 1848-1875*. London: Hachette, 2010.

Hobsbawm, Eric. *Age of revolution: 1789-1848*. London: Hachette, 2010.

Iovănel, Mihai. "Hamlet at the End of History: the specter of capitalism haunting communism," *Transilvania*, no. 5 (2024): 64–70.

Jowett, Lorna. "Horrible Histories? Vampire Television, Period Drama and Spectacle." *Horror Studies* 8, no. 2 (2017): 313–328.

Kabatchnik, Amnon. *Horror on the Stage: Monsters, Murders and Terrifying Moments in Theater*. Jefferson: McFarland and Company, 2023.

Kracauer, Siegfried. "Caligari." In *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari, a film by Robert Wiene, Carl Mayer and Hans Janowitz*, edited and translated by R. V. Adkinson, 5–26. New York: Lorrimer Publishing, 1972.

Levy, Robert I. "Horror and Tragedy: The Wings and Center of the Moral Stage." *Ethos* 13, no. 2 (1985): 175–187.

Marx, Karl. *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*. Vol. 1. Translated by Ben Fowkes. London: Penguin Books, 1976.

Marx, Karl. *Capital. A Critique of Political Economy*, vol. I, *Book One: The Process of Production of Capital* [1867]. First English edition of 1887, translated by Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling, edited by Frederick Engels. Moscow, USSR: Progress Publishers, 1887. https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/Capital-Volume-I.pdf.

Marx, Karl. *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1977.

Martin, Anca Simina. "The Trope of the Vampire (and *Strigoi*) in Romanian Culture and Cultural Products Imported to Romania (1839–1947)." *Transilvania*, no. 7 (2023): 17–25.

Martin, Anca Simina, and Stefan Baghiu. "The transmedial triangulation of Dracula: how cinema turned the Gothic bloodsucker into a Gothicized serial killer." *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* 11, no. 1 (2024). https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-03531-2.

McDayter, Ghislaine. "Conjuring Byron: Byromania, Literary Commodification and the Birth of Celebrity." In *Byromania: Portraits of the Artist in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Culture*, edited by Frances Wilson, 43–62. Houndmills: Macmillan Press, 1999.

McFarland, Ronald E. "The Vampire on Stage: A Study in Adaptations." *Comparative Drama* 21, no. 1

(1987): 19–33.
Meils, Cathy. "Rice Novel Getting Musical Treatment." Last modified January 28, 1997. https://variety.com/1997/legit/news/rice-novel-getting-musical-treatment-1117432956/.
Moretti, Franco. "Two Theories." *Daedalus* 150, no. 1 (2021): 16–25.
Moretti, Franco. *Modern Epic: The World-system from Goethe to García Márquez*. Translated by Quintin Hoare. London and New York: Verso, 1996.
Moretti, Franco. *Signs Taken for Wonders: Essays in the Sociology of Literary Forms*. Translated by Susan Fischer, David Forgacs and David Miller. London and New York: Verso, 1997.
Ní Fhlainn, Sorcha. *Postmodern Vampires: Film, Fiction, and Popular Culture*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019.
Picard, Caroline Joan and Cecil Greek. "The Compulsion of Real/Reel Serial Killers and Vampires: Toward a Gothic Criminology." *Journal of Criminal Justice and Popular Culture* 10, no. 1 (2003): 39–68.
Prendergast, Christopher. *Balzac, Fiction and Melodrama*. London: Edward Arnold, 1978.
Rice, Anne. *Interview with the Vampire*. New York: Ballantine Books, 2010.
Riedel, Michael. "'Vampires': New Musical Blood." Last modified May 23, 2001. https://nypost.com/2001/05/23/vampires-new-musical-blood/.
Roof, Judith. *Reproductions of Reproduction: Imaging Symbolic Change*. New York and London: Routledge.
Scodel, Ruth. "Tragedy and Epic." In *A Companion to Tragedy*, edited by Rebecca Bushnell, 181–197. Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2005.
Shakespeare, William. *Timon of Athens*. Edited by John Jowett. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
Skal, David J. *Hollywood Gothic: The Tangled Web of* Dracula *from Novel to Stage to Screen*. New York: Faber and Faber, 2004.
Skal, David J. *The Monster Show: A Cultural History of Horror*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1993.
Stoker, Bram. *Dracula*. New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997.
Stuart, Roxana. *Stage Blood: Vampires of the 19th-Century Stage*. Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1994.
Terian, Andrei. "Tragedy in Romanian Literature: Some Conceptual Delimitations," *Transilvania*, no. 5 (2024): 12–22.
Twitchell, James B. *The Living Dead: A Study of the Vampire in Romantic Literature*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1981.
Vancu, Radu. "Tragic Poetry and the Cultural Foundation of Power: A Re-examination of Franco Moretti's Theory of Tragic," Transilvania, no. 5 (2024): 55–63.
Watt, Ian. *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1957.
Wynne, Catherine. *Bram Stoker, Dracula and the Victorian Gothic Stage*. Houndmills and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.