

Irish Commentaries on Stoker

Andrew Parkin: ‘The rhythms of the Count are that of an Irish speaker of English rather than a European one; they fit with the image of Dracula as a nobleman with a ‘Gothic’ castle, and a country house, as well as a London town house to which he periodically withdraws.’

(‘Shadows of Destruction: The Big House in Contemporary Irish Fiction’ in Michael Kenneally, ed., *Cultural Contexts and Literary Idioms in Contemporary Irish Literature* (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1988), pp.306-354, espec. pp.307-08.)

Seamus Deane: Deane treats Dracula under the heading of Big House novels, calling it the ‘most hysterical and popular development’ of the ruined house genre of which Le Fanu was the great Victorian master. He paraphrases: The living dead of the aristocratic vampire’s tribe are victims of an historical crime from which the very bourgeois living - like Mina Harkness [recte Harker], the heroine - must be released by a joint Anglo-American assault, fortified by ‘the wonderful power of money’. He comments, This was the power which the Anglo-Irish landowners and the middle classes sadly lacked ... caught in a historical crisis from which there was no escape.’

(*A Short History of Irish Literature*, London: Hutchinson 1986, p.205.)

Seamus Deane: Dracula’s dwindling soil and his vampiric appetites consort well enough with the image of the Irish landlord current in the nineteenth century. Running out of soil, this peculiar version of the absentee landlord in London will flee the light of day and be consigned to the only territory left to him, that of legend. Like O’Grady’s and Yeats’s Anglo-Irish, he will be expelled from history to enter the never-never land of myth, demonised more effectively but also more clandestinely than by a Lalor, Mitchel, or Davitt.

(‘Landlord and Soil: *Dracula*’, in ‘National Character and the Character of Nations’, in *Strange Country: Modernity and Nationhood in Irish Writing Since 1790*, Oxford: Clarendon Press 1997, p.90.)

Terry Eagleton: Protestant Gothic [...] is the political unconscious of Irish [sic] society, the place where its fears and fantasies most luridly emerge. [...] For Gothic is the nightmare of the besieged and reviled, most notably of women, but in this case of an ethnic minority marooned with a largely hostile people.

(‘Form and Ideology in the Anglo-Irish Novel’, in Mary Massoud, ed., *Literary Relations: Ireland, Egypt and the Far East* (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe 1996), pp.135-46, p.140.)

Terry Eagleton: Dracula is a material ghoul, much preoccupied with leases and title deeds, and has summoned the narrator Jonathan Harker to his Gothic fastness less to bite him in the neck than to discuss his legal affairs. When he is slashed with a knife, it is banknotes and gold coins rather than blood which cascade from his breast. But Dracula, like the Ascendancy, is running out of land [...].by the end of the novel he is being hotly pursued around Europe, furnished only with the crates of Transylvanian soil he needs to bed down in for the night. His material base, like that of his author’s, is rapidly *dwindling*, and once deprived of his earth he will die [*italics mine*].

(*Heathcliff and the Great Hunger* (1995, p.215.)