

BORÓKA ANDL-BECK

An Imagined Alliance: Understanding “the Szgany” of Bram Stoker’s Transylvania in a Pseudo-Ethnographical Context

Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* utilises ethnographical tropes for descriptions of the Transylvanian “whirlpool” of cultures, religions, and peoples to paint a quasi-scientific picture of the region and set the scene for supernatural and immoral activity. For this, the narrative builds on the notion of racialisation as a key element of landscape-creation and Western cultural memory. This collective, racialised memory encompasses centuries-old systematisations of the West-East dichotomy: establishing the fact of racial and behavioural difference is a heritage of historiographies that sought to build narratives that would uphold the prejudices formed and ingrained in Western, markedly in Victorian British society. By highlighting the imagined alliance between the Transylvanian “Szgany”, an entity Oriental enough to be recognised as Other and geographically close enough to be considered a threat, and the “gypsies all the world over”, *Dracula* underlines Victorian fears of an imminent invasion that would attack the integrity and erase the achievements of Occidental societies, finally replacing it with backward views and animalistic behaviour characteristic of the “Szgany” of the novel. Thus, *Dracula* advocates for the Occidental agenda through foretelling a seemingly unavoidable climax, a fight against those who seek eliminate the significant pillars of Western identity and pride. The defeat of the East, namely Count Dracula and his “Szgany”, Gypsy cronies signifies a rejection of the imagined Oriental way of life and the degeneration of the West. As narrators, Westerners record their adventures in the way they see fit, and, by creating a narrative that masquerades as scientific, their ambitions and results are similar to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century travel writing and ethnographical accounts.

Keywords: Dracula, Transylvania, Victorian, Orientalism, ethnography

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Időpont	MÁJUS 05. PÉNTEK – FRIDAY, 5 MAY, 2023	
15.20–16.30	ONELETRAJZ – CSALADTÖRTÉNET – MEMOÁRIRODALOM elnök: Kisantal Tamás	KULTURÁLIS EMLÉKEZET – HELYEK – KÉPZELT HAZA elnök: V. Gilbert Edit
15.20–15.40	Száz Pál: Hova van beosztva? A zsidóság identitás artikulálásának módjai és dilemmái a magyarországi zsidó szerzők önéletrajzi elbeszéléseiben	Pap Norbert: Magyar kulturális emlékezet – kulturális nyomok – a Balkánon és Törökországban
15.40–16.00	Tapodi Zsuzsa – Tomonicska Ingrid: Markovits Rodion – egy eltűnt közösség krónikása	Acs Mariann: A levéltár, mint emlékezhely
16.00–16.20	Berszán István: Meg van írva	Köves Margit: Amrita Sher-Gil, Brunner Erzsébet és a „képzelt haza” – „imaginary homeland” (online)
16.20–16.30	Diskusszió – Discussion	
16.30–16.40	Szünet – Break	
16.40–17.50	FORDÍTÁS – DIASPORA – KULTURÁLIS TRANSZFER elnök: Mekis D. János	CRITICAL ROMA STUDIES – DIASPORA – REPRESENTATION elnök: Orbán Jolán
16.40–17.00	Kiss Noémi: Utazó nő szerzők. Nemes Nagy Ágnes: Amerikai napló, 1979 Iowa	Bogdán Mária: Representation: the deconstructive shift of the Romani movements (online)
17.00–17.20	V. Gilbert Edit: Gyanakvás és közvetítés avagy diaszpórák közt – komparatistaként	Boróka Andi-Beck: An imagined alliance: understanding “The Szgany” of Bram Stoker’s Transylvania in a pseudo-ethnographical context
17.20–17.40	Szávai Dorottya: Lorand Gaspar, Pilinszky János és a nyugati magyar diaszpóra	Beck Zoltán – Egri Petra: Fashion and pilgrimage – discourses of Romani identity construction
17.40–17.50	Diskusszió – Discussion	
18.00–18.40	PLENÁRIS ELŐADÁS – PLENARY SESSION (I. emeleti előadóterem) TAMÁS DOBOZY: On Misplaced Persons	
19.30–21.30	Magrár látogatóközpont, borkóstoló, Kiss Ágnes mesemondó előadása – Magrár Visitor Center: wine tasting, storytelling performance by Ágnes Kiss	

* Egyéb program: a brazilai magyarságról dokumentumfilm-vetítés a Földrajzi társalgóban: 10.40–12.00.