

DRACULA by Bram Stoker, 1897

1 Stoker's biographical elements - Born in Dublin.

- his mother: a free spirit, feminist, philanthropist, in favour of self-support for women.
- Stoker's bad health, spent his childhood in bed, importance of pathology, medical presence.
- Unpaid drama critic for the Daily Mail. His friend: Henry Irving, magnetic actor, specialized in acting the villain. They ran the Lyceum Theatre together for 20 years.
- 1890-1896 : 6 years writing his novel, Dracula, meant to be adapted for the stage, but Irving declined. It was adapted by someone else → dramatic dimension of the novel.

2 The gothic novel: 1897 → Dracula is a very late gothic novel.

- 1764 : The Castle of Otranto, Horace Walpole
 - 1818 : Frankenstein, Mary Shelley
 - 1847 : Jane Eyre, Charlotte Brontë → gothic undertones
- } 1770s - 1820s: the period of the gothic novel

Popular literature, sensation, horror.

Archaic setting: an old castle, convent, manor, graveyard, mist, innocent victims, supernatural, medieval times, barbarity.

Often an epistolary novel (like Dracula)

↳ creates suspense: no omniscient narrator, subjective points of view (limited)

↳ fragmentation: the reader has to reassemble the pieces.

3 The literary context

- Gothic revival: Ruskin, The Nature of Gothic 1851
↳ preraphaelite painters

- Freud starts his work on psychoanalysis 1896
- Nietzsche, So spoke Zarathustra 1885 → super-human being
- Henry James, What Maizie Knew 1897 → modernism, subjective, limited point of view, focalisation.
- science-fiction:
 - Robert Louis Stevenson: The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde (1885) → the dangers of science
 - H. G. Wells: The Time Machine (1895), The Invisible Man (1897), The War of the Worlds (1898)
- exoticism:
 - R. L. Stevenson: Treasure Island (1883)
 - Rudyard Kiplin: The Jungle Book (1895)
(in Dracula, Transylvania is an "exotic" land)
- Vampire stories:
 - Sheridan Le Fanu's Carmilla: a female vampire who only preys on women (homosexual undertones)
 - Polidori's short story: The Vampyre