

32

# “THE PLAGUE SHALL BE LIFTED”: REPRESENTATIONS OF EAST AND WEST IN *NOSFERATU* (2024)

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## Abstract

Robert Eggers' critically acclaimed *Nosferatu* (2024) revisits the myth of the vampire in a visually stunning masterpiece that revitalizes one of the most iconic myths of modern times. Rooted in Eastern European folklore and the literary imagination of centuries past, the vampire fascinates and inspires artists today. Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) popularised the vampire in the Western imagination in a novel in which East and West are presented as spatial embodiments of the dichotomy between civilised and savage. This paper aims to analyse the depiction of East and West in *Nosferatu* (2024), arguing that while such a political representation is not Eggers' primary aim, the film successfully inverts the narrative according to which the East is savage while the West is the civilised counterpart while also integrating forms of othering, namely spatial, cultural, and corporeal. This study also aims to highlight the implications of the film in terms of its representation of East and West while providing a deeper understanding of the development of the vampire myth in cinema.

**Keywords:** *Nosferatu*; vampire; *Dracula*; East; West; otherness

## INTRODUCTION

Since the publication of Bram Stoker's seminal *Dracula* (1897), the legacy of the undead bloodsucker has been forever transfused into the cultural imagination of Western nations, adapted in various contexts over the centuries. Indeed, the text "is one of the most obsessional texts of all time, a veritable black hole of the imagination" (Skal 5) upon which new generations of artists have inscribed their versions of the original, and the legacy of the iconic vampire has remained relevant and influential well into the twenty-first century (Skal 11).

A mutable and fluid metaphor, the vampire, as Scott writes, adapts to cultural climates: "From the dark tales of popular novels to the resurrections of contemporary cinema, the vampire continues to adapt itself to suit the ever-changing climate of our culture" (113). An endless source of inspiration, it has become "a literary Victorian sex night-mare, a stock figure of theatrical melodrama, a movie icon, a trade-mark, cuddle toy, swizzle stick, and breakfast cereal." (Skal 4). In essence, the vampire has become an emblematic cultural sensation that has been endowed with symbolic power that has been linked to sexuality, disease, and colonialism, among other things.

Although the vampire myth is not rooted in Hollywood, *Dracula* has been a staple of cinematic productions since the early German Expressionist films (Skal 5). Murnau's silent film *Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror* (1922) is the first major cinematic adaptation of the vampire myth and can be seen as a cornerstone in the development of the vampire cinematic genre. Since its release, numerous new films and series have drawn on the metaphor of the blood-sucking undead, effectively reflecting its cultural significance and endurance.

One of the latest adaptations of Murnau's signature film is *Nosferatu* (2024), directed by Robert Eggers. Robert Eggers' critically acclaimed *Nosferatu* (2024) revisits the lore of the vampire in a visually stunning masterpiece, reviving one of the most iconic myths of modern times. It is an imaginative and visually stunning take on the vampire myth, paying homage to previous adaptations while presenting a unique take on Count Orlok's story.

Set in the historical context of nineteenth-century Europe, *Nosferatu* (2024) tells a Gothic tale of love and madness, imbued with esoteric references and intertextual elements. For example, in an interview with Pullam-Moore, Eggers

mentioned that *Wuthering Heights* had inspired him for the creation of the demonic lover archetype (2024). Another important element of the story is the depiction of the East and the West, and the cultural anxieties associated with them, which are prominent in Stoker's novel. This paper aims to analyse the depiction of East and West in *Nosferatu*, arguing that while political representation is not the primary aim, the film successfully inverts the narrative of the East as savage and the West as civilised while also integrating forms of othering, namely spatial, cultural, and corporeal. This study also aims to highlight the film's implications in terms of its representation of East and West, while providing a deeper understanding of the development of the vampire myth in cinema.

### **DRACULA (1897) AND THE POLITICS OF OTHERNESS**

Brantlinger coined the term “imperial Gothic” (227) to refer to fiction that explores “individual regression or going native; an invasion of civilization by the forces of barbarism or demonism; and the diminution of opportunities for adventure and heroism in the modern world.” (230) In these texts, representations of alien forces contaminating civilization are juxtaposed with the dichotomy of self and other. As such, vampire fiction becomes the perfect vehicle to convey these anxieties, as the vampire embodies Otherness par excellence. The association of the vampire with the exoticized Other reflects not only cultural bias, but also a mindset that assumes the superiority of Western nations. As George and Hughes aptly argue, the rational minds of educated Western Europe used the vampire as a metaphor for irrationality or otherness, an idea also expressed in Goya's famous etching 'The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters', which dates back to the Enlightenment and its conceptualisation of irrationality (7-8).

The cultural fascination with vampires dates back to Victorian times, when

Vampire texts, like so many late Victorian fictions, drew a significant part of their simultaneous popular inspiration of fascination and horror from their portrayal of the Other, the exotic, the mysterious, the unfathomed. Such portrayals were common in the colonialist English literature of the Victorian

period; after all, this was a time during which the sun of the English empire was presumed to be illuminating the entire globe—and one by-product, for the English, was that they were able to imagine themselves as the torchbearers of civilization, proudly enlightening and civilizing all the mysterious and dangerous exotica with which they came into contact. (Doerksen 137).

The symbolic interpretation of the vampire includes a cultural bias against the East, including

western prejudices against Serbia, Wallachia, Transylvania and their neighbours – places imagined as barbaric, baleful and unnatural. Though these territories have forcibly become European, they bring with them dire problems. The complexities of lands annexed from the East and the tangled lore and legend of alien and contested regions are generalised and exoticised into an uncanny realm of otherness that spawns an unholy threat. It is from this chaos, this whirlpool of berserkers and werewolves, witches and devils that the undead rose. (Groom 23)

In other words, the vampire emerges as a threatening, “dangerous, ancient, outsider from the East” (Simon 2), and thereby becomes an apt metaphor for the outsider position. No wonder, then, that the vampire has been the focus of many postcolonial scholarship and has inspired writers too. One of the first and arguably the most famous literary texts of vampire fiction is Stoker’s *Dracula* (1897). Stoker’s novel can be read as “an individual invasion or demonic possession fantasy with political implications” (Brantlinger 233). *Dracula* was considered “one of the many fantastic adventure stories pitting manly Englishmen against foreign monsters”, which showed that “*Dracula’s* essential formula of invasion and appropriation was by 1897 cozily familiar to readers of adventure tales.” (Auerbach and Skal, ix).

Stoker's *Dracula* was published at a time when imperial Britain was in decline, leading to unease and a sense of decay in political power (Arata 622), so the vampire can also function as a postcolonial metaphor for “a threat that haunted *fin-de-siècle* England: that of atavism, or reversion. At the height of domestic prosperity and imperial expansion, thoughtful Victorians were uneasily aware of the fragility of their sophisticated civilization.” (Auerbach and Skal ix-x). As Arata explains, *Dracula* reflects “a narrative of reverse colonization”

(623)<sup>1</sup>, in which “The fear is that what has been represented as the “civilized” world is on the point of being colonized by “primitive” forces” (623). This cultural anxiety is “linked to a perceived decline—racial, moral, spiritual—which makes the nation vulnerable to attack from more vigorous, “primitive” people” (Arata 623). At the same time,

fantasies of reverse colonization are more than products of geopolitical fears. They are also responses to cultural guilt. In the marauding, invasive Other, British culture sees its own imperial practices mirrored back in monstrous forms. (...) As fantasies, these narratives provide an opportunity to atone for imperial sins, since reverse colonization is often represented as deserved punishment (Arata 623).

The foreign invasion aspect positions Dracula as the Other par excellence and “his social otherness can destabilize the entire social order that is the backbone of Victorian culture” (Kern 19) Stoker’s magnum opus “can stand for the vanguard in the invasion of the Western colonial world by peripheral, minority cultures, disrupting the status of the West as a normal/normative society.” (Passos 225). Carol Senf aptly argues that Dracula can be the embodiment of “the threat of the primitive trying to colonize the civilized world” (164). The vampire has thus become a scapegoat for otherness and, by extension, his repulsive physicality a repository of sin and disease.

Overall, Dracula’s “influence on the literary imagination lies in the continuing relevance of the motifs and thematics Stoker deploys to address issues as diverse as alterity, the body, history, and the power of discourses such as religion and science.” (Asempasah 117) The focus on science versus superstition encoded in Dracula’s plot, which can be extended to the civilised and savage tropes, is of particular interest in understanding *Nosferatu* (2024) and the construction of otherness.

### **NOSFERATU (2024), THE EAST-WEST DYAD, AND FORMS OF OTHERNESS**

*Nosferatu* (2024) is Robert Eggers' latest foray into gothic fantasy, drawing on the vampire myth and elements of previous *Dracula* adaptations such as

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<sup>1</sup> Gelder similarly calls vampirism “reverse colonisation” (12).

Murnau's *Nosferatu*, to create a complex tale of love and obsession in the looming shadow of Count Orlok. The film boasts stunning visuals and a compelling story, with a particular focus on historical accuracy<sup>2</sup>. This commitment was translated into Eggers' attempt to "make the vampire as scary as possible" (Eggers 2024), reminding viewers of the undead disease carriers of folk tales.

In an interview with Feldberg, Eggers explained that politics and the threat of the Other in *Nosferatu* (2024) was not his primary concern:

My works tend to be less intentionally politically charged, and that was also something that was not necessarily front of mind for me. I think there's a lot of criticism about "Dracula" and Murnau's film, about this Other from the East coming in. But that's not what excites me about the story. (2025)

In other words, the film is less explicitly about "imperialist anxiety" (Harse 29) than a story of supernatural love and obsession set against nineteenth-century European society. However, the complexity of the film allows for multiple interpretations. Eggers's fascination with vampire mythology also involves problematising binary oppositions such as East and West, science and superstition, ancient and modern, life and death (Marin 2021).

The clash between the modern and the traditional is represented early in the film when Thomas Hutter is shown rushing to work and suddenly stopped by a herd of cows, which can also be interpreted as the encroachment of older ways of life on civilised and industrialised societies. The film also tackles the superior mentality of Westerners by alluding to the monster trope early on. More specifically, the first instance of British gentlemen mocking the idea of the supernatural occurs when Friedrich, Thomas's best friend, takes his two young daughters into their bedroom and jokes about killing the monster hiding there, dismissing the children's fear as childish and nonsensical. This scene

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<sup>2</sup> Historical accuracy is not only reflected in the costumes and the use of accurate historical settings, but, as Ide writes, Eggers "explores and embraces the period-specific cadences and peculiarities of language: the screenplay is full of gorgeously ornate curses and florid turns of phrase, as crucial to the character development as the choices of costumes." (Ide 2024)

foreshadows the appearance of the vampire and the death it brings. Ironically, Friedrich's family will later be brutally killed by Count Orlok.

At first, Count Orlok appears to be the embodiment of the aristocratic past, a relic of a bygone era, a figure of noble descent, as suggested by his clothing and linguistic idiosyncrasies. Orlok's physical appearance is a grotesque embodiment of otherness, combining the features and style of dress of the Transylvanian nobility with decaying flesh. When Thomas calls Orlok sir, Orlok corrects him by stating "I will be addressed as the honor of my blood demands it." (Nosferatu 30:08-12). Even the wine goblet is ornate and detailed enough to suggest the count's noble heritage. Orlok's otherness is evident even in the film's opening scene, when he appears in shadowy form and murmurs, "You wakened me from an eternity of darkness." (Nosferatu 1:50-53 as he asphyxiates Ellen, which is an early visual foreshadowing of his association with death.

Herr Knock mentions Count Orlok to Thomas Hutter, describing the vampire as a foreign aristocrat, "very old and... excentric" (Nosferatu, 7:13-7:15). Count Orlok is both a source of fascination and fear, which can be traced back to a late-Victorian obsession "with the occult and the paranormal, and by extension to the Gothic." (Arata 624). Interestingly, when Herr Knock shows Thomas the Count's location, a sigil is revealed that contains references to the occult and mystical tradition, visually suggesting a connection to the supernatural. At the same time, throughout the film, the Count is bound by ancient rituals and customs. For example, after arriving in Wissburg, he tells his servant, Herr Knock, that Ellen "must willingly repledge her vow. She cannot be stolen." (Nosferatu 1:17:03-11), implying that willing sacrifice is the key to their union.

Transylvania, the Gothic locus of the vampire's origin and the spatial rendering of otherness, is first described as "a small country east of Bohemia, isolated in the Carpathian Alps" (Nosferatu, 7:55-8:02). Transylvania first appears in the twilight, isolated from civilisation, as a snowy, grey, forested area. This foreshadows the words of Stoker's *Dracula*, "We are in Transylvania; and Transylvania is not England. Our ways are not your ways, and there shall be to you many strange things" (Stoker 28). As Beresford points out, Transylvania persists in the cultural imagination of Western countries as synonym for "a dark and misty land peaked by mountains and home to blood-sucking fiends." (53) The Gothic setting alludes to the prospect of monsters lurking in the dense

forests, which is visually reinforced by the shot of Orlok's castle shrouded in darkness under a full moon.

In Stoker's novel, "Details about the history, geography and local customs not only give the text its richness but successfully ground it in the real world. Transylvania is both real and mysterious (...)" (Miller 5). While Transylvania functions as an anchor to the real world, the film also features the fictional German city of Wisburg, which is the spatial embodiment of Western culture, a bustling and heavily polluted place that appears chaotic, a reference to fast-paced life and crowded urban spaces. The mixing of a real and a fictional setting creates a transworld connection that becomes an ontological problematisation of space.

Although Transylvania appears to be a land of superstition in contrast to the advanced, civilised Wisburg, these beliefs ultimately appear to be superior to the science-driven Western society. The occult forces that plague Wisburg can only be defeated through the use of the magical rules that govern the Transylvanian communities. In other words, these folk beliefs and superstitions are just as valid as scientific facts, and so Transylvania becomes a repository of old-world knowledge. Pencack notes of Dracula that "Representatives of the tradition, reasons, and wealth valued by the modern world are (...) afraid and helpless when confronted with primeval forces represented by Dracula" (35). The same idea can be applied to the film: as much as Westerners believe in science, their saving is anchored in folklore.

Thomas's comments on the "unfamiliar customs of the peasantry and the errant wanderers" (Nosferatu 31:38-42) reveal how strange such customs appear to the educated mind of an English young man. When Thomas approaches a gypsy settlement after his arrival, he enters a carnivalesque world that is in stark contrast to Wisburg. Curiously, the villagers are more disciplined than their Western counterparts, as evidenced by the way the townsfolk listen to their chief. The lively atmosphere of the village, the music and the dancing seem to contradict the poor living conditions. The way the people laugh at Thomas reflects how ridiculous and out of place he seems, with his expensive clothes and Western mannerisms.

Orlok's words, "I fear we yet keep close many superstitions here that may seem backward to a young man of your high learning" (Nosferatu 31:54-32-09), are an ironic reference to the traditional versus modern dyad so prominently

embedded in the East/West dichotomy, and foreshadow the central conflict of the film. In another revelatory episode, Thomas asks Orlok about witnessing the ritual exhumation of a body, and Orlok, in a fit of rage, forbids Thomas to speak of the sordid act again. This scene is connected to Thomas' witnessing a ritual in which a white horse ridden by a naked virgin is led to the grave of a supposed vampire, and a stake is driven through the heart of the exhumed body to destroy the unclean spirit. Thomas' reaction to such a barbaric ritual is a clash between his Christian beliefs and the pagan, old-world superstitions of the villagers. Then, Orlok says, "How I look forward to retiring to your city of modern mind... who knows nothing of nor believes any such morbid fairy tales. (Nosferatu 32:29-47), emphasising his intention to settle in a modern place skeptical of evil. This, in turn, implies what Professor von Franz stresses: "We must know evil to be able to destroy it" (Nosferatu 1:48:47-49). Or, as the professor insists, "if we are to tame darkness, we must first face that it exists" (Nosferatu 1:24:57-25:00).

If in eighteenth-century vampire fiction the peasants are portrayed "as deluded by superstition" (George and Hughes 10), Eggers offers an alternate portrayal. The women from Transylvania use garlic and religious incantations to ward off evil spirits, another aspect of cultural difference. One older woman warns Thomas explicitly in Romanian about the perils lurking in the castle: "Please, please don't go there. Beware of his shadow. The shadow covers you in a nightmare." (Nosferatu, 21:20-21:27). However outdated these beliefs may be to the educated, in the film such faith in folklore is the vampire's undoing. Dracula, as Clausen pertinently argues, shows how "the modern hopes of science prove futile and are replaced by the ancient resources of religion" (244). Indeed, "religious imagery and practices completely displace scientific enlightenment as the chief means of battling the enemy" (Clausen 245).

Eggers' take on East and West is less political than it is about magical thinking versus rational thinking. Magic defies established norms, and the film captures the tension surrounding the superstitions that challenge rational, scientific communities. After Thomas is found by a nun, he is taken to a church. He is exorcised according to religious rituals, which ultimately cures him, reflecting how the knowledge of the old world is the superior tool in treating such ailments. Finally, Professor Von Franz finds the way to kill the vampire in an ancient magical book: "And lo, the maiden fair did offer up her love unto the

beast and with him lay in close embrace until the first cock crow. Her willing sacrifice thus broke the curse and freed them from the plague of Nosferatu." (Nosferatu 1:44:14-32).

As in earlier films such as *Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror* (1922) and *Vampyr* (1932), the destruction of the vampire is to be found in folklore and superstition than in science: "The knowledge that is of value, therefore, stems from the old world, whereas science is presented as at best ineffectual and at worst demonic." (Abbott 106). Professor von Franz's prophetic words anticipate the end of the film and Ellen's sacrifice as the Count Orlok's destruction: "Her dark bond with the beast shall redeem us all, for when the sun's pure light shall break upon the dawn, redemption!" (Nosferatu 1:57:28-37). Ending Orlok is Ellen's own choice. When Thomas laments that "This is not moral" (Nosferatu 1:57:14-16), the Professor's response reveals how circumstances require them to go beyond the binary thinking so deeply ingrained in the Western mentality: "God is beyond our morals! (Nosferatu 1:57:17-19).

The eccentric and disgraced professor, Albin Eberhart von Franz, is the only Westerner who truly grasps the mystical aspects of the case. More specifically, he is the only one who can diagnose Ellen and the only one who sees her illness as a curse. Despite being part of the Western scientific community, he believes in occult forces and is therefore laughed at and ostracised by his peers, suggesting how Western science is considered superior in this society. He also understands that Orlok is a demonic entity, a plague, and "Like every plague, its soul desire is to consume all life on Earth. This creature is a force more powerful than evil. It is Death itself. (Nosferatu 1:24:10-19). Friedrich's answer, "Do not tell me you believe in such medieval devilry!" (Nosferatu 1:24:31-33) reflects the supposedly enlightened attitude towards magic and the cynical skepticism it often entails. The viewer's understanding of the ontologically ambivalent world and magical thinking is further deepened by the Professor's monologue: "I have seen things in this world that would have made Isaac Newton crawl back into his mother's womb. We have not become so much enlightened as we have been blinded by the gaseous light of science. (Nosferatu 1:24:37-1:24-53).

Ellen's violent seizures are rationalized by modern medicine as the result of nerves, and the doctor recommends that she sleep in her corset and be tied up. Such actions demonstrate the ineffectiveness of science in curing the hallucinatory states that Ellen experiences. The professor tells her that she has

cosmic significance, saying “In heathen times, you might have been a great priestess of Isis. Yet, in this strange and modern world, your purpose is of greater worth. You are our salvation. (Nosferatu 1:49:27-43). Besides the cultural implications of the female condition in the nineteenth century, Ellen also functions as a symbol of ontological liminality, as she inhabits the educated society of Western civilization and the magical world of the supernatural. So she becomes a symbolic gateway between East and West, between science and magic, between life and death. Moreover, Ellen is a contrasting character, both attracted to and repulsed by Orlok, a person both real and ethereal, suggested by Herr Knock, who refers to her as a sylph. This goes hand in hand with vampire literature, as Nordberg observes: “Vampire fictions, in particular, blur and complicate the boundaries between life and death (the undead), spirit and body, health and illness, and good and evil” (111).

In *Dracula*, othering is also evident in the body horror: “In *Dracula* vampirism designates a kind of colonization of the body. Horror arises not because *Dracula* destroys bodies, but because he appropriates and transforms them”, leading “to the biological and political annihilation of the weaker race by the stronger.” (Arata 630)<sup>3</sup> Indeed, as Kern writes, the novel “depicts the count’s otherness as a physical, spiritual, and cultural threat to the English characters to demonstrate the true frailty of the British Empire.” (13)

Corporeal othering embodied by Count Orlok is visually striking, rooted in European folklore, according to which the vampire is a contaminator and the source of epidemics (Barber 8). At its core, as Skall, explain, the vampire mythology stems from unusual burial traditions: “At its most primitive level, the vampire myth is connected to cannibalism, and to the corollary belief that the devouring of body and blood also imparts a transference of the victim’s strength, courage, or other attributes. Mysterious wasting plagues, catalepsy, and premature burial also contributed to the myth, fostering prescientific explanations for frightening biological phenomena. (Skal 11)

Eggers was inspired by Eastern European folklore to create Count Orlok as a plague-ridden, rotting corpse:

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<sup>3</sup> For more on the political reading of the metaphor of the vampire, see George and Hughes, pp. 12-14.

The vampire of folklore is a corpse. An undead corpse. These early vampires are visually closer to a cinematic zombie, often engorged with blood, their faces sometimes pooling with blood under their rotting skin, maggot-infested, in a state of terrifying putrefaction and decay. (Eggers 2024)

The identification of the vampire with pestilence and decay positions the vampire as the Other *par excellence*. Like disease, the vampire aims to corrupt and contaminate, as Pugh aptly notes:

The diseased subject is seen as problematic: corrupt, deviant, ugly and alien. Like disease itself, it is their purpose to invade, assimilate or engulf the vitality of those who are 'pure', draining them of their essence or burning out their energy, tainted with a partial Other. (177).

As Bacon writes,

the body of the vampire gives physical form both to the contagion itself as well as the associated anxieties around the perceived causes and spread of the disease once it strikes. It is not surprising then that the body of the vampire, the disease, can take on many forms, from animal (bat and rat) to pestilential particulate matter, creeping shadows, and even malignant weather systems. (2)

Metaphorically, the aspect of contagion can be linked to otherness and cultural pollution, such that the vampire becomes a political symbol and a "source of contagion from the East" (Bacon 6) that seeks to infect civilized cultures. Orlok's arrival in Wisborg visibly changes the town. As the plague spreads, the cities become emptier, showing only rats and dogs feeding on corpses, with burning objects, processions of coffins and biblical readings in the background, adding to the apocalyptic atmosphere. Orlok's arrival in Wisburg is visually represented by the rat infestation and the "plague ship" (Nosferatu 1:15:51). The townspeople's reaction is typical of the modern medical response, with quarantine and burial of the dead. Orlok as a plague is also apparent in the overflowing hospital and the many infected and sick patients, including Friedrich's wife. Friedrich insists that "A real plague, killing real people"

(*Nosferatu* 1:37:22-24). Ironically, Friedrich himself becomes infected and commits acts of necromancy as Orlok's curse affects his mind, not just his body.

In the end, the key symbol of the film that captures the central tension is the vampire, who embodies otherness - spatial, cultural and bodily - but at the same time inhabits a liminal space, always hovering between ontological and epistemological zones. Marin observes how the horror genre, in a general sense, emphasises the in-between space or the "twilight zone" (2021).

## CONCLUSION

Eggers' *Nosferatu* (2024) is "a testament to how remakes can breathe new life into old stories while reminding us why they mattered in the first place." (Pinheiro 2024). One aspect of the film that stands out is its portrayal of the vampire as the embodiment of otherness. Still, his Count Orlok is not a metaphor for the East invading the West and the cultural anxieties that come with it, but a multifaceted symbol that also embodies the demonic lover, the clash between traditional and modern, between life and death, between the supernatural and the real. The vampire is thus elevated to a position where it becomes a potent symbol even for modern societies.

The film also subverts the conventional narrative of the West as civilized and the East as savage, crediting superstition and magical books with the destruction of the vampire. Eggers draws on Eastern European folklore to create Count Orlok as a rotting, decomposing corpse that returns from the grave to haunt and torment the living, infecting and destroying societies unfamiliar with the superstitious ways to contain or kill him.

*Nosferatu* (2024) deals with different types of otherness, such as spatial otherness - represented by Transylvania and Wisburg as the embodiment of East and West and the cultural elements implied - but also corporeal otherness, constructing the vampire as the carrier of the plague. The characters fall into several typologies, and Eggers masterfully mocks English superiority in the figure of Thomas Hutter and Friedrich Harding, but also embeds more complex characters such as Professor Albin Eberhart von Franz and Ellen Hutter, both capable of understanding the deeper and more supernatural aspects of the vampire. Eggers also focuses on the dichotomy between science and superstition, alluding to the superiority of magical thinking over rational

reasoning in battling the vampire. This, in turn, could imply that such practices are a reminder of a not-so-distant past, when age-old beliefs were the norm.

One of the film's merits is its broadening of the vampire mythology and "Nosferatu's story remains carved in ambiguity. Nosferatu is trapped between the land of reason and the land of the supernatural; his figure symbolises the duality of human nature." (Marin 2021), so that the film becomes a complex meditation not only on monstrosity and dichotomies, but also on the human condition. The film is, therefore, relevant not only because it adds to the existing vampire narratives in cinema but also because it urges the viewer to gain a deeper understanding of our perennial fascination with the vampire.

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