

**Title:** Vampires in Human Flesh: Representations of the Slovaks and Gypsies in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*

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Count Dracula's loyal-to-the-death helpers in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*—the Gypsies and the Slovaks—have received little scholarly attention in the otherwise notable amount of critical literature dedicated to the novel. How does Stoker characterize these two ethnic groups? What role do they play in the novel, and what is their relationship with the Count? In my talk, I will offer answers to these questions through close reading of Stoker's rhetoric about the Gypsies and the Slovaks. I will further examine the sources on which Stoker relied to construct the images of these two ethnic groups, including Emily Gerard's "Transylvanian Superstitions" (1885) and Major E. C. Johnson's *On the Track of the Crescent: Erratic Notes from the Piraeus to Pesth* (1885). In *Dracula*, I will argue, the Gypsies and Slovaks are shown as no lesser monsters than their bloodthirsty master, as vampires in human flesh. Loyal to the death to the Count, the Gypsies and Slovaks become one with their master—they do not possess their own, independent identity, but are identified through the Count. Stoker thus uses these two ethnic groups to build an image of Transylvania, and by extension the Balkans, that is a proxy of the Count, distinguished by lawlessness and unspeakable evil.

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