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Stalking the count: Dracula, Fandom and Tourism

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Abstract

Large numbers of tourists travel to Transylvania every year, looking for traces of Count Dracula. This article investigates why people feel the need to connect fictional stories, such as *Dracula*, with identifiable physical locations, and why they subsequently want to visit these locations. Based on field work, it is concluded that the experience of the Dracula tourist is characterised by a dynamic between two partially contradictory modes. First, Dracula tourists are driven by a desire to make a concrete comparison between the landscape they are visiting and their mental image. On the other hand, this rational approach to trace reality is contrasted with a more intuitive, emotional desire for a temporary symbiosis of both worlds.

Research highlights

• The inner experience of Dracula tourism is characterized by two contradictory modes. • Imagined worlds are contrasted with sensory impressions and historical narratives. • Dracula tourists want to overcome this division between reality and

narratives. Dracula tourists want to overcome this division between reality and imagination. Dracula re-enactments serve as the basis of a liminal experience.



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Keywords

dracula; vampire; imagination; reality; place

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