

**Incursiuni în imaginar 10. Folclor, practici magice și literatură/
Incursions into the Imaginary 10. Folklore, Magic Practices and Literature**

Ovidiu IVANCU, *From Vlad Țepeș to Count Dracula. A Challenging Relation between History and Myth*

Abstract: *The relation between myth and reality is a very complex one, and it becomes more and more difficult to discuss because there is a significant risk to touch national sensibilities, clichés and painful taboos. Just the simple statement that a nation is based not only on historical facts but mainly on mythologies, elaborated during centuries of evolution and living together, might be considered an exaggeration. Since the beginning of our adventure on Earth, a sum of universal archetypes were incorporated in various myths that crossed the centuries. The present paper aims to discuss and analyse how a 15th century Romanian historical figure (Vlad Țepeș, i.e. Vlad the Impaler) turned into a well spread literary myth, and to debate about the two opposite perspectives regarding the same mythological figure (Count Dracula). If, for the Romanian collective mentality, Vlad Țepeș is associated even today with the idea of justice, in Europe he is nothing more than a tyrant. Moreover, in Bram Stoker's novel, Dracula has colonial ambitions, wanting to conquer no less than the entire England. In fact, we will see that the path from history to myth is (and it is not at all a particular case) a chain of multiple mutations. At the beginning of this chain we find Vlad Țepeș, his cruelty (which was not quite an exception for that time), his fights against the Turkish Empire and some economic disagreements with neighbours, and at the other end of the chain we have a blood-thirsty vampire placed in an exotic landscape meant to justify his credibility. The present paper analyses the confrontation of the myth as defined by Plato, Roland Barthes, Roger Caillois, Jean Jacques Wunenburger, Claude Levi-Strauss and Mircea Eliade with the reality attested by historical documents, in an attempt to clarify the exact point when history and literature become an indistinguishable conglomerate.*

Keywords: Vlad Țepeș; Dracula; myth; history.

References :

- Lévy-Strauss, C. (1968). *Structural Anthropology*. New York: Basic Books.
Stoker, B. (1897). *Dracula*. New York: Grosset & Dunlap.
Magoulick, M. (2015). What is Myth? Retrieved from <https://faculty.gcsu.edu/custom-website/mary-magoulick/defmyth.htm>.
Boia, L. (2006). *Pentru o istorie imaginarului*. Bucharest: Humanitas.
Wunenbruger, J.J (1998). *Viața imaginilor*. Cluj-Napoca: Cartimpex.
Wunenburger, J.J (2004). *Filozofia imaginii*. Iași: Polirom.

Cite This Item

Copy Citation

APA

Ivancu, O. (2019). From Vlad Țepeș to Count Dracula. A Challenging Relation between History and Myth. *Incursiuni în imaginar*, (10), 47-57. DOI:10.29302/InImag.2019.10.3

MLA

Ivancu, Ovidiu. "From Vlad Țepeș to Count Dracula. A Challenging Relation between History and Myth". *Incursiuni în imaginar*, no. 10, 2019, pp. 47-57. www.inimag.uab.ro. DOI:10.29302/InImag.2019.10.3

ROMANIAN ACADEMY DEMANDS

Ivancu, Ovidiu, *From Vlad Țepeș to Count Dracula. A Challenging Relation between History and Myth*, în „Incursiuni în imaginar”. *Folclor, practici magice și literatură*, nr. 10, 2019, pp. 47-57.
DOI:10.29302/InImag.2019.10.3