



From Demons to Dracula: The Creation of the Modern Vampire Myth

Matthew Beresford

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In blood-soaked lore handed down the centuries, the vampire is a monster of endless fascination: from Bram Stoker's "Dracula" to "Buffy the Vampire Slayer", this seductive lover of blood haunts popular culture and inhabits our darkest imaginings. The history of the vampire is a compelling tale that is now documented in "From Demons to Dracula", which reveals why the vampire myth and this creature of the undead fascinates us. Beresford's chronicle roams from the mountains of Eastern Europe, to the foggy streets of Victorian England, to Hollywood film, as he investigates the portrayal of the vampire in history, literature and art. Investigating the historical "Dracula", "Vlad the Impaler", and his status as a national hero in Romania, Beresford endeavours to winnow out truths from the complex legend and folklore. "From Demons to Dracula" tracks the evolution of the vampire, drawing on classical Greek and Roman myths, witch trials and medieval plagues, Gothic literature and even contemporary works such as Anne Rice's Interview with the Vampire and Elizabeth Kostova's "The Historian". Beresford also looks at the widespread impact of screen vampires from television shows, classic movies starring Bela Lugosi and Christopher Lee, and more recent films such as "Underworld" and "Blade". Whether as a demon of the underworld or a light-fearing hunter of humans, the vampire has endured through the centuries, the book reveals, as a powerful symbolic figure for human concerns with life, death and the afterlife. Wide-ranging and engrossing, "From Demons to Dracula" casts this bloodthirsty nightstalker as a remarkably complex and telling totem of our nightmares, real and imagined.

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