



**UNIVERSIDADE ESTADUAL DA PARAÍBA
FACULDADE DE LINGUÍSTICA, LETRAS E ARTES
CURSO DE LETRAS - INGLÊS**

AMANDA DE LIMA MONTEIRO

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTS OF GOTHIC SPACE
IN BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA**

**CAMPINA GRANDE - PB
2024**

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Trabalho de Conclusão de Curso (Artigo)
apresentado a Coordenação do Curso Letras -
Inglês da Universidade Estadual da Paraíba,
como requisito parcial à obtenção do título de
Licenciatura em Letras – Inglês.

Área de concentração: Estudos Literários

Orientador: Prof. Me. Joselito Porto de Lucena

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M775a Monteiro, Amanda de Lima.
An analysis of the effects of gothic space in Bram Stoker's
Dracula [manuscrito] / Amanda de Lima Monteiro. - 2024.
23 p.

Digitado.

Trabalho de Conclusão de Curso (Graduação em Letras
Inglês) - Universidade Estadual da Paraíba, Faculdade de
Linguística, Letras e Artes, 2024.

"Orientação : Prof. Me. Joselito Porto de Lucena ,
Coordenação do Curso de Letras Inglês - CEDUC. "

1. Literatura gótica. 2. Espaço gótico. 3. Análise literária. I.
Título

21. ed. CDD 801.95

AMANDA DE LIMA MONTEIRO

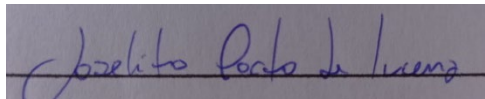
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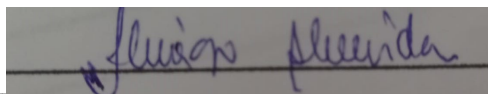
Área de concentração: Estudos Literários.

Aprovada em: 21/06/2024.

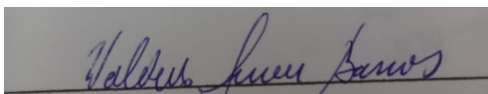
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To God, for His grace that reached me, and to my parents, for their support and for being my inspirations, I DEDICATE.

“The world seems full of good men, even if
there are monsters in it!”

(Dracula, 1897)

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**UMA ANÁLISE DOS EFEITOS DO ESPAÇO GÓTICO
EM DRÁCULA DE BRAM STOKER**

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTS OF GOTHIC SPACE
IN BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA**

Amanda de Lima Monteiro¹

RESUMO

Através da literatura gótica, é possível conhecer os espaços mais sombrios onde se escondem os mistérios mais assustadores. Esses espaços provocam reações humanas que aguçam os instintos mais profundos que buscam proteger o ser humano daquilo que desconhece. Assim, este estudo se propõe a explorar em *Drácula*, escrito em 1897 por Bram Stoker, o espaço gótico de maneira a compreender do que se trata tal espaço e como age sobre a personagem Jonathan Harker, influenciando suas ações na trama. Dessa forma, sendo este trabalho de abordagem exploratória e explicativa, trechos da obra foram selecionados e analisados à luz de teorias atuais que explicam o gótico, revelando que a personagem principal, ao observar o espaço em que se insere, percebe acontecimentos misteriosos e impossíveis num mundo racional, fazendo-o questionar sua própria sanidade, além de provocar sentimentos de medo, aflição e agonia. Conclui-se que o espaço gótico transcende a marginalidade literária, ocupando uma posição central na narrativa ao influenciar os sentidos mais primitivos do ser humano, através de suas arquiteturas labirínticas e sua atmosfera caótica.

Palavras-Chave: Literatura gótica; espaço gótico; Bram Stoker; *Drácula*.

ABSTRACT

Through Gothic literature, it is possible to discover the darkest spaces where the most frightening mysteries are hidden. These spaces provoke human reactions that sharpen the deepest instincts that seek to protect human beings from what they do not know. Thus, this study proposes to explore the gothic space in *Dracula*, written in 1897 by Bram Stoker, in order to understand what this space is about and how it acts on the character Jonathan Harker and influences his actions in the plot. Thus, as this work has an exploratory and explanatory approach, excerpts from the work were selected and analyzed in light of the theories that best explain Gothic and everything that surrounds it, showing that the main character, when observing the space in which he is located, perceives mysterious and impossible events in a rational world making him question his own sanity, in addition to provoking feelings of fear, horror and agony. The work concludes that the Gothic space leaves the margins of literature and begins to occupy the center, forming part of the plot by influencing the most primitive senses of the human being, through its labyrinthine architectures and its chaotic atmosphere.

Keywords: Gothic literature; gothic space; Bram Stoker; *Dracula*;

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1 INTRODUCTION

The legend of Count Dracula has survived over the centuries and continues to be perpetuated throughout the world. However, this legend is based on the story of the Romanian prince and military leader Vlad Tepes, who also had the title of *Dracula*, which according to Santanna (2015), means son of the Dragon. Vlad Tepes had a government known for his cruelty when defeating his opponents in war. Vlad used to impale his opponents and drain their blood to drink, and although there are no historical records that prove the veracity of the story in its entirety it was the inspiration for the legend of the best-known vampire in world literature: Count Dracula.

It was in the Victorian Era (1837-1901) that this well-known legend became a literary work. Although this Era was the stage for great transformations, it was also the moment when the bourgeoisie cultivated conservatism and realism, which was evidenced through literary works, especially the novel. However, the Victorian Era also opened doors to horror and science fiction, which went against the conservative and religious ideas of the time, presenting the most macabre side of the human being and placed the profane more in evidence than the sacred. And it was in these circumstances that the Irish writer Bram Stoker (1847-1912) found the perfect setting for *Dracula* (1897). The work tells the journey of Jonathan Harker, a lawyer for a securities firm, to Transylvania at the request of Count Dracula, who wanted to buy a house in England. The plot also presents Harker's sinister and fearful stay at the Count's castle, an ancient building with Gothic architecture that arouses Harker's curiosity. Over the days, Jonathan makes surprising discoveries, and frightening events bring many terrifying surprises.

Thereby, *Dracula* (1897) brings a dark atmosphere which is surrounded by mysteries and scary events. As in other works, such as *The Fall of the House of Usher* (1839), written by Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849), and *O Cortiço* (1890), written by Aluísio de Azevedo (1857-1913), in which the spaces interact with the characters, influencing events, it is clear that the space in which *Dracula* (1897) is inserted also has a great importance to the work. As the novel develops, the space becomes even more important, ceasing to be just a place and becoming an agent that acts on the characters, and could even be interpreted as a living organism.

Therefore, the objective of this research is to understand how space affects the unconscious of characters and influence events in *Dracula* (1897). The two specific objectives are: a) define the gothic in term of etymology and main characteristics and b) show through feelings, imagery and perceptions how the story is influenced by space. To achieve this, this work was supported by scientific works that explore Gothic literature and emphasize the Gothic space. Authors such as Cardoso e Teixeira (2023), Ismatullayevna (2022), Bazzoli (2021), Neto e Filho (2021), Costa (2019), (2019), Silveira (2019), Friedrich (2019), Gross (2019), Silva (2019), Duarte (2017), Camargo (2013), Neto e Camargo (2013), Santana e Senko (2016), Santanna (2015), Majlingová (2011), Cordeiro (2010), Borges Filho (2008), Camargo (2008) and Rossi (2008), were consulted to build the theoretical basis of this work.

Based on what Gil (2002) proposed, this research is explanatory in nature, considering that it proposes explore the literary work in order to clarify factors that contribute to a phenomenon. The approach is qualitative, as the focus is on understanding the relationship between the space and the subject inserted in it. To carry out the research, a review of a substantial part of the literature on Gothic and Gothic space was carried out, with the aim of clarifying the research question and developing a new path in the study of Gothic space. Thus, in addition to this review, the literary work in focus (*Dracula*, by Bram Stoker), in a 1995 version, was read and analyzed, to find specific excerpts about what the literature postulates about the Gothic space. Therefore, the first four chapters were chosen for this analysis, as this is when we have the main character's involvement with the villain and physical space, the castle.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Bram Stoker's Gothic Literature and the Victorian Era.

Abraham Stoker, known as Bram Stoker, was born in Dublin, Ireland, in 1847 and died in London, United Kingdom, in 1912. He spent the first seven years of his life sick, lying on a bed, listening to Irish legends and stories told by his mother. According to the article ““Bram Stoker, a family perspective” (2018)², from the website “Bramstokerestate.com”, which is dedicated to publishing the details of the life and work of the writer, the legends and stories had a melancholic and even gothic tone, as they also portrayed the harsh reality lived by his family, and that may have contributed to the gothic literature works of Stoker as well.

Bram was an excellent student at Trinity College and received several honors. In 1866 he entered military service, and began his career as a newspaper editor, theater reviewer and wrote a manual that described military duties called “The Duties of Clerks of Petty Sessions in Ireland” (1879). After this time, Bram Stoker accepted the invitation of the actor Henry Irving (1838–1905)³, to manage the Lyceum Theater in London, which allowed him closer contact with other writers such as Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) and Arthur Conan Doyle (1859-1930), bringing him even closer to literature.

While still in military service, and working with Henry Irving, Stoker wrote short stories and novels, spanning genres such as fiction, fantasy, romance and horror. Some more well-known works are *Under the Sunset* (1881), a set of fantastic short stories for children, *The Snake's Pass* (1890), a novel of fantasy, *The Mystery of The Sea* (1902), a novel of adventure and horror fiction and *The Lady of the Shroud* (1909), a novel of romance and horror. All of these works always included horror and supernatural stories.

Bram Stoker initiated his work as a writer during the Victorian Era (1837-1901), which was named in honor of Queen Victoria. This Era was marked by transformations in industry, politics, art and literature. According to Santana e Senko (2016), many of the literary works produced in this period criticized the limits forced by the government in relation to lifestyle, sexuality and religiosity. Bram Stoker published works showing a different lifestyle than the one advocated by Victorian society, such as *Dracula* (1897). It was first published in 1897, and although it became an inspiration for later vampires and other gothic stories, it was not immediately successful, only years later it became popular and turned into the phenomenon it is today. In this sense, *Dracula* (1897) reveals the horror of humanity and shows how the gothic stories can elicit the feelings of fear that are common to all humanity, and leads readers and characters to reflect on their own limits in the face of desperate situations also evoking the most innate instincts of human beings, which make characters seek the truth and reach surprising conclusions throughout the plot through incredible revelations of a fantastic universe.

2.2 Gothic and legends

The word “gothic” is related to the Goths which, according to Sá (2019), were a Germanic tribe that took down the Roman Empire. Referring to the etymology of the word “gothic” which, according to the website “*Origem da Palavra*” (2011), comes from the Latin

² STOKER, William Parker. Bram Stoker, a family perspective. **Bram Stoker Estate, 2018**. Disponível em: <https://www.bramstokerestate.com/life>. Acesso em: 14 jun. 2024.

³ According to the website "theirivingsociety.org.uk", Sir Henry Irving (1838-1905) was a 19th century British actor known for producing comic, dramatic and tragic plays. He received the title of "Knight" for his artistic contributions to the theater, and was known for his great interpretations of the plays of Shakespeare.

gothicus and the Greek *gothoi*, the name of a Germanic people who called themselves *gothi*, a word that comes from *gothar*, which, in Scandinavian, means “man”.

In the sixteenth century the word “Gothic” was used by the painter Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574), which according to Ismatullayevna (2022) “tried with this definition to mark the boundary between the medieval, barbaric art of the northern peoples and the classical style of the Italian Renaissance”. As a genre, “Gothic is characterized by eighteenth and nineteenth-century English literary tradition, with its depictions of castles and supernatural experiences (...)” (Ramos, 2019, p. 57); and according to Silveira (2019, p. 118), “the term Gothic developed in the literary context in opposition to the Enlightenment, creating a counterpoint to the realistic tendency through narratives that prioritized the supernatural and the fantastic”.

In addition to architecture and painting, the Gothic style was also brought to literature in the 18th century, which developed new characteristics that remain to this day. According to Sá (2019, p. 11), the Gothic in literature became a “spokesperson of anxieties, fears and of the shadows that are inherent to humanity”. Gothic characteristics that are extremely important for the construction of the text, given the need for a special atmosphere for the actions to unfold, are:

Inconfessable desires, personality dissimulations, obsessions, neuroses, repressed memories, individual and collective psychogenics⁴, failures in understanding reality or realities beyond understanding, are just a few examples of the specters that haunt us. Gothic fiction, whether set in the present, past or future, often contains an allegorization of meanings, that is, they are narratives that indirectly represent one thing or an idea under the appearance of another, replacing the usual meaning with an implied comparison. (Sá, 2019, p. 12, our translation).

These characteristics ensure that there is an excess in language, given the need of describing these obsessions and neuroses showing how characters can become disturbed and fail to understand reality and events throughout the plot. Furthermore, Gothic literature presents “elements of horror and dark and mysterious themes (...) feeling of fear and estrangement (...) Terrifying scenes, castles, monsters, vampires and the supernatural” (Costa, 2019, p. 7).

Thus, Gothic literature highlights writers such as Bram Stoker (1847-1912), author of the well-known vampire novel *Dracula*, Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) author of the Victorian romance *The picture of Dorian Gray* (1890), which is about a beautiful young man who makes a pact, placing his imperfections and consequences of the darkest practices in a painting of himself, which begins to reveal his dark soul; Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849), well known author of the *Tales of the Grotesque and the Arabesque* (1840), a collection of bizarre tales, representing the grotesque, and Gothic tales representing the arabesque; Mary Shelley (1797-1851), author of *Frankenstein* (1818), which tells the story of a scientist who, in an attempt to bring an inanimate being to life, creates a monstrous creature made of mortal remains that pursues him during a plot and causes frightening situations; Horace Walpole (1717-1797), author of the first gothic story: *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), which shows the haunting consequences and supernatural forces that a prince suffers after inappropriately taking possession of a castle; Emily Bronte (1818-1848), author of *Wuthering Heights* (1847), which features devastating romance, a tragic past and revenge, leading the characters to have frightening and mysterious experiences, such as the disturbing appearance of a ghost. All of these authors dedicated themselves, among other genres, to Gothic writing, going against the ideals of the times in which they published their stories.

⁴ According to the American Psychological Association (2018), the term *psychogenic* is “resulting from mental factors. The term is used particularly to denote or refer to a disorder that cannot be accounted for by any identifiable physical dysfunction and is believed to be due to psychological factors (e.g., a conversion disorder).”

The emergence of the figure of the vampire happened independently in different cultures, as stated Costa (2009, p. 2) *apud* Cardoso e Teixeira (2023, p. 166, our translation⁵):

The legends of beings that suck blood and energy in several cultures are millennial. In the remote year of 600 BC in China, there are records of a demon called Giangeshi who drank blood; also in Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, Greece and Rome; the Sanskrit *katakhanoso* and *bital*, the Russian *upity*, the Polish *upiory*, the Greek *urykolaker*. They are autochthonous entities or legends, it means, they appeared in each place without the possibility of an inter-influence of the most diverse regions, as even in pre-Columbian Peru there are records of them: the *canchus* or *pumapamics*, who drank the blood of sleeping young people, as well as Aztec priests who drank blood to have the energy of the sun

Therefore, vampires are ancient creatures that civilizations century after century, and gained popular imagination in the 18th century, as infers Friedrich (2019, p. 86) when she says that vampires are evil gothic figures endowed with inhuman powers, even though they have human characteristics. The first novel about a vampire was written by John Polidori (1795-1821), who created the vampire Lord Ruthven in the story *The Vampire* (1819), and years later other vampires were created and transformed, reaching the best known: *Dracula* (1897), which became a classic of gothic literature and vampire stories, that inspire many other stories to this day.

2.3 The Gothic and the effects of space

In addition to highlighting horror in its most haunting form and awakening the feeling of fear, Gothic stories show the limits of the human mind and how actions can affect the psyche, raising questions about what one is experiencing, as stated by Sá (2019, p. 17), when talking about the issue of the real world and the supernatural world, “Distrust and fear of Evil erupted in the collective European imagination, giving rise to the creation of novels whose plots oscillated between verifiable reality and the acceptance of a supernatural and perverse world”.

The presence of flaws in rationality is common in Gothic stories, as Sá (2019, p. 18) explains: “Gothic would then be a gap, an anarchic moment of irrationality, in which the mind escapes the language of representation and escapes through the textual gaps”⁶, it means, the characteristics of Gothic previously presented in this work also offer the characters moments of escape from reality, with no rational explanation for the events. These diffuse experiences are the path to discovering a truth (Sá, 2019), involving the characters in an even more frightening and mysterious shadow, always returning to questions, such as “Am I going crazy? Is this my imagination?”. Thus, the exploration of the conscious and the unconscious makes chronological and historical time cease to exist, giving voice to the chaos that has ensued in the characters (Camargo, 2013).

Another characteristic in Gothic and psychologic processes is the dream. According to Silva (2019, p. 80), “Often, dreams are messages that the unconscious is trying to send and, nevertheless, many of people’s dreams are nothing more than repressed feelings in their real

⁵ “São milenares as lendas de seres que sugam sangue e energia em várias culturas. No ano remoto de 600 a.e. na China, há registros de um demônio chamado *giangeshi* que bebia sangue; também na Babilônia, Assíria, Egito, Grécia e Roma; o *katakhanoso* e o *baita!* do sânscrito, o *upity* russo, o *upiory* polonês, o *urykolaker* grego. São entidades ou lendas autóctones, isto é, surgiam em cada lugar sem possibilidade de uma interinfluência das mais diversas regiões, pois até no Peru pré-colombiano há registros delas: o *canchus* ou *pumapamics*, que bebiam sangue de jovens adormecidos, assim como sacerdotes astecas que bebiam sangue para ter a energia do sol.”

⁶ “O gótico seria então uma lacuna, um momento anárquico de irracionalidade, no qual a mente escapa à linguagem da representação e foge por entre as brechas textuais.”

lives”, therefore, dreams are reflections of the experiences that the characters have had and of human instincts in an attempt to warn about something still unknown. The night is also an important element in the process of loss of reality and the arrival of doubts about the unreal. In accordance with Neto e Filho (2021, p. 10, our translation):

Twilight, (...) brings with it the arrival of the macabre that becomes manifest in the absence of light and confuses the senses, boosting the gloomy effect that haunts Gothic fiction. Entering the darkness of the night is taking a direction towards the indeterminate, where nightmares and monster’s mix. Darkness implies the domain of the unconscious (Neto e Filho, 2021, p. 10, our translation⁷).

The unknown sharpens the senses and makes the mind imagine everything that is possible. The fear of what may be found makes the human mind delirious in search of answers and makes it question its own values (Gross, 2019). The unconscious needs a stimulus to question actions, thus, “It may be argued that there is an occasion for repressed thoughts and psychological material to emerge from the id⁸ into the conscious “reality” that lies between dreaming and neurosis (...)” (Gross, 2019, p. 26).

Space is also a very important element in the construction of Gothic narratives. In accordance with Borges Filho (2008), space can influence the characters making them act in different ways. Moreover, space can represent the feelings of the character:

These are not spaces in which the character lives, but are transitional spaces, often casual. Thus, in certain scenes, we observe that there is an analogy between the space that the character occupies and the feeling of it. For example, we will have a scene of joy that takes place under the fresh sun of a bright late afternoon, in a sky with few clouds and birds flying. It seems that, like the character, nature is happy, therefore there is a relationship of homology between character and space. It is a homologous space. (Borges Filho, 2008, p. 2, our translation⁹)

Taking into account the quotation above, the space became an important element to emphasize how the characters are feeling about a situation, making readers get closer to the scene, better recognizing feelings and enjoying the same sensation, as well as imagining the Nature, which is also part of the Gothic scenery, enters the narratives in a way that foreshadows the events, leaving the atmosphere mysterious and macabre, giving a feeling of estrangement and doubt, both in the characters and in the reader, as stated Camargo (2008, p. 6, our translation): “(...) oppressive clouds, night shadows, furious gusts of winds, storms and lightning. These conditions, apparently normal in the cycle of nature, are intrinsically related to the progress of the plot and the conduct, above all, of the characters.”¹⁰, and Borges Filho (2008, p. 3, our translation): “Through indexes impregnated in space, the attentive reader perceives the

⁷ “O crepúsculo, [...] traz consigo a chegada do macabro que se faz manifesto na ausência de luminosidade e confunde os sentidos, impulsionando o efeito soturno que ronda a ficção gótica.”

⁸ “The id is the original nucleus of the personality, which contains the instinctive field, reservoir and source of psychic energy. The function of the id is to reduce tension, increase pleasure and minimize discomfort, comprising somatic stimuli that require immediate satisfaction from the psyche.” (Cordeiro, 2010, p. 5, our translation).

⁹ “Esses não são espaços em que a personagem vive, mas são espaços transitórios, muitas vezes, casuais. Assim, em determinadas cenas, observamos que existe uma analogia entre o espaço que a personagem ocupa e o seu sentimento. Por exemplo, teremos uma cena de alegria que se passa sob o sol fresco de um fim de tarde, brilhante, num céu com poucas nuvens e passarinhos voando. Parece que, como a personagem, a natureza está alegre, portanto, há uma relação de homologia entre personagem e espaço. Trata-se de um espaço homólogo.”

¹⁰ “[...] nuvens opressoras, sombras da noite, rajadas furiosas de ventos, tempestades e relâmpagos. Essas condições, aparentemente normais do ciclo da natureza, se relacionam intrinsecamente com o caminhar do enredo e da conduta, acima de tudo, das personagens”

following paths of narrative. In other words, there is a spatial prolepsis.”¹¹ In the quotations, it is observed that both constructions and nature are fundamental elements in the Gothic text.

About constructions, Majlingová (2011) by citing authors such as Aguirre (2010), Campbell (2008), Durant (2011), Holland (2001), Jackson (1987), and Nuzum (2001), presents how Gothic spaces are important for the development of the plot, showing the environments and their particularities that psychologically and emotionally interfere with the characters. According to this theory, nature and buildings mark the passage from the "normal" world to the chaotic, or "numinous" world, as also observed by Lotman (1990), because it is through the buildings and hidden mysteries that the characters change their perspectives on what is happening and what could happen yet. That way, these authors explain that large buildings, such as castles, built on cliffs, doors, windows, labyrinths and large staircases are manifestations of the boundaries and liminalities, as well as serving as symbols which represent feelings and powers.

3 AN ANALYSIS OF DRACULA (1897)

Dracula (1897), tells the story of a young real estate agent who visits a mysterious client named Count Dracula. Arriving at the hotel reserved by the Count, people are in shock and fear for Jonathan Harker's life, as they believe there is something wrong with the Count and his scary castle. On the way to the castle, Harker observes the change from day to night, which changes the atmosphere of the moment and the places he passes by. Upon arriving at the castle, he comes across a peculiar architectural construction: a castle on the edge of a cliff, huge, dark and apparently empty. After meeting Dracula, and a few days of conversation, Harker notices something strange when he sees his meals always ready and his room always tidy, but he never finds any employees or residents in the castle.

After exploring that building surrounded by mysteries, Harker realizes that he is trapped in an unknown place, with a man who scares him and with the possibility of no escape. Sinister events happen inside and outside the castle, making Harker, on several occasions, doubt his sanity and not know how to differentiate reality from the imaginary. His thoughts, emotions and perceptions are drastically affected by everything around him, showing that even doors and windows can make the plot of the story change drastically. These events, exposed throughout the first four chapters of the work, will be analyzed in the light of theories that aim to understand the Gothic and the Gothic space as an active agent of narratives.

3.1 The way to the castle: the crossing to the supernatural

In the beginning of the story, when leaving the hotel where he stayed before meeting the Count, Harker is warned about a superstition that people in the region had:

Do you know what day it is?’ I answered that it was the fourth of May. She shook her head as she said again: ‘Oh, yes! I know that! I know that, but do you know what day it is?’ On my saying that I did not understand, she went on: ‘It is the eve of St. George’s Day. Do you not know that tonight, when the clock strikes midnight, all the evil things in the world will have full sway? Do you know where you are going, and what you are going to?’ She was in such evident distress that I tried to comfort her, but without effect. Finally, she went down on her knees and implored me not to go; at least to wait a day or two before starting (*Dracula*, 1995, p. 11).

¹¹ “Através de índices impregnados no espaço, o leitor atento percebe os caminhos seguintes da narrativa. Em outras palavras, há uma prolepse espacial.”

This quote leads us to understand the atmosphere of mystery and doubt that Gothic literature builds. According to Silveira (2019), gothic narratives prioritize the supernatural, and it is through the belief mentioned above that the first hint of supernaturality appears, making the character doubt what he is told and the existence of a specific date for the manifestation of evil on earth. However, despite not knowing the legend, his consciousness does not allow him to forget what was said to him in such a frightening way, as the territory he was in was not known to him.

On his way to the castle, the character observes the beauty of the landscape, bringing characteristics of Romanticism, such as the richness of details of natural landscapes:

Before us lay a green sloping land full of forests and woods, with here and there steep hills, crowned with clumps of trees or with farmhouses, the blank gable end to the road. There was everywhere a bewildering mass of fruit blossom—apple, plum, pear, cherry. And as we drove by, I could see the green grass under the trees spangled with the fallen petals. In and out amongst these green hills of what they call here the ‘Mittel Land’ ran the road, losing itself as it swept round the grassy curve, or was shut out by the straggling ends of pine woods, which here and there ran down the hillsides like tongues of flame (...) As we wound on our endless way, and the sun sank lower and lower behind us, the shadows of the evening began to creep round us (Dracula, 1995, p. 14-15).

This excerpt reveals the beauty of the places Harker passed through, detailing the bright colors and normality of the landscape, as there was nothing outside its natural place. Daylight allowed the character to see everything around him, bringing him peace and the feeling of an endless path. As night falls, the character begins to visualize the projection of shadows, and the beautiful landscape of peace and security is left behind, giving way to the darkness of night, in a place where only lamps illuminate the path that becomes even more unknown. This crossing from one atmosphere to another is divided into two opposite spaces by Lotman (2011), who calls these opposing sides cosmos and chaos. The following excerpt may be a representation crossing of these limits:

As the evening fell it began to get very cold, and the growing twilight seemed to merge into one dark mistiness the gloom of the trees, oak, beech, and pine, (...) Sometimes, as the road was cut through the pine woods that seemed in the darkness to be closing down upon us, great masses of greyness which here and there bestrewed the trees, produced a peculiarly weird and solemn effect, which carried on the thoughts and grim fancies engendered earlier in the evening, when the falling sunset threw into strange relief the ghost-like clouds which amongst the Carpathians seem to wind ceaselessly through the valley (Dracula, 1995, p. 15-16)

In this moment, Harker is faced with visual effects caused by the poor lighting in the space. The dark clouds, the cold, the trees that seem bigger, as well as the mountains, cause a feeling of strangeness in the character, who previously saw beautiful images, and now he barely sees nature and its beautiful colors, because everything he can see is dressed in dark colors and ghostly shapes. As a result, the character feels that there is a different atmosphere in the place and begins to fantasize about the events in that space. In this way, the first excerpt can represent the cosmos, that is, the order that exists in the universe, each thing in its proper place without external interference, maintaining the balance of humanity and nature. The second excerpt, on the other hand, can represent chaos, so to speak, the disharmony of human beings and nature, disorder, confusion and obscurity. Harker himself makes this reflection when noting that the arrival of darkness transformed everything around him, when he says “It seemed as though the

mountain range had separated two atmospheres, and that now we had got into the thunderous one.” (Dracula, 1995, p. 17).

3.2 The castle as an anti-home

Castles are always found in gothic novels, as they have a peculiar structure. According to Majlingová (2011), Gothic and Gothic architecture have a common origin in the culture, society and politics of the 18th century, as buildings with structures rich in details are perfect settings for the search for what is hidden or what is prohibited, in addition to being the symbol of the villains' power over other characters. Therefore, the following excerpts present how Count Dracula's castle becomes essential to Harker's character arc and the entire plot of the novel. Upon arriving at his destination, after a long journey full of mysterious events, Harker comes across a grandiose construction. Understanding that it is the Count's home, he says:

Jonathan Harker's Journal Continued 5 May. —I must have been asleep, for certainly if I had been fully awake, I must have noticed the approach of such a remarkable place. In the gloom the courtyard looked of considerable size, and as several dark ways led from it under great round arches, it perhaps seemed bigger than it really is. I have not yet been able to see it by daylight (Dracula, 1995, p. 24).

Upon entering the castle, Harker is impressed by its grandeur and does not understand how he did not realize on the way that it was in fact a huge castle. The environment is large and shows traditional structure and paths to other environments, foreshadowing that there were mysteries to be discovered in that place. Upon entering that large courtyard, Harker notices that there was no bell and that the huge walls and windows seemed not to allow his voice to penetrate the place, showing that the castle was indeed a large building inside and out, as no one inside would hear his voice. Upon meeting the Count Dracula, Harker explains the route taken:

The Count halted, putting down my bags, closed the door, and crossing the room, opened another door, which led into a small octagonal room lit by a single lamp, and seemingly without a window of any sort. Passing through this, he opened another door, and motioned me to enter (Dracula, 1995, p. 26).

With this excerpt, we can see that the castle right from the start has several rooms, some without windows, but always with doors. Majlingová (2011), states that:

Windows and doors are the most literal manifestations of the boundary and they are therefore significant symbols in the concept of liminality. Windows and doors are points of entrance and egress; they are the points of transgression from one sphere into another as well as contact points between these two spheres (Majlingová, 2011, p. 15).

In the previous section, Harker shows that there were no windows in one of the rooms, which could mean that there was no way out from the moment he entered the castle. When inviting Harker to enter one of the rooms, it is seen that the Count has chosen one for him, leaving him with no alternative, and so, the Count warns:

You may go anywhere you wish in the castle, except where the doors are locked, where of course you will not wish to go. There is reason that all things are as they are, and did you see with my eyes and know with my knowledge, you would perhaps better understand (Dracula, 1995, p. 32).

Despite mentioning that Harker can go anywhere in the castle, there are doors that the Count states he will not want to enter. What secrets might lie behind these doors? Why do they need to be locked? Stating that there are reasons for things to be the way they are, Dracula leaves room for doubts to arise in Harker and readers, in addition to stating once again that there are mysteries in the castle. Thus, according to Majlingová (2011), there is an uncertainty in the door, because being locked symbolizes security, since behind it there may be monsters and horrible things, but it can also symbolize a prison or obstacle for the hero of the narrative. In the case of the excerpt above, the doors are like an obstacle, since he will not be able to enter these rooms and see what is really hiding there. It does not take long for Jonathan Harker to realize that something is wrong with the castle, so he reveals:

I began to fear as I wrote in this book that I was getting too diffuse. But now I am glad that I went into detail from the first, for there is something so strange about this place and all in it that I cannot but feel uneasy. I wish I were safe out of it, or that I had never come (Dracula, 1995, p. 37).

It is clear, therefore, that the space in which the character is inserted causes him fear. Everything he has seen up to the moment of his speech shows that there is something very strange about the castle, also considering its location, as the character describes the castle as being on top of a huge cliff, where a stone could fall a thousand feet. without finding it anywhere else. The character also claims to only see locked doors wherever he goes and there are no exits beyond the big windows, leading to what Neto and Camargo (2013, p. 95, our translation)¹². state, "The closed and claustrophobic space of the Castle is essential for the Gothic villain's action to unfold (...)". Soon after describing the space, Harker realizes why he is in the castle:

The castle is a veritable prison, and I am a prisoner! (...) When I found that I was a prisoner a sort of wild feeling came over me. I rushed up and down the stairs, trying every door and peering out of every window I could find but after a little the conviction of my helplessness overpowered all other feelings. When I look back after a few hours I think I must have been madding for the time, for I behaved much as a rat does in a trap. (Dracula, 1995, p. 39-40).

When faced with so many doors and windows, Harker sees that there is no way to leave the castle and sees that he is a prisoner of Count Dracula. It is clear, then, that it is through space that the character perceives what is happening, at the same time that he has doubts and daydreams. The feeling of wildness allowed him to explore the place, but it also made him realize that he could be going crazy, acting without rationality. After starting the escape plan, Dracula goes to meet Harker and once again warns him about not sleeping anywhere else in the castle, and this once again demonstrates the dangers hidden there, and further sharpens curiosity and fear, and the desperation of Harker, who already knows that he is a prisoner and needs to escape the plans that Dracula has for him.

When he decides to put his plan into practice, Harker begins to explore other areas of the castle, in order to find the exit, and makes new discoveries:

¹² *O espaço fechado e claustrofóbico do Castelo é essencial para o desenrolar da ação do vilão gótico (...)*

I must watch should his door be unlocked, so that I may get it and escape. I went on to make a thorough examination of the various stairs and passages, and to try the doors that opened from them. One or two small rooms near the hall were open, but there was nothing to see in them except old furniture, dusty with age and moth-eaten. At last, however, I found one door at the top of the stairway which, though it seemed locked, gave a little under pressure. I tried it harder, and found that it was not really locked, but that the resistance came from the fact that the hinges had fallen somewhat, and the heavy door rested on the floor. Here was an opportunity which I might not have again, so I exerted myself, and with many efforts forced it back so that I could enter (Dracula, 1995, p. 49-50).

By discovering new passages, Harker shows us that the castle is much larger than it appears, confirming what Jackson (1987, p. 106) clarified about the structure of Gothic castles: “These places tend to have labyrinthine structure, secret rooms and passages, or generally weird structure like the masterpiece of architectural misdirection”. As the castle is a symbol of power for the gothic villain (Majlingová, 2011), Count Dracula shows an unusual affection for his home. In the following excerpt, Dracula reveals the feelings he has for the castle and the family tradition he carries:

I am glad that it is old and big. I myself am of an old family, and to live in a new house would kill me. A house cannot be made habitable in a day, and after all, how few days go to make up a century. I rejoice also that there is a chapel of old times (...) Moreover, the walls of my castle are broken. The shadows are many, and the wind breathes cold through the broken battlements and casements. I love the shade and the shadow, and would be alone with my thoughts when I may (Dracula, 1995, p. 35).

This unusual attachment to his castle and refusal to live in a house demonstrating the feeling of belonging to the place, also presents what Majlingová (2011) calls "anti-home", that is, there is no chance of a villain like the count having the same feeling of belonging while being in a house different from the one, he has lived in for centuries, a place where there is no history, nor traces of his past, his lineage and his life story. With this, the castle becomes even more frightening and peculiar, arousing even more curiosity, becoming an anti-home for visitor, as Jonathan Harker.

3.3 The psychological and emotional effects of Gothic space

The atmosphere that Gothic provides has a relevant effect on the plot of the story. For Bazzoli (2021), these atmospheres that disorient and terrify the characters can cause tension between the understandable and the misunderstanding and between reality and illusion. In the Gothic space, this tension can be seen through nature, environments, suspicious events, strange dreams, and the prolongation of time and some environments such as corridors, leading the characters to develop irrationality in the face of events, raising questions and making the plot even more distressing and incomprehensible. Bazzoli (2021, p. 48, our translation)¹³, also states that “nature in gothic narratives expresses the characters’ inner state, revealing and amplifying his [the character’s] feelings”, in this way, it can be seen that the choice of environments and nature are not chancy, there is a connection between the characters and the places they are in.

¹³ *A natureza em narrativas góticas expressa o estado interior das personagens, revelando e amplificando seus sentimentos.*

In the following excerpt, back in the beginning, when Jonathan Harker is on his way to the castle, he reflects on the passage of time. Looking at his watch, he realizes that it is close to midnight and remembers the alert he received about the Day of Saint George when leaving the hotel:

This gave me a sort of shock, for I suppose the general superstition about midnight was increased by my recent experiences. I waited with a sick feeling of suspense (Dracula, 1995, p. 19).

This passage shows how the character felt when remembering what was told him about strange events, Harker tells the experience of his journey, witnessing the clear difference in the atmosphere of the place as soon as night arrived, with possible evil powers, leaving him in shock with what could be true and in hope of what else could happen, raising an air of suspense. Then, upon coming face to face with the driver of the carriage, Harker revealed that he was scared by what he saw:

Once there appeared a strange optical effect. When he stood between me and the flame, he did not obstruct it, for I could see its ghostly flicker all the same. This startled me, but as the effect was only momentary, I took it that my eyes deceived me straining through the darkness (Dracula, 1995, p. 21).

With this description, Jonathan Harker highlights the fact that darkness causes visual confusion over the image of the driver. Due to the lack of lighting, the man appears to be a ghost, frightening Harker and making him think he has been tricked by his own vision. With this, it can be seen that what is common in nature, such as the darkness, becomes important by showing that reality cannot be fully achieved by the character and affects his vision, making him unable to distinguish what is reality or fantasy.

For Harker, the path to the castle seemed endless. When he finally arrives at his destination, he stands in a large courtyard waiting for someone to greet him, and feels time passing slowly once again: "The time seemed interminable as we swept on our way (...) the time I waited seemed endless and I felt doubts and fears crowding upon me. (Dracula, 1995, p. 22-24). According to Majlingová (2011), the prolongation is used extensively, and shows how this device affects the character, making him impatient and anxious. This is also because Harker had already had horrifying experiences that day, leaving him even more scared of what could happen. Gothic works to have endless paths, long corridors and even time consuming, as it gives the feeling to both the characters and the reader, of never reaching the conclusion of the scene rapidly.

Another example of this prolongation is evident when Harker mentions his tiredness from being in the castle for days and talking to the count every night until dawn:

But he sat as on the previous night, and chatted whilst I ate. After supper I smoked, as on the last evening, and the Count stayed with me, chatting and asking questions on every conceivable subject, hour after hour. I felt that it was getting very late indeed, but I did not say anything, for I felt under obligation to meet my host's wishes in every way (...) Count Dracula, jumping to his feet, said: — "Why, there is the morning again! How remiss I am to let you stay up so long. You must make your conversation regarding my dear new country of England less interesting, so that I may not forget how time flies by us," and, with a courtly bow, he quickly left me. (Dracula, 1995, p. 36).

In this passage, we can see the emphasis of Harker on the word "again", showing that the Count had engaged him in endless conversations for several nights, leaving him tired and,

consequently, tired during the day, when the Count mysteriously disappeared and in the same way it reappeared at night. This strategy by the Count aims to postpone Harker's return to England, as he has an as yet unrevealed plan for him. Thus, it can be seen that this prolongation causes distress to the character, who feels forced to continue talking, unconsciously becoming the Count's prisoner.

After some time in the castle, having already been warned by the Count that he could not sleep anywhere other than his room, leaving a mystery in the air, and having already noticed strange things in the castle such as the lack of staff, the exits during Count Dracula's day, how old that place was and how many doors were locked, Jonathan Harker says: "God knows that there is ground for my terrible fear in this accursed place!" (Dracula, 1995, p. 48), showing that the castle has a completely macabre and sinister atmosphere, which does not allow him to feel peace. Soon after, these feelings are amplified, as Harker unexpectedly sees the Count come out of the window in the form of a lizard-like creature, Harker is terrified and no longer knows who he is dealing with and realizes that this is one of the secrets that the castle keeps:

What manner of man is this, or what manner of creature is it in the semblance of man? I feel the dread of this horrible place overpowering me. I am in fear -in awful fear- and there is no escape for me. I am encompassed about with terrors that I dare not think of... (Dracula, 1995, p. 49).

Exploring the castle, Harker made bizarre discoveries: he was in the castle for a still mysterious purpose, but one that was certainly not good; he saw the Count transform into a sinister creature, which confirmed to him that the castle kept, in its many locked rooms, absurd secrets; there are no ways out of this place. Faced with this, Jonathan realized that there is no way to escape and fears what might happen while he is the Count's prisoner. For Majlingová (2011, p. 35), "the difficulty of escape stems from the power and isolation of the castle, on the metaphorical level it emphasizes the impossibility of escaping from the psychological aspects the anti-home sphere represents", in this way, in addition to not being able to escape the Count and his castle, Harker becomes trapped in the fantasies that arise in his mind in the face of the horrifying events that take place, intensifying the lack of rationality caused by fear. It is at this moment that he realizes that he may be living a nightmare and no longer knows what can be real or fantasy:

God preserve my sanity, for to this I am reduced. Safety and the assurance of safety are things of the past. Whilst I live on here there is but one thing to hope for, that I may not go mad, if, indeed, I be not mad already. If I be sane, then surely it is maddening to think that of all the foul things that lurk in this hateful place the Count is the least dreadful to me, that to him alone I can look for safety, even though this be only whilst I can serve his purpose. Great God! Merciful God, let me be calm, for out of that way lies madness indeed (...) For now, feeling as though my own brain were unhinged or as if the shock had come which must end in its undoing, I turn to my diary for repose. The habit of entering accurately must help to soothe me (Dracula, 1995, 51).

The chaos that takes place in Harker's mind is configured as the presence of irrationality proposed by Camargo (2013) and Sá (2019), in which the character presents a break in rationality due to the strange events that happened to him. Then, he realizes that he is no longer in his chronological time and in his everyday life, in which everything makes sense and fits together, because he is in a new universe, in which what seems fantasy is real, although the brain does not understand it. In this way, we can connect the excerpt above with what Majlingová (2011) states about the Gothic space:

Its isolation, confusing structure and gloomy atmosphere make the characters confront their deep-seated fears and emotions. The hostility of the environment is increased by the fact that it has supernaturally firm grasp on its victims and all the anxieties are combined into one obstructive force from which it is almost impossible to break away” (Majlingová, 2011. p. 38).

Taking this into consideration, it is observed that the sinister structure of the castle, along with its macabre events left Harker tormented. Thus, Jonathan Harker's physical and psychological vulnerability, faced with so many events that seem not to be real, makes him feel unstable, without having any idea of what had been a nightmare and reality, showing the duality necessary in gothic plots. When he was exploring the castle, looking for the truth and a way to escape, Harker ends up falling asleep in one of the castle's rooms. When he wakes up, he notices the surprising presence of three women, whom Harker describes as young, similar in appearance to the Count, pale skin and perfectly red lips, in addition to noticing an air of mortality about them. The women were also undead creatures and desired the blood of Jonathan, who barely escaped through the arrival of Dracula, who prevented the women from killing Harker. The Count pretended everything was fine and took Harker to his own room, which he explained when he woke up:

I have been down to look at that room again in daylight, for I *must* know the truth. When I got to the doorway at the top of the stairs, I found it closed. It had been so forcibly driven against the jamb that part of the woodwork was splintered. I could see that the bolt of the lock had not been shot, but the door is fastened from the inside. I fear it was no dream, and must act on this surmise (Dracula, 1995, p. 56).

In view of the excerpt, it is inferred that once again driven by the desperation of escaping the castle and the evil things that lived there, Harker tries to enter a room so that, in daylight, he could discover the truth, and finds himself caught in a moment of irrationality in stating that he does not know what he experienced the night before, when he was found by three frightening women in the castle.

After realizing that if he did nothing to save himself, he could be devoured by those women, Harker sets off again in search of an escape. He finds several rooms and doors, most of which are locked, making the character believe that he would not be able to escape. However, he finally finds a way out through one of the windows and takes with him some of the gold he found around the castle:

I may find a way from this dreadful place. And then away for home! Away, to the quickest and nearest train. Away from the cursed spot, from this cursed land, where the devil and his children still walk with earthly feet. (Dracula, 1995, p. 72).

This imbalance in Harker continues when he escapes the castle, showing us that he was indeed affected beyond the castle walls. When he escapes and tries to return home, Harker falls ill. In a hospital, it is found that he is suffering from delirium, showing that all the sinister and macabre things he experienced in the Count's kingdom are still in his mind, keeping him trapped in the gothic space in which he was inserted.

4 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

At the end of this research, given the analysis and discoveries made, we were able to understand that Gothic has the objective of exposing people's deepest fears and desires through

exaggeration in language, imagery effects and the constant sensation of suspense, both for readers and for the characters. We also understand that the gothic space plays a vital role in gothic work, as it potentiates feelings of fear, distress and anguish, provoking the most primitive human instincts, the sense of danger, and the desire to escape this evil, literature reveals to us that the Gothic space is no longer just another environment for the characters to pass through, it is in fact the main part of the plot, leaving the margins and being placed at the center of the story, as its influence on the characters opens up space for the plot's revelations and twists.

In this research, we were able to understand some essential concepts and strategies for the development of the Gothic space, such as anti-home, which refers to the castle not being a home, a comfortable and inviting place, in fact it is an uncomfortable place for Harker, but not for Dracula, as it is exactly in this hostile place that he needs to live to show his villainy; We also find the definition of chaos and cosmos for Gothic literature, the first being the representation of the character's life before arriving in Transylvania, and the second representing the change in the atmosphere and in his perception of the world upon arriving in the Count's land.; the artifice of prolonging time, which evokes the feeling of anxiety and distress, very important to maintain the suspense of the scene for both the characters and the readers; the strategy of having many doors, generally locked, leading to the feeling of enclosure, and windows in the environment, symbolizing there is no longer any escape for the character. The castle also proves to be an important tool for the Gothic plot, which with geographic isolation and architectural grandeur symbolizes the villain's power over the most vulnerable character.

In this way, it can be seen that the effects of the Gothic space on characters and even on readers are increasingly greater, considering that in each scene something new appears, mysteries and truths to be discovered, leading the character further in every moment. Finally, it is of great importance to continue studies on the Gothic space, so that there is a better understanding of its effects and its importance in the construction of the plot and the development of the characters.

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THANKS

First of all, with all my heart, I thank God for giving me everything I needed during these years, for pouring out his saving grace on me and, above all, for loving me.

I truly thank my parents for dedicating themselves to me, for providing me with a valuable education, for supporting me throughout my studies, for being my foundation and, for

caring so much about me and doing everything for my happiness. This final work is a way of thanking you and demonstrating that every effort you made on this journey was worth it, and it was much easier to get through the difficult days because you held my hand. I would also like to thank my brothers, Rafael and Yuri, for being willing to help me and always doing their best for me, and I thank you for being so patient with me, for taking me to and picking me up from the university so many times during these years. Your availability and goodwill have enormous meaning for me. I hope one day I can repay all of your efforts for me. You are inspirational to me. you are my loves, my lives and my passions.

I am immensely grateful to my professor and advisor, Joselito, for his dedication to this research. I would also like to thank you for your availability and patience in this process; each teaching will be carried forward in my academic life, both from this orientation and from the subjects in which I was your student during the course.

I am very grateful to the professors Valécio and Thiago, for accepting the invitation and being willing to contribute to the enrichment of my final work. I am also grateful for the teachings that were shared with such dedication in the classroom, and built a solid foundation in my academic and professional training.

I also extend my most sincere thanks to all the teachers who have crossed my life during this journey. Each of you played a part in my formation, each teaching, each demonstration of concern and each help given to me made me a better student and teacher. Thank you for dedicating yourself to higher education and for masterfully fulfilling the purpose of being a teacher.

Finally, I am immensely grateful to my friends Edezio, Lidianne, Lucas and Mayra for being my company during these years. I am grateful for the true friendship we have built, for sharing so much knowledge, for the maturity we have achieved together, for the many happy moments we have experienced, for every day together, for all the jokes we made, for so many sincere laughs we had and for being each other's support in times of despair. Without a shadow of a doubt, those years at university were much more meaningful because you were there. I'm glad you crossed my path and left such happy memories. There is a happy ending waiting for each of us.