

Dear Readers,

Thanks to the encouragement and support of the Dean of the Faculty of Science and Letters of Yaşar University, Prof. Dr. Behzat Gürkan, and to the Editors, we are very pleased to offer this Special Edition of the Journal of Yaşar University on *The Gothic*, edited by the Yaşar University Department of English Language and Literature.

As will be further discussed in the introductory essay to this Special Edition, the gothic is, from one perspective, a hoary topic, one that even at the most conservative estimate dates back 250 years, to the publication of Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*. As argued in the introductory essay below, however, there are sound reasons for being highly suspicious of any attempt to identify a single *Ur-text* or point of origin for the gothic.

The gothic has, nevertheless, shown an astonishing ability to propagate new approaches and readings, especially over the last 40 or 50 years, with interpretations inflected by feminist and postcolonial concerns proving particularly productive. It will be evident that the essays presented below emerge from this continuing critical energy and, we hope, will contribute to ongoing debates concerning, among others, questions of the relationship between gothic and space (and in particular urban space); the gothic as a distinct genre and its relationship to other canonical texts as well as a broader set of historical discourses; the role of vision, or spectatorship, in the transition to film but also, intriguingly, within literary gothic texts; and gothic sexuality.

Valerie Kennedy's article "From 'Urban Gothic' to Haunted House and Minds: The Gothic in *Oliver Twist* and *Little Dorrit*" painstakingly uncovers the spatial underpinnings of Dickens's debts to the gothic while linking concerns of space as setting and theme to the formal and narratological aspects of these two novels, their labyrinthine textuality. Notions of divine justice are shown violently to irrupt into these mundane locations in ways which echo the sudden emergence of Dickensian melodrama within the narratives.

Mahinur Akşehir Uygur's article, "Queer Vampires and the Ideology of the Gothic," brings the resources of Foucauldian thought and of queer theory to a number of films that in many ways have a common literary predecessor in Sheridan Le Fanu's quite astonishing novella *Carmilla*, a text which predates Bram Stoker's *Dracula* by a quarter of a century and which, while perhaps not widely known, clearly continues to resonate in contemporary culture. The monstrous is carefully revealed to lie ultimately not in the repudiated sexual transgressor, nor in some inchoate and asocial "id," but rather within the deployment of something resembling a discursive superego.

"The Unveiling Gaze and the Superstition of Sexuality In *The Monk*," Ahmet Süner's contribution to this collection of essays, also focuses on questions of sexuality, but does so in ways which, perhaps surprisingly, uncover its presence not so much at the level of theme as in a reiterated set of textual tropes and narrative topoi. Sex becomes literary rather than literal as *The Monk* is boldly shown both to be fixated and driven by a certain undecidability of veiling and unveiling which, while displacing the gaze *from* sexuality, constitutes that very displacement as the substance *of* sexuality.

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Trevor Hope

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