LTRS 250.01 Vampires!
MWF 11-11:50
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In this class we will examine the figure of the vampire and its origins in Eastern Europe by reading Russian literature. We will also examine the way that vampires help us to understand cross-cultural interaction in the European context by reading other national literatures, journalistic texts, theater and film. For example, we will analyze why Dracula comes to England from Transylvania on a Russian ship and what this fact can tell us about the West’s perception of Russia at that time.

In reading about the many varieties of vampires, we will see that some of them do not even drink blood. Many don’t fear the sun. So what do these varied monsters have in common? Their “otherness” and their focalization of cultural desires and anxieties. By studying vampirism through a historical perspective, we will learn that vampires – although they may not have reflections – reflect our anxieties about alterity, particularly in regard to such charged subjects as gender, sexuality, race, religion and nationality.