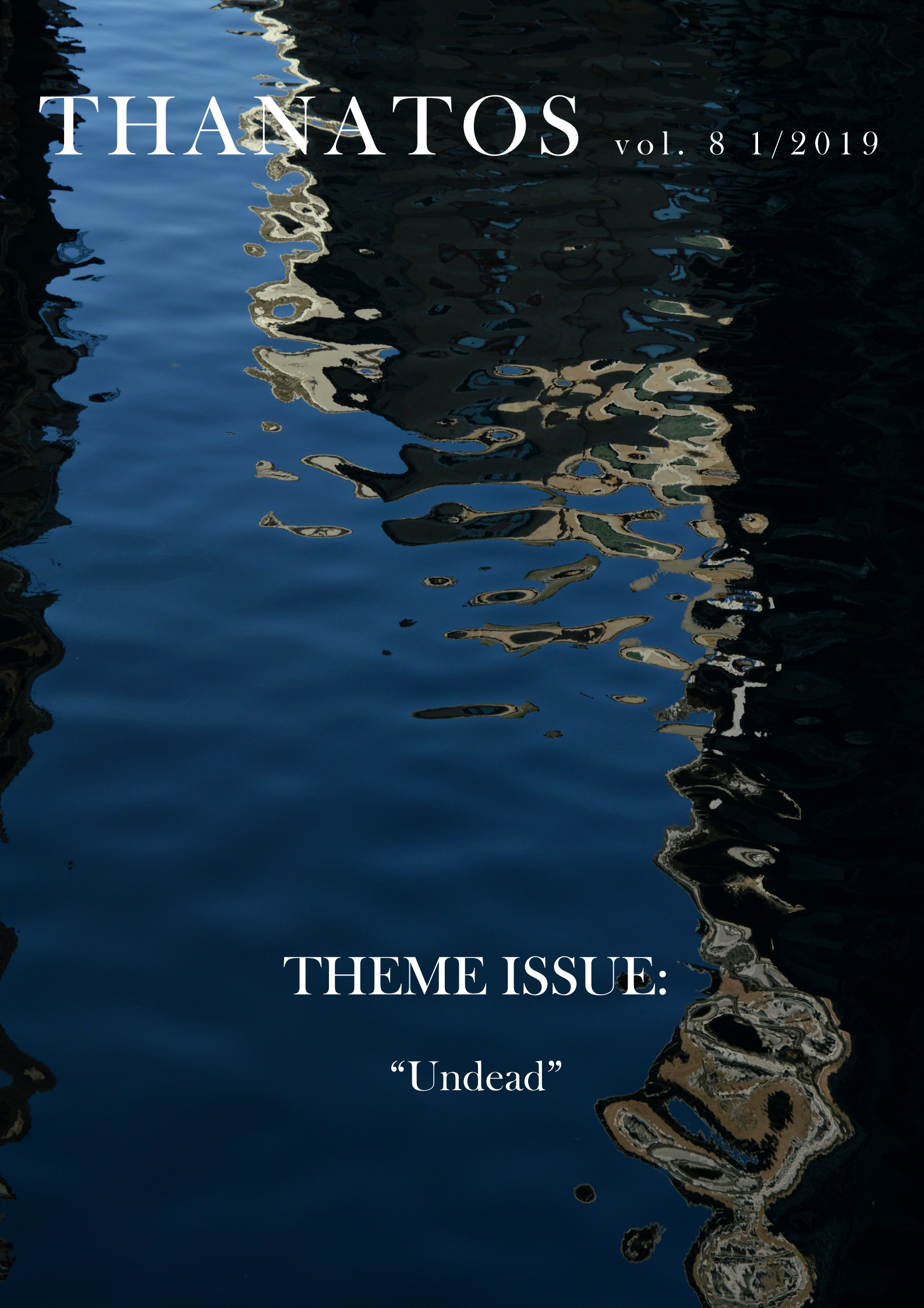

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* * *

Thanatos on Suomalaisen Kuolemantutkimuksen Seura Ry:n oma vertaisarvioitu, monialainen ja tieteellinen verkkolehti, joka ilmestyy kahdesti vuodessa. Ensisijainen julkaisukieli on suomi. Artikkeleita otetaan vastaan myös ruotsiksi ja englanniksi. Tieteelliset artikkelit käyvät läpi kahden toimituskunnan ulkopuolisen asiantuntijan suorittaman vertaisarvioinnin. Thanatoksella on Julkaisufoorumin luokitus numero 1.

Thanatos pyrkii edistämään kuolemantutkimuksen eri alojen välistä vuoropuhelua tarjoamalla mahdollisuuden poikkitieteelliseen keskusteluun. Thanatos toivottaa tervetulleiksi julkaisuehdotuksia artikkeleista kirja-arvioihin, tutkimuspapereista konferenssiraportteihin sekä vapaamuotoisempia kirjoituksia, kuten kolumneja ja elokuva-arvosteluja. Pyrkimyksenämme on laajentaa tiedon mahdollisuuksia perinteisten tieteellisten rajojen ylitse sekä tiedottaa erilaisista alaan liittyvistä ilmiöistä ja tapahtumista.

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INTRODUCTION

Beings of Many Kinds – Introduction for the Theme Issue "Undead"[1]

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What happens if something goes wrong at death and the dead person does not find peace? This question is colourfully answered by innumerable representations of the "undead" in various cultural practices, products, creations and beliefs. Through the history of humankind, the undead appear to be everywhere. They are numerous, and they are of many types. In the dark hours of the night, rotten corpses crawl out of their graves. In an old mouldy castle somewhere in Transylvania, a vampire grins, revealing its yellowish canine teeth. At dusk in a rural cemetery in the remote north, a bunch of immaterial spirits lurk behind a tombstone, about to ambush an unsuspecting old man in search of bones to use for magical purposes. The answers to the question are many, but do we know them all?

This issue of *Thanatos* focuses on various representations of the undead, that is, the deceased who have returned to the world of the living. The aim is to bring together a wide variety of depictions and interpretations of the undead in various sources, ranging from historical accounts to present-day popular culture. More often than not, the undead of modern popular culture appear as various kinds of animated corpses. Yet, the emphasis on corporeality can be seen as a relatively recent phenomenon. The

[1] Special thanks to Albion Butters who proofread the article, corrected our English and offered useful comments.

presence of a body gives more power to drama and horror, whereas it may be easier to dismiss an immaterial haunting as the personal imagination of the experiencing subject. When we look back at vernacular traditions in earlier centuries, the body and soul were tied together more closely than in our time. The restless dead and ghosts could have both spiritual and physical qualities, even though their bodies were not observable in this world (Koski 2018, 73). Undead could also be threatening in a purely immaterial form. In Christian Europe, the eternal souls of the living could be threatened by the returning dead, who could actually be evil spirits in disguise (see, e.g., Edwards 2015; Harms in this issue).

While the scope of this issue ranges from vernacular belief traditions, in which the dead were assumed to return in many forms, to the fictive monsters of 20th- and 21st-century movies and novels, what is common to the undead is that their activity breaks the rules of living humans, defying expectations of the irreversibility of death or earlier generations' understandings of the rules of coexistence and ritual contact with the deceased. We choose to use the term 'undead' in a broad way to give a comparative view of how the dead have been imagined acting in ways that they should not. In what follows, we will draw a brief outline of the history of the concept of 'undead', discuss the features that appear to be central to the category, and give a brief overview of the characteristics of the phenomenon and its meanings in past and present cultures.

The Undead as a Popular and Travelling Concept

The concept of the undead belongs to popular culture. As such, it does not have a precise scholarly definition, and its meanings vary according to who uses it and for what purpose. In historical English, 'undead' used to mean living and eternal. Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) has been regarded as the starting point of the term's present meaning, denoting a being who has died but continues living. However, it was not necessarily Stoker's novel itself but its interpretations that informed the meaning of the word.

Adam Barrows suggests that Stoker's text portrays mortality as "a fundamental part of one's natural being". The immortality of the undead vampire thus deprives him of his humanity. According to Barrows, the true object of fear in *Dracula* is not the blood-sucking or violence but one's eternal fate as an inhuman being. (Barrows 2010.)

In the definition of the undead in general use, eternity has given way to death and decay. Online English dictionaries define the undead – especially vampires and zombies – as fictive beings which are technically dead but continue to live. The *Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary* (OALD) includes vampires and zombies in its definition but also gives an example sentence which contains Frankenstein's monster. The OALD also makes reference to the concept of 'living dead', which only denotes zombies. Because of the relatively recent introduction of the word 'undead' into common usage, printed 20th-century dictionaries – for example, *Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary* from 1989 – do not yet include the term.

Deriving from fantasy and horror novels and movies, the word 'undead' has gradually permeated the public discourse and even entered the scholarly vocabulary. Until the end of the 20th century, fantasy and horror themes had a marginal role in popular fiction. The flood of supernatural topics into popular films has been called the paranormal, supernatural or spectral turn. (Hill 2011, 1–8; Koski 2016, 17–19.) This development can be connected with the secularisation of the Western world, followed by the rise and popularisation of spiritual movements such as numerous New Age spiritualities. The Internet has also contributed to the boom. The visibility of popular fiction in broadcast media and quotidian social interactions has had an impact on the vocabularies of everyday speech, the media and even scholarly work. On an everyday basis, people use words like 'vampire' or 'zombie' metaphorically when they speak about taxing or burdensome people, about their own tiredness and exhaustion, or people addicted to their mobile device. As fictive representations in novels and movies, the undead have also been interpreted as metaphors for various contemporary issues such as traumatic national history, sexuality, consumerism and health problems (see,

e.g., Etkin 2013; Hobson 2016). The metaphoric use of fictive or supernatural beings has a long and continuous history from the folklore of oral communities to present-day movies and novels (see Carter 1997; Gunnell 2014).

Researchers use vernacular or colloquial concepts in their work for several reasons. Naturally, scholars who study popular culture also use terminology – such as the term 'undead' – as part of their object of study. Vernacular concepts are typically not precisely defined, and therefore they are not valid as analytical concepts unless specifically defined and reassessed. There have been scholarly attempts to analyse the meanings and boundaries of the concept of undead (Vargas 2010), yet the practice is heterogeneous. Historians and archaeologists – or the journalists who write about their work – sometimes use the term without analytical framing to make the research more interesting for a wider audience. Calling medieval skeletons with stones in their mouth 'vampires' can be seen as more or less in accord with the local folk beliefs of that time (see Gregoricka et al. 2014), but when popular news about recent excavations in Europe report about the remains of zombies, the gap between the actual findings and the terminology is quite wide. Because the term 'undead' is less precise, it may be more suitable for referring to deceased people who have been suspected of being restless after death. Popular culture experts may prefer a narrower definition and argue that 'undead' only refers to vampires, while zombies are 'living dead'. However, in popular culture as well, these two figures are increasingly mixed with each other in new productions which seek to make use of both sides of the coin: the erotic and individual appeal of the vampires and the decay and identity loss of the zombies (Abbott 2016, 1–4). Meanwhile, in academia, the term 'undead' is broadened still more. A great variety of types of dead are seen coming back in history and popular culture, and researchers seek new and fresh umbrella terms to discuss this as a related phenomenon.

The Undead in Context: Premodern Perspectives on Death

According to the Wittgensteinian model of family resemblance (*Familienähnlichkeit*), the term 'undead' has vague boundaries and lacks exactness. It is difficult, if not impossible, to provide necessary and sufficient conditions for "undeadness". The members of the category 'undead' share some properties, and, consequently, like the genetically related members of a human family, they resemble each other, but it is difficult to find a quality that would be common to all uses of the concept, like that required in the classical view of categories. (Koski 2008, 50–51; Biletzki and Matar 2018.) However, there may still be some core features that are central to the category – or more important than the other features that the members of the category may have (Koski 2008, 51).

One of the central features that appears to characterise many of the undead (but not all, as we shall see later below) is that they are objects and entities that were formerly alive but then died and still continued to show some activity. In the course of Western history, the definition of death held by laymen, philosophers and theologians – and later also by physicians and natural scientists – has varied and changed from one time, place, individual and situation to another. Among the oldest definitions of death, which as a state was paralleled with sleep (e.g. in Ancient Egypt and Ancient Greece), is the idea that an organism dies when the soul or another similar entity responsible for the vital force (a kind of life principle, such as the soul, or souls, spirit, breath or heat in the heart) exits the body. Cessation of breathing has been a widely known and used indicator of death. Ever since Aristotle, and since Aristotle was rediscovered in twelfth-century Western Europe until the 20th century, the heart has remained the central organ whose collapse indicated the complete death of an organism (Rodabough 2003, 284–285; Schäfer 2013, 2671–2674). However, although the heart stopped beating, respiration ceased and the corpse eventually started to decay, death did not necessarily entail complete ending. Along with the heart-centred definition of death, which postulated the existence of some kind of life principle, belief in the immortal soul that

survives bodily death – an idea expressed already in Plato's *Phaedo* (Lorenz 2009) – lived on in the Christian doctrine. These aspects, in addition to Christian ideas about bodily resurrection and the power of the physical remains of the saints (i.e. relics), were still more or less part of people's conceptual framework in eleventh-century Germany, as well as in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England, as seen in the studies by Andrea Maraschi and Daniel Harms in this issue, respectively.

Even though ecclesiastical writers situated the souls of the dead either in Heaven or in Hell, and later also in Purgatory, Maraschi and Harms show that both the dead and the living could cross the boundary between their domains, albeit by different means. As Maraschi demonstrates in his study of the *Corrector*, the nineteenth book of the *Decretum* of Burchard of Worms, written around 1000 in Germany, in contemporary folk belief the boundary between the two realms was a source of great concern. Clerics, many of whom considered that the dead were incapable of returning, insisted that the living and the undead that crossed the boundary were tricked or reanimated, respectively, by the Devil. However, earlier studies on medieval West Scandinavian sources suggest that in Germanic tradition, the dead who had literally 'lost their breath' (inf. *týna öndu*) the moment they died (Tolley 2009, 180) could become undead of their own free will. Their corpses still contained some vital force, and their undeadness was of a particularly material essence (Caciola 1996, 12, 19, 26–35; Vésteinn Ólason 2003, 167; Kanerva 2018, 31–35). The material bodies of the revenants would not decay, and the corpses preserved "energy still unexpended" (Little 1994, 151), which could be exploited for magical or medicinal purposes, or could enable posthumous activity, as long as there was flesh on their bones.

In early modern European folklore, vampires did not gradually lose this energy, because they preyed on the living. If disturbances or attacks were experienced in the community, or if a suspect person – for example, a witch, drunkard, troublemaker or someone who had died in sinister circumstances – had been buried lately, the body could be exhumed and found to be undead, if the corpse had not decayed but was

"alive". What were seen as signs of life in the dead body have later been interpreted as the process of decomposition. In local beliefs, this persistent animation turned the deceased into a monster, which was dangerous as long as the dead body was "alive". The intact condition of the body was not a sufficient criterion for undeadness, however. A contrary example was offered by the saints, whose bodies' failure to decompose was a miracle. (Barber 1988, 15–17, 108–109.) The point was that the life force preserved in dead bodies was used for bad deeds. In normal circumstances, the life force residing in the corpse would gradually be drained, but it could be used – or it had to be avoided – by the living as well, as long as there was some left.

Similarly, in Finno-Ugric folklore materials from the 19th and 20th centuries, the ability of the deceased to act depended on the life force remaining in the flesh. The probability of returning increased if the person had been a sinner or a witch, reluctant to die, or if s/he had left unfinished business in this world. The deceased could be angered and driven to return, in order to complain or avenge themselves, if their propitiation was neglected. (Paulaharju 1995, 209–210.) However, propitiation was only necessary until the flesh decayed away. After that, the deceased had no power to complain. (Harva 1948, 497–498.) In the folk belief traditions of Lutheran Finland, the "return" could manifest itself as invisible haunting or disturbing clatter (Koski 2011, 236–237). The returning dead were understood as otherworldly beings, and their materiality was able to affect this world only partially and in exceptional circumstances. The boundary between everyday reality and the other world was thinner at night and during certain festivals, and also when serious breaches of social mores had been committed. In these circumstances, the dead could be encountered in material form. The features of the returning dead also depended on the genre. In entertaining and fabulous legends, they were corporeal, with mould growing on their face, their bony arms outstretched to reach the living. However, when adapted to everyday beliefs and norms, they were hardly visible. (Koski 2008, 342–348.) The vernacular belief system in 19th-century Lutheran Finland emphasised that the power substance of the dead

remained dormant in graveyards unless the social order was disturbed. However, the force residing in the remains of the dead could also be ritually used in healing and for problem-solving – such as finding stolen goods – as well as to cause magical harm. The dead – or the so-called churchyard *väki*, which represented the agency of the dead and the graveyard – could be harnessed to a variety of uses, but they also actively resisted violations of the peace of the hallowed ground and could punish norm-breakers even violently. (Koski 2011, 273–274; Koski 2019, 175–177, 179.) Thus, in Finnish vernacular tradition, the vital force of the deceased was a well-recognised phenomenon. It was problematic only if the deceased were restless or provoked. Lutheran ethics aimed at addressing both of these problems.

Daniel Harms's discussion on the so-called "Keeper of the Bones" ritual, a necromantic practice known from sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English sources, which was meant to be used when contacting the dead, suggests that similar conceptions of death and undeadness existed also in the premodern insular society. The death of the body did not mean total annihilation. The bodies, bones and spirits of the dead continued to possess magic power or immaterial knowledge, and the dead were invoked by necromantic rituals for various reasons, such as to reassert social order. The act was strictly condemned by ecclesiastical and legal authorities in the premodern context studied by Harms, even though in the early third century the necromancy practised by Egyptians still raised interest among Christians, since it was thought to support belief in the immortality of the soul (on the history of necromancy, see Bremmer 2015, 136–137).

The Undead in Context: Escaping Death

The soul nevertheless lost its important role when physicians started to gain a monopoly on the clinical diagnosis of death by the end of the nineteenth century and, consequently, the definition of death became medicalised. (Schäfer 2013, 2671, 2674–

2675.) By that time, clinical death had become reversible; various resuscitation techniques made it possible to revive people who had been at the brink of death (Pernick 1988, 22), while new scientific discoveries suggested that it was possible to maintain blood circulation and respiration artificially. Later in the twentieth century, death even became postponable: breathing could be maintained by external pumps for longer periods of time, and defibrillators enabled the resuscitation of patients suffering from cardiopulmonary problems. (Schäfer 2013, 2673–2675.) When the first organ transplants were completed in the second half of the twentieth century, the role of the heart as the "seat of life" was problematised, and the definition of death (and thus also the definition of a potential organ donor) became an ethical, legal and moral issue. (Rodabough 2003, 285–287; Monteverde and Rid 2012, 1; Schäfer 2013, 2675.)

The Ad Hoc Committee of Harvard Medical School was an influential panel that established brain death as the valid criterion for death in 1968. According to its standards, a person whose entire brain had ceased to function was unresponsive to any external stimuli, exhibited no reflexes, and had no spontaneous muscle movements or respiration; in addition, no electric activity could be detected in their brains. (Rodabough 2003, 287; Monteverde and Rid 2012, 1; Schäfer 2013, 2675–2676.) However, there are two approaches to brain death: the so-called whole-brain approach and the higher-brain approach. The whole-brain definition followed in the Ad Hoc Committee criterion "involves the destruction of the entire brain, both the higher brain and the brainstem". A permanent vegetative state (PVS) does not meet the whole-brain standard, since the brainstems of patients in that state tend to mostly be intact. As a consequence, PVS patients may still cough and swallow, their pupils may react to light, their heart may beat without assistance and they may exhibit cycles of waking and sleeping. (DeGrazia 2017; Rodabough 2003, 289–290.) However, critical views of whole-brain standards have pointed out that patients diagnosed as being whole-brain dead may, for instance, still gestate foetuses, grow taller or fight infections. (Monteverde and Rid 2012, 2–3.)

The higher-brain standard suggests that "human death is the irreversible cessation of the capacity for consciousness" (DeGrazia 2017). According to this approach, PVS patients, for instance, are dead even though their brainstems are largely intact and their hearts may still be beating, since they are not capable of returning to consciousness (DeGrazia 2017; Rodabough 2003, 288). According to the higher-brain approach, human death is different from the death of animals and plants. The emphasis is on the death of a person, that is, the human self instead of the human organism. In Ben Sarbey's words, "[i]n a person the self is the mind", and mental states and processes are regarded as "identical to states and processes of the brain"; this reflects the so-called identity theory of mind. What makes a human being a person, according to this approach, are such cerebral functions as consciousness, memory and personality (since a self/person has a biography), whereas the physical body is just an organism, which "houses" the person and may survive their death. (Sarbey 2016.)

The indefiniteness of the modern definition of death is also reflected in the sources discussed by Outi Hakola (in this issue) in her article "Zombies, Vampires and Frankenstein's Monster: Embodied Experiences of Illness in Living Dead Films". Even though many of the cinematic vampires and zombies are dead people who have formerly been alive or, like Frankenstein's monster, are an assemblage of various (both human and non-human, as well as engineered) parts that originate from once living but now dead organisms, some of the undead in living dead films do not necessarily die in the biological sense of the word when they become undead. Instead, they may be infected and transformed into zombies by a virus or into vampires by consuming pills that contain vampire blood. In other words, it is not necessary to die (a biological death) to become undead.

Even though the inherently human bodies of these cinematic undead who have escaped biological death may be decaying and rotting, and some zombies have lost their memories as well as their identity (to follow the higher-brain standard of death, they would thus no longer be persons), the bloodthirstiness of the people infected by

vampirism and the actions of the zombified people that betray a sense of direction suggest that the undead Hakola discusses in her article have not actually lost their mental functions. They still have desires and intentions, they are capable of using language (e.g. the bloodthirsty vampires speak and interact with humans), or they can recognise and interpret sensory stimuli (e.g. the predatory zombified people who follow the living, eventually finding and attacking the place where the last surviving human beings are hiding). They are still objects capable of mental functions, but their personalities have grown unrecognisable to the people who once knew them; indeed, they have become "soulless monsters". The undead studied by Hakola epitomise the modern medical conceptions of death; they appear to embody the idea that persons who lose their memory and identity, such as demented people, or who succumb to non-normative or illegal behaviour which negatively affects members of society, such as drug abuse or committing homicide, are actually dead, even though their biological bodies are still functioning and they appear to have the capability of mental processes, that is, their consciousness is at least partially intact.

The ideas reflected in these cinematic figures do not suggest what the definition of death should be, but, like a Freudian slip, some of the undead in modern horror movies do reveal what we living people may think. As a kind of modern vernacular standard of death, this finds a parallel in the theoretical concept of social death, which may precede biological death. The condition is linked to the debilitation of all or crucial social roles, which results in a loss of social identity and a loss of connectedness; as the socially dead are marginalised (based, for example, on their ethnicity, age, behaviour or state of health), they become "non-persons". (Králová 2015, 238–240, 245.) In light of the cinematic vampires and zombies, in certain contexts social death appears as a sufficient condition for undeadness. However, being socially dead is not a central feature in undeadness per se.

Coming Back Changed: Threats and Opportunities

The undead are both living and dead, which entails that they are neither living nor properly dead. Seen as extraordinary beings or marginalised as hideous others, they are absent from the society of the living but still present in the ordinary world; because they are socially dead, they have been stripped of their humanity (see also Králová 2015, 239). This liminal position of the undead, which resembles the ontological position of monsters (Cohen 1996, 6), makes them uncanny and frightening.

Following the ideas presented by Noël Carroll in his discussion on "art-horror" (i.e. the effects of a specific (post)modern cinematic and literary genre), the undead are also potentially impure (as defined by Mary Douglas in her 1966 book *Purity and Danger*) in that reanimated, sometimes putrefying corpses – bodies that have been infected and thus transformed into zombies or vampires – can cause repulsion and disgust. The undead are impure because they violate and transgress "schemes of cultural categorization" (Carroll 1987, 55). In Carroll's words, these impure objects, entities or beings are (not exhaustively or exclusively but often) "categorically interstitial, categorically contradictory, categorically incomplete, or formless" (ibid.), or they may transgress categories, like the Frankenstein monster, which is an assemblage of human, non-human and engineered parts. Being both (or neither) dead and (nor) alive makes the undead categorically contradictory and interstitial; they transgress the intransgressible boundary of life and death and/or stay on the threshold. (Carroll 1987, 53, 55) The undead may also be categorically incomplete in that they do not possess a soul, or their bodies may be visibly decaying. Restless corpses may possess superhuman strength, and as vaporous and ethereal ghosts the undead are formless. The undead escape classification; they refuse to fit into culture's pre-existing standard categories and taxonomies, which are based on common knowledge of the world and the (socially and culturally constructed) order of things. (See, e.g., Carroll 1987, 55–57; Cohen 1996, 6–7.)

In addition to their exceptional or interstitial status, the undead often pose a threat to the subjects who define them as undead. As Manuel Vargas (2010) notes, we would probably not define as undead those people who, having been cryogenically frozen, might someday be revived. Nor is it common to find interpretations of the risen Christ as undead. Return from death as such does not make someone undead. Vargas argues that vampires and zombies are not necessarily evil; they only harm people for instrumental reasons. They desire human brains or blood, which makes their actions injurious for living people (Vargas 2010). If not their evil nature, it is these beings' otherness which makes their existence and intentions a threat to the living.

In the Christian outlook, however, the undead are reanimated by the Devil; they are anti-Christian and thus unequivocally evil. Despite the hegemonic position of Christianity in European societies, other views on the dead and undead have been preserved and developed for centuries in the vernacular culture, as well as in esoteric practices among the learned. In 21st-century cinematic presentations of the undead, the Christian view is dismissed. The vampires of Victorian popular culture and their successors were still anti-Christian figures whose characteristics, especially sexuality, presented the demonic other. They symbolised desires and intentions which had to be suppressed and excluded from society. By the end of the 20th century, the nature of the vampire's otherness had changed, together with attitudes towards the dangerous other. (Carter 1997, 27–29; Zanger 1997, 25.) In films and television series, this change can be seen as a domestication of the vampire (Gordon and Hollinger 1997, 2) or as a shift from an "old" demonic and metaphysical vampire to a "new" socially deviant one during the 1970s and 1980s (Zanger 1997, 17–19). In today's Western secularised societies, respect towards authorities has declined, and individuality and freedom to choose are celebrated. The undead can be used as signposts to explore alternative possibilities for sexual roles and human identity. They stand for ethnic, sexual or other minorities, or other races or species. While Bram Stoker's *Dracula* has been criticised for reinforcing social, racial and sexual prejudices, the current trend since the 1980s

instead shows understanding towards the other and critiques on prejudices. (Carter 1997, 29–39.)

Earlier studies of premodern death cultures suggest that the returning dead can be either good or bad, depending on the context of the encounter or its intention. Some may be benevolent, in that their main reason for returning is to help the living – or, from the point of view of the living, their appearance leads to a favourable result. For instance, in medieval Scandinavian vernacular tradition, when Christianity had been adopted only recently, the dead could return (or their posthumous power could "emanate" from beyond the grave) to offer the living encouragement and support, to give knowledge that would assist in future tasks and efforts, to transmit skills that would contribute to the status of the living person, or to protect the living from various kinds of supernatural harm. The benevolent dead were often (but not always) dead relatives; sometimes they were saint-like figures, or they could be more or less selfish cadavers who wished to enhance their own aims and glory by offering assistance and support. In many cases, interaction with the undead was reciprocal, following the norms and conventions of appropriate social behaviour in the realm of the living; accordingly, the living were polite towards the dead, who could contribute to their wellbeing and help them to prosper. (Kanerva 2013; Vanherpen 2013, 75–76; Kanerva 2017, 64–67.)

In preindustrial Karelia, similar reciprocal communication between the living (relatives or ritual specialists as mediators) and the deceased could occur through laments, or the dead could come to the living and communicate with them in dreams, for instance, to warn them, to give them advice, or to present requests (Stepanova 2011, 138–139). Laments advised the dead to contact the living in dreams or to return as birds, but appearing as a ghost or a walking corpse was unwanted (Honko 1963, 114–115). In premodern and traditional cultures, the demarcation between the worlds of the dead and the living (and other alternative worlds that may have existed in premodern thought) has not always been clear and precise. Boundaries were seen as porous and permeable, and the frontiers could be zones rather than clear and fixed borders.

(Bradford Smith 2013, 133–139; see also Maraschi in this issue.) However, there were more and less acceptable contexts for crossing over. Contact needed to be controllable by the living; otherwise it was unacceptable and terrifying. In the former case, the dead who returned were perhaps categorically less contradictory. Encountering the undead thus corresponded to cultural expectations and was in line with people's common knowledge of the world. Still, those premodern undead who were malevolent towards the living were just as threatening to people in real life as modern cinematic and literary zombies and vampires are to the living protagonists in the stories.

Reasons for Posthumous Activity

Why do the undead return? European folk tradition gives both moral and technical reasons for vampirism: for example, the person has been a witch; he has died violently and not received a proper burial in time; he has been contaminated (that is, attacked) by a vampire in his life; he has specific personal qualities (for example, two hearts or red hair, which in certain areas are thought to inevitably lead to vampirism); or he is a victim of a spell. The body continues to live after death because some spirit or soul animates it. It can be the person's own soul which returns to the body instead of finding its way to the land of death. The animating agent can also be an evil spirit who found the body unguarded. (Barber 1988, 29–39.)

In medieval Scandinavian vernacular tradition, restless corpses usually returned of their own free will, because they had some things to attend to and wanted to exert their influence on the realm of the living. The undead were not passive agents but active ones, reanimated by their own "unexpended energy", such as anger, which survived death and remained in their corpses. They could return to help the living or, because of their greedy nature that persisted even after their demise, to defend the possessions they had once owned and to prevent others from enjoying their property. Like the dead in preindustrial Finnish folklore (e.g. Harva 1948), the dead could also be

guardians of morals, returning to communities where social norms had been broken. Later, Christian conceptions fused with indigenous ideas: the dead corpses became more like passive objects that could be reanimated by unclean spirits or raised by means of magic, such as necromantic practices found in medieval learned Latin literature. (Ármann Jakobsson 2005; Kanerva 2011; Kanerva 2017, 45–62; Kanerva 2018, 29–37.)

In medieval and post-Reformation Europe, the Church emphasised in its teaching that the dead who returned were actually corpses reanimated by demons and inclined to deception. Communication with the dead for the purpose of divination was strictly banned in both religious and legal contexts. However, such communication was apparently found to be effective by laypeople; surviving necromantic manuals suggest that the evocation of dead spirits was considered possible if the appropriate rites and spells were performed to bring the ghost back from the otherworld. As such, the ideas of necromancy that circulated in premodern England (discussed by Harms in this issue) represent a continuation in the long history of Western necromancy, which in Ancient Greece often aimed at gaining information about the past instead of the future by communicating with immaterial shadows and ghosts, whereas Latin sources from the first century BCE introduced the use of corpses for the purpose of divination (on necromancy in Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome, see Bremmer 2015).

In European folklore, the dead were able to walk not because they were exceptionally reanimated, like vampires, but simply because they were dead and for some reason restless. According to popular legends and rumours, the deceased could return if they had personal unfinished business in this world, or they were restless because of their sins and crimes, or because they had been mistreated or murdered (see, e.g., Pentikäinen 1969). Traditions concerning revenants have been first and foremost a way to discuss social norms in an entertaining manner. Central European folklore includes a rich variety of beings that derive from dead people, and usually the haunting resulted from the deviance of the person or their breaching of norms. The innocent became

immaterial and light ghosts, while those suspected of witchcraft or crimes were dark or had more repulsive forms, including such material bodies as werewolves and vampires. The soul was thought to part from the body only after it had decayed. Therefore, as long as the body existed, it could be useful to the soul if the latter had bad intentions. This is why (for example, in Czech lands) the bodies of those who had been suspected of witchcraft were destroyed, in order to prevent impure souls from using them anymore. (Navrátilová 2004, 292–310.)

The popular culture of our time still makes use of old folklore motifs, but instead of moral reasons the technical frames are emphasised. In popular novels and movies, the reasons for posthumous activities are countless, and new ones are constantly created to update the imagery. Manuel Vargas has listed a number of technical reasons for the activity of the undead. The undead can emerge because of supernatural activity, such as spells or demons. Another reason, given especially for zombies, is science gone wrong, such as a bioweapons program or an accidentally released virus. A third explanation for the undead is natural development, for instance, the mutation of a virus. (Vargas 2010.) In the last cases, the undead may not have literally died yet. Their transformation into zombies has involved another route but with the same result, such as losing essential human characteristics that constituted the person prior to the contamination or mutation, including memory and (the previous) personality; in this way, they are no longer identifiable as themselves. The individuals have been lost, and they have joined a crowd or species which cannot be integrated into human society. Popular fiction has also developed alternative narratives in which undead are not derived from death at all: for example, vampires are simply another species or race, which preys on humans (Carter 1997).

The Role of the Undead

In our modern world, the undead have appeared widely in cultural products such as films, television series, music videos and literature. Interest in the undead is not a new phenomenon. For instance, in her review article "The Evolution of the Vampire in Popular Narrative from the Nineteenth Century to the Present" (this issue), which gives an overview of the changing roles of vampires in literature and cinema from the "birth" of the vampire in the West in 18th-century Gothic fiction to 21st-century cinematic sources, Charmaine Tanti shows that the modern Western form of the vampire is not a recent innovation. Based on research on other cultural and historical contexts, we can also say that the roots of the vampire, depending on how exactly we define the term, stretch a long way back. Vampiric qualities have characterised various undead beings at various times in various cultures: for instance, in Ancient Egypt, India, Eastern Europe and medieval Scandinavia (see Beresford 2008; Ármann Jakobsson 2011). Other articles in this theme issue (Maraschi; Harms), as well as earlier studies on the subject, suggest that even though visual and verbal narratives prior to the birth of the modern entertainment industry and mass media have not been available for large audiences, the undead have inspired and stirred interest among many people across a range of historical and cultural contexts.

The power of the undead – including their potential to play a significant role in such forms of communication as art, literature and narrative tradition – is in their monstrousness. The undead can be seen as extra-geographically unknown others; they participate in this world but are simultaneously outside it, being excluded. This makes them potential bridges between two worlds, the world of actuality on the one hand and the domain of myth and allegory on the other (see, e.g., Carroll 1987, 57; Williams 1996, 13–14; Cohen 1996, 6). To follow Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, as objects and entities that do not signify themselves but (as sign vehicles) stand for others, the undead – in their monstrous way – carry with them a plethora of semiotic potential. They reveal things, teach, advise and instruct, and they make (hidden and unspoken) things known

(Lat. *monstrare*) if they are read, but they are also characterised with uncertainty: they are not "either/or" but "and/or". In times of crisis, they question things, but they also allow "safe expression" of "potent escapist fantasies" and delimit the boundaries of possibility. To understand their message and grasp their meanings before they vanish, the undead need to be viewed in the cultural and historical context where they have been constructed and which they reflect. (See Cohen 1996, 4–7, 12–13, 16–17.) The symbolic value of the undead is not diminished by belief in their physical existence (Williams 1996, 11–14, 76–77); thus, a ghost story may describe the life of the undead and its origin, but at the same time the undead being serves as a sign that carries meanings.

In European folklore, stories about ghosts and revenants dealt with the relationship between everyday reality and other worlds, as well as morals and the social order. In belief narratives, immoral behaviour and breaches of norms were often followed by supernatural disturbances and punishments. The undead were one of the terrifying results of ill-will of people towards each other, or they resulted from the negligence of decent behaviour and the proper performance of death rituals (see, e.g., Pentikäinen 1969; Navratilová 2004). However, the undead could also arise accidentally without any possibility for the living to prevent the process. This unexpectedness also corresponded with general experiences: life was not fair, and terrible accidents could occur at any time. The juiciest stories were entertaining and hardly connected to the everyday reality of the listeners. (Koski 2008.) But much of the narrative tradition around the undead was experienced as real. In early modern Europe, a rumour about vampires terrorising the region could cause a panic. Knowing that the victims of a vampire would also become vampires, it was necessary to kill the vampire before there would then be more vampires than living people. (Barber 1988, 22–23, 57.)

In the popular culture of our time, the focus is on this reality instead of possible other worlds, and the monstrosity or otherness of the vampires or zombies often refers metaphorically to contemporary societal problems. In a vampire the audience can find

the racial or sexual other, while zombies can be seen as an allegory of the consumerist society in which people lose their individuality. There is a vast range of possible interpretations. Once these characters have become mainstream in popular culture, it is also possible to identify with them. Vampires or ghosts as protagonists thus become identifiable with one's own feelings of alienation or otherness in contemporary society. (See Gunnell 2014.)

In her article, Outi Hakola examines vampires, zombies and Frankenstein's monster in contemporary horror films, in order to discuss allegories of illness. As Hakola shows, the living dead of cinema have been an appropriate vehicle to transmit meanings linked to maladies and various health issues, such as organ transplantations. As symbols, these "monstrous beings" have offered an arena for discussion about subjects of sociocultural concern, sources of anxiety and uncertainties, or issues that have been feared or considered taboo. Through their semiotic potential, the undead generate meanings concerning the experience of long-term illnesses and stigmatisation, as well as the marginalisation associated with them, or concerning questions of identity, personality and organ transplantation. They represent the abnormal and undesired. Hakola argues that the undead expose the ambiguous nature of experiences of illness and the fragile body. However, it remains unclear whether the monstrous nature of the undead eventually signifies the monstrousness of the illness or of the person suffering from it.

Like monsters, even though they will be destroyed in the end, the undead escape and reappear in new places where they again adopt new meanings and stand for new referents (Cohen 1996, 4–6). In this issue, Charmaine Tanti shows, for instance, that over the centuries, from the nineteenth century to the present, Western vampires have been first created, then recreated and reinvented. They have taken various roles in the different cultural and historical contexts, according to the needs of each era and society. Vampires have occasionally aroused sympathy instead of being seen as just monstrous and evil. Like the group of undead discussed by Hakola in this issue they

have also served to express cultural fears and concerns, as well as the desires typical of specific time periods.

* * *

As the editors of this "Undead" theme issue, we wish to express our deepest gratitude to all of the authors, whose contributions have broadened our knowledge of the undead as a phenomenon and have made this volume possible. We also wish to thank the anonymous referees who carefully read the articles offered for publication and whose rigorous efforts greatly supported the standards of the journal.

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ARTICLE

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There is More than Meets the Eye. Undead, Ghosts and Spirits in the *Decretum* of Burchard of Worms

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Abstract

The *Corrector*, that is, the nineteenth book of Burchard of Worms's *Decretum*, is widely recognized as one of the essential sources for the study of pagan survivals around the year 1000 A.D. in Germany – more specifically, in the Rhenish Hesse. The *Decretum* is in itself an important collection of canon law of its time, but the *Corrector* in particular has drawn the attention of scholars because of its peculiarities. Most interestingly, despite being partially based on previous penitentials and council canons, book nineteen of the *Decretum* was also partly written originally by the Bishop of Worms himself, and thus turns out to be a fundamental penitential text for the understanding of pagan survivals at the time and in the place of its composition. The source proves all the more useful for scholars interested in beliefs concerning death, the "undead", and the likes, even though terminology can be deceptive: for this reason, modern and anachronistic taxonomies such as "ghost", "undead", "revenant", etc. will be discarded, in favour of an emic approach which aims at respecting the text and imposing as fewer filters as possible. As a matter of fact, Burchard mentions many kinds of otherworldly entities which recall our modern notions of "ghosts", "spirits" and "undead", but often does not attach further details to identify them – either because he did not deem them worthy of his attention, or because he might have not known folk beliefs in detail. In any case, Burchard's Germany appears to be densely populated: people share their space with hordes of "spectres", seem to be aware of it, and often believe to be able to join them. The aim of the present contribution is then to analyze those folk beliefs which involve otherworldly entities, in order to critically discuss

their characteristics and understand their implications among the people of Hesse around the year 1000. Attention will be specifically focused on the relationship between the living and the dead/undead, and will cast light on a series of related aspects such as: 1) the bias against women – who were held naturally predisposed to credulity; 2) positive/negative interactions between man and otherworldly entities; 3) attributes associated to said entities (persistent, wicked, benevolent/malevolent, etc.); 4) the fear of the darkness due to the supposed activity of evil spirits in the night hours; 5) the role of otherwordly entities at the service of the living; 6) the fear that the dead may rise again and harm the living.

Introduction

Burchard, Bishop of the city of Worms (in the Rhenish Hesse) at the beginning of the eleventh century, is arguably one of the best historical sources for the understanding of pagan survivals in his time (Gurevich 1990, 78 ff.; Meens 2014, 150–151). Burchard was elected bishop in 1000, and compiled an important collection of canon law (Hoffmann and Pokorny 1991, 165–276; Picasso, Piana and Motta 1986, 173–183) – known as *Decretum* – around the year 1008 (Kéry 1999, 133–155). A remarkably interesting part of the *Decretum* is book nineteen, entitled *Corrector* or *Medicus*, a penitential which casts light on popular religion and common errors and sins committed by the folk (Wasserschleben 1958; Schmitz 1958a; Vogel 1978, 88 ff.; Frantzen 1985, 40; Kottje 1985). It distinguishes itself from other similar works because it was in part originally written by Burchard himself. Indeed, Burchard did draw on older penitentials (dating back to as early as the seventh century) to address certain sins and their related penalties (Kottje 1982; Fournier 1983; Meens 1994, 11–72; Körntgen 2000), but he proved rather original, meticulous – and then credible – as for what concerned a number of non-Christian beliefs which were widespread among the folk in his diocese at that time (Hamilton 2001; Austin 2004; Meens 2014, 150–151). It is well known that Burchard's penitential was heavily based on the handbook for episcopal visitations composed by Regino of Prüm around 906 (structured as a questionnaire), even though it is fair to assume that specific portions of the *Corrector* stemmed from

actual observations of practices in – but not exclusively – the diocese of Worms (Körntgen 2006, 110). In fact, if Burchard embraced Regino's method of directly questioning the penitent, he listed one hundred and ninety-four questions (some of which are not based on previous sources, apparently), whereas Regino had about forty. In this sense, this analysis endorses Alan Gurevich's position (Gurevich 1990, 36–37) which, contrary to Dieter Harmening's opinion (Harmening 1979), held that Burchard's work was not a mere repetition of earlier penitential tradition, but rather represents a useful ethnographic sketch of contemporary popular beliefs. A partially obscure sketch, however. For instance, the very notion of "folk" is rather vague: Burchard occasionally makes social distinctions between poor, slaves, freemen and lords, but the vast majority of our examples will in fact address an indistinct audience of sinners (*fecisti, interfuisti, consensisti, credidisti...?*), with particular attention to women.

The source presents specific problems in itself. Migne's edition (*Decretum* 1880) is not considered entirely reliable (Fransen 1977), and aside from Melchior von Neuss' *Editio princeps* of the *Decretum* – dating to 1548, reprinted by Gérald Fransen and Theo Kölzer in 1992, but representing a minor branch of the manuscript tradition (Dusil and Hill 2017, 536) – no modern editions of the work are available. For this reason, this analysis has been based on Frankfurt, Stadt– und Universitätsbibliothek, MS Barth. 50: this and Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MSS Pal. lat. 586 and 586, represent the earliest copies of the text, which were probably revised by Burchard himself (Hoffmann and Pokorny 1991, 29–39).

In particular, the present article aims at analyzing the historical evidence of folk beliefs in the existence of undead/revenenants/ghosts in Burchard's Germany (and in the author's sources, if that is the case), in order to understand what the religious and practical implications were for believing that mankind shared the world with numerous other entities of such kinds. The study will touch different aspects connected with this, such as: gender; cases of positive/negative interactions between the living and the dead/undead by means of sharing, exchanging, offering, and sacrificing food; attributes

associated to said entities; the fear of the darkness because of the supposed presence of evil spirits who wandered about in the night hours; the useful role of ghosts/undead/revenants in divinatory practices; and, finally, the fear that the dead may rise again and harm the living.

As immediately stated in the incipit, the *Corrector sive Medicus* was named after its specific function as cure for the sickness of souls. It was intended for priests, in order to teach them how to come to the aid of people (Meens 2014, 150), for – whether they were rich or poor, adults or children, sick or healthy, men or women – anybody could have been vulnerable to beliefs and practices that were condemned by the Church (Barth. 50, fol. 242ra). The work was then meant for a practical context of confession, but also for the training of young students (Hoffmann and Pokorny 1991, 68).

As useful as a written collection of sins and wrong behaviours is for modern scholars, however, the nineteenth book of the *Decretum* was a tricky instrument: in a rubric, Burchard himself recommended confessors to use the greatest discretion when questioning penitents, for speaking about, condemning and emphasizing certain non-Christian practices may have reinforced and publicized them (Barth. 50, fol. 258vb).[1] It is also to be borne in mind that the area to which Burchard was referring had been Christianized (if not Christianized again) about two hundred and fifty years earlier by the English missionary Boniface. Consequently, the beliefs and rituals described by Burchard survived the process of conversion ascribed to the so–called "apostle of Germany", or sprouted after the second half of the eighth century.

The topic which will be addressed in the present contribution, the "undead", has received remarkable attention by scholars – especially for what concerns the Old Norse area – and even more so in recent times, from historical, anthropological, and literary perspectives (e.g., Chadwick 1946; Ármann Jakobsson 2009, 2011, 2013, 2017; Bernstein 2009; Caciola 2005, 2016; Joynes 2001; Kanerva 2011; Keyworth 2007;

[1] "In istis om(n)ib(us) sup(ra)dictis debent sacerdotes magna(m) discretione(m) habere, ut discernant int(er) illu(m) qui publice peccavit et publice poenituit, et int(er) illu(m) qui absconse peccavit et sua sponte confessus est."

Lecouteux 2011; Ogden 2002; Sävborg and Bek-Pedersen 2018; Schmitt 1998). Such brilliant contributions have done justice to aspects of our medieval past – the "supernatural", the "paranormal" – which modern readers would be tempted to categorize as mere fiction, or as something standing outside humans' society. As a matter of fact, they have allowed to develop a new understanding of the relationship between the living and the dead (and entities from the hereafter in general). The result of this has been a depiction of the past where said hemispheres were not as separated as we might have assumed, and where interactions between their respective "inhabitants" were frequent and even taken for granted, to a certain extent.

A major problem inherent in dealing with said matters is handling the concepts of "supernatural" and "paranormal" (and, consequently, the notions of "ghost", "undead", "revenant", and the likes). There is little doubt that our modern understanding of said categories is likely to deceive us when we approach medieval sources. It has been argued that our current definition of "supernatural" emphasizes its existence outside of the natural world and the fact that it cannot be explained by means of references to "nature" (Mitchell 2009, 285–287). On the other hand, in medieval times such distinctions were heavily influenced by Christian intellectuals, who mainly distinguished between acts of God, acts of the Devil, and unexplained phenomena which did not fit in either category (*Arngrímur* Vídalín 2016, 9). A safer approach is to completely avoid anachronistic terminology, and respect that which is found in the sources: Burchard mentions entities of various kinds, such as *larvae demonum*, *spiritus*, *daemones* and more, which we will try to analyze avoiding modern taxonomies. What is sure, in our particular case, is that the belief in said entities was a sin, and led to penance. It will not always be possible to find precise definitions of what an entity was, or was supposed to be: either because Burchard did not consider such beliefs important enough, or because he himself may not have known much about them. As a whole, though, most of the entities described in the *Corrector* share some common ground: they often manifest physically and look like real human beings; they are active agents, sometimes

threatening and malicious; they can turn out to be useful for the living, if appropriately approached; and, from a Christian perspective, they are strictly connected with the Devil.

The Undead

Death: a Dangerous Boundary

Before touching the matter of undead entities, it is necessary to introduce that concerning death. A good portion of the *Corrector* is permeated with the idea of death as a territory contiguous to life: the boundary separating the two spaces is thin, and requires utmost care in order to avoid dangerous accidents. Actually, the very notion of "boundary" – as it is used here and in the following sections – needs to be briefly problematized. Indeed, our modern understanding of it does not necessarily match the way it was understood in the medieval past. More than a border or a fixed point, the line between life and death, and between the natural and the supernatural, should be understood as a "zone" (Bradford Smith 2013, 135), or – at best – a "porous" boundary (ibid., 136; see also Lecouteux 2003). These fluid frontiers had specific access points, natural (springs, rocks, forests) or artificial (crossroads, bridges, temples, sanctuaries, cemeteries). Crossing them could be dangerous, but the two hemispheres were contiguous and could intersect with each other (Lecouteux 2003, 26ff.; Pócs 2000, 17; Maraschi 2019). Scenes of contacts between entities from the world of the living and the world of the dead are anything but rare in medieval literary sources, for instance: they suggest that such (para)normal encounters (Maraschi 2019) could be friendly, or even profitable, but often implied a potential danger. Most importantly, literary and folkloric tradition from medieval times casts light on the belief that each person had spiritual or physical alter egos that could separate from their physical bodies during specific phases (sleep, trances, etc.) and access the otherworld (Bradford

Smith 2013, 138). As will be shown later, this aspect surfaces in Burchard's *Corrector* as well, to a certain extent.

The matter of death is first summoned by Burchard in Chapter 5, which consists of 194 *interrogationes* and can be considered 'the penitential proper' (Filotas 2005, 378). His concern regards the violation of graves with the intention of stealing the dead's clothes (Barth. 50, fol. 252ra),[2] which is severely punished with a two-year penance on the appointed fast days. Burchard does not explain what the function of the dead's clothes may have been, which suggests that the practice was condemned because it was sacrilegious and perhaps widespread. As will be shown later, however, dead men's belts were used to cause harm to other individuals, and the two practices may have been connected. Be that as it may, it is already clear that the grave and the dead were perceived to be located in a liminal "territory", which had important magico-religious implications and which thus could be misused in some way.

Furthermore, the matter of the desecration of graves is mentioned in the eleventh book of the *Decretum* as well (Barth. 50, foll. 195rb–196va), which in turn is based on canon 46 of the Council of Toledo of 633, in Visighotic Spain (Mansi 1764, x, 630).[3] The canon addressed clerics involved in the destruction of sepulchers, an act of profanation which did not have any magical or superstitious connotation, but rather was aimed at the appropriation of stones (which could be re-used to build new churches, for example), and at the spoliation of grave sites of the élite and of the saints in order to pillage their precious content or covering (Effros 2001, 108–109).[4]

[2] "Violasti sepulchru(m), ita dico, du(m) alique(m) videres sepelire et in nocte infringeres sepulchru(m) et tolleres vestim(en)ta ei(us)?"

[3] "Si quis clericus in demolendis sepulcris fuerit deprehensus, quia facinus hoc pro sacrilegio legibus publicis sanguine vendicatur, oportet canonibus in tali scelere proditum clericatus ordine submoveri, et poenitentiae triennio deputari." The same practice is condemned by Regino of Prüm (*Libri duo de synodalibus causis et disciplinis ecclesiasticis* 1840, 1.304, 144).

[4] The same matter is immediately addressed at the beginning of the *Indiculus superstitionum et paganiarum* (northern Gaul, half of the eighth century), which is believed to be strictly associated with the Frankish councils of 743 and 744 (Dierkens 1984, 24). There is no information about the nature of the profanation in the first article, whereas the second is more precise: "de sacrilegio super defunctos, id est dadsisas". The term *dadsisas* probably refers to funerary meals, libations and food offerings to idols, which Burchard mentions later and calls *idolothita* (Barth. 50, fol. 254va; the penance consisted of thirty days on bread and water). According to Burchard, such meals were consumed at particularly

Women and Nocturnal Spirits Wandering the Skies

Although not directly touching our macro-topic – the "undead" – these passages cast light on a fundamental link tying the living and the dead together, and on the problems connected with the said link, of course. There were numerous other ways in which the two hemispheres could come into contact, however, and for different reasons. Often, it was believed that women were particularly guilty in this sense: "Have you ever believed that there is a kind of woman", Burchard asks, "who can do what certain women, deceived by the devil, claim they have to do by necessity or command...?" (Barth. 50, fol. 253ra).[5] In Christian times, there developed a strong bias against women with regards to the practice of witchcraft (Bitel 2002; Maraschi 2019, and related bibliography), and Christian intellectuals frequently repeated that women were predisposed by nature to credulity and were vulnerable to the influence of demons (Caciola 2005, 21–22; 2016, 161). Here, Burchard refers to a well-known traditional belief – namely that in the Wild Hunt – in which the protagonist was a woman, and whose cult seems to have concerned women only (Ginzburg 1992; Walter 1997; Bernstein 2009; Lecouteux 2011). According to the bishop of Worms, they believed that on some nights the witch Holda flew about in the sky with a retinue of female *daemones* (namely, "demons transformed into the shape of women"): women themselves believed to take part in the cortège, riding various beasts. This "superstitious" belief must have concerned Burchard, since he established that the penance consisted in a one-year fast on the appointed fast days. Evidently, the issue was not to be overlooked: the belief in the nighttime ladies surfaced in Christian texts already in the sixth century, and was connected with a number of female figures such as

critical places (the graves of the dead, springs, trees, rocks, crossroads), often connected with the worshipping of pagan gods and non-Christian entities. The problem was already clearly identified in the sixth century by Martin of Braga (*De correctione rusticorum* 1950, 16), and was addressed by Burchard in the tenth book (Barth. 50, foll. 176rb–va). See Meslin 1969 and Filotas 2005, 145 ff.

[5] "Credidisti ut aliq(ua) femina sit quae hoc facere possit q(uo)d quaeda(m), a diabolo deceptae, se affirmant necessario et ex p(rae)cepto facere debere, id (est) cu(m) daemonu(m) turba in similitudine(m) mulieru(m) transformata, qua(m) vulgaris stulticia Holda(m) vocant, certis noctib(us) equitare debere sup(er) quasda(m) bestias, et in eo(rum) se consortio annumerata(m) e(ss)e? Si particeps fuisti illius incredulitatis, annu(m) unu(m) p(er) legitimas fer(ias) poenitere debes." An earlier parallel is in Regino of Prüm (*Libri duo de synodalibus causis et disciplinis ecclesiasticis* 1840, 2.5, q. 45, 212).

Herodias, Diana, Perchta, Satia or Abundia. Besides, it was still in vogue in the thirteenth century (Lecouteux 2011, 11–16; Maraschi 2019, 275–276; Neyra 2017), when the nighttime ladies were believed to visit households and bestow wealth on them. This may well mean that the legend of the Wild Hunt was particularly widespread and appealing: on the other hand, it was only a part of a more complex system of rituals and beliefs, as will be shown later.

Given our aims, terminology is essential. Unfortunately, it is not clear how one should interpret the term *daemones*, here, for its meaning varies depending on the sources and often on the specific context. Bernadette Filotas has hesitatingly translated the word as "ghosts" (Filotas 2005, 76), even though a parallel between such "ghosts" and our general notion of the term seems to be far-fetched. Filotas' translation makes sense at least from a "visual" perspective, though: the demons are "in the guise of women", and thus look like human revenants. Burchard himself is rather vague about this aspect. The only distinction which is possible to make is one concerning gender: Burchard reckons that both men and women believed in Holda and her retinue, but only women believed that they personally joined the nocturnal *daemones*.

The belief in a retinue of nocturnal spirits led by a witch or a goddess recurs again later. This time, the cavalcade through the night sky is led by the pagan deity Diana (Barth. 50, foll. 253vb–254ra),[6] and the role of the *daemones* is slightly clearer: "Have you believed or taken part in this kind of faithlessness that some impious women, turning back to Satan and seduced by the illusions and the phantasms of demons, believe and proclaim...?", the question reads. The word *fantasma* (*phantasma*), "apparition", of clear Greek origins, suggests that believers are convinced by entities of some kind, possibly demons in disguise: this trick has probably the purpose of deceiving women, of masking their own (i.e., the demons') identity and of looking

[6] "Credidisti aut particeps fuisti illius incredulitatis, q(uo)d quaeda(m) sceleratae mulieres retro post Satanam c(on)versae, daemonum inlusionib(us) et fantasmatib(us) seductae, credunt et p(ro)fitent(ur) se nocturnis horis cu(m) Diana paganorum dea, et cu(m) innumera multitudine mulieru(m) equitare super quasda(m) bestias, et multa t(er)raru(m) spacia inte(m)pestae noctis silentio p(er)transire, eiusq(ue) iussionib(us) (ve)lut dominae oboedire, et certis noctib(us) ad eius servitiu(m) evocari? [...]"

appealing to them. As for the belief itself, it does not differ from that in Holda, essentially (Neyra 2017): certain women obeyed Diana as their mistress and mounted on the back of beasts through the night sky. Here, Burchard drew upon Regino of Prüm's collection of canons (*Libri duo de synodalibus causis et disciplinis ecclesiasticis* 1840, 2.371, 354–356), and included the passage earlier in his own *Decretum* as well (Barth. 50, foll. 172ra–172vb). Interestingly, though, in book ten[7] he proves uncertain whether the female mistress was called Diana or Herodias ("cum Diana paganorum dea, vel cum Herodiade"): this suggests that the tradition was so popular that it developed into different sub-branches, at some point. Be that as it may, Burchard – following his source Regino – dwells on the theological implications of such a belief (Bellini 1998; Rampton 2007), and discusses their inner danger in detail. Said *fantasmata* (i.e., the devil) appear in the likeness of various people ("transformat se in diversarum personarum species atque similitudines") and deceive the mind ("et mentem...deludens"), which in turn transmits the experience to the body ("infidelis mens haec non in animo, sed in corpore evenire opinatur"). They have corporeality (Caciola 2016, 113 ff.), unlike the phantasms described by St. Augustine as "spiritual images" (Schmitt 1998, 17–26), and are then a concrete danger for the living (i.e., for both the body and the soul). This nonetheless, Burchard held this superstitious belief worthy of no more than thirty days of penance, as in the case of idolothytes.[8]

Help from the Hereafter

In Burchard's Rhenish Hesse, the folk considered the hereafter a resource as well, for the dead could cover an important function for the community: that of diviners of the future. This positive interaction between the dead and the living found its ideal stage at

[7] The main difference between the two references is the audiences respectively addressed: churchmen in book ten, sinners in book nineteen.

[8] The night cortège led by Diana, Herodias or others was often associated with a custom (typical of women, according to various medieval Christian intellectuals, and probably practiced on New Year's Eve) of setting the table after dinner with food, drinks and three knives (more on this later). The intention was to curry favour with the "three sisters", that is, the Parcae (Barth. 50, foll. 258vb–259ra). See Maraschi 2019, 275; Lecouteux 2011, 14–15; Rampton 2007, 29.

Yule-time (the winter solstice) and on New Year's Eve (the Kalends of January). Celebrations of the Kalends of January were harshly condemned by the Church, since they denied the Christian idea of renewal which coincided with Christmas (Meslin 1970, 109–112); the attempt to replace and Christianize them by establishing the Feast of the Circumcision of Christ did not prove very successful, though (Filotas 2005, 155; Grig 2017). On these days, in Germanic folklore, the Furious Host or army of the dead flew about the skies, received offerings of food and drink, and responded to the questions of the living about the coming year (Grundy 2014, 40ff.). This belief stemmed from the same root as that of the tradition of the Wild Hunt, and was massively widespread among the Germans. Traces of it are still perfectly trackable in the *Corrector*: "Have you observed the Kalends of January in the pagan fashion," the penitential reads,

> so that you did something more on that day because it was the new year than you would usually do before or after it, by which I mean to say that on that day have you either set your table with stones or food-offerings in your house [...], or have you sat on the roof of your house in the middle of a circle that you traced with your sword, in order for you to see and learn from there what will happen to you in the coming year? [...] If so, since you have abandoned God your creator and turned to idols and such vain things and have become an apostate, you should do penance for two years on the appointed fast days. (Barth. 50, foll. 252rb–252va).[9]

Hordes of spectres were thus believed to roam the skies at a key moment of the year: they could bring good news, wealth, abundance, or they could be vicious as otherworldly entities could often be (Maraschi 2019). Evidently, the rooftop represented a privileged and safe place from which to consult the entities (and symbolically not less important than crossroads), but only if protected by a magic circle.

[9] "Observasti K(a)l(endas) Januarias ritu paganor(um), ut (ve)l aliqu(i)d plus faceres p(ro)pt(er) novu(m) annu(m) qua(m) antea, (ve)l p(ost) soleres facere, ita dico ut aut mensa(m) tua(m) cu(m) lapidib(us) (ve)l epulis in domo tua p(rae)parares eo te(m)pore, [...] aut sup(ra) tectu(m) domus tuae sederes, ense tuo circu(n)signatus, ut ibi videres et intellegeres q(ui)d tibi in sequenti anno futuru(m) esset? [...] Ideo, quia D(eu)m creatore(m) tuu(m) dereliquisti, et ad idola et ad illa vana te c(on)vertisti, et apostata effect(us) es, duos annos p(er) legitimas fer(ias) poeniteas."

The same belief is more or less implicitly suggested in earlier Christian sources dating to the eighth century (Filotas 2005, 170–171, 218). Burchard punished them with two years of fast, for they dangerously perpetuated old pagan traditions which were wrong and – not secondarily – ostentatious as well.

As said, this belief was probably paralleled by that in the *tres sorores*, the Parcae, which led the folk to set again their tables after dinner with food and three knives in order to please them (Barth. 50, foll. 258vb–259ra):[10] in return, the Sisters would bestow wealth and abundance of food on those who paid homage to them (Maraschi 2019, 275–276). Not only does Burchard hold that this belief is typical of women, but he also associates it with "quibusdam temporibus anni", "certain times of the year" – which may well refer to New Year's Eve. Interestingly, however, the penitential punishes this belief with "only" one year of fast, instead of two. This difference may have depended on the fact that the former belief was connected with more complex and flamboyant rituals, and that the belief in pre-Christian personifications of destiny (the *Parcae*) was less blasphemous than that in hordes of dead.

Nyctophobia

However problematic the interpretation of the entities mentioned in the *Corrector* may be, there is little doubt that the folk believed in their existence, perceived their presence, and that this affected their life. At times, the very presence of these beings in the world caused deep anxiety and forced people to find appropriate remedies.[11] This is the case of those entities which Burchard calls *spiritus immundi* (Barth. 50, foll. 258 rb–258va),[12] in a passage which is original and does not depend on earlier sources.

[10] "Fecisti ut quaeda(m) mulieres in quib(us)da(m) te(m)porib(us) anni facere solent: ut in domo tua m(en)sam p(rae)parares, et tuos cibos, et potu(m) cu(m) trib(us) cultellis sup(ra) m(en)sa(m) poneres, ut si venissent tres illae sorores, quas antiq(ua) posteritas et antiq(ua) stulticia parcas nominavit, ibi reficerent(ur), et tulisti divinae pietati potestate(m) sua(m), et nom(en) suu(m), et diabolo tradidisti, ita, dico, ut crederes illas quas tu dicis e(ss)e sorores, tibi posse, aut hic aut in futuro p(ro)desse? Si fecisti, aut c(on)sensisti, unu(m) annu(m) p(er) legitimas fer(ias) poeniteas."

[11] For a wider discussion of existential anxiety in medieval times, see Maraschi 2018b.

[12] "Credidisti q(uo)d quida(m) credere solent? Du(m) necesse habent ante luce(m) aliorsu(m) exire, n(on) audent, dicentes q(uo)d posteru(m) sit, et ante galli cantu(m) egredi n(on) liceat, er periculosu(m) sit eo q(uo)d inmundi sp(iritu)s ante

These "unclean spirits" were believed to wander about among the living, and to be harmful to them especially until dawn, before the cock's crowing.[13] They apparently were feared so much that the people would not dare leave their houses until after the cock had crowed, even if urged by need. According to Burchard, it was believed that the *spiritus* could not be repelled by that which he defines *divina mens*, the "divine mind" which resided inside the faithful (i.e., by their Christian faith). Indeed, they were effectively neutralized only by the cock's cry, which thus played a critical function in the ordering of things. Burchard did not take this belief very seriously, nor considered it an extremely reprehensible behaviour, for the penalty consisted of ten days on bread and water, even though it clearly clashed against Christian tenets. This nonetheless, the passage is particularly interesting for it makes reference to "impure spirits", a clearer definition of which Burchard offers in the twentieth book of his *Decretum*, quoting Gregory the Great's well-known commentary on Job (Barth. 50, fol. 296va): these were unclean spirits who "fell from the heavens" and "wander about between the sky and the earth". However, no detailed explanation is given for what concerns the identity of such spirits: they may have been "demons, minor imps of the woods, souls wandering away from their body, or the ghosts of the unhallowed dead", Bernadette Filotas has observed (Filotas 2005, 82). She has also suggested that the third option might have been possible due to the attested belief in the transmigration of souls between the end of the eighth and the beginning of the ninth century, for an anonymous Carolingian sermon held that some people believed that spirits (*spiritus*) leaving the body of a man could enter that of another person (Levison 1976, 312).[14] Due to this demonic possession, the possessed person would speak through the spirit.

gallicinu(m) plus ad nocendu(m) potestatis habeant, qua(m) post, et gallus suo cantu plus valeat eos repellere et sedare, qua(m) illa divina mens quae e(st) in homine sua fide et crucis signaculo? Si fecisti aut credidisti, x dies in pane et aq(ua) debes poenit(ere)."

[13] About beliefs in the powers of the cock's cry, which are already found in Prudentius, see Filotas 2005, 144; Boglioni 1985, 972–973.

[14] "Et alia heresis est, quod stulti homines credunt, quod spiritus, cum de uno homine exit, in alium possit intrare, quod hoc omnino numquam potest fieri, nisi daemonis hoc faciunt et per ipsus homines locuntur."

Other passages from the *Corrector* describe behaviours and powers which surely look familiar to our modern notion of "ghost" as incorporeal being. Among other beliefs ascribed to women, he inserts the following one:

> Have you believed what many women turning back to Satan believe and maintain to be true: you believe that in the silence of a quiet night, as you are gathering in your bed with your husband lying at your bosom, you are physically capable of passing through closed doors and of travelling across the span of the earth with others deceived by a similar error? And of killing baptized people redeemed by Christ's blood without using visible weapons and, after cooking their flesh, of eating it, and putting straw, wood, or something like this in place of their hearts, and, once you have eaten them, of bringing them back to life and of granting them a truce to live? If you have believed this, you should do penance for forty days, that is, a quarantine, on bread and water, with seven years of penance subsequently. (Barth. 50, fol. 260ra)[15]

Burchard's details are all the more precious, for his only source seems to have been the tenth-century anonymous *Arundel penitential*[16] (McNeill 1923; Boglioni 1991; Künzel 1992; Harmening 1997; Müller 2001; Austin 2009). In particular, the penitential reads: "If someone has believed that, in the stillness of a quiet night, he has been lifted up in the air by wicked women, he shall do penance for two years" ("Si quis in aerem in quiete noctis silentio se a maleficis feminis sublevari crediderit, ii annos peniteat", Schmitz 1958b, 460). The bishop of Worms reprises the time reference (the stillness of a quiet night), the cause (Satan, evil), the agents (women), and a generic attribute of their power (they lift up in the air). At the same time, he originally adds more information and changes the penalty, spreading it over a longer period of time, and showing that such a belief was to be severely punished. What is striking about

[15] "Credidisti q(uo)d multae mulieres retro Satanan conversae credunt et affirmant veru(m) e(ss)e, ut credas in quietae noctis silentio cu(m) te collocaveris in lecto tuo, et marito tuo in sinu tuo iacente, te du(m) corporea sis ianuis clausis exire posse, et t(er)raru(m) spacia cu(m) aliis simili errore deceptis p(er)transire valere, et homines baptizatos, et Christi sanguine redemptos, sine armis visibilib(us) et int(er)ficere, et de coctis carnib(us) eor(um) vos comedere, et in loco cordis eor(um) stram(en) aut lignu(m), (ve)l aliq(uo)d hui(us)modi ponere, et com(m)estis, iteru(m) vivos facere, et inducias vivendi dare? Si credidisti xl dies, id est carrina(m) in pane et aq(ua) cum vii sequentib(us) annis poenit(eas)."

[16] A particularly important source due to the fact that it features beliefs and practices without precedents in earlier penitentials, some of which Burchard reprised.

Burchard's description is that the corporeality of the women's bodies (Bellini 1998, 295–296) does not prevent them from passing through physical obstacles – in line with our modern idea of "ghost" – and the women apparently can gather together and travel long distances in a very short time; they are also able to perform actions which imply the ability to physically interact with the environment without using any tangible means to exert influence upon it. Furthermore, although positive examples of interactions between "ghosts" and human beings are quite numerous in late medieval literary texts – especially when the interaction takes place by means of sharing or offering food (Maraschi 2019) – in this case the protagonists seem to have ill intentions. They act as soldiers of the Devil, kill Christians without "visible weapons", and – most importantly – they are cannibals.[17] More specifically: they eat Christians. On top of this, they resuscitate the dead bodies of their victims after replacing their hearts[18] with fodder, presumably bringing them back to life in order to exert control over them.

Interestingly, this "error" is linked with a specific time: the night. This is not surprising, given the aforementioned beliefs in the presence of spirits wandering about in the darkness, or in the cortège of the night ladies. Furthermore, it has clear connections with the belief in the nocturnal Wild Hunt and in the so-called *chevauchée sur le bâton* or *gandreið* (Lecouteux 1998, 27, fn. 81; 2011). In fact, the following question in Burchard's *Corrector* reprises the same time-related expression ("in quietae noctis silentio"; Barth. 50, fol. 260rb), the same environmental characteristics ("clausis ianuis"), and describes a nocturnal battle between flying servants of the devil, of which women believe to be part. In any case, the Devil seems to have often hired women for most of his plots.

[17] Cannibalism usually identified the enemy, the Other, the "barbarian", etc. See, for instance, Holden 2000, 16, about the literary representation of the Cyclops.

[18] About the symbolic significance of the heart in ancient and medieval times, see Maraschi 2018a and related bibliography.

The Passage from This World to the Otherworld: Rituals and Precautions

Considering how threatening otherwordly entities could be, it is no wonder that great care was devoted to the critical journey of the deceased from the world of the living to the afterlife. At the time of Burchard, many pagan customs still addressed the fate of the bodies of the dead after their burial, and the bishop of Worms is an incredibly original source with regards to this aspect. In fact, he does not seem to draw upon any earlier penitential when he describes a funerary ritual which he thinks worthy of twenty days on bread and water for those who practiced it:

> Have you done or approved of what some people do to a killed man, when he is buried? They put a certain ointment in his hand, as if his wound can be healed by this ointment after death, and they bury him in this way with the ointment. (Barth. 50, fol. 254vb)[19]

This practice had the purpose of healing the dead as they undertook their voyage to the Otherworld. What is interesting is that it also had a Christian counterpart – and, again, Burchard does not seem to draw on any earlier source. In this case, at the death of newborns who had been previously baptized, "some women" allegedly buried the children and put a wax paten with a Host in their right hands; in the left hands, they put a wax chalice with wine in it (Barth. 50, fol. 261rb).[20] Although it has been suggested that the latter practice had purely Christian features (Vogel 1974), the similarities are quite interesting, and Burchard condemns it as pagan. Interestingly, however, he considers it less worrisome than the former, and punished it with half the days of penance. Both practices had probably the same purposes (ensuring a safe journey to the afterlife), where the second may have represented a Christianized evolution of the first one. Their coexistence is striking, though, because they show how old traditions

[19] "Fecisti aut c(on)sensisti q(uo)d quida(m) faciunt homini occiso, cu(m) sepelitur? Dabunt ei in manu(m) unguentu(m) q(uo)dda(m), quasi illo unguento post morte(m) vulnus sanari possit, et sic cu(m) unguento sepeliunt. Si fecisti, xx dies poenitas in pane et aq(ua)."

[20] "Fecisti q(uo)d quaeda(m) mulieres facere solent? Cu(m) infans novit(er) natus e(st), et statim baptizatus, et sic mortuus fuerit, du(m) sepeliunt eu(m), in dext(e)ra(m) manu(m) ponunt ei patena(m) cerea(m) cu(m) oblata, et in sinistra(m) manu(m) calice(m) cu(m) vino similit(er) cereu(m) ponunt ei, et sic eu(m) sepeliunt. Si fecisti, x dies in pane et aq(ua) poenitere debes."

were preserved through the process of conversion: they did not disappear abruptly, but instead were fused with the new belief system – new terms were adopted to formulate the same sentence, metaphorically speaking. Often, the old and the new customs could also coexist for a certain period of time.

Problems would arise when newborns died before receiving Baptism, for it was believed that the souls of unbaptized children could visit and vex the living. Again, Burchard originally deals with this aspect, and associates the erroneous belief to "women inspired by the devil" (Barth. 50, fol. 260vb).[21] From a conceptual standpoint, the main issue was to take care of the little souls which would not be allowed into Heaven and could not be buried in consecrated ground (Schmitt 1994, 14 ff.; see also Cumont 1949, 443), nor had yet an intermediate limbo to go to until the thirteenth century. The "error" sprouted exactly from the ambiguity of the children's status after death: they did not belong to the world of the living, but they did not belong to God's kingdom either. The devil would then deceive the mothers, and convince them that their children would rise from the dead, this time to harm them. This would lead women to "take the baby's corpse, put it in a secret spot, and impale the little body with a pole". The same belief is confirmed by the following *quaestio*, which examines a consequent circumstance: if a mother died as she was trying to give birth to her child, she was to be impaled into the ground with a stake and to be buried in the same grave with the child still in her womb (Barth. 50, fol. 260vb).[22] In this way, the child – deprived of his/her abode in the afterlife – would be prevented from coming back from the world of the dead and harm the living (Gordon 2017, 109).

This superstitious belief must have looked despicable to Burchard, who punished it with a penance of two years on the appointed fast days (in line with the desecration of

[21] "Fecisti q(uo)d quaed(am) mulieres instinctu diaboli facere solent? Cu(m) aliq(ui)s infans sine baptismo mortuus fuerit, tollunt cadaver parvuli, et ponunt in aliquo secreto loco, et palo corpusculu(m) eius transfigunt, dicentes, si sic non fecissent, q(uo)d infantulus surgeret, et multos laedere posset? Si fecisti, aut c(on)sensisti, aut credidisti, ii annos p(er) legitimas fer(ias)debes ponitere."

[22] "Fecisti q(uo)d quida(m) facere solent, diaboli audacia replete? Cum aliq(ua) femina parere debet, et n(on) potest, du(m) parere n(on) potest, in ipso dolore si mortem obierit, in ipso sepulchro matre(m) cu(m) infante palo in t(er)ra(m) transfigunt. Si fecisti (ve)l c(on)sensisti, ii annos p(er) legitimas fer(ias) debes poenitere."

graves). The problem of the souls of unbaptized babies was perceived as real, probably since earlier times, due to a high child mortality rate. Indeed, in the tenth book of the *Decretum*, Burchard reprises canon 35 of the early fourth-century Council of Elvira (*Council of Elvira* 1963, 7–8), according to which women could not keep vigils in cemeteries "because often under the pretext of prayer and religion" they committed evil deeds in secret (Barth. 50, fol. 176ra).[23] In the canons of the Council of Elvira it is not explained what the problem was with women lingering at cemeteries at night, but one of the reasons may have been connected with the aforementioned ritual of impaling unbaptized babies in their graves so as to prevent their vicious souls from rising and harassing the living.[24]

Be that as it may, there is little doubt that the living felt the need to protect themselves from the dead even when these were not perceived as dangerous. Earlier sources, such as the seventh-century *Penitentiale Theodori*, Regino of Prüm and the *Arundel Penitential*, already mentioned a series of practices having this exact purpose. One consisted in burning grain in the house where a corpse was lying, which the *Penitentiale Theodori* punished with five years of penitence, and thus considered extremely sacrilegious (Schmitz 1958a, 556). Burchard featured this practice in the *Corrector* (Barth. 50, fol. 254va–b),[25] but seems to have not taken it as serious, since he reduced the penalty to twenty days only. At the same time, he added a few other unprecedented ones. First he mentions the custom of tying a dead man's belt in knots with the purpose of harming someone, a practice which falls within the category of sympathetic magic. In truth, Burchard mentions further folk beliefs in the magical powers connected with

[23] "Placuit p(ro)hiberi ne feminae in cimeterio p(er)vigilent, eo q(uo)d sepe sub obtentu orationis et religionis, latent(er) scelera co(m)mittant."

[24] Bernadette Filotas adds that another problem was that human skulls were used in magical potions, as explained by Burchard himself. Women would burn human skulls and make curative potions with the ashes: "Fecisti q(uo)d quaeda(m) mulieres facere solent? Tollunt testa(m) hominis, et igni co(m)burent, et cinere(m) dant viris suis ad bibendu(m) p(ro) sanitate? Si fecisti, i ann(um) p(er) legitimas fer(ias) poen(iteas)."(Barth. 50, fol. 260va; Filotas 2005, 261). This practice was punished with one year of penance on the appointed fast days.

[25] "...incendisti grana ubi mortuus homo erat, (ve)l cingulu(m) mortui p(ro) da(m)no alicuius in nodos conligasti, (ve)l pectines quib(us) mulierculae lana(m) discerpere solent sup(ra) funus co(m)plosisti, (ve)l quando efferebat(ur) funus a domo, plaustru(m) in duo dividisti, et funus p(er) media(m) divisione(m) plaustri asportare fecisti? Si fecisti, aut c(on)sentiens fuisti, xx dies in pane et aq(ua) poeniteas."

ligaturae ("ligatures, knots"; Barth. 50, fol. 252va).[26] He says that men – namely, swineherds, oxherds, hunters and wicked men in general – sang chants over bread, herbs and ligatures at certain sacred places (trees, crossroads) in order to heal their animals or dogs, or to harm someone else's. Compared to this custom, the use of knotting a dead man's belt seems to have implied the use of a supernatural force surrounding the corpse, which could be used to harm other people.

Secondly, Burchard mentions the practice of clapping together the combs which women used to tease wool over a corpse, while this was still inside the house. The striking of combs may well be a reference to the magical powers associated with the weaving and spinning of wool (Grimm 1883, 1099), which he explains in an earlier passage. There, the bishop of Worms enigmatically suggests that women, when they started their weaving, used incantations to make sure that the work be done properly (Barth. 50, fol. 252va).[27] However, the purpose of clapping together the combs over the corpse is not explained: was it a way to protect the dead along its journey to the Otherworld, or a magical practice by which women drew upon the aforesaid force that supposedly surrounded the body in order to ensure good luck for the household?

Thirdly, a ritual was practiced after the body had been carried from the house by means of a cart, and consisted in splitting the cart into two halves. The body was to be carried just in the middle of the wagon, between the two parts. Again, the meaning of the ritual is obscure, and parallels are hardly traceable (Grimm 1883, 1144): this notwithstanding, one may assume that the space between the two halves represented a sacred liminal area "in the midst of which no cheating or juggling can subsist" (ibidem). In other words, placing the body in said specific area might have protected the dead

[26] "Fecisti ligaturas, et incantationes, et illas varias fascinationes quas nefarii homines, subulci, (ve)l bubulci, et int(er)du(m) venatores faciunt, du(m) dicunt diabolica carmina sup(er) pane(m) aut sup(er) herbas et sup(er) qu(a)eda(m) nefaria ligam(en)ta, et h(a)ec aut in arbore abscondunt, aut in bivio aut in trivio p(ro)iciunt, ut aut sua animalia (ve)l canes liberent a peste et a clade, et alterius p(er)dant? Si fecisti, ii annos p(er) legitimas fer(ias) poeniteas."

[27] "Int(er)fuisti, aut consensisti vanitatib(us) quas mulieres exercent in suis laneficiis, in suis telis, quae cu(m) ordiunt(ur) telas suas, sperant se utru(m)q(ue) posse facere, cu(m) incantationib(us) et cu(m) aggressu illaru(m), ut et fila staminis, et subteminis in invicem ita co(m)misceant(ur), nisi his iteru(m) aliis diaboli incantationib(us) ec(on)tra subveniant, totu(m) pereat? Si int(er)fuisti, aut c(on)sensisti, xxx dies poenit(eas)." The passage is obscure, however, and scholars' interpretations differ. See, for instance, Flint 1990, 227; Filotas 2005, 264.

from the living, or the living from the dead, by keeping the former and the latter separated from each other. Unfortunately, Burchard does not give abundant details about the meaning of practices of this kind. Was it because he himself was not aware of it, or because he did not care about the purposes of superstitious beliefs, which he deemed worth only twenty days of penance? Or, lastly, because he thought that many were familiar with it?

The answer to this question remains open. What, however, is fundamental about his contribution, is the fact that most of these are novelties (i.e., not mentioned in earlier penitentials), like the following one. As seen, the folk were rather concerned about ensuring the dead a safe journey to the afterlife, and – at the same time – they wanted to ensure themselves protection from the malicious spirits of the undead. In line with this, Burchard mentions one further complex ritual that was performed by women: when the body was still in the house, they filled a jug with water and brought it back to the house in silence; then, when the corpse was first lifted up to be carried away, they poured some of the water underneath the bier. Finally, while the body was being transferred outside of the house, the women had to make sure that the corpse be not lifted more than knee-high (Barth. 50, fol. 254vb).[28] In Burchard's view, this *vanitas* was not worth more than ten days of penance, but its meaning is quite hard to grasp since he – as usual – does not add any explanation. On top of this, there are no earlier sources which could help us to safely interpret it. At the very least, one should focus the attention on the expression *pro sanitate*, which Burchard uses in the case of healing potions made with charred human skulls, or earlier in the tenth book of the *Decretum* about the custom of putting sick children in the oven or on the rooftop to cure them. This may suggest that the ritual had protective purposes, and – again – it is not clear whether said protection was to be intended for the dead, for the living, or for both

[28] "Fecisti illas vanitates aut c(on)sensisti quas stultae mulieres facere solent, [quae], du(m) cadaver mortui hominis adhuc in domo iacet, currunt ad aqua(m), et adducunt tacite vas cu(m) aq(ua), et, cu(m) sublevat(ur) corpus mortui, eande(m) aqua(m) fundunt subtus feretru(m), et hoc observant, du(m) extra domu(m) asportat(ur) funus, [ut] n(on) altius qua(m) ad genua elevet(ur), et hoc faciunt p(ro) quada(m) sanitate? Si fecisti, aut c(on)sensisti, x dies debes poenitere in pane et aq(ua)."

(even if the latter option would totally make sense). What is sure is that the complex sequence of actions is particularly careful about liminalities, boundaries, and even measures: whatever their deeper meaning may have been it is clear that the departure of the dead from the world of the living implied that the corpse would cross a threshold, one which the living should respect and fear. At the same time, it suggests that the living were thought to be able to interact with the world of the dead, just as much as the dead were to affect the world of the living: continuity between the two hemispheres seems to have prevailed over discontinuity, in other words.

Conjuring up the dead

One further non-Christian practice is worth being discussed in the present paper, even though not mentioned in the *Corrector*. Burchard drew on an older Carolingian *Admonitio synodalis* of the year 813, and inserted it in the second book of the *Decretum* (Barth. 50, fol. 65ra–b) – thus implying that it was still relevant in his times and in his diocese. The *Admonitio* – which was also reprised by Regino of Prüm and Hincmar of Reims – addressed the behaviour of clerics on the occasion of commemorative banquets (Filotas 2005, 334). Namely, banquets arranged on the anniversary of a death, on the thirtieth or on the third day (Burchard added the seventh day as well), or banquets for the celebration of other occasions in general (Amiet 1964, 51).[29] As clear from the rubric introducing the chapter, Burchard's attention is mainly focused on drunkenness, and subsequently on entertainment and fun, in line with the typical attitude of early medieval Church towards excess and unbecoming behaviour during banquets (Maraschi 2018c, 2–3). But a further element – which the rubric seems to suggest was of secondary importance – was connected with this, especially

[29] "Nullus quando anniuersarium diem uel tricesimum aut tercium alicuius defuncti aut quacumque uocatione ad collectam presbiteri uenerint, se inebriare ullatenus presumat, nec precari in amore sanctorum uel ipsius anime bibere, aut alios ad bibendum cogere uel se aliena precatione ingurgitare nec ultra terciam uicem poculum sumere, nec plausus et risus inconditos et fabulas inanes ibi referre aut cantare presumat uel turpia ioca, fidibus uel urso uel ceruulo uel tornatricibus ante se facere permittat, nec laruas demonum, quas uulgo talamascas dicunt, ibi ante se ferri consentiat, quia hoc diabolicum est et a sacris canonibus prohibitum."

because such gatherings had the purpose of commemorating the dead: the custom of displaying masks representing "laruas demonum, quas uulgo talamascas dicunt". The use of masks to represent the dead or demons was no novelty in popular culture (e.g., Lecouteux 2011, 177–179): Jacob Grimm highlighted the affinity between the terms *larva* and *lar*, noting that the *lares* (protective spirits of households) were held to be "souls of the departed ancestors" (Grimm 1883, 912). Quite interestingly, Church authorities felt the need to specify the vernacular Germanic word for *larvae demonum*, that is, *talamascae*, from which the later Italian *maschera*, French *masque*, etc. (Schmitt 1988, 206–230; 2001). The Christian Church reckoned that they dangerously annihilated the distance between the living and the dead, and associated them to diabolic inspiration (Napier 1986, 11).

But the problem had even deeper implications. The matter of the representation of otherworldly (i.e., non-human, no-more-human, or more-than-human) subjects was an essential dispute at the core of Christian and Islamic doctrines – the iconoclastic controversy (ca. 730–843) being one of the more notorious examples. The danger lied exactly in the fact that, by representing an animal, an individual, or a god, the depiction would *turn into* them, him or her. "In their associating the mask with the disguised and ghoulish *larvae*", Napier states, "we observe, in addition, how medieval thinkers cemented, at least until the Renaissance, the idea that appearance had more to do with the dangers of 'concrete persons transubstantiated' than with 'abstract personifications'" (ibid., 15). Thus, the *talamascae* mentioned by Burchard were not merely undignified for Christians on the basis of their link with pagan rituals, but, most importantly, they disturbed the dead and conjured them up, bringing them back to the world of the living. Needless to say, this was not only hardly advisable, but could disturb the ordering of things as God had planned it.

Concluding remarks

In the *Corrector*, there emerges a fundamental difference with our post-illuministic interpretation of reality: there was more than meets the eye (and the reference is not to subatomic particles or to dark matter). In his detailed depiction of medieval Western society, Jacques Le Goff wrote that three populations were believed to inhabit the world: men, angels, and demons (Le Goff 2008, 138). This was at least the representation of the world and of its peoples according to Honorius of Autun, who wrote his summa of medieval Christian theology known as *Elucidarium* at the end of the eleventh century. The work was not too distant in time from Burchard and, most interestingly, it was a Christian description of the beings – either human or not – populating the Earth: according to Honorius, man was constantly under a "double espionage" of angels and demons (ibid., p. 139). In his own small way, Burchard shows that the idea that otherworldly beings lived alongside man had been a common belief among the German folk as well, even though the folk did not necessarily associate them with angels or demons as Christian intellectuals did.

As has been noted earlier, the reliability of penitentials as sources for the study of actual practices and beliefs in a given area at a given time is not to be taken for granted. Nora Chadwick held that the sins featured in penitentials were merely abstract inventions made up in the cloister (Chadwick 1963, 148), whereas in Harmening's view, the fact that penitentials drew heavily upon older council canons, attested that they cannot be taken as mirrors of the time and area in which they were produced (Harmening 1979 and 1997). However, one can hardly ignore the fact that – as also noted by Gurevich – a portion of the practices and beliefs included in the *Corrector* consists of original entries made by Burchard himself. This is especially true in reference to beliefs concerning the dead and the undead, for – as has been indicated case by case – they often seem to have no precedents in earlier sources. This, alongside references to folk terminology, is a fundamental *condicio sine qua non* that allows the

Corrector to be used as an ethno-historical source (Harmening 1997, 449; Künzel 1992).

Saying that the living were aware of sharing the earth with a host of other otherwordly entities is one thing, but one question needs to be asked: on the basis of our modern taxonomy, how "normal" or "paranormal" were the encounters between humans and otherwordly beings according to the *Corrector*? As I have recently tried to suggest, encounters between the living and the dead (or other otherwordly entities) were not necessarily charaterized by "paranormal" or "supernatural" features (Maraschi 2019, 283–285). Even from his perspective as bishop and spiritual judge, Burchard corroborates this idea. For instance, he holds that the cortège of the nighttime ladies is formed of devils, but this is his own interpretation: the women who believed in the horde thought that it was an essentially human cohort, although with non-human characteristics. Furthermore, their leaders – whether Abunda, Satia, or others – were believed to bestow wealth on the households they visited, often in the form of abundance of food. From the same perspective, one may ask how "normal" a ritual was that of setting the table for the Parcae: it by no means implied magico-religious elements, but was rather based on the concept of hospitality (ibidem). This shows that people often resorted to "human" means of communication to establish a contact with the otherworldly (non-human or no-more-human) beings.

That said, the boundary was never put into question: it elicited respect, concern, care, caution, in both Burchard and the pagan folk – from different perspectives, of course. Women appear to have been particularly prey of – or acquainted with, depending on the side one takes – the powers of otherwordly entities. The women described by Burchard, through the filters of his Christian bias, believed to possess specific powers concerning the world of the dead and the boundary between that world and the world of the living. Interestingly, the connection between the feminine gender and death emerging in the *Corrector* matches very closely the relationship that was thought to bind women and the supernatural in the North in the same years (e.g., Icelandic *vǫlur*

and the practice of *seiðr*; Maraschi 2018a, 29–31). This detail – among others – suggests that the *Corrector* could deserve a better reputation than that of a sterile copy of earlier sources, or, even worse, of the product of the imagination of industrious monks. On the contrary, it seems to speak about the boundary between life and death as it was perceived at the beginning of the eleventh century, telling us that the said boundary was perceived in a way that was considerably different from the modern, secularized, scientific and medicalized view of the subject.

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Abstrakti: Enemmän kuin ensi näkemältä vaikuttaa: Epäkuolleet, kummitukset ja henget Burchard Wormsilaisen teoksessa *Decretum*

Corrector eli Burchard Wormsilaisen teoksen *Decretum* yhdeksästoista kirja on yksi merkittävimmistä lähteistä tutkittaessa Saksassa – tarkemmin sanottuna Reininmaan Hessenissä –vuoden 1000 tietämillä säilyneitä pakanallisia tapoja ja uskomuksia. *Decretum* on itsessään tärkeä oman aikansa kanonisen lain kokoelma, mutta *Corrector* erityisesti on kiinnittänyt tutkijoiden huomion sen erikoisuuksien vuoksi. Kiinnostavaa on varsinkin se, että vaikka *Decretumin* yhdeksästoista kirja perustuu osittain aikaisemmille penitentiaaleille ja konsiilien säädöksille, se oli myös osittain alkujaan Wormsin piispan itsensä kirjoittama. Siten teos osoittautuu perustavanlaatuiseksi tekstiksi, jonka avulla voidaan ymmärtää niitä pakanallisia piirteitä, jotka olivat säilyneet siinä ajassa ja paikassa, jossa teksti on kirjoitettu. Teksti on erityisen hyödyllinen tutkijoille, jotka ovat kiinnostuneita kuolemaan liittyvistä uskomuksista, kuten ”epäkuolleista” ja vastaavista, vaikkakin terminologia voi olla hämäävää: tästä johtuen tutkimuksessa ei käytetä moderneja ja anakronistisia taksonomioita, kuten ”haamu”, ”epäkuollut”, ”aave” ja niin edelleen. Sen sijaan suositaan *emic*-lähestymistapaa, jossa pyrkimyksenä on aineiston kunnioittaminen ja erilaisten suodattimien asettaminen niin vähäisessä määrin kuin mahdollista.

Burchard mainitsee monenlaisia tuonpuoleisia entiteettejä, jotka muistuttavat moderneja mielikuvia “haamuista”, “hengistä” ja “epäkuolleista, mutta usein hän ei mainitse muita, niiden tunnistamista edesauttavia yksityiskohtia – joko koska hän ei katsonut niitä huomionsa arvoisina, tai koska hän ei tuntenut kansanuskomuksia yksityiskohtaisesti. Burchardin Saksa näytti kuitenkin olevan tiiviisti asutettu: ihmiset jakoivat tilansa ”kummituslaumojen” kanssa, näyttivät olevan tietoisia niistä, ja uskoivat usein voivansa liittyä niiden seuraan. Käsillä olevan tutkimuksen tavoitteena on analysoida niitä kansanuskomuksia, joihin liittyy tuonpuoleisia entiteettejä, mikä mahdollistaa näiden piirteiden kriittisen tarkastelun ja sen ymmärtämisen, millaisia merkityksiä näillä tuonpuoleisilla entiteeteillä Hessenin väestön keskuudessa oli vuoden 1000 tienoilla. Huomio kohdistuu erityisesti elävien ja kuolleiden/epäkuolleiden väliseen suhteeseen ja valottaa sellaisia teemaan liittyviä aiheita kuten 1) ennakkoasenteet naisia kohtaan – joita pidettiin luonnostaan alttiina taikauskolle; 2) ihmisen ja tuonpuoleisen entiteetin välinen myönteinen/kielteinen kanssakäyminen; 3) piirteet, joita näihin mainittuihin entiteetteihin yhdistettiin (sitkeä, häijy, hyväntahtoinen/pahantahtoinen, jne.); 4) pimeänpelko sen seurauksena, että pahojen henkien oletettiin olevan aktiivisia yöaikaan; 5) tuonpuoleisten entiteettien rooli elävien palveluksessa; 6) pelko siitä, että kuolleet voivat palata ja vahingoittaa eläviä.

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ARTICLE

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"Thou Art Keeper of Man and Woman's Bones" – Rituals of Necromancy in Early Modern England

Daniel Harms
SUNY Cortland

Abstract

In sixteenth and seventeenth-century England, high rates of mortality and churchyard burial placed the dead very close to the living both physically and emotionally. Experiments of necromancy, in which a magician sought to contact the dead by magical means, from the time have been little examined as historical documents. One such set of experiments is referred to here as the "Keeper of the Bones" ritual, in which a magician calls on a spirit to bring the ghost of a dead person in order to obtain desired information. We will examine these rituals and connect them with contemporary funerary rituals and practices, as well as beliefs in the nature of the soul and the role of the dead in early modern culture.

Introduction

In early modern England, the dead were a matter of deep concern to the living. Mortality rates were high by modern standards, with a quarter of children dying before the age of ten (Pollock 2017, 61). The average life expectancy remained close to 38 years, less than half of that in the United States and Finland today, from the mid-sixteenth century to the end of the seventeenth (Wrigley et al. 1981, 234–236). Not only did the living fondly remember the many deceased, but their dead relatives and neighbors often lay in the local parish church or churchyard, binding them to the center of civic and religious life. Further, the Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory

promised that those in the afterlife could receive succor by all manner of practices, ranging from private prayer to major endowments for local religious institutions, all of which led in turn to continued remembrance and visibility of the dead. Most notably, however, indulgences could be purchased to ease the suffering of the dead while in purgatory (Marshall 2002, 6–46). The dead, while in this liminal state, could interact with the living through apparitions that brought warnings or indications of an undone deed or a hidden crime (Edwards 2012).

Such practices became fodder for Protestant reformers and their supporters, who saw post-mortem religious practices that channeled money to the Church as exploitation of the living rather than relief of the dead. The denial of Purgatory, and that of the connections between the dead and the living that accompanied it, became key elements of Church of England theology. This dissociation brought change to many different aspects of remembering and interacting with the dead, ranging from revisions of the Church's liturgy to the dissolution of religious endowments to the unparalleled destruction of tombs, funerary monuments, and bodies. The goal of these efforts was to close off the world of the dead from the living, save for directing the most general sentiments of hope and gratitude toward the deceased (Marshall 2002, 93–187).

Nonetheless, popular devotion and belief could not be transformed so easily. Narratives regarding the re-appearance of those dead continued to circulate, as they had before. Further, people continued to report dreams in which the dead visited them, in some cases to provide comfort, in others to warn or provide admonitions about improper behavior (Schmitt 1998, 42–58). Finally, a small educated population sought out dream visions through rituals not forming part of acceptable liturgical or popular practice: the branch of ritual magic known as necromancy[1]. As Janine Rivière sums up the situation, "the evidence of popular beliefs and narratives about ghosts

[1] The term "necromancy" could have different meanings at this time. Authors sometimes employed it to designate magic they viewed with disapproval, or that explicitly dealt with demonic rituals, as opposed to "nigromancy," which was magic that an author perceived positively (Klaassen 2012b, 10–11). In this article, it is used in the original Greek and Roman sense of magical operations used to contact the dead, a meaning in which it was also employed in early modern Britain (Ogden 2001, xxxi–ii; Holland 1590, D4r–v; Perkins and Pickering 1608, 108; Cotta 1616, 37).

indicates a more complex relationship that reflects continuities rather than abrupt changes" (2009, 104).

Contemporary literature displayed some ambiguity toward necromantic practices, despite the best effort of divines to dissuade readers from such practices. Educated authors and readers were familiar with and quoted such Biblical passages as Leviticus 19:31 and Deuteronomy 18:10–11 that set out prohibitions against those who consulted with the dead or even those who allowed practitioners to live in their community. The most famous Biblical description of necromancy was the account of Saul and the Witch of Endor (1 Samuel 28). On the eve of a battle, Saul, King of Israel, asked a medium to call up the ghost of the prophet Samuel. When the witch conjured Samuel, he appeared and gave a dire prediction of Saul's death that was fulfilled. The plain wording of the passage suggested that the medium was successful in her magic and that the information the ghost provided was accurate. This did not stop many interpreters from seeking to explain the passage instead as a demonic illusion or trick (e.g. Lavater 1572, 127–140; Howard 1620, 89v–90r). Further, with the revival of the Classics, many learned individuals would have been familiar with the necromantic rites performed for Odysseus (*Odyssey* XI), Aeneas (*Aeneid* VI), and Lucan (*De Bello Civili* VI). Such encounters spilled over into theatre, with the most prominent example being the ghost of Hamlet's father in Shakespeare's play, a figure whose ambiguous nature as ghost, devil, or hallucination drives the play's dramatic tension (Kapitaniak 2008, 613–680).

Necromancy was not only a phenomenon of Biblical narrative, literature, or entertainment. Contemporary accounts of necromantic rites are very much in evidence, even if they might tell us more about attitudes on the topic rather than actual practice. Edward Kelley, before he engaged in crystal-gazing sessions with John Dee, was reputed to have called up a dead man in a Lancashire churchyard (Weever and Cecil 1631, 45–46). We have multiple accounts of cunning people, or local magicians who set out to address a wide range of local concerns, seeking out ghosts haunting

houses in order to lay them or seek their guidance in finding treasure (e.g. Anonymous 1661, 4–5; 1685, 3). The powerful were not exempt from engaging in necromancy – or being accused of doing so. The MP Goodwin Wharton, in conjunction with the cunning woman Mary Parrish, had dealings with her familiar spirit, one George Whitmore, supposedly an executed man who promised to serve her after his death (Timbers 2016, 58–70). Henry Caesar, vicar of Lostwithiel, accused Sir Walter Mildmay, Elizabeth's Chancellor of the Exchequer, of engaging a magician to call up the ghost of Cardinal Pole (Rowse 1969, 335–336). The explorers Adrian (c. 1541–1629) and Humphrey Gilbert (1537–1583), are believed to be responsible for a series of necromantic rituals for calling up dead magicians, as chronicled in a manuscript now designated as British Library Additional MS. 36,674 (Klaassen 2012b). These practices were treated with such seriousness that King James I included in his Witchcraft Act of 1604 a prohibition against those who would "take up any dead man, woman, or child, out of his, her, or their grave, or any other place where the dead body resteth; or the skin, bone, or any other part of any dead person, to be imployed, or used in any manner of Witchcraft, Sorcery, Charme, or Inchantment," upon pain of death. (*Statutes of the Realm*, 1 Jac. I c. 12)

Much of the above is well known to historians of early modern England. What have remained largely unexamined, however, are the manuscripts and printed works relating to necromantic procedures found in various repositories in the United Kingdom and United States. This literature, often transcribed and circulated surreptitiously, often consists of miscellanies collecting various procedures, ranging from short charms to rituals of exceeding length and complexity, compiled from different sources. Such rituals make extensive use of Christian symbolism, imagery, and references, by calling on which the magician could command or entreat a wide variety of supernatural beings. Such creatures could assist in obtaining many goals, including the acquisition of wealth, influence, healing, knowledge, or sex. A small but substantial percentage of these rituals promises the magician successful contact with the dead (Klaassen 2012a).

Necromancy was a key aspect of the ritual magic literature of the time. The influential author and magician Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa devoted two chapters of his *De occulta philosophia* (1533), the encyclopedic treatise on magic first published in English in 1650, to the dead and necromantic rituals (Agrippa von Nettesheim 1992, 521–538). After Agrippa's death, a spurious "Fourth Book" attributed to him appeared, with its English translation first published in 1655. Its last section expanded upon the principles in *De occulta* to lay out necromantic procedures in further detail (Agrippa von Nettesheim and d'Abano 1655, 69–71). Reginald Scot's anti-witchcraft, anti-Catholic treatise *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584), as part of a lengthy catalogue of magical procedures, provided one ritual to call up a ghost who would in turn contact the fairy queen Sibilya, and another in which a man to be executed would promise to serve the magician, similar to the one who supposedly served Mary Parrish and Goodwin Wharton (Scot 1584, 401–410, 423–429). Scot hoped that revealing magical rituals would lead to their ridicule; instead, these were supplemented in the 1665 expanded edition, published after his death, with an operation to summon the spirit of a hanged man (Scot 1665, 217–218). Interest in the topic was reflected in manuscripts as well, which might include operations for the creation of a Hand of Glory (Sloane 1727, 46), or a sheet with characters that could be placed upon the ground when one wished to speak with a spirit (Folger V.b.26, 121). One might even summon up spirits in order to cause the body of a dead person to walk, or to ease their time in purgatory – even if the Church denied that realm existed. Such rituals appear in manuscripts alongside those intended to influence angels, demons, unspecified "spirits," fairies, thieves, witches, and other creatures (e.g. e Mus. 173, 56r, 45r).

One ghost-summoning ritual, perhaps the most common of those in the manuscript tradition, appears under several titles (or none), but for the sake of analytical simplicity, it will be henceforth referred to as the "Keeper of the Bones" rituals. Examination of these rituals will reveal not only hitherto little-noted examples of early modern ritual magic, but also draw interesting parallels and contrasts with beliefs and practices

regarding the dead found everywhere from theological treatises to British law to the printed literature of ritual magic to folk praxis. The aspects covered here include the role of Azazel, considered to be the keeper of the bones of the dead; the role of dreaming and the dead; the importance of the churchyard; what items might be taken away from the grave; the time a spirit could be called to manifest; and the purposes for such conjurations. In doing so, this demonstrates that explorations of ritual magic texts might yield important historical insights not accessible through other sources.

The "Keeper of the Bones" Rituals

Many of the manuscripts of early modern British magic have not been systematically examined as to content, and many more await discovery. Examination of the manuscript sources available to the author has located fifteen different examples of this ritual appearing in collections of miscellaneous magical rites, ranging from short charms to lengthy spirit conjurations for all manner of purposes. The first exemplar, appearing in Bodleian Library Rawlinson D.252, 67r–v, dates from the fifteenth century; three more from two manuscripts date to the sixteenth century[2], and eleven from eight manuscripts are recorded in seventeenth century works[3]. Due to the state of preservation of these manuscripts, it is unknown whether this signifies a broader interest in the early modern era for this topic, but it does indicate that individual copyists found the work of interest for more than two centuries. Notably, in three cases, multiple versions of the same ritual can be found in a single manuscript, likely as a safeguard against imprecise procedures leading to failure or other dangerous

[2] From London, British Library: Sloane 3884, 47–56; From Urbana-Champaign, University of Illinois: Pre-1650 0102, 68–72, 87–92.

[3] From London, British Library: Sloane 3318, 71v; Sloane 3851, 103r–103v; from Oxford, Bodleian Library: Ballard 66, 35–9; Douce 116, 129bis–130, 196–202, 204; e Mus. 173, 73r, 75v; Rawlinson D.253, 139-4; from Chicago, Newberry Library: Vault Case 5017, 23; from Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland: Guthrie GD188/25/1/3 (not examined), 115–20. In the following citations, truncated references will be given, based on shelfmarks, and page numbers omitted for rituals that are the sole examples in a manuscript.

The following uncritical versions of this ritual have been published: Sloane 3851 in Gauntlet and Rankine 2011, 235–236; Rawlinson D.252 in Mathieu 2015, 468–469; Rawlinson D.253 in Skinner and Rankine 2018, 125; the two in e Mus. 173 in Harms and Clark 2019, 293–294, 300.

consequences. If so, it not only indicates that some examples would have been copied for reasons other than curiosity, but also that different versions of the same rite were available to the copyists for transcription through their surreptitious networks of distribution.

Many of these rituals are quite brief, being only a few hundred words, most of which are invocations that call upon God and holy spirits, individuals, events, and objects to compel the spirits to obey that are typical of the genre (Kieckhefer 1998, 126–143). If we were to assemble a common picture summing up these rituals, it might yield the following picture: The magician, in search of a desired but inaccessible piece of information, visits the grave of a dead individual; save in one exemplar, the identity or nature of the dead person is not specified. Calling out to that person multiple times, he or she then recites an incantation calling upon the spirit Azazel (or some variant thereof) to grant the magician control of the dead individual. These incantations form the bulk of most of the text of these ceremonies. One example begins as follows:

> O Thou Azazell, as thou arte the keeper of dead mens bones; And keepest heare the bones of this man N. I Commande the[e] And also Charge the[e] and I Coniure the[e] by the vertue of almighty god... That thou come to me, naminge the place and also the time and hower, And at the enteringe into a the [sic] place to give; 3 knockes so that they may be perfectly heard... (Pre-1650 0102, 87–88)

Having done so, the magician departs the grave and returns home. The dead individual either appears to the magician in a dream or appears to him or her later, imparting the desired information. (Mathieu 2015)

Despite these overall commonalities, considerable differences also appear among these rituals, particularly in the length and content of the conjurations, the ritual preparations and tools, and the overall goals of the operation. For example, one set of operations, consisting of Sloane 3851 and 3884; Douce 116, 196–202; and Pre-1650 0102, 68–72 and 87–92 are longer than the rest, featuring multiple conjurations, an intermediate

stage in which Azazel appears to the magician to negotiate for the dead person to appear, and sometimes additional accoutrements, such as a magical circle drawn on the ground or a plate of lead used as a lamina. A few also have elements not present in the others. One key example, Rawlinson D.252, ends with the magician requesting a Mass to be said for the dead person. Notably, only one other ritual, Sloane 3851, mentions this stipulation, and that only to promise the Masses to the spirit in the incantation, with no instructions at the ritual's end that they must be included. The lack of mentions in other manuscripts might be due to different textual traditions, the excising of an unnecessary step, or removal of a process that, after the Church of England's critique of Purgatory and the saying of masses for the dead, would have been seen as heretical or too difficult to perform. (Marshall 2002, 148–149) Other such variations shall be explored in the analysis below.

"Keeper of the Bones of the Dead": The Role of Azazel

Protestant theology placed the souls of the dead in hell and heaven, with their status determined and governed over by God. Thomas Nashe, however, expressed his concern that that Devil would deceive Christians to believe that "the bodies and the souls of the departed rest entirely in his possession" and "the boanes of the dead the diuell counts as his chiefe treasurie" (1594, B.iii). Our rituals suggest that this was no idle fear, as they assign both the bodies and souls of the dead to the dominion of a more ambiguous figure, known by different names and titles. In all cases save but one (Rawlinson D.253), it is said to have the bones or bodies of the dead in its keeping. In some rites it bears different and exalted titles, especially "god" (e Mus. 173, 73r, 75v), "lord" (Sloane 3318, Newberry Vault Case 5017), or "King of the Dead" (Sloane 3851). Its name differs between sources, as it is variously referred to as Fazol, Sezel, Assachell, Asiel, Azafell, Asacel, or St. S., but in over half the name is given as "Azazel" or a variant spelling thereof.

Even if Reformed theologians did not recognize Azazel's dominion over the dead, he was a familiar figure to them. In Leviticus 16:8, 10, and 26, two goats are designated for sacrifice in a ritual performed on behalf of the Jewish people. One goat was designated by lots for Yahweh and the other for Azazel, with the latter being sent away into the desert. Within the context of Leviticus, Azazel seems to be a personification of chaos and counterpoint to Yahweh. Later commentators decided the name referred to a specific spirit at odds with the Old Testament God (Blair 2009, 55–62). Early modern writers were unaware of the prominent role that Azazel or Asael played in the *Book of Enoch* as a rebel angel (Nickelsburg and VanderKam 2012, 25, 28), but they were certainly aware of the Biblical references, and readers at the end of the early modern period would have been familiar with Milton's depiction of him as a "Cherube tall" bearing the standard of Hell (Milton 1667, 18).

Azazel also possesses associations with the dead outside this group of rituals. Agrippa's *De Occulta Philosophia* maintains that the cadaver remains in the power of the demon Azazel, as known to the Hebrews[4] (Agrippa von Nettesheim 1992, 523). Agrippa had considerable influence on later occultists, yet Rawlinson D.252, our fifteenth-century source, pre-dates Agrippa's work and describes the spirit as "Asacel." This suggests that Agrippa might have been adapting an existing tradition from magical literature, counter to previous speculation that such associations might have been derived from passages in the compilation of Kabbalistic mysticism known as the *Zohar*. It could be that the usage of "Azazel" in these rituals ultimately derives from the *Zohar* or other Hebrew sources, but much work remains to be done on the transmissions of magical rituals from Hebrew to Latin and later vernacular sources that might illuminate this question (Mesler 2019).

This association between Azazel and the dead can be found elsewhere in magical practice, if one record of magical operations is any indication. This is the series of magical experiments recorded in Additional Ms. 36,674 performed by the Gilbert

[4] "[U]t dicunt Hebraeorum theologi, linquitur in potestate daemonis Zazelis" (Agrippa von Nettesheim 1992, 523).

brothers. The record of crystal-gazing workings conducted in 1567 does not mention the "Keeper of the Bones" ritual itself, but it features Azazel as a key figure. In one session, conducted at sunrise on February 24, "Assasell" appeared with the figures of several dead magicians, including Solomon, Adam, Bacon, and Tobias, who promised that they "love man more" than other types of spirits and were therefore ideal for teaching magic (59r–60r). The following day, the spirit appeared again, this time with Solomon, Job, Adam, Bacon, and Cornelius Agrippa. This time, Assasel himself speaks, telling the magicians that "they" – presumably the spirits – were not to "tell things past, present, & to come," a common phrase in the magical literature of the time (49r–50r). Given the procedures outlined elsewhere in the manuscript, and the lack of access to the graves of these far-flung and illustrious individuals, the Gilberts probably were not performing the "Keeper of the Bones" ritual itself. It remains to be seen whether other such usages of Azazel with the dead appear in manuscripts elsewhere, but this does suggest that these associations were apparent to those beyond the ritual described here.

"Far Easier, and More Familiar": Dreaming of the Dead in Early Modern England

In most of the "Keeper of the Bones" rituals[5], the ritual's intended outcome is to induce a dream in which the dead individual manifests and provides information to the magician. Such dream incubation, in which an individual sought a message from a supernatural source through dreams, was a common element of pagan spiritualities and carried over into Christian times (Véronèse 2007), with precedents in Biblical stories ranging from Jacob to Joseph. Saint Augustine addressed the visions of the dead in dreams, admitting that they could provide correct information, but that this was the result of angelic intervention rather than the appearance of the deceased (Augustine 1999, 366–369). Later Christian authors treated dreams of the dead with skepticism,

[5] All save Sloane 3851, 3884; Douce 116, 196–202; and Pre-1650 0102, 87–92.

but such visions nonetheless possessed an important role in medieval hagiography and the practice of pilgrims.

The belief in supernatural contact during dreams began to be critiqued by sixteenth-century British thinkers, and it sustained a full-scale intellectual assault during the seventeenth century. Many authors, having witnessed the devastation of the Civil War, inveighed against claims of supernaturally inspired nocturnal visions as being superstitious and leading to civil unrest (Rivière 2013). Nonetheless, early modern people, including such notables as Elias Ashmole, Archbishop Laud, and Thomas Vaughan, continue to report dreams of the dead (Rivière 2009, 111–115), so it is unsurprising that some believed these to be actual contact with the deceased. The English merchant Thomas Tryon could assert "it is far easier, and more familiar for the deceased Souls to communicate their secrets to their living Friends in Dreams, then to appear thus in external Forms, by cloathing themselves with thin Elemental Bodies" (Tryon 1689, 74). The antiquary John Aubrey relates three examples of dream visions of the dead, two of which proved to be true, and the other which led to a mother giving her daughter a deadly remedy, following her into the next world when she herself took it to reassure her chambermaid that it was harmless (Aubrey 1857, 52, 74, 56–57).

Given this grudging and caveat-filled official sanction of dream messages, and narratives and practices involving dream intervention by saints, it is hardly surprising that dream incubation formed an important technique in the literature of ritual magic, with various techniques for pursuing nocturnal visions appearing in manuscripts from the medieval and early modern periods (Véronèse 2007; Chardonnens 2014). A sixteenth-century manual at the Folger Shakespeare Library details a procedure for invoking an old man named "Balancus" or "Balanchus" who appears at night to provide the magician with desired information (Folger V.b.26, 47, 224). Other operations, preserved in the Newberry Library manuscript mentioned above, stipulate that the magician place either magical words on a parchment, or the names of the Three Magi on green wax, beneath their head before sleep to learn the identity of a thief (Newberry Vault Case 5017, 11v).

In a similar manner, the "Keeper of the Bones" ritual often requires a magically potent item – in this case, dirt from the grave – be placed in the same position in order to contact the dead. In doing so, it reflects the Biblical, folkloric, and magical beliefs of its time and place.

"A Right and Due Burial": The Role of the Churchyard

One commonality within these rituals is their beginning at a grave, the most accessible location of which would be the parish churchyard. Even if there is no supernatural manifestation there, the ritual involves a trip to this site to make the initial call. Yet a reader of the printed magical literature of the time might have some serious misgivings about this instruction.

Within the works of Agrippa and pseudo-Agrippa, the churchyard was an appropriate, and yet not entirely desirable, place for such rituals. Agrippa's *De Occulta Philosophia* lists several such locations, while noting that "the holy right of buriall being duely performed to the bodies, oftentimes prohibiteth the souls themselves to come up, and driveth them farther off the places of judgement" (Agrippa von Nettesheim 1992, 489). Following this cue, the *Fourth Book* lists among "the places most befitting for these things" the "Church-yards," although these rank well behind the "execution of criminal judgements," places of "publike slaughters of men," or a location where "some dead carkass, that came by a violent death, is not yet expiated, nor ritely buried, and was lately buried" (Agrippa von Nettesheim and d'Abano 1655, 70). It continues by stating that "the Souls of the dead are not easily to be raised up, except it be the Souls of them whom we know to be evil, or to have perished by a violent death, and whose bodies do want a right and due burial." (Ibid., 71) Thus, we might be surprised that the rituals make no stipulations in this regard, especially as most operators would have first-hand knowledge of local burials that might fit the bill.

It remains puzzling why exactly these rituals did not conform to the caveats in the printed literature. Agrippa's name and reputation were common knowledge during his lifetime. His *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* and the *Fourth Book* later attributed to him did not come into print in Britain until 1651 and 1655, respectively, yet fragments taken from his work are copied into manuscript works of magic from the time, including some that include the rituals to Azazel (e.g. e Mus. 173, 32v–33r; Sloane 3318, 147r) and once even within the text of the rite itself (Sloane 3884, 49r). Thus, at least some of the copyists would have been familiar with Agrippa's preferences. A more important factor could be the shift in the localization of the souls of the dead during the Reformation, with the denial of purgatory. Many theologians, led by Martin Luther, believed that all of the dead were effectively asleep at the earth until Judgment. Ironically, even despite the theological push to minimize monuments and remembrances of the dead, this position of the Church re-focused attention upon the churchyard as the prime location for the spirits of the dead, no matter their deeds in life, to take residence. (Boyacioğlu 2016, 218–220)

The performances of such rites in the churchyard might seem less likely due to its public nature, as many different activities, ranging from markets to sports to cock-fighting, might take place within (Dymond 1999; Peate 1970). Nonetheless, most of these rituals require very little in the way of ritualized speech or actions, much of which might seem to an observer to be prayer for the dead, a practice which found a strong defense in the writings of the Church fathers (Marshall 2002, 141–148). Further, the view of the churchyard as a place that "swarmed soules and spirits" and where "a right hardie man heretofore scant durst passe by night, but his haire would stand upright" indicates that evenings might have granted more privacy for potential necromantic rituals (Scot 1584, 462, 153). Given the dangers of travel in the era, such a covert practice might have been preferable to traveling out into the wilds to perform the ritual at a more appropriate site (Parkes 1925, 152–192; Monga 1998). Then again, secrecy also depended upon what the magician needed to acquire at the grave.

"Skin, Bone, or Any Other Part": The Use of Remains in the "Keeper of the Bones" Rituals

On December 4–5, 1590, Agnes Sampson confessed to attending a meeting of witches at North Berwick kirk, at which the Devil's servants "opened up three graves... and took of the joints of their fingers, toes, and noses" in order "to make a powder of them to do evil withall" (Normand and Roberts 2000, 147). King James I, the supposed target of the North Berwick witches' spells, later wrote in his *Daemonologie* of how "the witches take [a dead body] up and joint it" (ibid., 406). Although the circumstances behind the drafting of the aforementioned 1604 statute against witchcraft and magic remain unclear, the king's displeasure likely led to the stipulation that the penalty of death should fall upon anyone who would remove any part of a corpse from its resting place for magical purposes (*Statutes of the Realm*, 1 Jac. I c. 12).

Despite the official prohibition, the printed literature of magic at the time did refer in several passages to the use of the corpse or parts thereof in magic. Agrippa assured his readers that "the souls of the dead cannot be called up without blood and a carkasse: but their shadowes to be easily allured by the fumigations of these things" (Agrippa von Nettesheim 1651, 489). The *Fourth Book* followed him, reiterating that "In raising up these shadows, we are to perfume with new Blood, [and] with the Bones of the dead..." along with other substances (Agrippa von Nettesheim and d'Abano 1655, 70). Scot noted that some considered that the burning of the smoke of "the tooth of a dead man" could be used to relieve those "bewitched in their privities," or that the skull of a slain man might be used to cure epilepsy or rabies (Scot 1584, 82, 243). The rite to summon the ghost of a hanged man from Scot's 1665 expanded edition, as noted above, also required the corpse to be present (Scot 1665, 217–218).

Within the "Keeper of the Bones" rituals, one manuscript, Sloane 3884, seems to correspond to these requirements. The magician is cautioned to bring a shovel along to facilitate the process. He or she should be prepared to dig up the entire corpse, replacing the dirt, and bearing the remains away to a secret place. Having done so, the

magician should remove some part of the body. This could be the heart of a small child, or a part "in the which she or he did most delyte in & dyd most offend with," such as the tongue of an eloquent person or the voice of the lecher. Such a substance could be used to make a perfume to call up the spirit (Sloane 3884, 48v–49r). This example, then, is quite close to the instructions given in Agrippa and pseudo-Agrippa.

Yet this gruesome example is an anomaly in our corpus of rituals. The other thirteen reviewed do not require any part of the dead individual to contact the spirit. Instead, most of the rituals simply require some dirt from the grave to be carried away. Not only was this much more feasible to obtain and more lawful, but its use would have had precedent in funerary ritual. Graveyard earth was already incorporated into the burial ritual, with either the minister or (later) someone nearby sprinkling it into the grave while the minister intoned the memorable phrase, "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust" (Cressy 2002, 397–398). The scattering of graveyard dirt stood as a symbol of ecclesiastical control over the death process; John Leech of Essex was excommunicated after sprinkling dirt on an informal burial in 1589 (Cressy 2002, 405) and Humphrey Justice of Banbury, Oxfordshire ended up in a physical altercation with a minister in 1619 when he tried to fill in a grave, with the body being present (Peyton 1928, 298). Thus, taking such earth could be seen as both a symbolic reversal of the burial process and an undermining of the Church's control of that process.

Beyond orthodox Protestant theology, the use of graveyard dirt to invoke the power of the dead, especially in the case of the saints, was a longstanding part of European folk tradition. Dirt or dust from the grave of saint falls into the category of "tertiary relics," items brought into a contact with the saint's body or items touched by the saint (Sauer 2010, 597). Such practices are known as early as the chronicles of Gregory of Tours and the Venerable Bede, which describe soil taken from saints' graves possessing great power (Van Dam 1993, 134–135, 151–152, 159–160, 244; Bede 1958, 118–119, 170). As late as the early twentieth century, the dirt from the tomb of St. Ulrich was sold in Augsburg to ward off rats and mice (Andree 1911, 125). At Rennes and Boistrudan,

linen bags of dirt from the graves of holy individuals were made available to sufferers (Sébillot and Harou 1900, 156; Orain 1886, 193). In some Western European folklore, graveyard dirt is seen as having special power to compel the dead. Paul Sebillot presents a nineteenth-century belief – without a given location, although his home province of Brittany is likely – that placing graveyard dirt into a sack might aid in the contacting of the dead (Sébillot 1904, 208). Folklore of the English West Country held that casting graveyard dirt into the face of a ghost could cause it to change form to that of an animal, a prelude to commanding the spirit to depart (Brown 1979, 29–30, 58).The magician who practiced the "Keeper of the Bones" rituals was thereby participating in a broader cultural practice, conducted throughout Western Europe for over a millennium[6].

"Within Thirteen Nights": Time and the Soul in Early Modern Burial

Although Catholics and Protestants agreed about the immortality of the soul, neither suggested that some time might elapse between death and the departure of the spirit from the world. This was nonetheless a component of popular belief, with the spirits of the wicked or those improperly buried remaining for a longer time. In some narratives from France, the buried individuals maintained enough of a presence that they could arise to defend or threaten the living (Muchembled 1985, 63–64). Authors rarely stated the exact period, and when they did, it was rare to have any agreement. Separate passages of the *Zohar* provide different spans of time in which the lower soul, or *nefesh*, stays with the corpse: thirty days, seven days of intense connection to the body followed by twelve months of visitation, or until the body has decayed (Matt 2004, VI: 135–136; III: 362; V: 302). Thomas Tryon was vague on the duration of the soul remaining on the earth, save to say that "as the moisture and matter of the Body does

[6] Given the frequency that these rituals were used to uncover theft – see below – a Welsh practice should be noted in which a person sleeps on a piece of earth on which the thief has walked, wrapped in a rag and placed under a pillow. (Trevelyan 1909, 44)

waste, so the Apparition or Ghost does grow weak, and at last vanish" (Tryon 1689, 70).

For most individuals, such questions might have theological or emotional importance, but those who practiced necromancy would find a pragmatic need in addition to these. After all, if a spirit has yet to depart for heaven, hell, or Purgatory, or if it merely has stronger ties to the moldering flesh for a time, those would be ideal times to use a ritual. The only printed reference to such a magical practice is in Reginald Scot, who claimed that "The Necromancers affirme, that the spirit of anie man may be called up, or recalled (as they terme it) before one yeare be past after their departure from the bodie" (Scot 1584, 141). Given Scot's hostility toward magicians, however, we might ask how accurate this information might be.

The operators of our "Keeper of the Bones" rituals take two different stances as to the elapsing of time. Nine of those examined make no reference to a time constraint whatsoever. This would have been in line with both Luther's doctrine that the dead lay sleeping until Judgment, and many seventeenth-century narratives regarding returning spirits, who would appear to redress wrongs no matter how much time had elapsed since their deaths (Boyacioğlu 2016, 227). Others suggest that the spirit should be contacted soon after burial, whether for an unspecified duration (Ballard 66, Rawlinson D.252), or for a specific length of time – "first night," "3 days," or "within 13 nights" (Sloane 3851, 3884; Illinois Pre-1650 0102, 87–92; Douce 116, 196–202). This disparity, along with the lack of agreement between any of these rites and the minimal links between these and other contemporary sources, suggests that questions of the soul's presence near the body were far from settled even well into the seventeenth century.

The Purpose for Seeking an Audience with the Dead

Sneaking into a graveyard, reciting an incantation, and stealing away something from the grave – a magician must have had compelling reasons to do such things. Some of the "Keeper of the Bones" ritual manuscripts remain silent as to what the ritual's purpose might be, while others provide multiple objectives. Half of the rituals examined are for the purpose of uncovering theft (Sloane 3318; e Mus 173, 73r, 75v; Douce 116, 129bis–130, 196–202, 204; Rawlinson D.252). The next most common category is the discovery of gold, silver or other treasure, which appears in five cases (Rawlinson D.253; Newberry Vault Case 5017; Douce 116, 196–202; Illinois Pre-1650 0102, 68–72, 87–92). Ghosts were routinely associated with buried treasure in early modern times; tales of spirit manifestations in a location were often interpreted as signs of hidden wealth, and uncovering them led not simply to enrichment, but to performing the laudable duty of putting a troubled spirit to final rest (Dillinger 2012, 77–79). Three rituals refer more generally to answering questions (Sloane 3318; Rawlinson D.253; Newberry Vault Case 5017), and one of these cites manslaughter as a crime to be revealed (Rawlinson D.253). We also have a single example of a ritual in which the spirit is compelled to "bring the Booke of Magick Science and arte written in suche a hand and with such Letters that I may reade it well and in such a tonge that I may well understand it" (Sloane 3851, 103v).

If we see a commonality running through most of those rituals in which a purpose is provided, it is ensuring that the social order is upheld: thieves are uncovered, wandering spirits are laid to rest, and killers are revealed. This was very much in line with many popular narratives in which ghosts manifested due to some injustice regarding their own murders, or the distribution of property, after their deaths. The magicians might themselves benefit from such situations; indeed, in the case of the request for the magical book, it is difficult to argue a direct communal good. Still, these rituals' purposes were among those addressed by the local service magicians, today classified as "cunning folk," who used experiments similar to others in these

manuscripts as part of a lucrative trade that served communities in the absence of modern medical, legal, or financial resources (Davies 2007, 84–89, 93–118, 186). If they performed such rites, the ghosts summoned via the breaking of elite and popular norms might nonetheless assist in the re-establishment of the social order (Boyacioğlu 2016, 233).

In a manner of speaking, however, these rituals show more adherence to community norms than the popular narratives. The ghosts in the stories are more focused on their own wishes, goods, and wrongs, or those done to their immediate families. Those called up in Azazel's name, however, are not stated to have limited knowledge, but instead may be summoned to provide information regarding any violation befalling members of the community. Although contemporary theology downplayed the dead's knowledge of this world, it nonetheless acknowledged that spirits had access to sources of information not available to the living, such as other dead individuals or angels (Marshall 2002, 212). Thus, by breaking both elite and popular norms regarding the relationship between the dead and the living, a magician could find knowledge capable of reasserting the social order.

Conclusion

One of the key debates in the modern study of magic is whether to treat rituals as transgressive against, or reflective of, the norms of the broader society. In his introduction to his edition of Clm 849, Richard Kieckhefer mentioned that the rites studied therein were "flamboyantly transgressive, even carrying transgression toward its furthest imaginable limits" (Kieckhefer 1998, 10). More recently, Stephen Clucas has criticized this approach, stressing the importance of the "normative character of ritual magic practices" and examining their correspondence with orthodox Christian devotion and practice (Clucas 2015, 271).

The rituals we have examined above illustrate how both approaches – toward the transgressive and normative analysis of these rituals – are required to integrate these works into our historical understanding. They breach the boundaries – whether spiritual or physical – between the living and the dead, disrupt the prerogatives of the clergy, and seek to circumvent legal restrictions on their practice. At the same time, however, they demonstrate how even such practices reflect religious and cultural norms, and, in some cases, seek to reassert community standards and social harmony. Further complicating the manner, these rites simultaneously conform to and set aside the procedures and stipulations that we might consider "normative" within necromantic practice itself. One passage turns one way, and the next another, with each change adding nuance to our understandings of macro- and micro-cultures of early modern Britain, showing how individuals set out to understand and explore the relationships between heaven and hell (and Purgatory), and between the living and the dead.

Given the explicitly Catholic elements of the fifteenth-century exemplar in Rawlinson D.252 and their omission from the other manuscripts, one might hypothesize that scribes removed such elements in order to comply with changing religious sensibilities. At the same time, the presence of only one exemplar from an earlier period is problematic, as is the assumption that magical manuscripts could not reflect previous beliefs later considered heretical or dangerous. The influence of Protestantism is certainly visible in some magical manuscripts; for example, these sensibilities likely informed Gilbert and Davis' rituals in Additional MS. 36,674 (Klaassen 2012a, 349, 351). Yet others referenced Roman Catholic concepts for much longer than it was publicly expressed. For example, Duffy has demonstrated that even the Books of Hours used for private devotion had language particular to Catholic beliefs struck out (Duffy 2011, 151–152), but it was not uncommon for magical texts to reference the pope, Purgatory, or relics (e.g. e Mus 173, 5r, 52r, 57r; Folger V.b.26(1), 21, 38, 89). It may be that the discovery of further manuscripts of the ritual, especially any composed in Catholic countries, might give some insight as to these transformations.

In addition, usage of magical manuscripts in historical analysis must come with caveats. Due to the variegated and scattered nature of such material across geography and time, caution should be displayed at attempts to postulate their contents as portraying a worldview consistent across all scribes. Likewise, we should be careful about considering these to be rites of an undifferentiated "folk" tradition, not only because such constructions are problematic in and of themselves, but also due to the proficiency of many of these copyists with both English and Latin, aligning them more with the learned members of society.

One question that is difficult to answer is how many of these copied rituals led to ritual practice by the authors, copyists, and owners of these works. It is certainly possible that many people copied these rituals out of curiosity or wonder, or held performing them in abeyance due to fear or lack of opportunity. Perhaps a future discovery of a court transcript or account of an experiment will help us to explore this question further. Nonetheless, even a ritual that remains unpracticed does not mean that its composition and transmission cannot provide valuable information about the beliefs and values of those who chose to include it in their manuscripts – insights we might not be able to achieve otherwise, save if we find a way to speak with the dead ourselves.

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Abstrakti:"Sa oot miesten ja naisten luiden haltija": rituaalinen nekromantia varhaismodernin ajan Englannissa

1500–1600-luvulla Englannissa korkea kuolleisuusaste ja kirkkomaalle tehtävät hautaukset vaikuttivat siihen, että kuolleet sijoittuivat hyvin lähelle eläviä sekä fyysisesti että emotionaalisesti. Tuon ajan nekromantia-kokeilut, joissa loitsija pyrki maagisin keinoin yhteyteen kuolleiden kanssa, ovat historiallisina dokumentteina olleet vähän tutkittuja. Yhteen tällaisista kokeiluista viitataan tässä "Luiden haltija" ("Keeper of the Bones") -rituaalina, jossa magian suorittaja haluamaansa tietoa saavuttaakseen kutsuu henkiä tuomaan luokseen kuolleen ihmisen haamun. Artikkelissa tarkastellaan näitä rituaaleja suhteessa hautajaisiin liittyneisiin aikalaisrituaaleihin ja -käytäntöihin sekä uskomuksiin sielun luonteesta ja kuolleiden roolista varhaismodernissa kulttuurissa.

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Zombies, Vampires and Frankenstein's Monster – Embodied Experiences of Illness in Living Dead Films

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Abstract

The living dead, such as vampires, zombies and Frankenstein's monster, serve the role of monsters in many horror films. They are liminal characters whose continuing corporeal existence questions the limits of life and death. Their problematic and abnormal bodies also symbolize the boundaries between normal, proper or healthy bodies and abnormal or unhealthy bodies. For these reasons, the living dead have the potential to create embodied narratives of illness.

In this article, I discuss three different allegories of illness in contemporary living dead films. First, I focus on lifestyle-generated health issues in vampire films that emphasize the consequences of individual decisions and social stigma. Secondly, I examine how zombies symbolize progressive and degenerative diseases, such as memory diseases, which alienate the living from those affected. Thirdly, I use the Frankenstein narrative to discuss the limits of medical science. In particular, I am interested in how organ transplants, as a way of treating sick bodies raise questions of (personal and social) identity.

My analysis shows that living dead films symbolically express fears related to fragile bodies and progressive illnesses. The degenerative processes of the body are portrayed as monstrous, and they have severe consequences for identity and sense of self. In these terrifying storylines, the living dead are easily discriminated against and viewed with horror. This demonstrates the various effects that illness has on social roles and social identities. I argue that by symbolizing experiences of illness through dreaded monsters, these horror stories both reveal

and stigmatize the health issues they represent. Embodied experience of living death has the potential to illustrate what people with long-term illnesses (and their families) are facing, yet the context of the horror genre creates an ambiguity about whether it is the illness or the person with the illness that is seen as monstrous.

Zombies, Vampires and Frankenstein's Monster: Embodied Experiences of Illness in Living Dead Films

The living dead's corporeal post-mortem existence challenges our cultural, social and medical definitions and understanding of mortality. In horror films, the liminal characters that exceed and blur the categories of life and death represent the unknown and otherness, which in turn mark them as monsters. Monster theorists argue that being a monster is first and foremost a narrative position and a set of characteristic or actions only second. In other words, monsters do not simply exist: they are created, recognized, and treated as such within a certain cultural, social and moral context. Consequently, the role of monster can dehumanize or exclude issues or groups of people who are seen to represent something abnormal or undesired. In this way, monsters are symbolic expressions of cultural anxieties and uncertainties (Cohen 1996; Ingebretsen 2001; McKahan 2007; Mittman 2013). Undead monsters, such as vampires, zombies, mummies or even Frankenstein's monster, have varied allegorical functions in horror cinema, such as representing debates on sexual orientation, gender roles, race, colonialism, slavery, and consumerism (e.g. Hakola 2015). This article focuses on disease-related symbolism. I analyze how the status of "undead" creates and reveals tensions between healthy (normal) and sick (other) bodies, and discuss what these films tell us about our cultural unease with being ill.

Health-related anxieties are central to our sense of humanity and mortality. After all, health relates to more than the mere absence of sickness; it includes happiness, a sense of self, productivity, and the ability to function. In a way, health has become a supervalue, a metaphor for all that is good in life (Crawford 2006; WHO 1948). In

contemporary Western societies, health has even become a duty of citizenship. Each citizen is encouraged and expected to maintain their health in order to benefit society and humanity (Tolvhed and Hakola 2018). Health problems, in turn, affect all aspects of life. Experiences of illness go beyond medical symptoms and include renegotiations of identity and social status. Consequently, illnesses often become part of the monster rhetoric. Several clinical research articles make this apparent by using titles such as: "Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease – The Unfolding Monster?" (Singh 2006), "Antiviral-Resistant Hepatitis B Virus: Can We Prevent This Monster from Growing?" (Zoulim et al. 2007), and "'A Monster That Lives in Our Lives': Experiences of Caregivers of People with Motor Neuron Disease and Identifying Avenues for Support" (Anderson et al. 2016). Similarly, several living dead films bring being ill and monstrosity together, which makes these films culturally relevant material for the study of health-related values and assumptions.

In horror cinema, the death-related corporeality of the living dead enables the examination of embodied health symbolism. Academic research has a dual, if somewhat overlapping, approach to this topic: one emphasizes infection processes and the other degenerative diseases. First, the undead have been studied from a pandemic perspective. Their common ability to contaminate others inspires fears of spreading infection, the collapse of civilization, and the mass destruction of the human population. In particular, zombies and vampires have often been used to represent potentially contagious ailments with apocalyptic potential, thus serving as a symbolic focus for the human need to identify a clear cause and to lay blame (e.g. Davies 2005, 146–147; Verran et al. 2014; Watson et al. 2014; Wonser and Boyns 2016, 647–650). Second, the research has focused on cultural symbolism, meanings, and representations attached to specified medical conditions and their degenerative processes in various living dead films (e.g. Hillman and Latimer 2017; Helman 2004; Miller 2003). This article relates to the latter tradition, because it studies the representations of embodiments and experiences of being ill. Whereas this kind of

research typically discusses one disease and monster at a time, this article brings together three different undead monsters (vampires, zombies and the Frankenstein's monster) and their illness allegories in order to point their commonly shared understandings of what it means to be ill and what the undead nature of the monsters adds to these portrayals.

The analysis is based on North American and European living dead films released in the 21st century which emphasize illness symbolism in their narratives. Using thematic analysis, the discussion focuses on several living dead films. First, I focus on lifestyle-generated health issues in vampire films that emphasize the consequences of individual decisions and social stigma. Secondly, I examine how zombies symbolize progressive and degenerative diseases, such as memory diseases, which alienate the living from those affected. Thirdly, I use the Frankenstein narrative to discuss how the use of organ transplants creates challenges to personal and social identity. By discussing various health issues that are symbolized by different living dead characters, I argue that even though the living dead are often discussed as symbolizing situations of mass threat and the spread of infection, they also create powerful representations of personal experiences of being ill. I argue that all living dead films symbolize fears about fragile bodies and identities, and foreground themes of social exclusion and marginalization.

The Living Dead: Death, Bodies, and "Becoming"

The cinematic living dead represent the fragility of life, the body, and health, and as such are powerful images of sick bodies. Their roles as monsters show how health challenges can have devastating consequences on individual lives, and their undead status adds nuances to the process of dealing with (life-threatening) illnesses. The living dead illustrate the difficulties of pinpointing and defining death. Such everyday phenomena as life support, coma, brain death, euthanasia, and abortion challenge any straightforward descriptions of life and death. As a consequence, there is no singular

definition of death; instead, dying is a multiple system of different deaths with complex physical, mental, and social processes (e.g. Hallam, Hockey and Howarth 2001). The debates related to the fictional undead – are they (socially) alive or dead, soulless or feeling characters – resemble these problematics.

In cinema, multiple characters have an unordinary relationship to death and not all films featuring the same monster share the same characteristics. For example, some vampires have a soul while others do not, and some zombies are controlled by an outside force while others are contaminated through infection; some Frankenstein's monsters are created from multiple real or artificial body parts and others are reanimated people. Thus, defining the living dead is a complicated, sometimes even redundant, task. Here, I use a broad definition that involves corporeality and a liminal state, whether it be through reanimation after death or a death-like state. In other words, I consider such figures as vampires, zombies, mummies, and the Frankenstein's monster to be the living dead (i.e. undead). From this list, Frankenstein's monster is often considered to be a golem, a magically created and animated anthropomorphic being, instead of the living dead. However, this monster invites similar questions regarding the limits of life and death as the other undead characters. Additionally, he is created through science, not magic as such, and this creates an interesting parallel with health technologies, making Frankenstein's monster relevant to this discussion.

The idea of liminality is familiar from different folklores and death rituals around the world. In cultural anthropology, the liminal period is placed between the detachment from an earlier social structure and reincorporation when the subject reaches a stable state. For example, the time between a person's death and society's adjustment to this death can be called a liminal period. The liminal state threatens the social order, even if only for a limited time (Turner 2008, 94–95). The living dead are liminal, because they are neither dead nor recognized to have the same rights and functions as the living. Their liminal state is heightened because their eagerness to continue their unconventional existence brings chaos to society.

The unstable and transforming undead bodies are recognizably human. For example, Frankenstein's monster is collected from body parts, zombies are visibly decaying, and even youthful vampires need constant maintenance to hide their aging appearances. Anna Powell (2005) has suggested that Gilles Deleuze's concept of "becoming" offers one explanation of why the transformative processes of undead bodies are effective sources of horror. In Deleuze's (1989, 140–143) theory, becoming is a continuing and acentral movement between forces, beings and nonbeings, and this process involves both cinematic material and its audiences. In other words, while horror films often threaten human bodies on screen, through sensations, they affect the bodies and minds of the viewers as well (e.g. Powell 2005; Shildrick 2002; Williams 1991). Horror films' potential lies with the viewers' embodied thinking. Horror's reputation as a "body genre" makes the allegorical treatment of health-related anxieties especially fruitful because of this material intention to horrify. As such, living dead films provide an intriguing insight into the debates what "normal" or "healthy" bodies could or could not be.

Becoming process makes (both physical and moral) degeneration a central theme in the living dead films, and it creates a fitting allegory for degenerative diseases. Since the beginning of the 20th century, the leading causes of death have changed away from infectious diseases (tuberculosis, influenza and pneumonia) towards degenerative diseases or isolated long-term illnesses (cardiovascular diseases, cancer and Alzheimer's disease). At the same time, the life expectancy has increased dramatically. In 1930, the average life expectancy was around 50–60 years, whereas nowadays it is closer to 80 years in Western countries. (Hoyert 2012; WHO 2018.) Thus, while people live longer also their experiences of illness have lengthened, making the experiences of slowly degenerating bodies common.

The undead visually and symbolically expose irreversible consequences to "healthy" bodies. Indeed, Margrit Shildrick (2002) argues that the monstrous body is both anomalous in itself and startling precisely because it always carries a risk of

contamination—if not at the material level, conceptually at least, because the improper body threatens to reveal the constructed nature of "proper" bodies. By setting the undead apart from "healthy" bodies, they become related to abnormality, impurity, even waste and other issues that need to be distanced from idealized humanity (Shildrick 2002, 68–73). When presenting monstrous bodies that are affected by health issues, the living dead embody the sickness in a visual and narrative context. Embodiments focus on people's subjective, felt experiences of their bodies and provide an understanding of how our bodies and body-related experiences affect our cognition, identity and social relations. Thus, the ways in which healthy and sick bodies are portrayed can play an important role in cultural understandings of experiences of health or sickness.

Different living dead characters with varied cinematic embodiments bring out different aspects of illness and death (e.g. Hakola 2015, 29; Michel 2007, 392; Vargas 2006, 42). Vampires constantly fight aging, and represent fantasies of immortality. However, the consumption of blood has also connected their artificially maintained bodies and questionable moral behavior to questions of addiction and sexually transmitted diseases. In contrast, zombies have an unashamed relationship with decay, and their existence symbolizes dread, loss, and the inevitable frailty of the human body. Zombies continue to exist physically after their mind, memories and identity have gone, and they invite allegories of memory-related diseases, such as Alzheimer's disease and dementia. Frankenstein's monster, similarly, draws attention to the discrepancy between the self and the body. As a collection of reanimated and engineered body parts, Frankenstein's monster is worried about his humanity and identity. Frankenstein's monster is a fitting symbol for anxieties related to body transplants, implants, genetic engineering and cloning. In all these cases, the body becomes a source of threat, yet the consequences reach out to the person's identity and social status as well.

The labeling of undead bodies as monstrous can have several consequences in the reading of the films. On the one hand, when illnesses are portrayed through monster

metaphors, the horror stories can stigmatize the health issues represented and marginalize the ill. On the other hand, these stories can also be empowering because they give visibility to these experiences and can help to understand exclusion processes (e.g. Goodwin 2014; Mittman 2013). Therefore, in the analysis of living dead stories it is crucial to pay attention to narrative perspectives. Cinematic representations of embodied experiences of living death has the potential to illustrate what people with long-term illnesses (and their families) are facing, yet the context of the horror genre creates an ambiguity about whether it is the illness or the person with that illness that is described as monstrous. Also, we need to consider whether illnesses should be described as monstrous at all, or should we widen our understanding of "proper" bodies.

Vampires and Unhealthy Lifestyle Choices

Vampires are hedonistic creatures – they seek pleasure and prioritize their individual desires and needs over those of the wider community. Similarly, as health metaphors they shed light to the individualized approaches to health. In Western societies, public health concerns have given room for emphasis of individual choices and responsibilities. Robert Crawford's (1980) concept of "healthism", for example, refers to situations where health and fit body are lifestyle markers and metaphors for morality and a good life. Thus, healthy lifestyle choices have become signs of good character. Most vampires refuse to meet the expectations of social norms and a good character, and they serve as warnings of decadent lifestyle. In their history, vampires have represented questionable morals, especially when it comes to drinking human blood, sexual relationships, and abuse of alcohol and drugs (e.g. Auerbach 1995; Williamson 2003). Thus, vampires' unhealthy and immoral choices are threatening the society.

Addiction and sexually transmitted diseases dominate health-related themes in vampire films, although some researchers have also discussed eating disorders in relation to

those vampires who refuse to drink human blood, such as vampires in *Interview with the Vampire* (1994) (e.g. Miller 2003; Tomc 1997). In particular, 1980s was an important decade for developing storylines of addiction and sex diseases. The changing attitudes towards drugs reframed them as societal problem, and concern over younger population was made visible in such films as *Lost Boys* (1987) and *Near Dark* (1987) (Sánchez 2011). The vampirism was compared to drug addiction that leads into social exclusion, crime and formation of gangs. Similarly, fears related to sexually transmitted diseases were recognizable to audiences. The Western AIDS crisis was in the core of the public attention and the idea of infectious blood and body fluids made an obvious connection to the vampire lore. The AIDS became an often unmentioned undertone in many of the films, where the disease was connected to (abnormal, immoral, and thus unhealthy) lifestyle choices. In the contemporary films, both addiction theme and fear of sexually transmitted diseases have continued to be important themes.

Several vampire stories compare the thirst for blood to substance abuse and an inability to resist temptation. For example, the popular television series *Vampire Diaries* (2009–2017) uses addiction metaphors. The vampire brothers Stefan and Damon have different ways of dealing with their illicit desire to drink blood. Stefan suppresses his desires and seeks nourishment from animal blood, but every now and then he falls off the wagon, and goes on a murdering rampage when looking for his next dose. Typically, he is detoxified by either withdrawal (cold turkey) or by using rationed and donated human blood. Damon has a different way of handling his desires. He uses human blood, but often does it in moderation, without unintentionally killing people. Both brothers also use alcohol as a replacement therapy in order to diminish their overwhelming desire to drink human blood. In this way, the series presents a complex relationship to substance abuse and addictions. By social standards, both brothers are outsiders due their challenging moral behavior. Yet, when their desires are controlled, they are able to form friendships and participate in society. Such a portrayal of the complexities of living with addictions is possible in a long-running television series

where continuing storylines require twists and changing points of view to hook the viewers. In comparison, films work within a more limited timeline and the viewpoints are often more stable.

For example, a comedy horror film *Frostbite* (2006), directed by Anders Banke, takes a more moralizing approach to the topic. In the film, a group of young people are organizing a party to pass the time during the long and dark winter months. Some of them want to liven up the party. They steal drugs from a local hospital and spike the punch. Unexpectedly, the drugs contain vampire blood, which turns the guests into bloodthirsty creatures. The bloodbath is not contained, but spreads to the town as well, causing death and destruction.

The theme of substance abuse is emphasized in the use of vampire blood pills. The dangers of drug experimentation are made evident as the drugs have unexpected side effects and consequences that end up killing people. The choices of the partygoers are pictured as reckless, but most of the blame is directed towards the doctor. Dr Beckert, who works at the hospital, has created the pills in order to study vampirism. His pills can be compared to synthetic drugs, which aim to mimic the effects of illicit drugs but can be unpredictable in their effect on the brain or on behavior. Indeed, the young partygoers go through similar undesired side effects to synthetic drugs; they become aggressive, experience paranoia, seizures, nausea and even death. Even though the doctor is not selling the drugs, he is placed in the role of a drug dealer, because he expresses a desire to spread vampirism. Thus, whereas the young people suffer the consequences of his drug, Dr Beckert is portrayed as the true monster of the story. As an expert of health care, he is supposed to promote healthy lifestyle choices. His failure to do so has devastating consequences for the local youth. Here, individual bad choices end up highlighting the negative consequences of drug use in the form of overdoses and bad trips. The context of horror also makes the moralism stand out. Any use of drugs is pictured as monstrous, undesired, and possibly deadly – not only to your health, but to the health of everyone in the community.

Another central theme is related to the seductive and sexual nature of vampires. In particular, these themes have been popular in the Dracula tradition. Bram Stoker introduced this single most influential vampire figure in his novel *Dracula* (1897). In several later adaptations of the novel, including film versions, Dracula has continued to engage questions of death and sexuality. In the 21st century, Dracula has made appearances in animations, films, and television shows. In a television movie *Dracula* (2006) directed by Bill Eagle, (sexual) health concerns are openly addressed. Eagle's film highlights the religious and moral reading of the familiar story where the vampire Count Dracula leaves his castle in Transylvania to seek a new life in London.

Arthur Holmwood, who is a minor character in the original story of Dracula, is given an important role in the TV film. At the beginning of the film, by his father's deathbed, Arthur learns that he has inherited syphilis from his father whose promiscuous lifestyle tainted the whole family. In a desperate search for a cure, Arthur hopes that Dracula's blood and transfusion could cure him. Thus, he agrees to fund a pagan cult's ("Brotherhood of the Undead") operation to invite the Count to London. Dracula, however, does not take kindly to being used: "You think you can control me, you think I am a man's slave. You'll watch that I take all you loved, your country, your God, and then it is you who dies." Consequently, this film creates two parallel stories, one about infection caused by Dracula and the other about degenerative disease experienced by Arthur. Both of them are heavily moralized because the spread of disease is seen to be the consequence of undesired individual choices and actions.

The syphilis storyline starts with Arthur's sick father who has turned into a deformed lunatic. He embodies the consequences of an immoral lifestyle. Arthur, on the other hand, is young, pleasant, and engaged to be married. However, Arthur's life changes when his father's doctor informs him that he has inherited the illness. Arthur is devastated because the illness has no cure (the events take place before the use of antibiotics). Furthermore, the illness is degenerative and the doctor warns him "You'll see a deterioration of your mind and of your body." Social consequences also play an

important role in his anxiety. Syphilis has a powerful stigma and Arthur fears the role of social outcast in a society that labels this illness as degrading and disgusting. In his desperate need to control the situation and illness, Arthur destroys his life and the lives of his friends and loved ones. For example, he has his bride bitten by a vampire and later killed. Here, immoral lifestyles, keeping secrets, and making bad choices become a threat, not only to a few individuals, but to everyone.

Frostbite and *Dracula* express a typical dualism in vampire lore. Aspasia Stephanou (2014, 49) writes that vampire stories are built "on the double power of blood, carrying within it both the possibility of the cure and the threat of the poison." The potential for immortality and pleasure represent hope, and the possibility of catching a disease and infecting others represents the threat. Stephanou (2014, 47–73) goes as far as comparing blood-related infections to bioterrorism, because it silently turns the symbol of life into a threat, and similarly many vampire stories create a "demonology of contagion." The parallel with bioterrorism highlights the connection of monstrosity with undesired lifestyle choices, such as substance abuse or reckless sexual behavior. In contemporary vampire stories, even in ones with a romantic and admiring approach to vampires, such as the *Twilight* film series (2008–2012), vampirism itself remains problematic and socially stigmatized due to its connection with improper bodies. However, the *Twilight* series, where good and heroic vampires do not feed on people and are reluctant to transform others, argues that if vampires are socially responsible and refrain from infecting others, they can be allowed to participate in society in a limited role. Thus, these cinematic representations argue for responsible behavior of sick people.

In the vampire stories, the ill-advised individual choices have widespread consequences that threaten the society. Even if syphilis is not Arthur's fault or a young partygoer is affected by mistake, they also place others under threat, which makes them part of the problem. These films create cautionary examples of how lifestyle choices can have societal dimensions. They also narrate how healthy choices can become indicators for

good citizenship. On the reverse, undesired and unhealthy choices can lead into social chaos and social exclusion.

Zombies and Memory Disorders

Whereas vampires often represent risky behavior by individuals, other undead characters embody illness narratives where blame is hard to pinpoint. Zombies are a typical example of a threat that unexpectedly introduces chaos, and where zombies are both victims and the source of threat. In contemporary zombie films, it is often a virus that causes the reanimation of zombies. Anyone infected is a victim, yet they also become carriers who have the potential to destroy humanity and the world. In *I Am Legend* (2007), medical experts release a virus into the population in the hope that it would cure cancer. Instead, it turns deadly and turns some of the infected into predatory zombie/vampire type mutants[1]. *Resident Evil* (2002) represents bioterrorism, because people are turned into zombies when a toxic virus is freed in an underground research facility, and *28 Days Later* (2002) involves the unfortunate consequence of animal activism where activists release infected chimpanzees. In all cases, a virus transforms the people it infects.

Zombies transform into mindless creatures whose bodily needs guide their actions, and their former personalities become non-existent because their memories and sense of self have been lost (e.g. Bishop 2006, 200–205). In their ability to consume and transform others, zombies create an embodied threat to the living. Yet, their threat extends from the physical to the existential, because zombies become warnings of what happens when you lose yourself and your humanity. Many of the characters are more afraid of being turned into zombies than they are of dying. Rain, one of the characters

[1] *I Am Legend* is a third film adaptation of Richard Matheson's novel (1954). The novel, in particular, described the monsters as vampires, and even in the 2007 version, they share the vampires' inability to be in the sun. However, the novel has strong ties with zombie tradition. It inspired the zombie film *Night of the Living Dead* (1968), after which zombies started to dominate apocalyptic undead narratives. Thus, the marketing of 2007 version represented the monsters similarly to zombies, and many contemporary audience members interpreted the film as a zombie film.

in *Resident Evil* (2002), worries about what her reanimated body might do. She begs another character to kill her if she turns into a zombie: "I don't want to be one of those things, walking around without a soul." Similarly, many other characters are worried that if their bodies continue to exist without their personalities and memories, they will not be the same people, but monsters.

In medical perspectives to popular culture, zombies provide an imaginary space to debate the effects of memory-related diseases, such as Alzheimer's disease (Behuniak 2011). Alzheimer's causes dementia and affects a person's mental capabilities, and the disease has become increasingly common. From 1987 to 1991, Alzheimer's disease was ranked the 11th leading cause of death, whereas in 2016 it was already the 5th leading cause of global death (Hoyert 1996; WHO 2018). The disease that causes disruptive behaviour affects social relationships and causes stress both for the patients and their caregivers. Lisa Badley (1995, 71), for example, argues that modern fear of death does not concern death as an event, but it is a fear of "'deadness' and the possibility of a 'living death'". Zombie films illustrate this degenerative experience when a body continues to live after the personality has drastically altered.

The zombies also raise dualistic tensions between the body and the mind and resemble traditional Christian dualism where the body was bestial, and the soul divine (e.g. Descartes 1956, 81–97). Even the first edition of *Encyclopaedia Britannica* in 1768 defined death dualistically as the separation of soul and body (Kastenbaum 2003, 224). Although dualistic views have been challenged, they continue to have cultural influence, and the soul or mind is often seen as the source of humanity and morality. Similarly, mindless zombies continue to exist physically, yet they lack thoughts, feelings, and memories expected of (living) human beings.

Even in the contemporary definition of death as a lack of brain function, the potential for separation of mind and body continues to exist because identity is a key element in the dying process. Some researchers claim that a person should be pronounced dead if he/she no longer has a chance to live (Gervais 1986; Singer 1994). In zombie films, the

status of undeadness arises from this separation of body and soul/mind/identity, which in turn causes the possibility of social death. The term refers to situations where a person's social influence and vitality have ended, even while still physically alive. The term has been used in the context of social history, including slavery and genocide, and in cases where people have lost their ability to interact with other people (Card 2003; Mulkay 1993; Patterson 1982). Kaarina Koski, for example, has argued that ill and dying people who are institutionalized often enter a state of social death before their actual death. They are in a liminal state, which ends at the moment of physiological death, but which often occurs a long time after social death (Koski 2014, 107–122). The situation resembles the personal and social consequences of Alzheimer's disease where patients can be considered to be lost long before their actual deaths. Similarly, zombies symbolize the consequences of social death. Their lives, bodies, identities and social roles are lost even if they continue to exist physically.

While zombies symbolize memory diseases, the narrative perspective plays an important part in these metaphors. Unlike vampire stories, the viewers of zombie films are rarely allowed to see the events from zombies' perspective. Instead, stories focus on how other people experience zombification. *I Am Legend* (2007), which is based on Richard Matheson's post-apocalyptic novel *I Am Legend* (1954), tells the story of Dr Robert Neville who is a former U.S. Army medical doctor and scientist. He is trying to find a cure for a virus that has turned most people into "Darkseekers." Neville himself is immune to the virus, and as a sole survivor in New York City, he continues his lonely research work during the day, and hides from the hunting creatures during the night.

In his studies of Darkseekers, Robert lists their physical characteristics, such as sensitivity to light, increased heartbeat and breathing, rage, and lack of pigment, which makes the infected seem monstrous. However, he also studies them socially and at one point, he makes a behavioral note: "Now, it is possible that decreased brain function or the growing scarcity of food is causing them to ignore their basic survival instincts. Social de-evolution appears complete. Typical human behavior is now entirely absent."

Robert is deeply upset by this development, because it further highlights the difference between him and the others. He is alone and feeling the pain of losing people, while the Darkseekers are increasingly less like him and turn against him.

The scene where living characters encounter people they used to know is typical of zombie films, and in these scenes, zombified people have no recognition, connection, or other than fleeting memories left. Thus, the living people are the ones who need to survive this loss. In the final scenes of *I am Legend*, this experience becomes emphasized. Darkseekers have found Robert's hiding place and are attacking his house and laboratory. At the same moment, Robert realizes that his latest anti-virus test is showing positive results and the test subject's symptoms have decreased and her human characteristics are returning. Robert tries to reason with the attacking Darkseekers by saying "I can fix this," "I can save everybody," and "let me save you." However, the message is not getting through. Robert and Darkseekers are separated with a glass wall, which confines them into different worlds with no communication between the groups. Every attempt to get through is desperate and in vain. Robert manages to get the anti-virus out of the laboratory but he and the Darkseekers die in a deadly explosion.

I am Legend embodies and creates allegories on memory diseases, and on attempted and failed efforts to communicate, to hold onto shared memories, and social continuance. More than anything else, it tells the story from the point-of-view of the one witnessing the slow transformations related to the memory diseases. However, the zombie films often hint the alternative perspective as well. In *I am Legend*, the Darkseekers appear frustrated and angry with Robert who captures them and uses them as test subjects in his experiments, which tend to have fatal consequences. For them, Robert's behavior appears invasive and they do not recognize it as help. This invasive behavior is threatening their current existence, the identity and social roles that they have gained after the infection.

Many philosophical approaches have argued for zombies potential to question what makes us human. The undead raise questions of subjectivity, consciousness and morality, and zombies provide possibilities to ask to what extent identity is persistent, "what it means to be alive in the first place", and "is it bad to be undead". (Greene and Mohammed 2006, xv; see also Hauser 2006; Jacquette 2006) These questions are visible in George Romero's *Land of the Dead* (2005) as well. In the film, zombies communicate with their expressions, which mimic sadness, helplessness, rage and the need for revenge on people who have excluded them from the society. The film hints that zombies have some identity, even if their personalities have transformed. For one character in the film, Cholo, the possibility of becoming a zombie is not even as disturbing as usually in the zombie films. When Cholo is infected, he refuses it to be end of his life. Instead, he argues "I've always wanted to see how the other side lives". Also, the ending of the film stresses the possibility of finding some value in zombie lives. Both the leader of the group of survivors and the leader of the zombies choose not to kill each other. Riley, the main character, justifies this by saying "They are just looking for a place to go. Same as us." This decision raises the possibility of coexistence.

Alexandra Hillman and Joanna Latimer call for destigmatization of cinematic images of dementia where the focus would be on transformation, not destruction of person's ability to live. This would accept ill people as they are, instead of seeing them as people they used to be (Hillman and Latimer 2017). Thus, when changing the perspective to the experiences of the infected people, such as is hinted in *Land of the Dead* (2005), the embodied experiences of both those with memory diseases and those taking care of them involve, above all, difficulties in communication.

The true tragedy of zombie stories is the lack of connection between zombies and humans. This shows that illness is not only about being alive, but also about social relationships and social positions. While zombification is an effective metaphor for degenerative memory diseases, the context of the horror tradition where monsters

cause terror and horror is problematic. The monster position dehumanizes and invites unsympathetic readings of those with memory diseases. By focusing on the perspective of survivors and their fears, most zombie films participate in underlining the distancing effect of memory-related diseases.

Frankenstein's Monster and Body Modifications

My third example of the living dead as metaphors for health-related issues comes from the story of Frankenstein and his monster, familiar from Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein; or, the Modern Prometheus* (1818). This story, too, has been adapted for the screen several times. Some adaptations, such as *Viktor Frankenstein* (2015), focus on the scientist Victor Frankenstein who creates artificial life through scientific experiment and, in doing so, foreground issues around the ethics and limits of medical science. Here, I am interested in stories that emphasize his monster, who is constructed from different body parts gathered from corpses. In such films as *Frankenstein* (2004) and *Frankenstein* (2015), the viewpoint of the monster and his questions about identity are central.

When Shelley's novel was published, the story illustrated the possibilities of galvanism, the study of stimulation by an electric current. Shelley's Frankenstein used these ideas to create artificial life. Yet, personal experiences and social consequences have always been part of the story. In the early film adaptations, particularly in the Universal film *Frankenstein* from 1931, the monster's artificial life culminates in troubles with social acceptance. Frankenstein's monster is excluded, even becoming a pitiful monster that tries and fails to connect with other people and the society around him. The monster ends up being hunted and killed. His lack of understanding of socially and morally acceptable behavior arises from being like a child in an adult's body. Thus, although the film emphasizes otherness through the clumsy embodiment of the monster, the

dangerous otherness is in fact to do with a lack of social skills and a lack of understanding of social norms.

Questions of how the body, identity and social relationships function together have always been part of the Frankenstein story. However, since medical technologies were introduced in the latter part of the 20th century, such as transplants and later on implants, Frankenstein's monster has begun to function as a metaphor for the experience of having parts of the deceased bring life to a living person. For example, Cecil Helman compares "Frankenstein's dream of an artificial man" to that of modern medicine's partially artificial people. Here, transplant surgery enables the use of other bodies and their parts as part of the self. Helman calls this "a walking collage of the living and the dead" (Helman 2004, 24.) In this way, films about Frankenstein are also symbols for transplants and the limits of modern science.

Similarly to zombies, the opposition of mind and body plays a role in Frankenstein lore. Margrit Shildrick has argued that biomedicine assumes a split between mind and body. For example, in the case of transplants there is an argument that a transplanted body part is merely a result of physiological possibilities, which should not influence a person's understanding of their self (Shildrick 2015, 26). However, several studies have showed that many transplant patients feel that a transplant affects their identity and sense of bodily integrity (e.g. Lowton et al. 2017; Mauthner et al. 2015; Shaw 2011). For these reasons, Lowton et al. (2017, 8–9), for example, argue that we should separate the corporeal and embodied body. The embodied body could denote those experiences that link the body and mind, the body and the experience of self, together.

In the two-part television film *Frankenstein* (2004), the monster represents embodied body and identity struggles. Whereas one storyline focuses on Victor Frankenstein's search for the limits of life and death, the other storyline focuses on the experiences of the monster. After being brought to life, a combination of different body parts of the dead, the monster hides in the countryside. We see how his first encounters with other people result in their horrified reactions that mark him out as a threatening outsider.

He observes people and learns that while other people have both a mother and a father, he only has a father. He views this unnatural family background as the cause of his outsiderness. Thus, he starts searching for a family connection. This has disastrous consequences, as most of Victor Frankenstein's family members die in the process. In the end, when Victor dies of a fever, his monster mourns for his father, takes his body with him, and disappears into the wild. The source of the violence is the creature's problematic relationship with his body and existence.

Similarly, transplant patients' experiences bring to the fore two main themes. The first is the awareness of difference within their bodies. Many patients have reported complex feelings of interconnectedness with their donors. While the transplanted organ can been seen as a gift of life, it can also be experienced as an intruder or even a parasite. Transplant recipients question who they are now, but also who they were before, and this sense of being a hybrid has an influence on their understanding of self (Mauthner et al 2015; Shildrick 2015, 24, 33–34). Frankenstein goes through a similar search for connection and identity when he studies Victor's scientific journal and tries to understand how he came to be.

Additionally to the troubled understanding of self, the social dimension is significant. Lowton et al., for example, have emphasized this dimension in their research on transplant recipients. They argue that the awareness of difference translates to the patients' connections with the social world. In their study, transplant recipients had mixed feelings about whether they were normal, and sometimes they felt that the difference in their bodies also stigmatized them (Lowton et al. 2017, 1–9). Frankenstein's monster embodies particularly well this fear of exclusion due to difference. His hybridness is visible in the cinematic appearance: the joints of different body parts are visible, he moves slowly and clumsily, and he has a larger than normal body. These elements communicate the embodied aspect of difference, and the corporeal process of collage. The social consequences of being recognized as different,

is the tragedy of Frankenstein's monster, and a similar fear of abnormality is central to the transplant experience.

For these reasons, the cultural parallel drawn between transplant surgery and Frankenstein's monster has also been criticized. The transplant story in Frankenstein assumes rejection, and does not allow for positive outcomes, limiting the possibilities of embodiment and ways of experiencing them for viewers (e.g. Bishop 1994). Thus, while the story can express the fears that people have about transplants, they rarely express the hope and possibilities related to them. Transplants become a source of monstrosity, which is further emphasized in the case of implants and artificial life.

Implants and artificial and prosthetic organs further blur the boundaries of life and death, and artificial life. Popular culture has debated these themes through representations of cyborgs, or "fusions of man and machine," as Cecil Helman (2004, 25) describes them. However, similar elements have also been included in the Frankenstein tradition. For example, in the film *Frankenstein* (2015) the monster is not a hybrid of different body parts, but an artificially created body. The scientific experiment goes wrong and the body starts to become deformed. The "monster" that is thus created escapes after being threatened with extermination. The monster questions whether he has a right to independent existence and identity because a scientific corporation created him, and, as such, he is a possession, and the intellectual property, of his creators. This follows the questions posed by Helman (2004, 25–26) who argues that implant stories are about self and capitalist society, where bodies become part of impersonal, mass-produced products in consumer society. Thus, the question of artificial life becomes a question about who can decide the right to existence. In the 2015 film, the story is explicitly violent as Frankenstein's monster encounters situations where his only resource for action is violence. He fights for his right to make decisions and to exist, but each fight also takes him further away from his goal of being accepted as a person and of gaining a right to social existence. Thus, the

artificial aspect highlights the identity-related questions that have always been part of Frankenstein narratives.

Frankenstein's monster embodies the social and identity-related challenges related to organ transplants and implants. It gives cinematic form to the haunting questions on the limits of self, life, death, and humanity. In this way, undeadness offers a unique possibility for discussing experiences related to sick bodies that are healed by using the bodies of others. The tragedy related to Frankenstein's monster's inability to communicate and connect with the surrounding world repeats situations that arise in vampire and zombie films as well. The embodied experiences of illness are not limited to physical questions, but social consequences also play a central role.

Conclusion

These three case studies of the undead in cinema bring to the fore interesting notions of sickness and health. First of all, they show that the relationship between body and mind, body and identity, and embodied identity and society are complex. It would be too easy to argue that the body is the source of threat to our minds and existence. Yet, sometimes the body survives the mind (zombies), or the mind would like to survive the body (vampires), or the functional corporeal body creates complex embodied identities (Frankenstein's monster). In all cases, struggles with how the body affects identities and vice versa resonate with real life.

Secondly, by making the living dead—monsters—represent these issues, sickness and failing bodies are marked as threats. This illustrates how people affected by these issues can experience exclusion and otherness. The stories show how it is not only degeneration or dying processes we should be afraid of, but also the reactions of others. Not being healthy can create a liminal experience in one's participation in society. Thus, illness is never just a medical problem, but also a social challenge.

Furthermore, living dead narratives also bring to the fore the blurry boundaries between life and death. Death is a complex phenomenon. Transplants show that a physiological death does not necessarily mark the death of the whole organism, and the social consequences of limitations from illness show that people may already experience death-like social positions before their bodies die. In this way, the living dead, who by definition straddle the boundary between life and death, pose medically relevant questions about what life and death mean in contemporary society.

In many ways, the cinematic living dead create interesting cultural metaphors for encounters with sick bodies and of embodied experiences of illness. They express cultural fears and anxieties relating to infections, sickness, and failing bodies. These stories show how such experiences threaten our corporeal bodies, identities and social relations. While these stories can be read as warnings of what sickness can do to us, they are also warnings of how (not) to react to illness of others. The most disturbing threat and cautionary stories are the tragedies of how those with health limitations are treated. By putting sick people into the position of monsters, these horror films have the potential to expose on the one hand and strengthen on the other the stigmatization of illness. Thus, the responsibility of interpretation remains with the viewers.

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Abstrakti: Zombit, Vampyyrit ja Frankensteinin Hirviö: Sairauden kokemukset elävä kuollut -elokuvissa

Elävät kuolleet, kuten vampyyrit, zombit ja Frankensteinin hirviö, toimivat hirviöinä useissa kauhuelokuvissa. Nämä rajatilaiset hahmot herättävät kysymyksiä kuoleman ja elämän rajoista. Heidän outo ruumiillinen olemassaolonsa symbolisoi rajoja normaalin/terveen ja epänormaalin/epäterveen kehojen välillä. Tästä syystä nämä hahmot voivat toimia allegorioina sairauden kokemuksista ja sairaista, kuolevista ruumiista.

Tässä artikkelissa käsittelen kolmea eri sairauden allegoriaa 2000-luvun elävä kuollut -elokuvissa. Ensinnäkin lähestyn vampyyrien kautta elämäntyyliin liittyviä terveyshaasteita pohtimalla yksilön valintojen seuraamuksia sekä hänen terveydelleen että näihin sairauksiin liitettyihin sosiaalisen leimautumisen pelkoihin. Toiseksi tutkin, miten zombit symboloivat rappeuttavia ja hitaasti eteneviä sairauksia, kuten muistisairauksia. Näissä tapauksissa sosiaalinen ulottuvuus liittyy vieraantumisen ja etääntymisen prosesseihin, joissa sairastunut menettää yhteyden muuhun yhteiskuntaan. Kolmanneksi hyödynnän Frankensteinin kertomusta lääketieteen rajojen pohdinnassa. Erityisesti olen kiinnostunut siitä, miten kertomus keinotekoisesta elämästä voi avata elinsiirtopotilaiden kokemuksia identiteetin muuttumisesta.

Analyysini osoittaa, että elävä kuollut -elokuvat kerronnallistavat pelkoja, jotka liittyvät ruumiin haurauteen ja rappeuttaviin sairauksiin. Prosessit, joissa ihmisen (fyysiset ja henkiset) toiminnot hitaasti muuttuvat, kuvataan hirviömäisinä ja niillä nähdään olevan vakavia vaikutuksia ihmisen itseymmärrykseen, identiteettiin ja sosiaaliseen asemaan. Keskeinen argumenttini on, että kuvaamalla sairauskokemuksia elävien kuolleiden kautta kauhutarinat voivat sekä paljastaa että stigmatisoida terveyshaasteisiin liittyviä kokemuksia. Sairauskokemusten ruumiillistaminen ja elokuvallinen ilmentäminen voi auttaa hahmottamaan, millaisia asioita ja tuntemuksia pitkäkestoisia sairauksia kohdanneet ihmiset ja heidän omaisensa kohtaavat. Samalla kauhutarinoiden konteksti asettaa nämä samat ihmiset hirviön asemaan, mikä voi mahdollistaa tulkinnan, jossa sairastuneet ihmiset (eivät heidän sairautensa) ovat hirviömäisyyden lähde.

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REVIEW ARTICLE

The Evolution of the Vampire in Popular Narrative from the Nineteenth Century to the Present

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Abstract

The vampire is one of the most powerful and enduring archetypes handed down to us by nineteenth-century literature, and remains, arguably, the most popular manifestation of the undead in popular culture. Perhaps more than any other monster, the vampire is a reflection of humanity. As Nina Auerbach says in her seminal work, *Our Vampire, Ourselves*, every generation creates its own vampire. Vampires embody our deepest fears and wildest desires, they represent the past that refuses to remain buried, our anxieties in the face of unavoidable social change and our fear of social and ethnic Others. They are signifiers that expose what we wish to conceal. Some vampires seem to uphold the status quo and a rigid patriarchal system, others defy the social and moral orders by freeing repressed desires and latent sexualities and by embodying in their very being all that is hated and suppressed by socio-normativity.

This paper will examine the evolution of the vampire in popular narrative, discussing its function and the way the figure has changed with the changing political and social climates, according to the needs of each culture that created, recreated and reinvented it. It will analyse the diverse roles that the vampire has played through the best part of two centuries by looking at a diversity of literary texts, films and television series that have made significant contributions to the development and continuing relevance of the vampire, from John Polidori's *The Vampyre* to Bram Stoker's *Dracula* to the cinematic contributions of Murnau, Dreyer and the Hammer Studios up to the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries with the works of Anne Rice, Stephen King,

> Joss Whedon's cult television series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Angel*, the Twilight saga, and more recent films such as *Only Lovers Left Alive* and *A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night.*

Introduction

The vampire is, arguably, the most popular of all the literary monsters we have inherited from the nineteenth century, and the most intimately linked to us. A creature that is quite literally post human, it has been, and still is, our intimate associate. The relationship between a vampire and its victim is often ambiguous and complicated. Vampires in fictional narrative are lovers, friends, and maternal figures, or all of these at once to their victims, many of whom crave the intimacy that the vampire's deadly kiss brings with it. At other times, vampires embody our deepest and darkest fears – fear of the ethnic Other, fear of the sexual Other, fear of disease and contamination, fear of our unrepressed selves, male fear of the female. They hold up a mirror to our addictions, our fantasies, our needs but also to our violence, corruption and predatory nature, because, as Gregory Waller suggests:

> Contrary to the old legends that tell us that vampires have no reflection, we do indeed see many diverse reflections – of ourselves – as the vampire stands before us cloaked in metaphor. (Waller 2010, 3)

The vampire is one of western culture's most powerful archetypes. William Patrick Day suggests that the power of the vampire myth lies in its metaphoric potential that provides us with a language to talk about the problems of our world (Day 2002, 4). In her seminal work *Our Vampires, Ourselves,* Nina Auerbach states that every generation creates its own vampires that reflect not just what we are, but also what the times have become (Auerbach 1995, 1). The vampire, therefore, is a shape-shifter, reflecting the social, political and cultural trends of any given period, while remaining firmly rooted in its origins and traditions.

From the very beginning of its literary existence in the nineteenth century, the vampire has assumed many guises: degenerate aristocrat, intimate friend, bestial predator, patriarch, lover, invader, outsider. In the twentieth century, it transitioned perfectly into the cinematic medium, becoming one of the most iconic movie monsters of all time. In literature, it continued to be invested with multiple, often contradictory roles: it has been portrayed as a supernatural being or a product of natural evolution, human or alien, physical being or metaphysical entity. It feeds on its victims' blood or on their psyche, draining life and giving it. It is a liberator or a tyrant, a villain, a hero or a victim, a being of superior moral and intellectual powers or a depraved, sadistic beast. Fictional vampires are, therefore, most potent and resilient creatures that mirror us and our fears, desires, traumas and contradictions. They are, in the words of Kim Newman, "ourselves expanded" (Newman 2012, 94).

The Beginnings of the Vampire in Literature

The first rudimentary vampires found their way into literature through Gothic poetry. Vampiric figures and dead lovers returning from the grave were popular in eighteenth-century German poetry, such as Heinrich August Ossenfelder's *The Vampire* (1748), Gottfried August Bürger's *Lenore* (1773) or Goethe's *The Bride of Corinth* (1797) which was published in the same year as Robert Southey's *Thalaba the Destroyer*, the first English poem to deal with the vampire. The English Romantics could not fail to be fascinated by the idea of an undead outcast returning from the grave to drain the life of its nearest and dearest, of the young and beautiful. Lord Byron included the theme of vampirism in his 1813 poem *The Giaour* whose anti-hero is inflicted with the curse of vampirism for his heinous deeds in life, and condemned to return from the dead to "suck the blood of all [his] race". In 1816, Samuel Taylor Coleridge published his unfinished poem *Christabel* which features the vampiric demon Geraldine, one of the first female vampires in English literature. However, it was John Polidori who recognised the vampire's metaphoric potential, power and flexibility as well as its

psychological possibilities (Twitchell 1981, 122), and his short story *The Vampyre* (1819) is officially recognised as the first vampire story in English literature.

The Nineteenth Century

The Vampyre was, in Christopher Frayling's words, "the first story successfully to fuse the disparate elements of vampirism into a coherent literary genre" (Frayling 1991, 108). Polidori's fascination with vampires stemmed from his professional interest, as a medical doctor, in the serious scientific study of vampirism that was carried out during the previous century (Beresford 2009, 99–114; Butler 2010, 27–45). Yet his vampire, Lord Ruthven, is not based on the medical reports written by his eighteenth-century forebears but is instead a vengeful portrayal of his previous employer, the Romantic poet Lord Byron, with whom he had a turbulent relationship. Drawing inspiration from an unfinished story written by the poet himself[1] and naming his vampire after the protagonist of *Glenarvon* (1816), another anti-Byron revenge novel written by the poet's ex-mistress Lady Caroline Lamb, Polidori created the first Byronic vampire – a creature eternally damned, bringing death and destruction to those who crossed his path.

The origins of the Byronic hero, and consequently also of his vampiric counterpart, can be traced back to the literature of the eighteenth century and its proliferation of charismatic anti-heroes like Lovelace in Samuel Richardson's epistolary novel *Clarissa* (1848), and of the villains of Gothic romances such as Manfred in *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) by Horace Walpole, Montoni in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) and Schedoni in *The Italian, or the Confessional of the Black Penitents* (1797), both by Ann Radcliffe, and Ambrosio in *The Monk: A Romance* (1796) by Matthew Lewis. Polidori transformed the unattractive, zombie-like revenant of superstition and folklore into a dangerous, sexually appealing and charismatic aristocrat (Baldick 1997, xix), a

[1] Published as *A Fragment* in 1819.

mysterious being who exists on the fringes of society rather than in remote foreign countries, and encourages the profligate and the dissolute in their pursuit of vice. D.L. MacDonald argues that Polidori's profound impact on the vampire story lies in his reinvention of the figure as a seducer, an aristocrat and a traveller, a "real" person as opposed to the spirit or reanimated corpse in *The Bride of Corinth* or *Thalaba the Destroyer*, for example (MacDonald 1991, 192–198). No longer confined to his native land, nor to the rural and exotic, the vampire entered the civilised world of English drawing rooms, bringing the horror home into the heart of a society that is as vicious and predatory as the vampire himself. *The Vampyre* draws a parallel between the supernatural evil and masochistic allure of the vampire and the corruption, greed and malevolence of the elite members of society. The figure of the rakish undead aristocrat seducing and using women, instigating vice and leading vulnerable and innocent young men to desperation became a metaphor for the perceived decadence of the higher classes (McGinley 1996, 74).

The Vampyre effectively launched a vampire craze that has survived until modern times. Polidori's blueprint for the vampire story and the undead Byronic aristocrat persisted in popularity for decades, inspiring prose, poetry, operas and theatrical productions, principally in England and France. It was only in the 1840s, with the serialized publication of the penny dreadful *Varney the Vampire, or the Feast of Blood*, that new and influential elements were introduced into vampire fiction. Varney is a creature of the past preying on the present, combining the bestial vampire of folkloric tradition with the aristocrat of literature. He has fangs, possesses powers of hypnosis and superhuman strength, and enters his victims' houses through bedroom windows. Varney is also one of the first examples of the sympathetic vampire, a creature who abhors his predatory nature to which he feels he is enslaved. The sympathetic vampire would make its appearance sporadically but consistently throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries until it became a mainstream character in modern narrative.

Another significant addition to the genre was *Carmilla*, an 1872 novella written by the Irish author Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, that is considered to be the prototype of the lesbian vampire story. In *Carmilla*, the eponymous vampire insinuates herself into a motherless household, befriending, seducing and preying on the lonely daughter of the house, Laura, thus undermining the patriarchy and its heteronormative values. Auerbach notes that a basic difference between male and female vampires of the nineteenth century is that male vampires preyed on women who were often marginal to the story while sparing their male friends with whom they nurtured close homosocial bonds, but female vampires typically preyed on those with whom they were intimate (Auerbach 1995, 13–18). Carmilla becomes a Terrible Mother figure as well as intimate friend and lover to Laura, filling the emotional void left by a dead mother and a distant father who entrusts his daughter's care to governesses and female servants.

The most significant milestone in the development of the vampire story and the popularisation of the vampire was indubitably the publication of *Dracula* in 1897, even though Stoker's undead Transylvanian Count would only achieve iconic status in the twentieth century thanks to the cinematic adaptations of the novel. The Victorian *fin-de-siècle* was a time of social and political unrest, not to mention great changes that elicited ambivalent responses and aroused considerable fears. Stoker's novel addresses many of the preoccupations that characterised England during the 1890s, most notably the fears of reverse colonisation, racial mixing and invasion by foreigners (Arata 1990), the threat of contagious diseases and the phenomenon of the New Woman, which is mentioned more than once in *Dracula*. Dracula embodies most of these fears: he is a foreign invader who travels to England with the intent to colonise it by spreading the disease of vampirism among English women, transforming them from the asexual models of virtue idealised by the Victorian patriarchy into lustful man-eaters who would act as his tools and proxies (Craft 1984, 109–110) by seducing and 'recruiting' their menfolk into the ranks of the undead.

Xenophobic fears in nineteenth-century England were fuelled by a general feeling that the moral order, the British patriarchy, and, indeed, the British Empire itself were under threat from the influence of foreigners who were arriving in great numbers and who brought with them strange and exotic ways. *Dracula* was not the only vampire narrative to express this concern, nor was England the only Western country to fear the consequences of unchecked immigration from regions considered to be less civilised. The fear of invasion is reiterated in H. G. Wells' *War of the Worlds* which was published the same year as *Dracula* and which locates the threat to humanity in the blood-drinking Martians who launch an attack against the Earth. Ten years earlier, Guy de Maupassant had published *Le Horla*, a story about a man who is persecuted by an invisible vampire that arrives in France on a steamship from Brazil and drives him insane. In these narratives, as in most others, the vampire is the foreign or alien Other (Maupassant's *hors là* or Outsider) whose chaotic being undermines order, bringing madness to a rational world, and subverting moral standards and the status quo. The fact that these threats might not always be easily detectable was another cause of anxiety. The Horla is an invisible, impalpable entity, while Dracula arrives in England quite legally, after having gone through appropriate channels to buy property in London and making the effort to learn the English language and English manners in order to blend into Victorian society.

The other great fear embodied by the vampire was the fear of contamination. The equivalence of vampirism with moral and physical disease is a recurrent theme in vampire literature that finds its source in folkloric beliefs about the undead. Sudden outbreaks of contagious diseases that spread rapidly in some rural communities were sometimes thought to be caused by the deceased who returned to feed on their surviving relatives. Such episodes of "vampirism" led to the exhumation and ritualistic staking and decapitation of those believed to have turned into vampires after their death.

At the end of the nineteenth century, the fear of contagion was centred primarily around sexually transmitted diseases, especially syphilis, that were spread mainly via prostitution. These fears were symptomatic of other resonant anxieties related to sex and gender at a time when Western nations were feeling threatened by ever-accelerating social changes. Efforts to contain syphilis through the forced medical inspection of prostitutes while ignoring and even protecting their male clients who passed the disease on to their wives (Ehrlich 2013) revealed an underlying misogyny that is reflected in vampire literature. The predominant characteristic of female vampires created by male authors is their rampant sexuality and, like prostitutes, they are typically described as "voluptuously wanton", "carnal", or "coquettish" creatures who transmit their contagion to their victims. *Dracula*, therefore, does not articulate only a fear of the foreign Other, but also of social Others, those who were considered to be a threat to society by virtue of their intellectual inferiority and looser morals. Lucy Westenra's utterance of her polygamous wish to marry her three suitors is an indication of her promiscuous nature and creates a connection between her and Dracula, also a polygamist who lives with his three brides in his castle in Transylvania. The predominance of women vampires in *Dracula* reflects the novel's preoccupation with female sexuality and gender roles. George Stade notes that the prevailing emotion in *Dracula* "is a screaming horror of female sexuality" (Stade 1985). However, Stade also suggests that the horror is accompanied by fascination and hate, as demonstrated by Jonathan's response to the aggressive and predatory brides of Dracula who take on a masculine role by initiating sexual activity, while he assumes a supine and passive female position, feeling in his "heart a wicked, burning desire that they would kiss [him] with those red lips" (Stoker 2002, 61). Jonathan's ambiguous responses of attraction and repulsion reflected real-life male responses to prostitutes.

The misogynistic fear of the sexual woman is evident in the fate suffered by many female vampires, whose destruction is often far more brutal and violent, and described in more graphic and gruesome detail, than that of their male counterparts. *Dracula* is a

case in point. While Dracula's death at the hands of the Crew of Light is rapid and quite unremarkable, the destruction of the vampire Lucy is one of the most horrific passages in the novel, the reason for this being that it comes across as a merciless and ferocious act of revenge inflicted upon Lucy for daring to become something other than the sweet and innocent lady her suitors had known. Many critics have interpreted Lucy's destruction as a punitive gang rape led by the patriarch of the Crew of Light, Abraham Van Helsing, and enacted by Lucy's fiancé Arthur Holmwood. At the end of the macabre scene, Lucy is effectively silenced when she is decapitated, her mouth stuffed with garlic, and she is locked up forever in the family vault.

Lucy's sinister fate is shared by numerous female vampires. Clarimonde in Théophile Gautier's *La Morte Amoureuse* (1836), for example, is destroyed in a similar manner by an old Roman Catholic priest after she seduces a young clergyman in her attempt to lure him away from the Church and from his mentor. The description of the old priest's laboured breathing as he drives the stake through Clarimonde's heart sexualises his act of penetration much in the same way as happens in *Dracula.* Sheridan Le Fanu's Carmilla is also dispatched in an equally ghastly manner for seducing her female victims and undermining paternal authority and social norms by flouting established heteronormative gender roles.

The female vampire encoded rebellious, anti-patriarchal womanhood that reneged and undermined Victorian ideals of female submissiveness, obedience, high religious and moral standards, and motherhood. Portrayed as a deadly, unnatural virago who seduces and drains the energy of her young, chaste and beautiful victims, feeding on intimate friends of both sexes and on children, she was the demonized embodiment of the unconventional and sexually-liberated woman. In *Dracula,* the vampire Lucy also incarnated the contemporary fear of the New Woman movement that its conservative opponents portrayed not as the movement towards gender equality that it was, but as an attempt to undermine social order and the status quo by turning women into rampant nymphomaniacs intent on reversing gender roles and emasculating their

husbands (Showalter 1991, 180; Eltis, 2002) or abandoning their families in order to pursue their own ambitions. However, it is worth noting that, while he portrayed the sexual woman as a horrific monster, Stoker did not condemn the New Woman's endeavours towards economic freedom, education and equality with men, which, on the contrary, are depicted as positive attributes in Mina Harker who elicits Van Helsing's admiration for possessing a "man's brain – a brain that a man should have were he much gifted – and a woman's heart" (Stoker 2002, 240).

The Vampire in the Twentieth Century

The twentieth century witnessed a great proliferation and diversification of vampires as the vampire story merged with other literary genres such as fantasy and science fiction. In science fiction, there was a tendency to transform the vampire from an undead supernatural being into a blood-drinking alien species, as occurs in *Le Prisonnier de la Planète Mars* and *La Guerre des Vampires* by Gustave Le Rouge, published in 1908 and 1909, respectively, or in C.L. Moore's *Shambleau* (1933) where the vampire is a lamia, part snake, part woman. Most vampire fiction, however, remained rooted in tradition. Stories such as *For the Blood is the Life* by F. Marion Crawford (1900), *The Tomb of Sarah* by F.G. Loring (1910), *An Episode in Cathedral History* by M.R. James (1914) and *Four Wooden Stakes* by Victor Roman (1925) continued in the tradition of the undead rising from their graves to wreak havoc among the living. Jan Neruda's *Vampire* (1927), like Edgar Allan Poe's 1842 short story *The Oval Portrait*, depicts the artist and his artistic obsession as vampiric and fatal to the subjects of his art. Stories such as *Doom of the House of Duryea* by Earl Pierce (1936) depicted vampirism as a family curse passed on from fathers to sons, a metaphor for genetically-transmitted illnesses. Fritz Leiber's *The Girl with the Hungry Eyes* (1949) symbolically links the vampire with the American advertising industry. Dysfunctional family relationships and relationships based on extreme neediness or possessiveness were also depicted as vampiric. Mary Wilkins-Freeman's 1902 short story *Luella Miller* portrays

the stereotypical idle lady of the upper middle classes as a psychic vampire whose need to be cared for literally drains the life out of her servants and her husband. *Seaton's Aunt* by Walter de la Mare (1923) revolves around the figure of the maiden aunt whose ego feeds on the sufferings of others and who finds sadistic pleasure in terrifying and emotionally torturing her nephew. In *The Antimacassar* by Greye La Spina (1949), the vampire is a little girl whose mother's denial of her death and refusal to let her go keeps the child in a state of undeath (Carter 1997, 184), while the mother feeds her voracious daughter on her own blood and on that of unsuspecting strangers.

It was cinema, however, that made the vampire an iconic figure. Tod Browning's 1931 film version of *Dracula,* the first talkie vampire movie, captured the public imagination, and Bela Lugosi's Count became the definitive and most recognisable vampire of popular culture, transforming Dracula into a cultural phenomenon even among people who had never read the novel. The Universal production was not the Count's first appearance in the cinematic world. *Nosferatu,* F. W. Murnau's adaptation of *Dracula,* was released in 1922, but was caught up in a bitter legal battle between Bram Stoker's widow and the German expressionist director over the rights of the novel. Florence Stoker won the lawsuit and Murnau had to remove the film from circulation and destroy it. Luckily for future generations, some copies survived, and the film is now considered to be one of the classics of horror cinema. Another seminal German vampire movie was released in 1932, namely, *Vampyr: Der Traum des Allan Gray* by Carl Theodor Dreyer, which is an adaptation of Le Fanu's *In a Glass Darkly* and more specifically of *Carmilla*. *Vampyr* is another milestone in vampire cinema worldwide. Although it has been criticized for its drastic changes to the original story and its avoidance of the intimacy which is at the heart of the vampire tale (Auerbach 1997, 13), it remains one of the most important vampire films, memorable for its surreal texture, its dream-like filmography and nightmarish scenarios.

In the meantime, Hollywood had not only adapted the Dracula story, but had appropriated the sexuality and allure endemic to the female vampire to promote its

own *femmes fatales*, such as Theda Bara, as exotic and dangerous "vamps". In *Caligari's Children,* S. S. Prawer notes that "in the early days of the cinema, the metaphorical meaning of vampire narrowed down to denote a woman who used her sexual charm to attract and ruin men" (Prawer 1980, 58). A note by story writer John L. Balderston about an early treatment of the script for *Dracula's Daughter* (1936) demonstrates the prevalent mentality at the time when he asserts that

> The use of a female vampire instead of a male gives us the chance to play up SEX and CRUELTY legitimately [...] I want to [...] establish the fact that Dracula's Daughter enjoys torturing her male victims. (Balderston 1936)

The final version of the film, however, portrays the Countess Marya Zaleska not as a woman who tortures men, but more of a tragic heroine at their mercy, a sympathetic vampire vainly trying to fight her monstrous patriarchal legacy by resorting to psychoanalysis. The Countess's predicament reflected that of the female vampire in the literary and cinematic spheres of the time – under the far-reaching influence of Stoker's *Dracula*, the female vampire was portrayed predominantly as a "vamp" in the Hollywood sense of the term, a being defined and trapped by an inherited monstrosity from which there seemed to be no escape.

Dracula's Daughter is a very rare case of an early film with intimations of lesbianism. The cinema would portray lesbianism more explicitly decades later in the Hammer *Karnstein Trilogy*[2] released in the early 1970s, which was based on *Carmilla* (Pirie 2009, 179). The Hammer Horror films of the late fifties and sixties had a huge impact on the future of the cinematic vampire which, by that time, had become stultified and rather a parody of itself. The release of *Horror of Dracula* in 1958, written by Jimmy Sangster, directed by Terence Fisher and starring Peter Cushing as Van Helsing and Christopher Lee as Dracula, launched another vampire craze among adolescents, and Lee, like Lugosi, became another of the iconic faces of Dracula (Holte 1997, 52). The

[2] The *Trilogy* was made up of *The Vampire Lovers* (1970), *Lust for a Vampire* (1971) and *Twins of Evil* (1971).

Hammer productions were aimed at the younger generation, and revolutionised horror film with their use of Technicolor, period settings, overt violence and explicit sexuality. The 1958 *Dracula* was the first vampire movie to show the vampire's fangs (Hutchings 2003, 7), his red eyes and dripping blood. The vampire's kiss was eroticised with the use of close-ups that focused not only on the vampire's fangs closing in on his beautiful victim's neck, but also on the ecstatic expression on the lady's face. At a time when there was a concerted effort by authorities to inculcate the values of domesticity in women, Fisher's *Dracula* advocated women's empowerment (Skal 2004, 265) by focusing on the liberating power of the vampire's bite and on the women's complicity with the vampire and their yearning for him.

The 1950s were a critical decade in the evolution of the vampire genre also owing to the publication of Richard Matheson's 1954 science fiction horror novel *I Am Legend,* one of the most important and influential vampire stories of the twentieth century. It has been adapted for the cinema several times, most notably in *The Last Man on Earth* (1964) and *The Omega Man* (1971), and was also a source of inspiration for George A. Romero's *Night of the Living Dead* (1968). Apart from its contribution to the development of the zombie story, *I Am Legend* re-imagines the vampire myth in scientific terms as a pandemic caused by war and spread by insects and the elements, thereby expanding the traditional generic notion of vampirism as contagion. As a consequence of the transference of vampirism from the realm of the supernatural into the sphere of the natural and man-made, the vampire hunter became an even more ambiguous figure than he was before, since the protagonist Neville, who makes it his life's mission to destroy all the vampires created by the pandemic, is "no more an embodiment of Good than the undead are an embodiment of Evil" (Waller 2010, 258). In fact, towards the end of the story, Neville discovers that those who had been infected while they were still alive had managed to adapt to the germ that caused the contagion and were attempting to build a new society. When they capture him, he

finally sees himself through their eyes as the monster these people perceive him to be, the "black terror" (Matheson 1962, 140) killing them in their sleep during the day.

I Am Legend presents a bleak and devastating picture of a humanity that nearly manages to destroy itself, somehow survives, but still relishes violence and depravity. Neville is shocked by the zest with which members of the new society assault and kill the other strain of survivors, the "vampire-zombies" who had been dead when they were infected, and whom this society considers as less than human. Authors of the genre were increasingly using the vampire as a foil against which to offset human evil, exposing the latter as by far the more destructive and atrocious. This became one of the predominant themes of the genre in the 1970s, which were characterised by a marked disillusionment with the establishment and with humanity in general. David Drake's *Something Had to Be Done* (1975) depicts the war zone as the ideal environment for the vampire to blend in and thrive (Senf 1988, 3). However, the vampire's depredations are nothing when compared to the pain and suffering wrought by Agent Orange, a man-made poison released by the US military on the enemy and on its own soldiers alike. Steven Utley's *Night Life* (1977) draws a parallel between the vampire and human night-time predators in large cities, revealing the latter to be more savage and less merciful than the former.

Stephen King's *'salem's Lot,* published in 1975, is one of the most famous vampire novels to juxtapose the evil of the undead and that of humanity, to the detriment of the latter. A rewriting and reimagining of *Dracula* within an American small-town setting, *'salem's Lot* deconstructs the idyllic image of rural America to expose the corruption that King felt had become embedded in the heart of the country. Springing from the author's disillusionment with politics and the government and his fear of the future, *'salem's Lot*, unlike *Dracula*, does not depict mankind as capable of uniting against evil but, rather, as ready and willing to succumb completely to it. When the vampire, Barlow, arrives in town, he finds that evil has already penetrated the Lot, firmly residing in its citizens' indifference, violence and brutality. Thus, the vampire becomes

merely the externalisation of a pre-existing evil, and the next logical step in mankind's devolution into monstrosity.

The Rise of the Sympathetic Vampire and the Dark Romantic Hero

The 1970s were a milestone decade in the development of the vampire genre, marked by a generic bifurcation that, on the one hand, saw the continuing development of the time-honoured evil vampire, and, on the other, the rise of the sympathetic vampire from its hitherto peripheral existence into the mainstream. At a time when horror was assimilated into mainstream culture, there emerged, as Auerbach says, "a wealth of new vampires, creatures so varied and unprecedented that they decomposed the archetype of The Vampire ..." (Auerbach 1995, 131). This occurred at a time when the vampire seemed to have become once again stagnated in cliché and doomed to a marginalised existence at best. An unexpected paradigm shift, catalysed principally by Anne Rice's *Interview with a Vampire* (1976), gave new life to the genre by turning the narrative focus away from the human and onto the vampire, giving the undead a voice and endowing the sympathetic vampire with new levels of complexity and pathos that resonated with readers like never before (Ramsland 1996, 20).

Rice was not the first to make the sympathetic vampire the protagonist of the narrative, nor even the first to give the vampire the first-person narrative voice. The tendency to portray the undead as sympathetic characters had been building up very slowly but surely since *Varney,* with stories such as Florence Marryat's *The Blood of the Vampire* (1897), E. Everett Evans' *The Undead Die* (1948) or James S. Hart's *The Traitor* (1950). Just a year before the publication of *Interview with a Vampire,* Fred Saberhagen had published *The Dracula Tape,* a retelling of *Dracula* from the vampire's point of view, depicting the Count as a misunderstood individual persecuted by a maniacal and violent Van Helsing. Television, too, played a major role in the promotion of the sympathetic vampire. In the late sixties and early seventies, the

character of Barnabas Collins in the series *Dark Shadows* grew to be immensely popular with audiences and became the focus of the show as a heroic and selfless vampire. In 1974, *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, a television film scripted by Richard Matheson, directed by Dan Curtis and starring Jack Palance as the Count, focused on Dracula's love story with Lucy who is re-imagined as the reincarnation of his lost love (Fry and Craig 2002, 271). Some twenty years later, Francis Ford Coppola would adopt this same premise in his own adaptation of Stoker's novel which cast Mina as the reincarnation of Dracula's wife.

Yet it was *Interview with a Vampire* that undoubtedly had the greatest impact of all, garnering a cult following that continued to grow with the publication of the rest of *The Vampire Chronicles* in the years that followed. Rice created a long saga and her own mythology of vampires and vampirism (Ramsland 1992, 72; Badley 1996, 117–118) that she populated with numerous characters. The first-person narration humanised the vampire, fostering an intimacy with the reader that had not existed before. By making her vampires charismatic, beautiful and tormented beings, objects "of glamorous transcendence and desire" (Rice, quoted by Skal 2004, 274–275), Rice transformed the Otherness that had always inspired fear into the vampire's source of appeal, and the vampire into a powerful incarnation of our desires. The subtexts that had always been part of the vampire's mythology – the loneliness, marginalisation, ambiguous sexuality, and the meaning of evil – were brought to the surface so that Rice's vampires became an embodiment of the human predicament, mirroring our own inner conflicts, dilemmas and soul-searching. Rice returned to the vampire's generic origins and resuscitated the Byronic hero, with all his loneliness, melancholy and decadence (Stein 2009, 80), splitting the two aspects of the Byronic persona into the anguished and gentle Louis, and the rebellious, passionate and ruthless outlaw Lestat.

Anne Billson suggests that vampires became more sympathetic

> perhaps as a result of an erosion in rigid moral standards as once dictated by organised religion, as well as the burgeoning appeal of the rebel outsider, the rise of the conflicted anti-hero and the enshrinement of the individual over the needs of society. (Billson 2013, 15)

Conservative ideologies could not fail to react to this glorification of the individual. Vampire films of the 1980s, such as the coming-of-age movies *Near Dark* and *The Lost Boys*, both released in 1987 at the height of the AIDS crisis, advocate family values and heteronormativity in young men. The protagonists' foray into vampirism – Caleb in *Near Dark* and Michael in *The Lost Boys* – spurred in both cases by the boys' interest in a vampire girl, is short-lived and, in the end, serves only to consolidate conservative family values. The vampire families, presented as rebellious, outlaw and monstrous alternatives to the wholesome American family, are ultimately destroyed and the prodigal sons return to their flock. In order for this to happen, these films portray vampirism as a reversible phenomenon, thus enabling the erring sons to return to their families of origin exactly as they were before. In both cases, the damage caused by the vampire is undone by the human father-figure – Caleb's father, who reclaims his son via a blood transfusion, and Michael's grandfather who kills the King Vampire – thereby restoring the authority of the conventional human patriarchy.

These American films sought to uphold the status quo by representing adolescent flirtation with vampirism as a transitory period of conflict that lures young people temporarily away from their families only to be ultimately rejected in favour of normalcy and the conservative family unit. Yet, on the literary front, many narratives portrayed vampirism as a means of consolidating one's own identity away from the stifling influence of parental authority and societal expectations. Robert Aickman's *Pages from a Young Girl's Journal* (1973), for example, also employs vampirism as a metaphor for the conflicts and rebelliousness of adolescence, with the difference that the vampire in this story is portrayed as the eponymous Girl's means of escape and

liberation from emotionally distant parents and from asphyxiating social norms (Lutz 2006, 33–34). Vampirism becomes a rite of passage to personal freedom and to an existence that is more consonant with the Girl's desires and her quintessential nature.

Far from portraying the vampire as an enemy to mankind, many stories portrayed him or her as a friend, a defender of the weak and oppressed, a creature nurturing ethical aspirations (Carter 1999, 167), more humane, merciful and noble than the greater part of humanity. Chelsea Quinn Yarbro's Saint-Germain, the gentlemanly protagonist of *Hotel Transylvania* (1978), is an erudite, wise and heroic upholder of justice who defends women against the corruption, tyranny and depravity of a debauched patriarchy. Sterling O'Blivion in Jody Scott's *I, Vampire* (1984) takes the human world to task for its senseless cruelty and intolerance, as do *The Gilda Stories* (1991) by Jewelle Gomez. For these vampires, blood-drinking gives rise to guilt and moral dilemmas, and many of them try to survive on blood-substitutes, on animal blood, or, like Rice's vampires, choose to feed only on criminals and wrong-doers, or to take as little blood as possible without killing their victim. The conflict between this new strain of good vampires with a conscience and the evil vampires of tradition who treat human beings like cattle became the narrative focus in novels such as *Fevre Dream* (1982) by George R. R. Martin, the *Vampirates* series (2005–2011) by Justin Somper and *The Southern Vampire Mysteries* (2001–2014) by Charlaine Harris that inspired the popular HBO television series *True Blood* (2008–2014).

By the 1990s, the cinema was finally catching up with the paradigm shift that had occurred nearly two decades before and the sympathetic, angst-ridden male vampire was romanticised and transformed into a heroic love interest. Francis Ford Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992) played a pivotal role with its portrayal of Dracula as a dark romantic hero seeking redemption through love. However, it was television that played the most prominent role in the popularisation of the romantic vampire, one of the main driving forces behind this phenomenon being Joss Whedon's cult series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1996–2003). The love story between Buffy and Angel, the

dark, brooding vampire cursed with a soul, resonated so much with audiences that when Angel left the show, he was replaced by his rival Spike as Buffy's love interest and given his own spin-off series aimed at a more mature audience. *The Vampire Diaries* (2009–2017), another young adult horror series based on the books by L. J. Smith that were published in the nineties, revolves around the love story between a human girl, Elena, and a vampire, Stefan Salvatore. The series was a huge success, especially among teenage audiences who were enthralled by Stefan and by his brother and rival Damon, whose development from villain into another love interest for Elena created a love triangle that had teenage girls rooting for one brother or the other, or both.

A great part of the appeal of vampires like Angel and Spike or Stefan and Damon stems from their moral ambiguity and the precariously fine line they walk between good and evil. Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* saga (2005–2008), on the other hand, does away with this precariousness by minimising the demonic aspect of the vampire Edward and re-costuming him instead as a fairy-tale prince charming and as the traditional hero and protector of romance fiction (Murphy 2011, 58–59), forever on a quest to save his damsel-in-distress. The *Twilight* series has been criticised for its misogynistic and racist subtexts that glorify abusive relationships, women's subservience to men and the superiority of affluent white people over ethnic communities (Butler 2013, 13–17). Despite its problematic aspects, however, the series was another huge success for vampire literature and film, so much so that, in its wake, the young adult market was inundated with romances featuring not only amorous vampires but also werewolves, angels, aliens and other assorted supernatural creatures.

The transformation of the vampire into the ideal boyfriend or love interest draws on the sexual allure and magnetism that have always formed part of the figure's literary mythology, but it is also symptomatic of disillusionment with traditional notions of romance, and of a keener sense of mankind's failings. These romantic depictions highlight the glamour and superhuman prowess of the undead, whose immortality promises a love that is permanent and eternal, as suggested by the tagline to Coppola's

Dracula that reads "Love Never Dies"*,* but other less-conventional vampire narratives dig deeper and focus instead on the lack of human connection implied by these paradigms. The 2004 novel by John Ajvide Lindqvist *Let the Right One In*, and the films *Only Lovers Left Alive* (2013) and *A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night* (2014) present a very bleak outlook of the human condition, exposing and decrying humankind's loneliness, misery, indifference and self-destructive impulses. By departing from the mainstream and from generic traditions while remaining true to the essence of the vampire, these narratives offer fresh perspectives by casting a critical eye on humanity and challenging definitions of monstrosity. Lindqvist's *Let the Right One In* combines the vampire story with stark social realism and portrays the development of a friendship between a human child, Oskar, and a vampire child, Eli, both of whom have a history of abuse, loneliness and neglect. Although, as we have seen, motifs such as the vampire-mother connection, absent and/or neglectful parents, and the special, intimate relationship between the vampire and its victim, have been recurring generic motifs since the nineteenth century, never have they been as relevant as they are today. Oskar, one of society's invisible children, who is physically and emotionally bullied by his classmates and neglected by his parents, finds in Eli his one and only friend, and his knowledge of the vampire's true nature and of its ferocity is no obstacle to this friendship. Likewise, Arash in Ana Lily Amirpour's *A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night* still chooses to leave Bad City with the girl vampire, even after he realises that she has killed his father. In both stories, vampire and human find in each other a means of escaping loneliness, isolation and the hostile environment they inhabit.

These stories also engage in a discourse about the burden and solitude of immortality and the decadence of the human race, which is a discourse they share with Jim Jarmusch's *Only Lovers Left Alive.* The angst-ridden and potentially suicidal reclusive musician Adam refers to human beings as "zombies" who are afraid of their own imaginations, animated by nothing more than a desire for destruction. Like Bad City in Amirpour's film which is peopled by drug addicts, gangsters and prostitutes, and where

the dead are thrown into an open pit like so much rubbish, Detroit and Tangier are desolate environmental and moral wastelands, ghost towns whose inhabitants are not truly living but rather existing in a state of living-death (Michaud–Lapointe 2015, 12–13). Driven by greed and vice, this diseased humanity has contaminated its own blood and now poses a threat not only to itself, but also to the vampires. To Adam, the "zombies" seem to be caught in an inescapable downward spiral that causes him to despair and to contemplate ending his own life. In the midst of all this human wreckage, Eve reminds him of the things worth living for, of their passion for beauty in all its forms, and their centuries-old love and friendship that is so intimate and close that it transcends death, time and even the devastation and contamination of humanity:

> How can you have lived for so long and still not get it? This self-obsession, it's a waste of living. It could be spent on surviving things, appreciating nature, nurturing kindness and friendship. And dancing.

Conclusion

The fictional vampire has developed from the monstrous embodiment of evil of the nineteenth century into the embodiment of an ideal for a toxic and sickened humanity to aspire to. Director Guillermo del Toro maintains that monsters are our friends, and, indeed, the vampire has always spoken to us about what it means to be human, showing us that the far greater danger to humanity lies in humanity itself. Its versatility and resilience has enabled the vampire to assume different forms at different times, expressing each generation's unconscious fears and desires while hiding them behind its monstrous form. It is very difficult to predict how the vampire will change in the future, what direction vampire narratives will take, and what questions they will ask, but what is certain is that these creatures that are so disturbingly close to us will continue to encourage analytical discourses about what it means to be truly human.

Bibliographical note:

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Abstrakti: Vampyyri-hahmon evoluutio populaarissa kerronnassa 1800-luvulta nykyaikaan

Vampyyri on yksi voimakkaimmista ja pysyvimmistä arkkityypeistä, joita 1800-luvun kirjallisuus on meille tuottanut, ja se on säilynyt luultavasti suosituimpana epäkuolleiden ilmentymänä populaarikulttuurissa. Vampyyri on ihmisyyden peilikuva ehkä enemmän kuin mikään muu hirviö. Kuten Nina Auerbach sanoo uraauurtavassa teoksessaan *Our Vampire, Ourselves*: jokainen sukupolvi luo oman vampyyrinsa. Vampyyrit ovat syvimpien pelkojemme ja villeimpien halujemme ruumiillistumia, ne ilmentävät menneisyyttä, joka ei suostu pysymään haudattuna, ahdistustamme väistämättömän sosiaalisen muutoksen edessä ja pelkoamme sosiaalista ja etnistä toiseutta kohtaan. Ne ovat signifioijia, jotka paljastavat sen, mitä tahdomme kätkeä. Jotkut vampyyreista näyttävät ylläpitävän asioiden vallitsevaa tilaa ja jäykkää patriarkaalista järjestelmää, toiset uhmaavat sosiaalista ja moraalista järjestystä vapauttamalla tukahdutettuja intohimoja ja latenttia seksuaalisuutta ja olemalla itsessään kaiken sellaisen ruumiillistuma, mitä sosio-normatiivisuus vihaa ja tukahduttaa.

Tässä katsauksessa käsitellään vampyyri-hahmon evoluutiota populaarissa kerronnassa tarkastelemalla sen toimintaa sekä sitä, millä tapaa hahmo on muuttunut poliittisen ja sosiaalisen ilmaston muuttumisen myötä, kunkin hahmon luoneen, uudelleenluoneen ja uudelleenkeksineen kulttuurin tarpeiden mukaisesti. Tarkoituksena on analysoida niitä erilaisia rooleja, joita vampyyrilla on ollut kautta lähes koko kahden vuosisadan tarkastelemalla erinäisiä kirjallisia tekstejä, elokuvia ja televisiosarjoja, jotka ovat huomattavasti vaikuttaneet vampyyri-hahmon kehittymiseen ja sen säilymiseen merkittävänä: John Polidorin novellista *The Vampyre* Bram Stokerin Draculaan ja Murnaun, Dreyerin ja Hammer Studiosin elokuvateoksiin aina 1900-luvun loppuun ja 2000-luvun alkuun asti, sekä Anne Ricen ja Stephen Kingin teoksiin, Joss Whedonin kulttitelevisiosarjoihin *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (suom. *Buffy, vampyyrintappaja*) ja *Angel*, *Twilight*-saagaan ja sellaisiin tuoreisiin filmeihin kuin *Only Lovers Left Alive* ja *A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night* saakka.

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KIRJA-ARVIO

Tarpeeksi vanha kuolemaan?

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Vapaa tutkija, sosiaalihistorian dosentti

Barbara Ehrenreich, *Natural Causes. An Epidemic of Wellness, the Certainty of Dying, and Killing Ourselves to Live Longer.* Twelve, New York ja Boston, 2018. 234 sivua.

Kuoleman vältteleminen on nykyihmisen aktiviteeteista hallitsevimpia. Mistä muusta syystä söisimme terveellisesti, kuntoilisimme rasitusvammoihin saakka, tutkisimme geenejämme ja ajattelisimme positiivisesti hampaat irvessä? Toki elämänlaatu sinänsä on tavoittelemisen arvoinen asia, mutta kuoleman lykkääminen mahdollisimman kauaksi on tunnustettu tavoite yksilöiden ja kansanterveyden tasolla. Keskimääräinen elinikä kertoo väestön hyvinvoinnista, kokonaisuutena ja eri ryhmien kohdalla. Tulotaso, koulutus, asuinpaikka ja sukupuoli vaikuttavat kaikki siihen, missä iässä ja miten ihminen todennäköisimmin kuolee.

Barbara Ehrenreichin teos *Natural Causes* on ansioistaan huolimatta melko niukka näiden yhteiskunnallisten erojen suhteen. Yhdysvaltain köyhän valkoihoisen väestön viimeaikainen kuolleisuuden nousu on kiinnostava ilmiö, johon Ehrenreich lyhyesti paneutuu. Köyhyys itsessään on kuolleisuutta nostava tekijä, mutta köyhyyteen sisältyvä toivottomuus ja tulevaisuudenuskon katoaminen lisäävät sitä usein dramaattisesti. Tämä on havaittu niin eri seutujen alkuperäiskansojen keskuudessa kuin Venäjällä Neuvostoliiton hajoamisen jälkeen, ja nyt Yhdysvalloissa.

Ehrenreich on kirjoittanut amerikkalaisen yhteiskunnan merkillisyyksistä paljon aiemmissa teoksissaan, joten asian vähäinen käsittely tässä teoksessa on sikäli

perusteltua. Terveydenhuollon osalta hän keskittyy luonnollisesti lähinnä Yhdysvaltain tilanteeseen, jossa kunkin henkilön vakuutuksen kattavuus määrittää hänen saamiensa tutkimusten ja hoidon määrän, ainakin ellei rahaa ole loputtomasti käytettävissä.

Ehrenreich ei sitä aivan suoraan sano, mutta suomalaiselle lukijalle syntyy käsitys monien, jatkuvasti toistuvien tutkimusten pakollisuudesta, jotta vakuutusta voidaan jatkaa. Tämä koskee erityisesti laajasti vakuutettua väestönosaa eli keski- ja yläluokkaa. Näistä tutkimuksista lääkärit ja sairaalat saavat tulonsa, koska vakuutusyhtiöt ovat valmiit maksamaan ne.

Media lehdistöstä viihteeseen saakka taas on täynnä tarinoita amerikkalaisista, joiden sairastaminen tuhoaa perheen talouden, kun vakuutus ei kata hoitokuluja. Teoksen ”me” on kuitenkin selvästi ylempi keskiluokka, jolla on suurimmat taloudelliset mahdollisuudet ja sosiaaliset paineet ylläpitää terveyttään kaikin keinoin.

Natural Causes kokoaa yhteen, joskus hieman hajanaisen tuntuisesti, erilaiset kuoleman lykkäämiseen pyrkivät keinot. Loputtomat tutkimukset on jo mainittu, samoin kuntoilun eli tyylikkäämmin sanottuna fitnessin valtavirtaistuminen ja suoranainen pakollisuus. Mielen hallinta, jonka monet tuntevat parhaiten – samoin englanninkielisellä termillä – mindfulnessina, tähtää henkisen hyvinvoinnin ja aivokapasiteetin tehokkaan käytön lisäksi fyysisen hyvinvoinnin lisäämiseen.

Kehoaan pitää kuunnella. Tämä on jo perustietoutta melkeinpä kaikille. Mutta miten hyvin kehoaan – tai lääkäreitä – kuunteli vaikkapa Steve Jobs, jonka lähinnä hedelmistä koostunut ruokavalio Ehrenreichin mukaan jopa pahensi hänen haimasyöpäänsä? Piilaakso on mindfulnessin kehto, ja kuolemattomuuspyrkimykset ovat siellä erityisen voimakkaita, transhumanismin usko vanhenemisen vapaaehtoisuuteen suosittua. Keho on tässä ajatussuuntauksessa kuitenkin vain mielen väline, ja keho voidaan vaihtaa uuteen, jos ja kun teknologia sen sallii.

Ehrenreich käyttää runsaasti tieteellistä tutkimustietoa teoksensa taustalla. Hän kertoo aluksi, miten on oman ikääntymisensä myötä päättänyt jättää turhiksi tietämänsä

tutkimukset omalta osaltaan väliin. Olisin odottanut, että tähän teemaan olisi palattu teoksen lopussa hieman tarkemmin. Toki Ehrenreich päättää teoksen kauniin lyyrisesti ajatukseen siitä, miten minuudesta luopuminen on osa kuoleman hyväksymistä – vaikka minun elämäni ei jatku, maailma jatkuu ja se on helpottava eikä pelottava ajatus.

Kuolemanpelon lievittämiseksi tehtyjä kokeita psykedeeleillä Ehrenreich pitää osoituksena siitä, miten minuus, tuo nykyihmisen tärkein omaisuus ja jatkuva kehittämiskohde, nimenomaan saa ihmisen pelkäämään kuolemaa. Onko maailma ilman minua mahdollinen? Voiko minun maailmani kadota? Psykedeelien tuoma kokemus sulautumisesta ja minuuden katoamisesta on tutkimuksissa saanut esimerkiksi parantumattomasti sairaiden kuolemanpelon katoamaan tai huomattavasti vähenemään.[1]

Ihmisen kyky hallita kuolemaa ja kuolevaisuutta on viimeisten vuosisatojen aikana siirtynyt uskonnollisista keinoista lääketieteeseen. Ehrenreich kuvaa laajasti sitä, miten lääketiede pystyy kyllä tekemään monenlaisia asioita ihmisen parantamiseksi, mutta sairauksien estäminen on paljon vaikeampaa. Ihmiskeho voi toimia myös itseään vastaan: hyvälaatuiset solut voivat muuttua pahanlaatuisiksi kasvaimiksi ja syöjäsolut eli makrofagit ryhtyä jopa yllyttämään syöpäsoluja leviämään. Immuunipuolustus voi kääntyä ihmistä vastaan, kuten diabeteksessa. Elimistö ei vain yksissä tuumin yritä selviytyä, vaan sen sisällä on monenlaisia pyrkimyksiä. Vai voiko yksittäisellä solulla olla pyrkimyksiä? Tätä Ehrenreich pohtii pitkään, onhan se valtavirran tiedenäkemyksen vastaista.

Hän päätyy siihen, että kenties animistiset esi-isämme olivat jossain määrin oikeassa ja maailma kuhisee elämää kaikilla tasoilla, joskus myös tietoista toimintaa. Yksijumalaisten uskontojen ja niiden yhä tiukemmin monoteististen muotojen kehittyminen edelsi luonnontieteen valta-asemaa. Samaan aikaan kehittyi minuuden (*self*) käsite, ja itsen esille tuomisesta, analysoinnista ja tarkkailusta alkoi mindfulnessiin päättyvä kehitys. Näitä asioita on toisissa yhteyksissä käsitelty paljon laajemmin ja

[1] Kupferschmidt 2016.

syvällisemmin, ja tuntuu kuin Ehrenreichilla olisi tullut teoksen lopussa jo hieman kiire, tai halu tehdä suurempia johtopäätöksiä puuttui.

Tai sitten hän arveli kirjan sisällön puhuvan puolestaan. Ehrenreich ei puutu viime vuosien ja vuosikymmenten hyvä kuolema -keskusteluun, ei saattohoitoon eikä sairaalakuoleman ongelmiin. Hänen painotuksensa on toisaalla: kuvitelmassa, että kuoleman voisi jotenkin voittaa hallitsemalla ruumistaan ja mieltään tehokkaasti. Onnistuneen vanhenemisen käsite kuvastaa tätä ajattelua. Kuolema on ehkä sittenkin väistämätön, mutta siihen halutaan päätyä pitkän ajan päästä, nopeasti ja tehokkaasti. Epäonnistunut vanheneminen on vaivojen rampauttamaa, kivuliasta ja avuttomuuden leimaamaa. Aktiivinen seniori pitää jokaisen oleman, kunnes kuolee tyylikkäästi lyhyen sairauden jälkeen.

Natural Causes käsittelee nimensä mukaisesti hyvin pitkälti elimistön toimintaa ja perustuu luonnontieteiden tutkimuksiin. Olisin humanistis-yhteiskuntatieteellisenä tutkijana odottanut siltä hieman laajempaa paneutumista siihen, miten tutkimustieto suhteutuu ihmisten mielikuviin kuolemaan johtavista syistä.

Kuoleman luonnollisuus ei ole nykykulttuurissa, edes tai varsinkaan Yhdysvalloissa niin outo asia kuin Ehrenreichin teos antaa ymmärtää. Pikemminkin teos itsessään on osa liikehdintää, jossa kuolemaa ei enää haluta lykätä kaikin keinoin mahdollisimman kauaksi, eikä peitellä kuoleman todellisuutta. Ainakin Suomessa lääkärit perinteisesti naurahtavat määrätessään yli 80-vuotialle potilaalle lääkkeitä, joilla saattaa olla sivuvaikutuksia kymmenen vuoden käytön jälkeen, eivätkä systemaattisesti kiellä kaikkia herkkuja iäkkäiltä ihmisiltä. Pikemminkin käskevät syömään kunnolla ja edes jotain.

Onnistunut ikääntyminen toki kiinnostaa meilläkin, onhan vanhustenhuollon todellisuus joskus karmea, eikä kukaan halua odotella kuolemaa vuosikausia laitoksessa. Mutta siihen eivät, kuten Ehrenreich muistuttaa, auta vain omat parhaat

pyrkimykset. Ihmisen elimistö elää sananmukaisesti omaa elämäänsä, joskus sairastuen ominkin päin ilman ulkoisia ärsykkeitä.

Juuri tämä harmonian ja hallittavuuden puute on Ehrenreichin teoksen keskeinen teesi. Monien sairauksien syntymekanismit ovat edelleen epäselviä, eikä terveys ole reilu ja tasapuolinen asia. Kuolema on ohjelmoitu meihin kaikkiin, ja toiset se kohtaa aiemmin kuin toiset. Ajatus siitä, että kuolemakin ”on vain itsestä kiinni”, on paikkansapitämätön ja myös julma.

Kuolemaa pidetään ”taistelun häviämisenä”, millä tuodaan suorastaan sotilaallista mystiikkaa tilanteeseen jossa lääketieteen keinot eivät riittäneet ja elimistön omat mekanismit jopa pahensivat tilannetta. Ehrenreich toteaa, että ajatus vaikkapa syöpää vastaan taistelevasta kehosta pitää vain osittain paikkansa. Solujen toiminta on paljon monimutkaisempaa, ja vaikkapa Wikipedian edelleen täysin hyväntahtoisina pitämät syöjäsolut eli makrofagit voivat kääntyä pahiksiksi tilaisuuden tullen.[2]

Samoin psyyke, johon moni luottaa nykyään rajattomasti, voi tehdä tepposet ja ohjelmoida kuoleman ihmiseen.

> The philosopher/immunologist Albert Tauber wrote of the self as a metaphor for the immune system, but that metaphor can be turned around to say that the immune system is a metaphor of the self. Its ostensible job is the defense of the organism, but it is potentially a treacherous defender, like the Praetorian guard that turns its swords against the emperor. Just as the immune system can unleash the inflammations that ultimately kill us, the self can pick at a psychic scar – until a detectable illness appears, such as obsessive-compulsive disorder, depression or crippling anxiety.

Tiivistäen kääntäen: psyyke voi olla immuunijärjestelmän vertauskuva, kuten immuunijärjestelmän voi nähdä psyyken vertauskuvana. Kummankin tehtävä on suojella elävää olentoa, mutta molemmat voivat kääntyä sitä vastaan.

[2] Ks. *Wikipedia*-artikkeli “Makrofagi”.

Immuunijärjestelmä voi kehittää tappavan tulehduksen ja psyyke taas pakko-oireita, masennuksen tai ahdistuksen.

Ehrenreich ei ehdota, että luopuisimme lääketieteestä, hoidoista tai edes myönteisestä ajattelusta. Sen sijaan hän esittää, että jossain iässä – hänen oman kokemuksensa mukaan yli 70-vuotiaana – ihminen voi ja saa jo kokea olevansa tarpeeksi vanha kuolemaan. Jokainen epäilemättä arvioi tilanteensa itse, ja kuten eutanasiankin tapauksessa, kaltevan pinnan argumentti on helppo esittää. Eli tietynikäisiä ihmisiä ei enää hoidettaisi kunnolla, ei tutkittaisi eikä terapoitaisi, vaan ajateltaisiin heidän jo joutavan kuolla.

Ehrenreichin teoksen päätelmä onkin vielä hyvissä voimissa olevan, elämäänsä hallitsevan ihmisen ajattelua. Hänen kokoamansa kuolemaan suhtautumisen ja kuoleman fyysisen todellisuuden tekijät ovat mielenkiintoinen ajankuva ja varsinkin lääketieteestä kiinnostuneelle maallikolle avartava tietopaketti. Kuolemantutkimuksesta ja erilaisista kuolemamyönteisyyden keskusteluista Ehrenreichin teos on kuitenkin melkoisen tietämätön. Ne eivät ehkä olisi kuuluneet aiheeseen, mutta nekin ovat osa aikaa, jossa ihmiset sinnittelevät elääkseen mahdollisimman terveinä mahdollisimman pitkään – joskus turhaan.

Kirjoittaja:

Ilona Pajari on vapaa tutkija ja sosiaalihistorian dosentti Jyväskylän yliopistossa. Hänen tutkimusaiheisiinsa kuuluvat suomalaisten hautajaisten historia, toisen maailmansodan aikainen sankarikuolemankulttuuri, suomalaiset hautausmaat sekä uskonnoton hautajaiskulttuuri Suomessa.

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