

TOWARDS A ZOMBIE THEORY FROM SIX FEET ABOVE

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İSTANBUL BİLGİ ÜNİVERSİTESİ

SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ

KARŞILAŞTIRMALI EDEBİYAT YÜKSEK LİSANS PROGRAMI

SÜHA OĞUZERTEM

EKİM 2014

TOWARDS A ZOMBIE THEORY FROM SIX FEET ABOVE

İKİ METRE YUKARIDAN BİR ZOMBİ TEORİSİNE DOĞRU

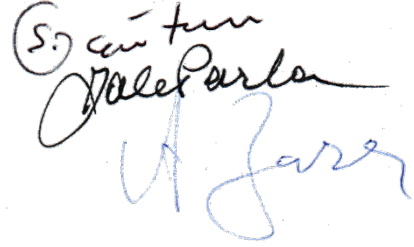
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Tezin Onaylandığı Tarih:

08.10.2014

Toplam Sayfa Sayısı:

78

Anahtar Kelimeler (İngilizce)

Anahtar Kelimeler (Türkçe)

1. The Zombie

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ÖZET

YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ

İKİ METRE YUKARIDAN BİR ZOMBİ TEORİSİNE DOĞRU

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Danışman: Dr. Süha Oğuzertem

2014, 78 Sayfa

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Bu çalışma, edebi, felsefi, sosyo-politik, kültürel ve bilimsel laboratuvarlardan insana dair varlıkbilimsel bir incelemeyi, 21. yüzyılda yaygınlaşmakta olan fantastik bir unsur olarak kurgulanan zombi motifinin güncel popülerliğini, insanın benlik ve kimlik teşhisi sorgulamalarının temelinde yatan temsil ihtiyacından aldığına dair bir zombi teorisini tartışmaktadır.

Bu çalışmanın ilk bölümü, zombi kavramının kökenlerini, bu olguya zemin hazırlayan coğrafi, kültürel, politik ve tarihsel platformlardan yola çıkarak açıklamayı amaçlar. Bu bağlamda, ne kadar insanız, ölmek ve yaşamak birer hak mıdır, olmak mı, ölmek mi gibi sorular, 18. yüzyıldan günümüze görsel ve yazılı eserler üzerinden incelenir.

Tezin ikinci bölümü, insanın hem kendi yadsıması hem de kendi kimliklendirmesi gerçeği dolayısıyla zombinin varlığını, ölüm ve yaşam arasındaki kısır döngünün getirdiği hissiyatsızlık, yabancılaşma, zamansızlık, devamlılığın sekteye uğraması, dil-ses-bilinç ve sonuç olarak benlik kaybı ve ötekileşme üzerinden tartışır. İnsanlığın masumiyetini yitirmesi ve yaşanan dünyada varolmanın doğal haline yabancılaşması hikâyeleri insanlığın muhtemel sonuna dair bir soruyu gündeme getirmiş ve varolmanın dehşeti sonsuz boyutlar kazanarak bir zombi teorisinin oluşabilmesine zemin hazırlamıştır. Felsefi ve edebi eserler ışığında, insanlığın görmezden geldiği kabul edilemez gerçekliklerin zombi kavramında beden bulup bulmadığı bu çalışma kapsamında sorgulanmıştır.

Anahtar sözcükler: zombi, kendilik, öteki, hiçlik, insan-sonrasılık.

ABSTRACT
MASTER THESIS
TOWARDS A ZOMBIE THEORY FROM SIX FEET ABOVE

DERYA ÇINAR

Thesis Supervisor: Dr. Süha Oğuzertem

2014, 78 p.

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This study aims at viewing a zombie theory based on a need for representation underlying the questions of self and identity of the human through the laboratories of literature, philosophy, socio politics, culture, and science and includes the current popularity of the motif of the zombie fictionalized as an element of fantasy pervading in the twenty-first century.

The first part of the study aims at clarifying the origins of the concept of zombie through the geographical, cultural, political and historical platforms paving the way for this phenomenon. At this stage, questions such as how much human we are, whether dying and living are natural rights and whether to live or to die is a better choice have been maintained in terms of visual and written works since the eighteenth century.

The second part of this study discusses the presence of zombie through human's reality of self-negation and self-identification via indifference, alienation, timelessness, the ruptured continuity, the loss of sound, language and consciousness, and ultimately the loss of self and the other. The fable of humanity's loss of innocence and alienation from a natural way of being in the world brings about a question for a probable endgame of humanity and the dread of being transforms into infinite dimensions where a zombie theory in the making could stem from. In the light of literary and philosophical works, whether the pretension of humanity against its own unacceptable realities is incarnated in the concept of zombie has been questioned within the body of this study.

Keywords: the zombie, self, the other, nothingness, post-humanism.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

During my studies at İstanbul Bilgi University, Dr. Süha Oğuzertem, by courtesy of whom, the intellectual aura has been able to take its form encompassing my academic curiosities. His excellence as a mentor and a scholar has always been incomparable since rarely could a university lecturer be credited for being both precise and compassionate. His incessant encouragement and meticulous monitoring have rendered this Master thesis possible. Prof. Dr. Jale Parla is the very lecturer whose seminars have gone beyond lectures and it is her professorship which has led me into the world of literature. I believe the word “metamorphosis” wouldn’t be better delivered and felt but for her. She is the angel on the shoulder of literature. Assistant Professor Selen Vanessa Ansen is the living proof how incessant flows of sophisticated philosophical thoughts could turn into a fine music in classroom situations. Her very kind and pleasant manners and her very clever presentations have helped me perceive many challenging theories.

Finally, Göktuğ Çınar, who is my muse and my better half, has always been the strength and courage I need. Without him, none would be possible.

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INTRODUCTION

The presence of the zombie, a concept depicted and examined primarily in literary, cultural and scientific pulpits, arises curiosity with regards to the existence and frequency of its popularity whilst its current reputation prevails and further covers premises of computer games, comic books, films, fashion and music. To give an example, *The Walking Dead*, which is an award-winning American post-apocalyptic horror drama television series, has recorded viewership of 16.1 million since its premiere in 2010. Whether this fascination of the viewers with the "walkers" in the series lies in their need for identification with these flesh-eating creatures is worth questioning. This is what inaugurates a scholarly investigation of the figure of living dead within this thesis, the scope of which aims at questioning a probable zombie theory based on the issue of identification with its emphasis on the self and the other in literary and cultural trajectories via lenses of life-death, individual-society, time-space, and essentially through being-nothingness.

Given the notion of zombie evolution or the concept of human metamorphosis together with human civilization, questions may arise as to whether the zombie resembles our prehistoric past, acts as a mirror reflecting our present anxieties, or suggests if the future will house a more evolved post-humanity or merely the graves of a failed civilization. In the case of the zombie, their metaphysical world totally rejects the boundary between life and death. A puppet possessed of life would evoke such horror since it would negate all conceptions of a natural physicalism and affirm metaphysics of nightmare and chaos. Without narrowing the scope of the status of zombie down to its popularity in films, it is worth considering that this concept, which exists in various audio, visual and written works, has not evolved within texts; on the contrary, it appears to be a metamorphosis giving shape to the texts. What is more, should the concept of

zombie be regarded as laying emphasis on post-humanism, then the concept of “infinite othering” constituting a basis for self identification will need to be underlined. As for the recent popularity of the zombie, it has been used in various discourses primarily in novels, and as a consequence of the estranged society at odds with itself, in performance arts and demonstrations by means of which the audience can be both the character and even the writer of his own zombie story.

Should alteration under control be ascribed to metamorphosis, does zombie, being a fantastic concept, emerge merely as a mobile corpse returned from the dead, or is it rather a representative of a vicious cycle or even a failure in metamorphosis itself? Is death as natural as life itself? Can everybody exercise the right of mortality? If answers to these questions and similar inquiries are sought through the lenses of being and nothingness, they might be found in the simultaneous and controversial state of the self having both the subject and object qualities in Jean-Paul Sartre’s work *Being and Nothingness*.

Another irony of the presence of the zombie today is the fact that this creature which is representative of the loss of self merely craves for human flesh which ultimately transforms into nothing but once again the zombie itself. Therefore, the concepts of lack of communication, language, memory and silence on the grounds of the arguments of loss of self and identity will be worth examining with respect to individual and society. The historical repertoire of memory erosion and the concept of otherization within societies besides the metamorphoses observed in those individuals and societies subsequent to wars or certain social post-traumatic states might have led the human to write his autobiography. At this point, Deborah Christie and Sarah Juliet Lauro’s *Better off Dead: The Evolution of the Zombie As Post-Human*, and Sarah Wasson and Emily Alder's *Gothic Science Fiction 1980-2010* will serve as the

backbones of this thesis as two significant sources. The zombie, neither being able to give up on the past nor willing to become a part of the future reserves the components of both gothic and science-fiction genres. We may then question by virtue of the human experiment conducted in the metamorphosis machine within Gothic science fiction whether the zombie advocates the phenomenon “to die or not being able to die at all” rather than the one “to be or not to be.”

The zombie is an everlasting beginning. His migration through these pages will follow a historical map, yet zombie itself doesn't need a map of his own; it challenges the linear patterns of history and instead orbits in a circular pattern around the human planet. The uncanniness is what gives the zombie its mere peculiarity. The term is used under the category of the genre of “supernatural horror” in which there is a reference to nonhuman forms that disport human qualities. As for the zombie, who is the undead and the monster of paradox, things are neither one thing or another; in their uncanny and supernatural aspects, the underlying phenomenon for the study of a zombie theory is based on the fact that things that are discovered can be two things at once, which is rather horrifying for human beings, of course, since humans live in a physical world which is controlled by the seemingly steadfast rules of either being alive or dead.

Then, when do we perceive the presence of the zombie? Naturally, when we choose to do so. Moreover, what we see in a portrayal of the zombie could still be beguiling since the human, in his self-deception, keeps his secret well hidden in his mind for fear that he betray to himself a secret too terrible to accept.

In his book entitled *The Conspiracy against the Human Race*, Thomas Ligotti unravels this self-mask:

All supernatural horror obtains in what we believe should be and should not be. As scientists, philosophers, and spiritual figures have

testified, our heads are full of illusions; things, including human things, are not dependably what they seem. Yet one thing we know for sure: the difference between what is natural and what is not. Another thing we know is that nature makes no blunders so untoward as to allow things, including human things, to swerve into supernaturalism. Were it to make such a blunder, we would do everything in our power to bury this knowledge. But we need not resort to such measures, being as natural as we are. No one can prove that our life in this world is a supernatural horror, nor cause us to suspect that it might be. Anybody can tell you that—not least a contriver of books that premise the supernatural, the uncanny, and the frightfully paradoxical as essential to our nature. (18)

Let us then examine the diverse approaches to conceptual phenomena that seem to illustrate philosophical views: the hidden secret of humanity could easily be in disguise of the zombie phenomenon, which we look forward to meeting with an unawareness that there's an I within us, deep, deeper than ourselves. What was once the home of all things tends to be alienated due to its uncanny quality, which is defined to be “unheimlich” by Sigmund Freud in his essay entitled “The Uncanny”:

I will relate an instance taken from psychoanalytical experience; if it does not rest upon mere coincidence, it furnishes a beautiful confirmation of our theory of the uncanny. It often happens that male patients declare that they feel there is something uncanny about the female genital organs. This *unheimlich* place, however, is the entrance to the former heim [home] of all human beings, to the place where everyone dwelt once upon a time and in the beginning. There is a humorous saying: ‘Love is home-sickness’; and whenever a man dreams of a place

or a country and says to himself, still in the dream, ‘this place is familiar to me, I have seen there before’, we may interpret the place as being his mother’s genitals or her body. In this case, too, the *unheimlich* is what *heimlich*, homelike, familiar was once; the prefix ‘un’ is the token of repression. (15)

This thesis consists of two parts, the first of which is entitled “An Automaton Biography” and is further broken down into two subsections: “From Cradle to the Grave” and “Beyond the Grave” respectively. The first part focuses on the variations of the definitions of the zombie, its categories and recent reflections through a historical understanding. The extraordinary metamorphosis of the human in gothic science fiction through the eighteenth to the twenty-first centuries will be discussed by means of points of transition as manifested in these centuries. While the zombie is depicted as a cultural, political and religious product and a phenomenon, definitions of which depending on the onlooker in the scope of socio-history, this presence with seemingly supernatural powers had tribal origins. In fact, it starts its journey as an African-originated spirit and then appears to be the representative of dead bodies reanimated as a consequence of sacred rituals within Haitian culture, and lastly turns into the aggressive, flesh-eating fictionalized creature of today as a threat against the individual’s existential predicament. The evolution of the zombie mythology in the western thought has been analyzed around metaphysical, epistemological and ontological studies since the eighteenth century. As result of this, the increasing appeal of the concept of zombie in the twenty-first century may convey a feature of this mythology which triggers the existential worry of humanity with regards to its own mortality or rather its transient state.

The second part of the thesis is entitled “A Self-Autopsy” and it is divided into two subsections as “Humanimalism” and “Exodus” successively, which attempt to monitor the zombie theory itself via cultural, political, psychoanalytic, and psycho-philosophical lenses. In these sections, the existential nature of the zombie and the relationship between the self and the myth are examined. The psychological duality between what is “I” and “Not I” which is apparent in self identification and negation, underlies the zombie theory and it is in fact woven within the infinite depths of the individual. The objectivity of the zombie is the innate material where the metamorphosis of human to post-human and ultimately to non-human takes place; therefore, a body, the foundations of which lay in such an abyss, is not considered to be the homeland of life. The zombie theory in this study argues that the most basic human instinct is not rooted in life or death but rather in the seductive fear of purgatory.

Controversial as they might be, the following arguments will pursue varied research questions and hopefully they will be for the most part complementary rather than incompatible with a focus on the phenomenon of zombie as the object of comparison.

PART ONE.

AN AUTOMATON BIOGRAPHY

Fictions of bodily transformation might serve as new technologies of writing; their corporeal formations comprise a cultural history of narrative transformations. As we may notice these metamorphoses when Daphne turns into a laurel tree or Narcissus into a flower, the biographies of these narratives represent the formation or reformation of self-reflection of humans. Hardly has there been a time in history where the lived lives of people have to confront a critical question for what marks the human species. One might like to follow the roads and stations in order to analyze these biographies of human experience; however, it might be the accidents in between those stations which may mark the biographies of the silent. Therefore, what the zombie fetches from the afterlife is constitutive of a unique experience beyond the limits of human perception which the library of Babel wouldn't overlook. While tracing the chain of this utterly unfamiliar notion, it will be noticed that various definitions have been proposed with the hope that this conception running directly counter to the orthodox doctrines may assert a pure experience for those six feet above.

Contemporary fiction portrays the perils of human status in disguise of demonic creatures like those of pre-modern folks and legends, and human constructions transform into non-human agencies through spiritual metaphors. The modern depictions of bodily metamorphoses focus on organizations of biological elements with no turning back. They are uncanny syntheses which tend to refuse renaturalization. Kafka's "Metamorphosis" stands for this type of metamorphosis. Yet, we will see whether this is the case with the post-human metamorphosis in the portrayal of the zombie. How the surreal phenomenon of this creature turns into an almost indistinguishable reality will

be what is portrayed and autopsied in the laboratories primarily of literature, audio-visual arts, computer games, discourse analysis, philosophy, popular culture and science. This candidate to be the representative of post-human condition will try to pass through the hallway of literature in this text bearing in mind the uncanny question or the expectation as to whether it is to stay or to leave is a better choice. The influence of the zombie fiction in the fields of cultural studies, literature, and philosophy has apparently been immense, as it has pervaded all modern questions concerning being and nothingness. Furthermore, we may look at the immortal and timeless qualities of this entity with a view to a change from the finite to the infinite. The accidents, or rather the errors, along the way, may reveal the truth behind the undying quality of this entity. In his book entitled *The Book to Come*, Maurice Blanchot explains the meaning of becoming through literary infinity by stating that “the truth of literature might be in the error of the infinite” (93). Furthermore, Maurice Blanchot mentions the error in this infinite journey:

The error, the fact of being on the go without ever being able to stop, changes the finite into infinity. And to it these singular characteristics are added: from the finite, which is still closed, one can always hope to escape, while the infinite vastness is a prison, being without an exit—just as any place absolutely without exit becomes infinite. The place of wandering knows no straight line; one never goes from one point to another in it; one does not leave here to go there; there is no point of departure and no beginning to the walk. Before having begun, already one begins again; before having finished, one broods, and this sort of absurdity (consisting of returning without ever having left, or of beginning by beginning again) is the secret of the "evil" eternity,

corresponding to "evil" infinity, both of which perhaps contain the meaning of becoming. (94)

We may, therefore, approach the zombie concept as the fictional image of the evil infinity as a result of the human error. In his article entitled “Zombie Death Drive: Between Gothic and Science Fiction,” Fred Botting clarifies the definition of zombie:

Zombies are the real lower-class citizens of the monster world. A lesser type of the undead and very much in the shadow – the very poor relations – of their charming bloodsucking aristocratic cousins, zombies have none of the style, attractiveness or supernatural power of vampires. Nor do they, unlike Frankenstein’s monstrous progeny with its curious if lumbering dignity of labour, retain much trace of humanity. On screen, zombies tend not to evoke sympathy or identification: it is difficult to remain unrepulsed by a humanoid creature with half a face slavered over the intestines of a dismembered teenager or enjoy the suffering of a ravenous mass of bloody hands clutching hungrily and with grim inevitability at any living flesh. Physically unprepossessing, intellectually challenged and lacking any social skills or redeeming qualities – thoroughly unromanticizable – the zombies remain at the trashiest end of a trashy genre. (36)

It will be beneficial to prepare and introduce the framework before taking a probable photo of the zombie. The genre called to be gothic or fantasy literature was rooted in the eighteenth century with *The Castle of Otranto* (1765) by Horace Walpole and thanks to the pens of various writers including primarily Stevenson, Stoker, and Wells during the nineteenth century, the genre contributed to the evolution of the horror, science-fiction, fantasy and gothic works of the twenty first century. In order to have a

better understanding of the framework of the zombie theory, we may focus on the “gothic science fiction” as a critical theory trusted to the readers of the twenty-first century and it aims at disclosing “something buried, something hidden [...] by its enduring heft, richness and depth within its creative mode” (Roberts 11). A zombie theory which will be attempted to be unearthed from this depth, therefore, will be on one hand “uncanny [being] that class of the terrifying which leads back to something long known to us, once very familiar” (1) in Sigmund Freud’s words. On the other hand, it will be “fantastic as a result of a shared uncertainty between the reader and the persona of the story who has to decide as to whether the concept perceived is a reality as defined by the thought shared” (Todorov 47). In his essay entitled “The Uncanny,” Sigmund Freud further explains the underlying basis for the concept of the uncanny:

Cataplexy and the re-animation of the dead have been represented as most uncanny themes. But things of this sort again are very common in fairy-stories. Who would be so bold as to call it an uncanny moment, for instance, when Snow-White opens her eyes once more? And the resuscitation of the dead in miracles, as in the New Testament, elicits feelings quite unrelated to the uncanny. Then the theme that achieves such an indubitably uncanny effect, the involuntary recurrence of the like, serves, too, other and quite different purposes in another class of cases. One case we have already heard about in which it is employed to call forth a feeling of the comic; and we could multiply instances of this kind. Or again, it works as a means of emphasis, and so on. Another consideration is this: whence come the uncanny influences of silence, darkness and solitude? Do not these factors point to the part played by danger in the aetiology of what is uncanny, notwithstanding that they are

also the most frequent accompaniment of the expression of fear in infancy? And are we in truth justified in entirely ignoring intellectual uncertainty as a factor, seeing that we have admitted its importance in relation to death? (16)

In addition to the uncanny quality zombie evokes, Gothic science fiction already promises an uncertainty with respect to both integration and a separation. It is curious that the words “gothic” and “science” complement with the word “fiction” constituting a meaningful sense. According to Darko Suvin, science fiction is a genre “in which the reader enters an imaginative world different or estranged from his or her empirical world, but different in a way that obeys rational causation or scientific law: thus, it is estranged cognitively” (Qtd. in Luckhurst 21). The genres of the Gothic, along with horror fiction, fantasy or fairy tales, might well offer estranged worlds, but they are far from cognitive: “these are not scientific but magical genres, where the causations are folkloric, irrational or arbitrary” (Qtd. in Luckhurst 21). Then, the Gothic has the present irrationally dominated by the resurgence of the past, which is apprehended only by overwhelming and disabling affect, typically of paralyzing horror. Therefore, a depth created by the contemporary clues where one could dig out the past and future is buried within seems proper enough for the development of zombie. Hence, the use of socio-historical and psycho-philosophical lenses in a metamorphosis microscope is inevitable in order to define this creature. The zombie faces with the causality of its well-rounded popularity in the light of the philosophical arguments regarding memory and consciousness as it is being pulled out of the depth within our minds. “Therefore, it is even more surprising that novelists who are concerned with a flawless representation of life the most place this fabricated and insubstantial creature in the center of their works” (Cohn 16). So much so that, definitions acquired may even come out against our

expectations just like this grunting, eye-sore, flesh eating monster itself. Yet again, “what virtue remains in the act of unmasking when we know full well what lies beneath the mask?” (Felski 1).

A. From Cradle to the Grave

The ubiquity of zombie in popular culture will by no doubt serve as an element of surprise insomuch as it is even more popular now than ever before which gives the rightful place for further investigation into the evolution of this fearsome figure of “living death”. Without doubt, the theory herein deserves to catch some glimpses of the zeitgeist in which one may witness how this theory might have developed along with human civilization. From works like *28 Days Later* to *World War Z*, the need to define exactly what we mean when we call something a zombie requires to map out the ways how this monster has been and will continue to be a useful theoretical apparatus. Maybe even before an attempt of such an inspection, one should knock on wood right on the coffin itself. Will it sound “trick or treat?”

To be able to interpret the zombie grunting, one needs a keen ear and an understanding of how the early zombie morphed from exotic to evil. This creature having the innocence of neither of a sleepwalker nor a mummy is undoubtedly supposed to have its own history book somewhere buried even deeper. The archeology of such a book may lead one back to the lands of Africa. The zombie mythology possesses a rich history and a much broader relevance to contemporary cultures. This sociohistorical evolution of the myth through and across cultural landscapes is indicative of the rite of passage of this moving corpse. The first appearance of this monster emerges from religious and cultural origins of the African diaspora. Only then will the journey go through the fields of Haitian sugarcane into the land of milk and honey. In his article entitled “And the Dead Shall Rise,” Kevin Boon focuses on the ways how this monster

has been characterized depending on the discrepancies concerning landscapes and time zones:

The zombie is primarily a political, cultural, and religious product, and how it is defined depends on who is looking; thus western and Haitian characterizations of the zombie differ. Further, contemporary characterizations (American and Haitian) largely differ from early nineteenth-century characterizations, so much so that no single perspective can contain the whole myth. Parts of the myth may, at times, even contradict one another. Just as voodoo and tales of zombies were employed by colonial forces to dehumanize Haitians, they are also a source of empowerment for Haiti and its citizens, a valorizing sign of Haitianness. (6)

When we look at the contemporary American zombies, one could take three remarkable similarities into consideration: they are born of infection, are the dead returned to life, and have a taste for human flesh. Nevertheless, this has not always been the case with the image of the popular zombie. The earliest zombies introduced into U.S. culture were neither sick nor cannibalistic. They were instead puppets of an exotic religion at their puppeteer's disposal. It is commonly acknowledged that modern zombies were born in George Romero's 1968 film *Night of the Living Dead*. However, the bonds that relate modern zombies to their Haitian ancestors are sometimes overlooked. These cannibalistic roots are what give the zombie its lasting popularity particularly as it is one of the few Hollywood monsters that come from outside Europe. As a matter of fact, stories around Haitian voodoo are fear factor regarding an independent black republic for the American psyche in the twentieth century.

Chera Kee witnesses this continental shift in her article entitled “They Are Not Men...They Are Dead Bodies!: From Cannibal to Zombie Back Again”:

From the time of the Haitian Revolution onward, stories of voodoo circulated throughout the Americas and Europe. Anxiety about Haiti in the United States translated into an anxiety about voodoo, which was increasingly linked to cannibalism in the U.S. popular press to underscore supposed Haitian primitivism. Yet, after the tumultuous U.S. occupation of Haiti from 1915 to 1934, cannibalism began to fade out of the discourse surrounding voodoo in favor of zombies. (9)

No sooner had this cannibalistic discourse with regards to Haitian voodoo prevailed through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries than a transformation into a racialized discourse inevitably showed itself in the early zombie films. However, this matter of racial segregation evidently led to the dissolution of the overt link to Haiti and voodoo and ended up representing any ethnic group as zombie. Zombie fiction came to represent a more diffuse definition of the self and the other as it evolved into its modern form. As a result of this, the fine line between “us” and “them” grow thinner in “Hollywood’s zombie films from the late 1930s to 1968, when *Night of the Living Dead* enacted its radical break in the genre” (Kee 10). In order to have full grasp of zombie archeology, therefore, one must have the necessary tools for excavation and need to know the exact site for such an exploration which is nowhere but Haiti itself.

The way leading to the evolutionary embodiment of the zombie stems from the idea of revolutionary heroes; moreover, this irony is somehow justified due to the fear of a massacre of the whites remaining in Haiti. The history of the realm following a series of slave revolts in the 1790s took a turn into becoming the first black-ruled independent nation in the western hemisphere in 1804. As part of their cultural heritage,

voodoo gatherings were integral to the beginnings of the revolts which provided the future leaders of the revolution yet “the connection between the revolution and voodoo presented opponents of Haitian independence with a means to disparage revolutionary ideas by linking them to a supposedly barbaric, superstitious belief system” (Kee 10). The heroes of the Haitian revolution were also heroes to slaves throughout the Americas and slaveholders naturally feared similar revolts and mistrusted slave gatherings, particularly those with regards to voodoo. This fine line between the colors of black and white had become so distinct that any stories concerning black revolution were held responsible as threats against the presence of white people. To put it in a nutshell, “Haitian Revolution reinforced the conviction that slave emancipation in any form would lead to economic ruin and to the indiscriminant massacre of white populations” (Kee 10). Nevertheless, the hemisphere’s only black-ruled republic couldn’t help raising much curiosity since the island existed in virtual isolation. Thus, what little information found about Haiti wasn’t subject to much critical interrogation. Much of the material available in English regarding nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was written either by those who were alienated to nation’s identity or by those who were in pursuit of benefiting from Haiti for their own ideological interests. Therefore, Haiti happened to be a battleground between abolitionists and slavers, used by both to prove their respective points. Chera Kee issues this ideological conflict in her article entitled “From Cannibal to Zombie and Back Again”:

In *Sketches of Hayti: From the Expulsions of the French to the Death of Christophe* (1872), W.W. Harvey, in many ways an admirer of Haiti, nevertheless remarks that the country’s history since the revolution presents to us the picture of a people newly escaped from slavery, yet still suffering and exhibiting in their character, its pernicious and

demoralizing effects. Harvey's views were typical of the abolitionists and missionaries writing on Haiti during the early nineteenth century. Yet those opposed to abolition were much more critical. In an 1805 letter from French Foreign Minister Charles Talleyrand to U.S. Secretary of State James Madison, for instance, Talleyrand observes, the existence of a Negro people in arms, occupying a country it has soiled by the most criminal acts, is a horrible spectacle for all white nations. There are no reasons to grant support to these brigands who have declared themselves the enemies of all government. (Kee 11)

Such ideological and political clashes are indicative of the quality that Haiti's revolution deprived white Europeans and Americans of the ability to "civilize" the black world; therefore, Haiti had to be demonized so as to create a situation where the civilizing forces of the white world could save the nation from itself. As a result, the revolution and the nation it produced could by no means be regarded to be a success; it could be nothing but a corrupted mindless corpse itself.

In such colonialist manifesto, Haiti was portrayed as a country in ruin. This waste land was regarded to be the cause for the devolution which was nothing but a malicious black magic. To give an example, a 1920 article on Haiti in *National Geographic* depicted them to be "natives forgetting their thin veneer of Christian civilization and reverted to utter, unthinking animalism, swayed only by fear of local bandit chiefs and the black magic of voodoo witch doctors" (Kee 12).

Indeed, much of the texts in the nineteenth century concerning Haiti arouse interest among the readers of the time insomuch as they were associated with cannibalism. Despite the popularity of such text on Haiti, it was not clear whether they were mere gossips or rumors. Fictitious as most of these reports might be, they tended

to be repeated nonetheless. To give an example, Spencer St. John “devoted a great deal of his 1884 book *Hayti, or the Black Republic of Voodoo* [...] and tied it to cannibalism, human sacrifice, and grave robbing although he never actually attended a voodoo ceremony” (Kee 12). Yet, he was careful to assert that cannibalism was not performed under the rule of French since it would have been difficult to realize “when colonial masters kept such a close eye on their property” (Kee 12). Naturally, what was inherent in St. John’s assertion was the fact that cannibalism could have endured as a result of Haitian self-rule. Following his claims, writings on Haitian voodoo continued on the allegation that Haitians ate their children in sacrifice to voodoo gods. Such pretension of devouring the offspring and the terror attempted to inflict alongside with it can also be traced back to Greek mythology regarding the myth of foundation of earth. It is worth questioning whether the myth is indicative of the fear of a supreme god, or a riot against the authority of the other or even a necessary clause in the matters of life and death in which one needs to die in order for the other to survive. In her book entitled *Ebedi Kutsal Ezeli Kurban* (Eternal Sacred Ancient Sacrifice), Saime Tuğrul makes a mythological reference to this replacement:

In the beginning, chaos prevails. In this psychotic core, everything is vague, undifferentiated and unresolved. First, Gaya, the mother goddess of earth, appears. Gaya gives birth to Uranos (the sky). Uranos is a terrifying god with a strict temperament. Although he constantly has children with Gaya (Titans, Titanides, Cyclopes and Giants), he hides them within the deepest parts of her, the realm of the Tartars, since he is afraid of the rivalry amongst his children. In the end, Gaya rises against him and persuades one of her children, Chronos (the time) to castrate his father and thus to replace him. Chronos cuts off his

father's penis; Uranus in pain pulls himself over Gaea and forms the sky, and brightness takes place. From Uranus's penis fallen into the waters Eros was born and from the foams Aphrodite is created. Out of the blood drops spread onto Gaea (the earth), Erinyes (three goddesses who are avengers of family and parental crimes; these goddesses are the protectors of social order) are developed. Uranus cursing his son heralds that the same thing would befall him and his reign would be ended by one of his children. Chronos copulates with Rhea (his sister). However, fearing of the prophecy of his father, swallows all his children (Hestia, Demeter, Hera, Hades, Poseidon) maintaining the same tradition of violence. (45)

From the cannibalistic recipe of the Greeks to the Haitian kitchen onwards, the innate fear of the other presented as the devourer of all pertaining to the self does not seem to engage in any confrontation with the mystification Haitian cannibalistic fiction represents. At this point, the inherent appetite of the subject is the fusion of the other so as to melt and destroy it within the self. As a matter of fact, the act of fusion of the other is what lies on the basis of love. Phrases such as sexual intercourse or copulation refer to this inclusion of the other. Moreover, the act of eating itself is an exercise of pleasure as the primary innate instinctual disposition of humankind. In *Ebedi Kutsal Ezeli Kurban*, Saime Tuğrul refers to this somehow happy ending between the self and the other as "recognizing the other as a conscious subject being receptive to the violence of the other, namely consenting to the conflict" (19). If that's the case, how the twin sister hatred would find itself a rightful place worthy of assessment when love is an act of violence. In his article "Dostoevsky and Parricide," Sigmund Freud explains the ways

for a further understanding of the matter of eating or being eaten by the offspring referring to the concept of “Oedipus complex”:

The relation of a boy to his father is, as we say, an ‘ambivalent’ one. In addition to the hate which seeks to get rid of the father as a rival, a measure of tenderness for him is also habitually present. The two attitudes of mind combine to produce identification with the father; the boy wants to be in his father’s place because he admires him and wants to be like him, and also because he wants to put him out of the way. This whole development now comes up against a powerful obstacle. At a certain moment the child comes to understand that an attempt to remove his father as a rival would be punished by him with castration. So from fear of castration – that is, in the interests of preserving masculinity – he gives up his wish to possess his mother and get rid of his father. [...] The boy understands that he must also submit to castration if he wants to be loved by his father as a woman. Thus both impulses, hatred of the father and being in love with the father, undergo repression. There is a certain psychological distinction in the fact that the hatred of the father is given up on account of fear of an external danger (castration), while the being in love with the father is treated as an internal instinctual danger. (Freud 8)

This dialogue of love and hatred in the time machine can clearly underline the fact that in the cases of Uranos, Oedipus, and the Haitian precursor of the zombie, the patriarchal order is much more essential than the order of the self. In *Ebedi Kutsal Ezeli Kurban*, Tuğrul focuses on these orders:

“Patriarchal code” is even more important than the civic code. Fathers prevent disintegration by swallowing their sons (like in the myth of Uranos and Chronos). Although the father happens to be the person who detaches the child from the mother and introduces him to the society, the son is the extension of the father and the symbolic and sovereign expression of the continuation of the next generation. The son not only maintains the patriarchal code but he also sustains the father name. The tradition of surname sets the best example of this. Entering into new order requires the “murder” of the father by the son. (22)

The question raised herein is whether the dialogue between independent Haiti and the U.S. serves the purpose of a father and son, or even the murderer and victim pairs. It may have been claimed that in the nineteenth century the fear of an independent black nation led the U.S. to a fictitious fear of the other in the form of voodoo practices and cannibalistic intentions. Further assertions may be suggested by means of a challenge so as not to be devoured by these uncanny subjects from Haiti which would mean the cessation of the nation. In this case, neither Haiti seems to take on the surname offered to him by the western world nor the U.S. sounds willing to let go of the excuse of fear of the other as part of its colonial or even patriarchal memory. To put it in a nutshell, what has been served as zombie so far is a perfect fictionalized presence, void of a surname, nothing other than a nonentity.

This monstrous creature without a surname did somehow maintain its name though. The origin of the name “zombie” given to this fictitious presence does not seem to leave its African roots. There are two main sources with regards to whereabouts of the name “zombie” first of which refers to the writings of R.P. Van Wing concerning his experiences among African people in the Nzambi Mpungu region of the lower

Congo River area in 1921. The predecessor of the term zombie is regarded as “Nzambi,” an invisible being with origins in the Bantu and Bankongo tribes. In his article “The Zombie as Other: Mortality and the Monstrous in the Post-Nuclear Age,” Kevin Boon draws attention to the remarks of R.P. Van Wing and refers to the various origins of the name zombie:

Above all...the sovereign Master, unapproachable, who has placed man here below to take him away some day, at the hour of death. He watches man, searches him out everywhere and takes him away, inexorably, young or old...Among the laws there are *nkondo mi Nzambi*, ‘God’s prohibitions’, the violation of which constitutes a *sumuku Nzambi* (a sin against Nzambi), and an ordinary sanction of this is *lufwa humbi* ‘a bad death’. The Nzambi is a religious figure, a spiritual entity with superhuman abilities, an object of religious faith. The term “Nzambi” dates to 1600 and is associated in its various linguistic incarnations with the idea of spirit. E. Torday claims that the term “Nzambi Mpungu” “appears...to mean ‘the chiefly spirit of the first man’” and points out that the term was “revived by the advent of Christianity,” when it was used to describe God. This is in some opinions a misuse of the term. One writer argues in 1906 that the term in use North of the French Congo literally means “Terrible Earth” and links the term to Mother Earth, “the fountain of all life and, in turn, also the home of the dead.” Despite varying definitions, there is no question that the Nzambi was a spiritual creature.

(51)

While the zombie is depicted in various portraits in a spiritual respect, it also embodies the mechanical puppet claiming no control of the self. The second source to

include further reference to the term zombie can be found in William Seabrook's book *The Magical Island*. In "They Are Not Men...They Are Dead Bodies!: From Cannibal to Zombie Back Again": Kee glances at this zombie island through another looking glass:

The term 'zombie' was virtually unknown outside Haiti until 1929. At that time, though, zombies entered U.S. culture quite forcefully in William Seabrook's book *The Magical Island*. Seabrook lived in Haiti and had developed a close friendship with a voodoo priestess. In *The Magic Island*, he gave detailed accounts of voodoo rituals and folklore, and one being in particular captured his interest. He wrote, 'I recalled one creature I had been hearing about in Haiti, which sounded exclusively local—the zombie'. (13)

Furthermore, a chapter in Seabrook's book titled "Dead Men Working in the Cane Fields" had been dedicated to detailed descriptions of the zombie: "The zombie, they say, is a soulless human corpse, still dead, but taken from the grave and endowed by sorcery with a mechanical semblance of life—it is a dead body which is made to walk and act and move as if it were alive" (Kee 13). The portrait of zombie through the eyes of Seabrook is therefore concerning those "plodding like brutes, like automations, and whose faces were expressionless and vacant with eyes like the eyes of a dead man, not blind, but staring, unfocused, unseeing" (Kee 14). Nevertheless, all variations of definitions regarding the concept of zombie including both sources mentioned above wouldn't be completely reflected in what is meant by zombie for the U.S. memory in years to come. The cannibalistic relevance to voodoo began to lose its track by which time the zombie had taken place in the U.S. imagination. The idea of cannibalism which is linked to Haitian zombie was taken into account rather like a nation of eternal slaves.

A reminiscence of the social dynamics of the time will be of vital importance herein; considering the fact that the U.S. being a society at the point of feeling dispossessed since the Civil War and emancipation survived the period of the Great Depression from 1929 to 1940s at which point the idea of identification with the concept of zombies wouldn't be regarded as an element of surprise. They felt how impotent they could be in the capitalist system and in the 1930s, there couldn't have been a better "ideological critique of modernity in the form of capitalist exploitation" (Kee 14). What's more, the depression not only aggravated feelings of racism but also rendered those of color as criminals or mentally challenged in the form of films and other arts. Naturally, they had become the monsters qualified for the capacity of becoming zombies. The concept of othering had already possessed the perfect ground for seeding itself. The self was nothing unless it was defined and this definition required the presence of the other at which point being colored made perfect sense for color white to take over. Indeed, much of the American society in 1930s couldn't have been bothered with the discourse in which zombies maintained that whiteness was the accepted norm when those of color were set as monstrous and "further fitting with earlier colonialist discourse that generally accorded white persons an individual identity, zombies were faceless masses: a new means of robbing the Other of its individuality in order to keep it as the Other" (Kee 14). This eternal hunger of the self for its own survival may sound quite instinctive inasmuch as the need has somehow been planted within and it is as if this so called innate urge has been within the self for quite some time. It seems that it hasn't been long before a representation of this motive takes place in the form of a performance in the U.S.:

One of the earliest appearances of the zombie after *The Magical Island* was Kenneth Webb's stage play *Zombie*, which opened in New

York in February 1932. By all accounts, the story line of *Zombie* borrowed liberally from *The Magic Island*, and the zombies of the play were portrayed in a fashion similar to Seabrook's descriptions. With its links to people of color, the zombie was a natural emblem for the slave, easily expendable and under the control of a powerful master. Yet, as exotic as the zombie may have been, the similarities between its plight and that of many of these 'everyday' Americans were not lost on observers. As J. Brooks Atkinson wrote in his review of the play in *the New York Times*, 'If zombies are those who work without knowing why and who see without understanding, one begins to look around among one's fellow countrymen with a new apprehension. Perhaps those native drums are sounding the national anthem'. (Kee 15)

Thus, it is obvious that zombification used in early zombie films and other forms of art refers to the other as a means of defining the white self. In the film *White Zombie* (1932); however, boundaries encompassing the traditional othering tends to become barely perceptible. Those oppositions between self and other, black and white, civilized person and cannibal appeared to be sharply defined under colonialism whereas in the case of *White Zombie*, these categories grew indistinct and the zombification of white people brought about a question as to how to define the other when the other looked just like the self in the first place.

By the early 1940s, zombie turned into a more familiar concept and conventions within the genre became more evident. To give an example, zombies were under the control of an external force that is a voodoo priest or a sorcerer in the early films. During the 1950s, when worries regarding space exploration flourished, the control of the zombie

was taken over by mad scientists or aliens. All in all, there had to be a zombie master pulling the strings regardless of the setting. In short, had the cannibal been used during much of the nineteenth century as a means of dividing the world into civilized and non-civilized, the zombie maintained this post in the films of the 1930s, 40s, and 60s. (Kee 19)

The creation of the other would have never been possible unless the knowable world hadn't been served within a system of categories and classes. Furthermore, it will not be so astounding to observe the fact that Dracula, Frankenstein's monster and the zombie earned their reputation at roughly the same time and within each variation the American audience would underline the fact that they are what the other is not. However, this extended fantasy of the self both being tainted and saved by the other incessantly may not be easily taken for granted. Zombiism, as it was first introduced to U.S. audiences was comprised of neither a disease nor was it irreversible; it was a status just like being under hypnosis which could be experienced and then abandoned and most often as a result of the death of the zombie master. As for cannibalism, it wasn't literal cannibalism of the earliest discourse surrounding Haitian voodoo but it grounded itself on the basis of the very mechanism that one used for defining the self who was slowly eaten away. The cannibal then somehow seemed to achieve the same ideological aspect of the zombie which was a new way of separating the world into its civilized and barbaric categories. In her article "From Cannibal to Zombie and Back Again," Chera Kee sheds light onto the concept of eating the other from a social and cultural setting:

It is by eating the Other that one asserts power and privilege and this sort of cultural cannibalism concerns power relations that grant white peoples the ability to enjoy the privilege of being able to appropriate, utilize, and borrow from other cultures without having to experience

what it is actually like to be a member of another culture. In a sense, it is being able to try on other cultural forms at will with no real lasting effect. This is very similar to what characters were able to do in early zombie films. Before 1968, zombiism was a reversible state that could be experienced then discarded. In a sense, zombification granted one the ability to try on the culture of the Other without any real fear that one would truly become like the Other. (22)

All the same, what constituted the other got more complicated as the zombie grew up since the question raised at this point was with regards to what constituted the self itself. The zombie idea left the Haitian realms and tended to soil in the lands of any exotic group yet as time passed this link to the exotic also weakened resulting in a challenge to draw the line between “us” and “them” since the absence of an explicitly conveyed other prevented the self from defining itself. Thus, zombie turns out to be the embodiment of all fears of loss and those are represented as not only the parts of the body but most importantly the head in which the mind is hidden. Chera Kee presents a very appropriate point in her article “From Cannibal to Zombie and Back Again”:

It was rather the mind, the embodied self, that was most affected. One’s free will was at stake, as it could be devoured at any time, and in this light zombies became an allegory for the larger societal self: the Depression, the world wars, the Cold War, and the atomic age were all potent reminders that people were caught up in events essentially in someone else’s control. Zombies reflected a fear of the anarchy or monster inside us all. (23)

The main inquisition to be highlighted for further reading at this point is whether dying is sufficient enough to be transformed into a zombie. So far, the silent witness

may have noticed the formation of not an evolution but rather a metamorphosis of human in an incessant kinesis. The symbol of a cradle is not only indicative of the beginning of humankind but it is also referred merely as a repetition of the same end and that's why the grave will attempt to leak the information of humanity hopefully giving away any probable secrets or it will just remain to be representative of human in the loop. This excavation may depict that the grave is only a gateway between two conditions; rather than "To be or not to be?" perhaps "To die or not to die?" is the question now.

B. Beyond the Grave

In addition to the sociohistorical archeology of the myth, a close observation of the dead man walking requires the laboratory of psycho-philosophical critiques. The journey of this monstrous traveler setting off in African tribal mythology, moving through its transformation within Caribbean religious practices and concluding with its current incarnation as a flesh-eating threat to the survival of the individual provides the metamorphosis of zombie mythology with changes in western thought during the past several centuries via metaphysical, epistemological and ontological lenses. The increased popularity of the zombie in the later twentieth century is thanks to the zombie mythology's competency to stimulate existential anxieties about humankind's own mortality. However, while the zombie preserves its appeal in popular culture to pose important questions of mind and consciousness, their role and significance in the canon of both Gothic and science fiction genres remains ambiguous. The recurrent figure of zombie tends to lure questions concerning interior mental states of sentience and intentionality; nevertheless, as Fred Botting questions in his essay entitled "Zombie Death Drive: Between Gothic and Science Fiction":

At the core of this line of semi-serious philosophical questioning lies an uncertainty about being able to tell the difference between the self-consciousness, self-possession and auto-centeredness of properly human intellectual processes and the merely rehearsed familiar behavioral habits equated with the non-conscious operations of a soulless machine. (36)

The zombie then turns out to be Samuel Taylor Coleridge's nightmare death-in-life from his eminently gothic poem "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" (1798) in which the anatomy of zombie suggests what is uncanny about death is not the prospect of individual extinction, but on the contrary the hideous intimation that death will not snatch our individual existence away. This intimation is a pact undersigned by death being precisely life itself. The real terror here is not the fact that we will go away but rather we might be doomed to stay forever. When Percy Bysshe Shelley wrote *Adonais* (1821) an elegy on the death of John Keats, he talked about life staining the white radiance of eternity. It is as if death stains on everyone and no matter how meticulously one scrubs to wash it away; once it gets stained, it is forever smitten. Therefore, it seems that this combination of life and death construes both process as somehow the same thing and it might only be through the quill pen of a Shakespearean zombie willing to write a pastoral elegy for man, this human stain may appear less obscure.

With philosophical zombies, interiority is replaced by an agent or individual identity whereas the external appearance and action remain insufficient when it comes to perceiving consciousness. Defining a philosophical zombie as an entity that "is or would be a human being who exhibits perfectly natural, alert, loquacious, vivacious behavior but is in fact not conscious at all, but rather normal some sort of automaton is rather challenging in that even some of your best friends may be zombies" (37). In his

book *Consciousness Explained*, Daniel Dennet emphasizes “the question of telling the difference becomes even more difficult when one is confronted with a complex zombie—called a ‘zimbo’—able to self monitor and function internally, if unconsciously, at a higher level and display complex behavior thanks to a control system that permits recursive self-representation” (310). The differences between human and automata, or between human and zombie will require a deeper analysis in the lights of the text; however, before such an attempt it might be worth paying attention to Dennett’s zombies and zimbos with regards to their philosophical prevalence since they are highly linked to a post human aspect in contemporary criticism since the question posed pertaining to the discrepancy between human and machine has turned into a less important topic of discussion than the reality of integration with the general machinism prevailing the world as part of a cyber culture. As human beings are already parts of a larger network of information and it might already be clear that humanity couldn’t resist the temptation of becoming automata; “we are all, so the story goes, already machines, already constructed higher-level functioning units of automatic, informatic, genetic -and indeed corporate- processes beyond our control. The human ‘we’, indeed, has become little more than a faded illusion in an age of technical prostheses, enhancements and networks” (Botting 37). This is true in the case of humanity whose strings are pulled by an external technological force which is compatible with the zombie theory; however, the idea of cyborgs that are supposed to be fundamental to post humanism in which otherness is portrayed to be glamorous tends to be more predictable as wireless monsters can only suggest a romantic catharsis when zombies are referred to be the products of modern subjectivity and culture. In brief, zombies, neither living nor death, are presented to be premodern throwbacks created by modernity and undoubtedly they will pose questions around the boundaries of modern humanity.

As mentioned earlier, Nzambi, the namesake of zombie, was a spiritual creature in the religious practices among African people. The relationship between the tribes and the Nzambi was religious and dependent on faith among tribal members. In his article “The Zombie as Other: Mortality and the Monstrous in the Post-Nuclear Age,” Kevin Boon underlines the fact that this belief system is not different from that of western religious traditions:

The origin of truth was external, that truth came from gods and demigods, and that validation of that truth was subjective. Subjective validation of an external truth enables one to make a claim of certainty, such as ‘I know God is real’, wholly in the absence of any empirical evidence. [...] Thus the religious traditions of western belief and African tribal practices posited spiritual beings and the truth they presumably possessed outside of self. The early modern rationalism of Leibniz, Spinoza, and Descartes, and the empiricism of Locke, Berkeley, and Hume supplanted this religious faith with reason and began a perceptual shift among the general population, which ultimately led to the Enlightenment. Rationalism mandates that truth is uncovered within self (that is, within the mind where self resides), that what we know to be true is a matter of what our mind can reason, and that the more accurately we reason with respect to the physical universe, the closer our beliefs approximate what is true. (51)

In the light of the afore mentioned concepts, there existed two different belief systems being religious faith and faith in reason according to Leibniz’s principle of sufficient reason which asserts that every extant must have a reason and this cause must be presented with a view to one of the two categories: “either a necessary God or

infinity” (Boon 52). The necessity of God or gods belonged to the domain of religion whereas the concept of infinity stemmed from the employment of reason. The period of western civilization before the Enlightenment was dominated by the first category in which God was the source of truth. The subsequent period; however, was dominated by reason in which the truth was realized by means of the exercise of rational thought.

The shifting from religious faith to reasoned truth or science turned out to be leading truth from an external source, God, to an internal source that is reason. Yet, to what extent has this alteration been decisive upon the disposition that the source of faith lies in the other? Together with rationalism, dependence on the other as the source of truth did not change and many people were in pursuit of scientists and philosophers as the arbiters of the truth. In short, science became the other source of truth which ultimately became their God.

The movement of zombie mythology also mirrors this shift from faith in God to faith in science. Boon summarizes this transformation:

When tribal members settled in the Caribbean, specifically in Saint-Domingue i.e., Haiti, the term zombie still referred to a spirit, as indicated in M.L.E. Moreau de Saint-Méry’s 1789 definition of the term as a Creole word which means spirit, revenant. But during the nineteenth century, as African religious beliefs collided with western influences and zombie mythology underwent the vicissitudes of cultural migration, the term came to represent a spirit that can occupy people (still an external). Eventually, in Haiti, the external disappeared and the term came to refer to a person for whom internal consciousness and volition were absent.

(53)

The empirical aspect that flourished through the end of the nineteenth century ironically turned out to an increased objectification of self “which to medieval sensibilities had been perceived as a whole, was transformed into an object of inquiry. Rationalism made it possible for the self to examine the self” (Boon 53). As a result of this self-inquiry, an understanding of a divided self played a vital role in comprehending the epistemological and ontological issues encompassing the existence of the zombie in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The self not only could occupy both subjective and objective positions but it could also contain them simultaneously. The question where does the need to negate the self stem from initially? In *Being and Nothingness*, Jean-Paul Sartre portrays this human condition:

The lacking is of the same nature as the existing; it would suffice to reverse the situation in order for it to become the existing to which the lacking is missing, while the existing would become the lacking. This lacking as the complement of the existing is determined in its being by the synthetic totality of the lacked. Thus in the human world, the incomplete being which is revealed to intuition as lacking is constituted in its being by the lacked - that is, by what is not. It is the full moon which confers on the crescent moon its being as crescent; what-is-not determines what—is. It is in the being of the existing, as the correlate of a human transcendence, to lead outside itself to the being which it is not—as to its meaning. (111)

As for Jean-Paul Sartre, the oxymoron of this integrated separation can be defined by the notion of negation which can be explained by means of the labels of figure and ground:

Negation is the ability to identify something as not being something else. If, for example, you are supposed to meet a friend at a restaurant and your friend is not there, negation is the process by which you identify his absence. When this occurs, the entire restaurant becomes the ‘ground’ to the absent ‘figure’ of your friend. If we imagine that in place of a restaurant we have a person, we come to understand the transformation that the mythological zombie came to present— a person who is all ground and no figure; that is, an absence of conscious self, a person for whom identity, self, personhood, and so on are absent from the body. (Boon 53)

This status of zombie, a creature lacking consciousness which is incapable of examining the self and is merely emptied of being, suggested as nothing but a vessel of nothingness and referred to be the other is what provides the basis of the zombie philosophy as introduced to western culture in the early twentieth century. The expression of being a vessel of nothingness triggers an existential despair of a potential loss of self. According to Sartre, the idea of a human body absent of figure awakens the most primal fear: “the possibility that we could be absent from ourselves, that we could look into the body and find only an absence, is ontologically terrifying because it denies humans that which makes us human” (Boon 54). Therefore, the zombie appearing in literature and films during the first half of the century is basically “a physical body occupied by nothingness—a human shell lacking whatever properties are presumed to constitute self to our consciousness” (Boon 54). This definition of zombie can be viewed in the films *White Zombie* (1932), *King of the Zombies* (1941), *I Walked with a Zombie* (1943), and *Revenge of the Zombies* (1943), and read in literature in the works of Lafcadio Hearn’s “The Country of the Comers-Back” (1889), Thomas Burke’s “The

Hollow Man” (1920), Richard E. Goddard’s *The Whistling Ancestors* (1936) and Zola Neale Hurston’s *Tell My Horse* (1937).

On August 6, 1945 the atomic bomb dropped by the United States on Hiroshima not only marked the onset of the nuclear age but also cleared the ground for the current zombie period. Prior to the bomb, faith still existed; it had only shifted from external gods to science. Yet, the bomb brought about a disillusionment of a generation and a deviation from modernity. The confidence in science and its arbiters which might convey a human utopia took a turn into being nothing but a dystopia to the disappointment of human race. The greatest fear of the individual turned out to be the loss of self since the human had no external referent on which to base his faith and the self was all that remained after the bomb. As a consequence of this human stain what would remain in the case of an absence of the self is a void of nothingness that is what the post-nuclear zombie signifies which has been disturbed and dugged out so far. Yet, this individual trapped in the post nuclear world was one in which the self became an existential agent whose attributions were disposed by the self’s engagement with the world. The deficiency of the source of logos, being devoid of an external source of truth, which leads to the absence of a reliable other in which faith can be instituted leaves the individual in total dismay as a result of which the self’s greatest fear turns into being absorbed by the other and thus being irretrievably lost. This divided self quite resembles the schizoid personality that R.D. Laing describes in *A Divided Self*:

The schizoid self [in objectifying others] is not erecting defenses against the loss of a part of his body. His whole effort is rather to preserve his self. This is precariously established; he is subject to the dread of his own dissolution into non-being, into what William Blake described in the last resort as ‘chaotic non-entity’. His autonomy is

threatened with engulfment. He has to guard himself against losing his subjectivity and sense of being alive. In so far as he feels empty, the full, substantial, living reality of others is an impingement which is always liable to get out of hand and become implosive, threatening to overwhelm and obliterate his self completely. The schizoid individual fears a real live dialectical relationship with real live people. He can relate himself only to depersonalized persons, to phantoms of his own phantasies (imagos), perhaps to things, perhaps to animals. (Qtd. in Boon 56)

What made the zombie myth gain visibility with its current echoing in the twenty-first century was a result of the film *Night of the Living Dead* by George Romero in 1968:

Nearly every film made after Romero's first sequel to *Night*, *Dawn of the Dead* (1978), can be linked back to Romero's characterization of the zombie. And it is quite difficult to find a zombie novel or short story released after Romero's third film in his zombie series, *Day of the Dead* (1985), that does not follow the director's lead. (Boon 5)

Zombie depicted as the schizoid self by Laing dominates the zombie films in this way moving increasingly toward hoards of dangerous undead during the 1970s. This paranoia was reflected in zombie fiction such as "Amando de Ossario's *Blind Dead Trilogy* (which began in 1971), and the films of Lucio Fulci" (Boon 56). Furthermore, this transformation stabilized somewhat in the 1980s with the current mythology of zombie survival fiction. Some of the purest manifestation of this fiction could be found in the novels and anthologies such as "Gary Bradner's *Carrion* (1986), Joe R.

Landsdale's *Dead in the West* (1986), Peter Haining's *Zombie: Stories of the Walking Dead* (1985) and Candace Caponegro's *The Breeze Horror* (1987)" (Boon 57).

The post nuclear zombie, therefore, is suggested as a clear indication of the loss of self as a result of being devoured by the other which is set as a manifestation of the post-nuclear hero's greatest ontological insecurity. As zombie travels in time, the othering turns into a viral disease inflicted in various forms throughout the journey and this gave way to the birth of peculiar categories even constituting a zombie nation. In his article "The Zombie as Other: Mortality and the Monstrous in the Post-Nuclear Age" Kevin Boon presents these nine categories respectively:

Zombie drone is the classic zombie. Whether dead first or not, it is robbed of its self and becomes a witless shell used for slave labor. The Haitian zombie falls into this category. This is the zombie we find in films such as *White Zombie* (1932), *King of the Zombies* (1941) and *I Walked with a Zombie* (1943) and novels such as Peter Tremayne's *Zombie!* (1981). The zombie drone's appearance in literature dates back to the nineteenth century. The zombie ghoul is Romero's creation, a fusion of the Haitian undead zombie with the flesh-eating ghoul. The zombie ghoul, like the zombie drone, is missing an essential self and operates to varying degrees as an eating machine. This is the most common zombie found in film and literature, present in nearly every zombie film or novel made after the mid-eighties. Romero's zombies in *Night of the Living Dead* are certainly the first film versions of the zombie ghoul. The most notable is H.P. Lovecraft's "Herbert West—Reanimator," which was published as a serial in *Home Brew* (1921-22). Lovecraft's story contains the earliest fictional linking of the zombie to

cannibalism. Found both in film and literature, the tech zombie is someone robbed of volition by technology. Ira Levin's 1972 novel *The Stepford Wives* contains this type of zombie. Curt Selby's *I, Zombie* (1982) and Kurt Vonnegut's *The Sirens of Titan* (1959) would also qualify as tech zombies. The bio zombie is one that has been deprived of its essential self or its volition by some external substance, either temporarily, as the case in Richard Layman's novel *One Rainy Night* (1991), in which something in the black rain turns people into psychotic creatures until the water is washed off, or permanently, as in Wilson Yip's film *Bio-Zombie* (1998), in which biochemicals in a soft drink create flesh-eating zombies. The course of zombification can vary from chemicals to viruses, but some substance has caused the loss of self. The zombies in the films *28 Days Later* (2002) and *Quarantine* (2008) are bio zombies. (58)

The mechanical, technical and bio-chemical mobilities of the zombie are denotative of the nomadic quality of this creature through the screens and pages of a fictional universe. The mechanism of othering functions in such a way that they persist in a circle of infinite otherization by means of both feeding and destroying one another regenerating further otherings. The appropriate zombie category in response to such an infinite otherization of the zombie theory is one which is more akin to literature and culture:

Primarily found in literature, the zombie channel is a zombie that has been taken over by another consciousness. The zombies in Brian Keene's novel *The Rising* (2003), for example, are cogent and organized, but the entities that inhabit them are not the original occupants of those

bodies. It is the psychological zombie that I would argue first appeared in film, in *Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari* (1920). This zombie has been robbed of will through some psychological means such as hypnotism. Cultural zombies have not yet received the attention they deserve, yet they offer a fascinating bridge between zombie mythology and the wider, general culture. Two of the best literary examples of the cultural zombie can be found in Brad Gouch's novel *Zombieoo* (2000), in which the main character identifies himself as a zombie and narrates his personal journey from Truckstown, Pennsylvania, to Haiti, and Joyce Oates's *Zombie* (1995). Brad Anderson's Kafkaesque film *The Machinist* (2004), in which the emaciated mechanist is eaten away by subconscious guilt and becomes a wasted, corpse-like creature, is an excellent film example of the cultural zombie. (Boon 59)

As for the category of zombie ghost, this is not regarded as a zombie proper; however this classification could be underlined since so many ghost stories are either included in zombie anthologies or mentioned in discussions of zombies. According to Boon, returning from the dead again comes to fore as the fundamental element:

Edgar Allan Poe's "The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar" [is] a story in which the spirit of a man is trapped between this world and the next by an unscrupulous hypnotist. But the essence of Valdemar is not absent, thus it is a ghost story rather than a zombie story. The same can be said of Clive Barker's "Sex, Death, and Starshine," in which Shakespearean actors continue to perform after their death. Note the cogency and the presence of self in the following exchange from Barker's story: Her voice was a ghost's voice: thin, forlorn. Her skin,

which he had thought so flatteringly pale, was, on second view, a waken white. ‘You are dead?’ he said. ‘I am afraid so. Two hours ago: in my sleep. But I had to come, Terry; so much unfinished business. I made my choice. You should be flattered. You are flattered, aren’t you?’ (59)

As a matter of fact, it will be noticed that qualifying someone as zombie requires more than returning from the dead. Yet, the persistent need for some sort of communication in this dialogue can be indicative of the quality that the boundary between the self and the other is already transparent enough to leak out any exchange of remarks and the need to be confirmed which is the ultimate necessity for being an entity. What is at stake at this point is the free-will of the individual and through the magnifying glass it is obvious that zombies constitute a greater portion of the allegory of the social self.

Lastly, the category of zombie ruse will be issued; however this notion is not owing to the fact of a zombie philosophy but rather on account of a marketing ploy that “exploits the popularity of zombie stories by invoking it in the title without presenting actual zombies in the plot” (Boon 60). These are mostly books made for children in which the use of the word zombie tends to draw attention such as “*The Gorgonzola Zombies in the Park* (1994) and *The Zombie Zone* (2005), and novels, such as *Bill, the Galactic Hero: On the Planet of Zombie Vampires* (1991)” (Boon 60). Ineffective though these fake examples of zombie fiction might be, the attraction stimulated merely by the word “zombie” is the proof of its commonly known and globally accepted rightful reputation. Then, the next question might be whether life wouldn’t be alive enough, if it weren’t for the zombie?

PART TWO. A SELF-AUTOPSY

Having visited the zombie in its historical plain and covered the varieties of zombies which may have been transformed accordingly, it will be important to understand the basis for the medium which generates animated corpses. Subsequently, this dual creature needs to go through a philosophical surgery. A questioning of life and death, and the creation of life by human as the artist will take place and the autopsy of the zombie firstly biologically and later on mechanically will hopefully contribute to an understanding of this creature in its vegetable, human, animal and lifeless but mobile forms.

A. Humanimalism

How was life like before the zombie pilgrimage? No sooner has any questions been posed in favor of a possible definition of the concept of “life” than probable answers may stream in a myriad of senses. Indeterminate as they might prove, the function of life could be challenged in the rooms of philosophy, politics, theology and maybe eventually medicine and biology. However, in this sort of “humanimal fairytale,” any attempt of a proper definition of life will eventually mount in the ebb and flow of a sea of information; therefore a very appropriate isolation of the term will be necessitated in order to articulate the anatomy of the supernatural which nests itself in this definition. In his book *The Open*, Giorgio Agamben exhumes life which he calls “De anima [...] from among the various senses of the term to live” (13). Life which may be “de anima” that is fertile enough to give birth to any organism also brings with itself the inciting offering of being the possessor of the living. Agamben supports his inclination towards the “de anima” definition of life with what Aristotle states:

It is through life that what has soul in it {l'animale} differs from what has not {l'inanimato}. Now this term 'to live' has more than one sense, and provided any one alone of these is found in a thing we say that the thing is living—viz. thinking, sensation, local movement and rest, or movement in the sense of nutrition, decay and growth. Hence, we think of all species of plants also as living, for they are observed to possess in themselves a principle and potentially through which they grow and decay in opposite directions [...] This principle can be separated from the others, but not they from it—in mortal beings at least. The fact is obvious in plants; for it is the only psychic potentiality {potenza dell'anima} they possess. Thus, it is through this principle that life belongs to living things. By nutritive power [threptikon] we mean that part of the soul which is common also to plants. (Qtd. in Agamben 13)

It is significant to underline the fact that Aristotle does not give a clear definition of what life is, yet he limits and divides it on the basis of a nutritive function. In his approach, another important factor is that life is based on a symbiotic form in which one thing belongs to the other. Indeed, the existence of one can be dependent on the definition of another and thus they are correlated with one another in their hierarchy in which one thing needs to be separated in order to survive. Thus, it is obvious that the order of life depends on both reciprocal and opposing faculties in an Aristotelian garden. Agamben further questions where this isolated and nutritive quality of flora intersects with fauna:

The isolation of nutritive life constitutes in every sense a fundamental event for western science. When Bichat, many centuries later, in his *Recherches physiologiques sur la vie et la mort*, distinguishes

between ‘animal life’, which is defined by its relation to an external world, and ‘organic life’, which is nothing other than a habitual succession of assimilation and excretion, it is again Aristotle’s nutritive life that marks out the obscure background from which the life of the higher animals gets separated. According to Bichat, it is as if two ‘animals’ lived together in every higher organism: *l’animal existant au-dedans*—whose life, which Bichat defines as ‘organic’, is merely the repetition of, so to speak, blind and unconscious functions (the circulation of blood, respiration, assimilation, excretion, etc.)—and *l’animal existant au-dehors*—whose life, for Bichat the only one that merits the name of ‘animal’, is defined through its relation to the external world. In man, these two animals live together, but they do not coincide; the internal animal’s {animale-di-dentro} organic life begins in the fetus before animal life does, and in aging and in the final death throes it survives the death of the external animal {animale-di-fuori}. (14)

According to Agamben’s *The Open*, Bichat’s two animals portray a way of life pertaining to biopolitics as shown by Michel Foucault in which the modern state, starting in the seventeenth century, began to make the population’s life as one of its highest priorities thus transforming its politics into biopolitics. The vegetative life came to fore and became a mission for the state leading to a need for the definition of the clinical death which “is a further identification of this bare life-detached from any brain activity and, so to speak, from any subject—which decides whether a certain body can be considered alive or must be abandoned to the extreme vicissitude of transplantation” (Agamben 15).

Definitions for the concepts of life and death, clinically or philosophically, therefore set forth challenges for an understanding of a division of life into animal and human. A very appropriate description for what is human and what is not does not seem possible at this point, yet it might be worth trying to initiate a humane production questioning where to draw the line between human and animal.

In an attempt to create an almost life form and play the role of god, the popular modern assumption to be made in a Frankenstein laboratory as to what it takes to cast human into being might require three basic concepts; first of all, the materials, which might be referred to as necessary chemicals for the makeup of the human body, the latter being the proper environment where these materials can be processed and lastly the energy, which will combine all these elements together in order to drive basic chemical reactions and make a living creature. In natural sciences, the source of this energy could simply derive from electricity or the solar power. Whereas, when it comes to the hide and seek for a substitute for the vital energy which is supposedly worn away in human body subsequently turning into a zombie is the soul itself. Without doubt, flesh without soul has already been acknowledged as the automata and renders a proper allegory for the emptied human body void of soul and mind. Nevertheless, did the first results of this human experiment turn out to be as they were expected? In his article "Machine and Organism," Georges Canguilhem presents an Aristotelian aspect of soul for human mechanism:

According to Aristotle, the soul is the principle of all movement. All movement first presupposes immobility and then requires a prime mover or some motivating force. Desire moves the body, and desire is explained by the soul, just as potentiality is explained by the act. Despite their differing explanations of movement, for Aristotle as for Descartes

later, the comparison of the body with a machine presupposes that man is composed of automated mechanical parts reliant on an energy source that produces motor effects over time and continues to do so well after the original (human or animal) energy has dissipated. It is this discrepancy between the storage of energy to be released by the mechanism and the moment of release that allows us to forget the relation of dependence between the effects of the mechanism and the actions of a body. (48)

Georges Canguilhem's presentation may lead the way from an entity possessing both human and animal capabilities to a machine with a soul. However, it also introduces originality in the form of this energy for living things to exist and survive. Such a state of mind is the very medium where the phrase "humanimalism" could be coined. It is possible to oppose human to other living things for the purposes of proper definitions of a human being and to portray the complex relations between human and animal just because an animal life has once been a part of human himself. However, when all things considered, the caesura between the words "human" and "animal" is the very point which both combines and separates these two words since human's distance to the animal has always been measured and considered to be quite intimate all the same. Giorgio Agamben observes this intimacy through his magnifying glass in his book *The Open*:

But, if this is true, if the caesura between the human and the animal passes first of all within man, then it is the very question of man—and of 'humanism'—that must be posed in a new way. In our culture, man has always been thought of as the articulation and conjunction of a body and a soul, of a living thing and a logos, of a natural (or animal) element and a supernatural or social or divine

element. We must learn instead to think of man as what results from the incongruity of these two elements, and investigate not the metaphysical mystery of conjunction, but rather the practical and political mystery of separation. What is man, if he is always the place—and, at the same, the result—of ceaseless divisions and caesurae? It is more urgent to work on these divisions, to ask in what way—within man—has man been separated from non-man, and the animal from the human, than it is to take positions on the great issues, on so-called human rights and values. And perhaps even the most luminous sphere of our relations with the divine depends, in some way, on that darker one which separates us from the animal. (16)

It is obvious that the grave has already been “open” according to Giorgio Agamben. However, a very appropriate assumption to be made at this point is whether this intimate distance between human and animal corresponds to those six feet under and above. This sets forth a problem with regards to the end of history and the figure human and nature would assume in the posthistorical world through negation, by means of which the animal of the species *Homo sapiens* had become human. Whether the disappearance of human from the pages of the history constitutes a cosmic catastrophe or not remains to be a curious case. Nonetheless, what is of significance here is rather the discussion what remains in the ruins of a war-torn and perhaps a stained humanity. The clash of being human itself is already rendered between the states of subject and object of the self. Therefore, a human like animalism is an inevitable part of being oneself. Agamben further investigates this human anatomy citing what Kojève dedicates to this clash:

Man remains alive as animal in *harmony* with Nature or given Being. What disappears is Man properly so called—that is, Action negating the given, and Error, or, in general, the Subject *opposed* to the Object. In point of fact, the end of human Time or History—that is, the definitive annihilation of Man properly so called or of the free and historical Individual—means quite simply the cessation of Action in the strong sense of the term. Practically, this means: the disappearance of *Philosophy*; for since Man no longer changes himself essentially, there is no longer any reason to change the (true) principles which are at the basis of his knowledge of the World and of himself. But all the rest can be preserved indefinitely; art, love, play, etc.; in short, everything that makes Man *happy*. (6)

This probable lack of happiness in human could turn out to be the state of the “rest” which survives the death of human, who has become animal again at the end of the history. The matter of the remnant, with regards to the state of staying, is prone to come to fore shedding light onto the gravestone so much so that it is even more vibrant and curious than the matter of life itself. When humankind is busy suffering the trouble of being either alive or dead what seems to be both precarious and intriguing is whether human could rest on earth when the zombie may never rest in peace. Another interpretation to be taken into consideration at this point is an approach of Hegel’s in which he draws the attention to the seemingly fading figure of human as if his soul has been amputated: “If history is nothing but the patient dialectical work of negation, and man both the subject and the stakes in this negating action, then the completion of history necessarily entails the end of man, and the face of this wise man who, on the threshold of time, contemplates this end with satisfaction necessarily fades” (Agamben

7). Yet, it needs to be taken into account once again whether Hegel's interpretation of negativity with no use which entails nothing but the end of human would complement with what zombie represents. Georges Bataille substitutes this idea of "negativity with no use" for "the open wound that is my life" (Agamben 7). Whether human possess the courage to open and show his wound is another matter; nevertheless, it could justifiably be asserted that this wound which has long been covered has been unveiled and has entitled itself with an unexpected word like "zombie." The epilogue of the history book, then, includes the human negativity as a "remnant" in the face of death.

It might be a factious argument to question if human has now truly become an animal again. Whether human traces have already been wiped out of the face of the earth or it is high time the last human locked himself in the panic room whispering "the end is nigh" might only turn out to be meager whining. Having experienced two major world wars, the individual in his own bliss in the human zoo has somehow managed to pretend to overlook his image of the zombie. The end-products of humanity of mental and physical machines are, however, portrayed in an ultra historical perspective that "man's remaining human presumes the survival of animals of the species *Homo sapiens* that must function as his support" (Agamben 12). Regardless of his present reflection, being human is not proper enough to survive. As Hegel once mentioned, "man is not a biologically defined species, nor is he a substance given once and for all; he is, rather, a field of dialectical tensions always already cut by internal caesurae that every time separate—at least virtually—'anthropophorous' animality and the humanity which takes bodily form in it" (Agamben 12). Then, it is requisite to think of a better name for this humanimal entity other than that of zombie.

But what becomes of the animality of man in post history? The aspects of negation and death between human and animal seems to be the point where modernity

begins to care for his own animal life and perhaps the body of this animal, just like the body of a slave or prisoner, whose aporias coincide with the philosophical aporias of modern times is withdrawn in such an irreducible manner that it has ultimately divided between animality and humanity. This is a point of madness where the “stultifera navis” (ship of fools) sets sails. In *Madness and Civilization*, Michel Foucault explains the voyage of this madman being both the slave and the prisoner to himself:

The madman’s voyage is at once a rigorous division and an absolute Passage. In one sense, it simply develops, across a half-real, half-imaginary geography, [...] a position symbolized and made real at the same time by the madman’s privilege of being confined within the city gates: his exclusion must enclose him; if he cannot and must not have another prison than the threshold itself, he is kept at the point of passage. He is put in the interior of the exterior, and inversely. A highly symbolic position, which will doubtless remain his until our own day, if we are willing to admit that what was formerly a visible fortress of order has now become the castle of our conscience. (11)

Indeed, this ship is quite like the Noah’s Ark on which the mere passengers have always been human and animal setting sail together never having taken a step on the land. Considering the price this humanimal pays for its punishment, it seems there is no escape from this vessel. This passenger having an incomparable quality is further introduced by Foucault:

He is a prisoner in the midst of what is the freest, the openest of routes: bound fast at the infinite crossroads. He is the Passenger par excellence: that is, the prisoner of the passage. And the land he will come to is unknown—as is, once he disembarks, the land from which he

comes. He has his truth and his homeland only in that fruitless expanse between two countries that cannot belong to him. (11)

Certainly, being homesick is something long forsaken the human shell drifting by itself along a sea of nothingness. What strands on the shore is the corpse of a humanimal and its journey from an Aristotelian garden to a Foucaultian shore seems to end up before the circular ruins of a Borgesian resurrection shrine “in [an] unanimous night” (Borges 52). The integrity and quality of the body of the resurrected has also been a conundrum in *The Open* for Giorgio Agamben:

The problem [...] to confront first of all was that of the resurrected body’s identity with the body of the man in life. For the identity of these two bodies seemed to imply that all the matter that had belonged to the body of the dead person must come back to life and take its place once again in the blessed organism. (17)

Then again, with such an expectation in mind, is one able to touch life well enough to create a living being? Agamben provides an insight into this question through a biblical reference in *The Open* which mentions:

They will corrupt both in their whole and in their parts. In the body of the resurrected, the animal functions will remain ‘idle and empty’ exactly as Eden, according to medieval theology, remains empty of all human life after the expulsion of Adam and Eve. All flesh will not be saved, and in the physiology of the blessed, the divine *oikonomia* of salvation leaves an unredeemable remnant. (19)

Those natural operations which are arranged for the purpose of either achieving or preserving the primary perfection of human nature; however, can’t escape the faith of turning into a humanimal fairytale. ”The anthropological machine of humanism is an

ironic apparatus that verifies the absence of a nature proper to *Homo*, holding him suspended between [...] animal and human—and, thus, his being always less and more than himself” (Agamben 29). Therefore, human having been molded when all models were already used up has neither an archetype nor a specific rank. Furthermore, since he was created without a certain model, he doesn't have a face of his own. Thus, this ironic machine lets him shape himself at his own discretion in either bestial or divine form. As human is the independent and extraordinary maker of himself, he attempts to be the artist of his own work in accordance with his soul's decision. This creation process is more like a reverse Pinocchio syndrome in which human ends up with the punishment of transforming into a puppet whereas Pinocchio the puppet struggles to become a real boy. Another failure in the creation of this work of art is satirized by Nikolai Gogol when he talks about a nose which leaves the face and develops a life of his own in his short story “The Nose.” This nose is unlike Pinocchio's which grows each time he tells a lie; nonetheless, it is also a satire for the human predicament depicting the incomplete and imperfect state of human. The human who is noseless and even faceless is now destined to take part in a zombie tale. Another literary work to set an allegory of reverse engineering of human anatomy is in the portrayal of Benjamin Button, the protagonist of the short-story entitled “The Curious Case of Benjamin Button” by F. Scott Fitzgerald. The creation of human is again reversed and the failure of the work of art is again underlined since Benjamin Button was born old, looking almost animal-like with wrinkles and poor limbs, and he gradually gets younger throughout his rite of passage ultimately dying as an infant. The paradox of birth and death are clearly presented in an anti-clock wise manner since it is obvious that it is too late for man to change his destiny and undo what has already been done. The despair and remorse of humanity and the irreversibility of human deeds are therefore embodied in the anatomy of Benjamin

Button. In his self-satirical face, the portrait of the zombie as an artist is constrained since the humane discovery of human turns out to be the fact that he lacks himself in the first place. *Zombie* is a work not yet done, an incomplete work of art on the canvas probably because the artist is either dissatisfied with the progress or startled with what might have been revealed through his craft.

This failure of creation of the human as an artist of himself in his anthropological machine is an ancient bequest he has long been inherited. Daedalus, as depicted to be the engineer and the architect of life, appears in the Latin poems, *Metamorphoses*, by Ovid. “Et ignotas animum dimittit in artes” (Ovid VIII 18) translates to “And he applied his spirit to obscure arts.” This “he” in the statement refers to Daedalus who is famous for creating the Labyrinth to house the Minotaur and building wax wings to escape from that Labyrinth. Unfortunately, his genius didn’t work out well in that he caused the death of his son, Icarus. “Museum of Fine Arts” a poem by W.H. Auden depicts the end of Icarus who attempts to use the wax wings made by his father, Daedalus. In his poem, W.H. Auden refers to the painting *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus* by Pieter Bruegel portraying not only the hubris of the creator of the wax wings but also the indifference of the world to a suffering in such a kind of lethargy which could have only been ascribed to a nation of mindless corpses:

In Brueghel's *Icarus*, for instance: how everything turns away
Quite leisurely from the disaster; the ploughman may
Have heard the splash, the forsaken cry,
But for him it was not an important failure; the sun shone
As it had to on the white legs disappearing into the green. (17)

As for Daedalus who stands for the ultimate and ideal artist, he is the representative of human who fails in his art as the engineer of life. Moreover, another

self with a very similar surname will be found in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* by James Joyce, Stephen Dedalus appears as the main character of the book and he also stands for the “he” as he also can’t apply his spirit to obscure arts. Therefore, human’s belief that the ultimate artist is God himself is disrupted since in his own creation he failed in creating an entity as good as God’s. It wouldn’t be too confusing, then, the zombie fictionalized as the other turns out to be the ultimate representative of human’s failure as an artist in creating a twin for himself.

In terms of failure in artistic creation, another crucial point we can make is with regards to the voice or silence of the zombie. Moreover, we may ask what silence represents in zombie fiction and whether it stands for the zombie concept itself. The replacement of the voice that is “phoné,” turning into “logos” that is speech serves as the faculty which distinguishes human from the animal. Looking back upon the Ancient Greek where matters of life and death were based on a political understanding of speech which is both “phallo” and “phono” centric, one who was able to speak could produce language and respected with his proven existence accordingly. The faculty of speech in “Polis,” the public space, belonged to human who is both “zoon politikon” (man as a social being) and “zon ekhon logon” (man as an animal with the ability to speak). Therefore, the speech, the sound human makes, is requisite for being. This discrepancy between human and animal in fact suggests a discontinuity between the subject and the object state of the self. This disposition is underlined in *The Open* by Giorgio Agamben in this way:

What distinguishes man from animal is language, but this is not a natural given already inherent in the psychophysical structure of man; it is, rather, a historical production which, as such, can be properly assigned neither to man nor to animal. If this element is taken away, the difference

between man and animal vanishes, unless we imagine a nonspeaking man—Homo alalus, precisely—who would function as a bridge that passes from the animal to the human. But all evidence suggests that this is only a shadow cast by language, a presupposition of speaking man (an animal-man) or a humanization of the animal (a man-ape). The animal-man and the man-animal are the two sides of a single fracture, which cannot be mended from either side. (36)

Moreover, within the boundaries of the zombie theory, the language could also be zombified; it could be the embodiment of the silence within the self. The need for language undoubtedly derives from the need for communication which turns out to be the discommunication with the other in the case of zombification. In the modern anthropological machine, the human is therefore excluded being from itself, that is, by animalizing the human, by isolating the nonhuman within the human. The inception of silence is regarded in relation with noise. Through various definitions and assumptions to identify the noise with, the notions of chaotic, inhumane, spontaneous, uncanny, uncontrollable, unwanted, vicious and wild come to the fore. Silence here can be interpreted through either impotence or enlightenment. With regards to its impotent quality, it will be worth referring to Herman Melville's short story entitled "Bartleby, the Scrivener" which sets forth a character who speaks no more than a few words but performs the act of writing. He is the one who answers every demand with a simple phrase "I would prefer not to." Giorgio Agamben states in "Bartleby, or On Contingency" that "Bartleby is the extreme figure of the Nothing from which all creation derives; and, at the same time, he constitutes the most implacable vindication of this Nothing as pure, absolute potentiality" (253). Here Bartleby neither prefers nor refuses, he is the representative of the limbo that humanity dares not to tread on. This is

indicative of a zone in between being and nothingness which timely fits into the zombie theory. In “Bartleby, or On Contingency,” Giorgi Agamben explains this when he mentions that “the zone of indistinction constituted by Bartleby’s reply is equally one between the potential to be (or to do) and the potential not to be (or do), a zone in which language, emancipated from both position and negation, abstains from referring to anything as such” (255). Another example for the humanimal presence and its relation to body and language could be unearthed from “The Burrow” by Franz Kafka. In this short story, an animal with human qualities with a faint sound has settled itself under the earth like a moll. What gives this creature its uncanniness is its hybridity of human and animal characteristics which could easily be an element of terror. The creature’s inner voice refers to itself as “I” and can produce ideas pertaining to the infrastructure of its den. This shelter, just like the grave of a corpse, is a frontier between inside and outside where one could hide itself but at the same time could detect any external intrusion. This is also a trap built by the creature’s own fears and it is a sonorous space which is capable of echoing both the space and the body inside. Silence in this burrow is therefore a portrayal for the metaphysical dimension and existential state for the concept of death since any sound produced out of body could only be the voice of the living death. What makes silent and dumb zombies uncanny is the fact that the link between the sound and body is disrupted. This creature’s work is always in progress, just like the incomplete work of art of man regarding his own self. The presence of the other is therefore a necessary element for the one to define itself. Mikhail Bakhtin explains this need in his essay entitled “Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity”:

It is a futile and surreptitious effort in order for man to look in the mirror to see how he is perceived by others. We can’t appear to others as we appear to ourselves in the mirror since the image in the mirror is the

image of a man who doesn't look at the other and is in no position of anticipating or responding to the look of the other. This is the look of a person who excludes outside while trying to comprehend how he is seen externally. (7)

When making a reference to this humanimal creature it is therefore significant to identify a transparent border between the self and the other when providing a basis on the opposition between them. The presence of the zombie on the screen thus poses terror not only through its bodily appearance but also by means of the uncanny sensation its silence preserves. Zombie whose voice and language have been stolen from itself with its decomposed body is something which cannot be seen in the mirror but only reflected on the shattered pieces of the looking glass turning into echoing selves and bodies scattering themselves through various angles.

This journey from macro-universes to micro-selves has also rendered a contrast for the afore-mentioned argument in a 2013 film by Jonathan Levine: *Warm Bodies*. As it could be predicted from the ironically allegorical title of the film considering the nature of death, zombies will be represented again destitute of mind and soul with repulsive bodies and a lack of volition yet a difference made by the director is the fact that they can get warmer and in order for them to be able to ice-break, these zombies firstly need to regain human feelings and subsequently they need to communicate this by developing language. While *Warm Bodies* suggest a humor for human condition, the need to identify oneself has also been underlined as the key issue. The lead character, a male zombie who will fall in love with a female human, persistently strives to remember his name; however he ends up with remembering only the first letter "R." This speck of memory might be considered rather important since zombies described so far are merely mindless creatures; puppets to their masters leave alone possessing any

process of brain activity. Nevertheless, this somehow sociable zombie never manages to remember his name although he develops communication with the girl he has feelings for and thus renamed by her randomly. Therefore, it might be indicative of the reality that zombies might be the embodiment of the self itself which is deficient and long abandoned in the human world. Instead, zombies ironically represent some sort of freedom in which one does not need to follow the name or the lead given to the self by the authority refusing everything identity suggests. Zombie, in this case, then turns into a pattern by which the person refuses the given name by denying language. The only linguistic understanding this zombie could share with the human world is through the acousmatic sound of the music which can suggest the fact that the world of language is not preferable to this zombie whereas the new world order suggested by the zombie manifesto is one which sustains even more humane, ideal and communicative qualities such as music. As for one common quality with zombie films portrayed so far is that brain is the part for the zombie appetite and the same case is underlined in *Warm Bodies* as well. The question to ask at this point whether zombies have the symbolic quality as destroyers of authority or they intend to take over in order to become another authority. Yet, the love affair in the film somehow seems to weaken the manifesto that the zombie theory might suggest at first sight; however the zombies in love, these postmodern Romeo and Juliet, might suggest more than a good science fictional make-up on the silver screen. The need to create a love scene between a zombie and a human is like a long expected outcome of post human anxiety and this discourse is very much like the relationship between man and animal. The incongruity between them is what also binds them together. The concept of love may actually refer to the inevitable coupling of the self and the other; and just like the love itself, it is an act of violence in which one needs to eat the other to become one, perhaps then the case of love is actually not becoming

one soul in two bodies, particularly in the case of zombification, one being a corpse. Just like the myth of “Narcissus and Echo” by Ovid, love is indeed an act of violence denying the existence of the other in an echoing body: “Oh, would that I were able to secede from my own body, depart from what I love!” These lines by Narcissus could be indicative of the fact that he is neither human nor animal in his decisions but destined to be a humanimal trapped in his own body; nonetheless, he continues through his own epiphany which is an affirmation of his own slavery to himself rather than his own salvation: “But now I get it! I am that other one! I’ve finally seen through my own image! I burn with love for-me! The spark I kindle is the torch I carry: whatever can I do? Am I the favor-seeker or the favor sought?” (Ovid 79). Moreover, it won’t be astonishing to find out that Echo, who is supposed to symbolize the other whose love will be cherished by Narcissus, is devoid of her voice and she is cursed by the gods that she would only repeat the last word anyone says. The loss of her language is also symbolic of the quality that her self and identity are denied by the authority and it is impossible for her to set up a proper communication with the other to identify herself. This ancient denial of the existence of the other must have been fortunately realized by the modern human so much so that a reinstatement seems to have been necessiated thanks to the presence of the concept of zombie. Perhaps, human may have chosen to come to terms with his own self and body whose love is nothing but one at last sight.

This study of human’s self-autopsy has analyzed the souls of human and animal subjects and has focused on the ways how brain functions and heart beats in a zombified body so far, and lastly the examination needs to cover the automaton’s bodily functions in terms of the puppet and automaton theories. In his article “The Inanimate Incarnate,” Roman Paska focuses on the relationship between the puppet and the master of modern times:

For centuries, puppet theory has concentrated on the puppet's symbolic relationship with human models, the puppet being primarily cast in the role of a surrogate human. Reflections on Puppet Theater, from the *Rig-Veda* to Marcus Aurelius to the present, have perpetuated an image of the puppet as a symbol of man manipulated by higher forces or beings, a metaphor in which the puppet is structurally interchangeable with its own controller, man. (411)

Roman Paska draws the attention further to the fact that the very nature of a puppet in the western culture is regarded to be something divine even being reflective of its self-consciousness in its integrity rather than automaton. Moreover, its object quality is outweighed by its usefulness as an object. The concept of negativity with use might be recalled since the puppet of Roman Paska moves from the "Not I" by Samuel Beckett to the "Cartesian I" by René Descartes; "I think therefore I am" seems to turn into "I move therefore I am" in Paska's words:

The essential fascination of puppet theater, its ability to engage and hold an audience, is a function of its nature as a theatrical activity consisting in the animation of lifeless objects (dead things) through the active intervention of a living human operator. The theatrical destination of the puppet also determines its distinction from the automaton, the mannequin and the doll, with their passive claims to formal autonomy as objects. In the puppet theater, the use (fullness) of the object is far more significant than the object itself. And when the object does take human form, sometimes even reproducing anatomical features quite extraneous to its integrity as a puppet, it often does so self-consciously, as if the

attempt to camouflage its otherness were in fact a subterfuge for displaying it. (411)

However, what is the use of a puppet theory in terms of developing an understanding of the concept of zombie? Although Paska defends the distinction of the puppet from the automata, whether the zombie could possess the cunningness and spirituality of the puppet is doubtful since “the Romantic view of the puppet as a representational figure intent on acquiring mechanical autonomy” is what the reflection of the otherness in zombie attempts to prevent (Paska 412). Yet, according to Jean-Claude Beaune, an automaton could also share the mechanical autonomy having the individuality and identity of his own in his article “The Classical Age of Automata: An Impressionistic Survey from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century”:

First, this automaton is a *mechanistic being*, and in this connection the Cartesian definition takes on its fullest sense: it acts by figure and motion, it is motion itself, the prime problem of physics, concentrated into exemplary machines [...] Second, the automaton is basically a *mechanical individual*. It is often possible to discern some temptation toward group activity, of course but not yet to such an extent as to affect its insularity. The combinations of instruments it presents are still visible, and its ‘character’ still has an identity of its own. Moreover, this mechanical or technological individuality relates to the broader concept of the individual as it develops in philosophy from the Cartesian cogito to the ‘responsible man’ of the Enlightenment. Third, the automaton has *close links with living creatures* in all its different manifestations, but especially in relation to the medicine and physiology of the period. It dissects the living and imitates them sufficiently well to

generate a gratifying illusion about its own nature; it proposes experimental protocols that link up with the old topics of the body, animals and man as machines [.] Fourth, as well as being a scientific individual, the automaton is also an *aesthetic* or more precisely, a *ludic* object. It simultaneously demonstrates and conceals the cunning artifice that makes it the supreme toy, and it also shares in the mathematical formalization of play. When dissection is complete, outward appearance reigns supreme and the automaton can make play of the ambiguities of the inside and outside of the body. Polished and powdered, it conjures up an image of Don Juan or Mozart (music being one of its favorite poles of attraction). Whether as entertainment for the great or as an illusion for the masses, it plays at denying its own trickery for the pleasure and pride of the spectators. As they watch, they admire themselves for being ‘philosophical’ enough to suspend willingly their disbelief in what they know is the object’s real nature; yet they also pretend to forget this suspension in order to share the great mysteries of the world with it.

(436)

Clearly, having the qualities of both a puppet and an automaton, it seems rather difficult for the zombie not to find an audience for itself. In this human play, zombie has its fair share of the performance; however, perhaps not for the purposes of a philosophical entertainment. In his last remarks in his article, Jean-Claude Beaune lays a bridge between the automaton and the concept of time:

Finally, at this period of history, as the world is somewhere being mapped and cataloged, the automaton represents a kind of primal mythology—not in terms of the old cosmicism, which Newton had done

away with, but in relation to other secrets. The automaton achieves this through a *grasp of time* in which there is still some memory of the great era of monumental timepieces and Jacks of the clock. The automaton, as clock of the universe, is no longer happy making symbolic figures appear and strike the hour; rather, it keeps as its own mysterious secret the rudiments of a history of man and nature which emerges in the shadow of the science of space. The question of *primum mobile* persists in the problem of the origin and medium of forces. Even Newton did not solve this completely and the cunning automaton leaves a second way open for an overly pure rationality, the road that will be taken later, for example, by Hegel. This relationship between the automaton and time is probably the most important part of its originality; it is what separates the automaton from the machine that it, in fact, is, though it can never fully accept it. (436)

It seems that zombie as the automaton also needs its otherness in human to express its temporality in the encyclopedia of the time. The paradoxical logic to be grasped by the reader then is the fact that zombie's trickery is merely offered as a way to define ourselves as human in turn, in both being and nothingness, zombies could possibly be our evil eye.

There is also an attitude to the continuum of these puppets pertaining to their temporality by Martin Heidegger as he refers to the machination of human nation with regards to being and time in his book entitled *Mindfulness*:

The predominance of machination shows itself most intensely in cases in which machination also takes possession of thinking and arranges machinationally the thinking of the beingness of beings, such

that being itself is made into something that makes itself, arranges and erects itself. Its precondition primarily is interpretation of being as 'objectivity' of 'objects', as 'objectness' of objects. The 'objectness' is 'constituted' and this 'constitution' in turn is relegated into a self-constitution of the 'subject' as the 'subject' of 'thinking'. Thus 'being' will be grasped 'constitutively' as 'becoming'. But because 'time' is the form of 'becoming', on these machinational pathways of interpreting being there arises an obvious interconnection between 'being' and 'time'.
(16)

Last but not least, in the light of the afore-mentioned remarks, the self-autopsy written in this automaton biography will be incomplete without a last touch by Descartes as he refers to the mechanism of body. Drew Leder interprets this lifeless body in his article "A Tale of Two Bodies: The Cartesian Corpse and the Lived Body":

While Descartes thus locates life within the body itself, this is made possible only by a deeper concession to death. The body's 'life' is modeled first and foremost upon the workings of *inanimate* machines. Descartes was fascinated by the automatons of his day which, while able to perform a variety of functions, even to imitate the behavior of living creatures, were in fact driven by mechanical forces. He reconceives the human body as just such a machine. As Descartes concludes the *Treaties of Man*, [he mentions that] the fire which burns continually in its heart [...] is of no other nature than all those fires that occur in inanimate bodies. The living body is not fundamentally different from the lifeless; it is a kind of animated corpse, a functioning mechanism. (119)

B. Exodus

No longer being the sleepwalker or the organic puppet of a voodoo master, the modern zombie with its body being a cage and its mind holding the key, becomes a force of nature that moves under its own autonomy impelled by its own instinctual needs and perpetuates its metamorphosis into the fast moving monster of the twenty-first century. In her article entitled “And the Dead Shall Walk,” Deborah Christie examines the roots of the modern zombie “tracing the development of what is now an iconic image of the shambling dead from its genesis in Richard Matheson’s novel *I Am Legend*” (61). Drawing on “Aldous Huxley’s paradigmatic example of societal evolution—of one society replacing another, often after violent upheaval, drawing on the Heraclitean model of progress that so influenced Hegel, Nietzsche, and others—Christie posits [the] cyclical focus on both destruction and regeneration” (61). The novel’s hero, Robert Neville draws the attention of the reader initially with the solitude of its main character rather than a human crowd who are still alive and struggle to stay that way. Christie argues in her article:

We tend to view zombie narratives as apocalyptic because we believe that we are watching either the slow breakdown or the catastrophic destruction of human society, and we generally regard that as a negative event. But because we most closely identify with the dwindling number of living human subjects, we often miss the larger implications that what we are really witnessing in a zombie narrative is a form of violent, transformative renewal. In Matheson’s novel, Robert Neville may be the last human, but he is not the last of humanity—humanity has evolved and a new society has superseded the old one. Further, as it was the hubris and aggression of the old society that

directly led to its destruction and the mutation of humans into a post-human hybrid of vampire/human, it becomes a resonating question as to whether humanity deserves our sympathy. (62)

The definition of this other society is one which is irreparable with regards to what Giorgio Agamben portrays in his book entitled *The Coming Community*:

The world of the happy and that of the unhappy, the world of the good and that of the evil contain the same states of things; with respect to their being—thus they are perfectly identical. The just person does not reside in another world. The one who is saved and the one who is lost have the same arms and legs. The glorious body cannot but be the mortal body itself. What changes are not the things but their limits. It is as if there hovered over them something like a halo, a glory. The irreparable is neither an essence nor an existence, neither a substance nor a quality, neither a possibility nor a necessity. It is not properly a modality of being, but it is the being that is always already given in modality, that *is* its modalities. It is not *thus*, but rather it is *its* thus. (91)

The *it* factor in the threshold which is born out of the representation of the other community is depicted as the failure of society and social order to protect the populace resulting in the failure of humanity to save itself. The final scene of *Night of the Living Dead* by George Romero, where the bodies of the first zombie appeared on-screen and the last human to survive are both shown being tossed into the fire by the sheriff and his men, is indicative of the flaw of human judgement and representative of the monster within. While both Matheson and Romero draw the attention of the audience to the body politic and the weakness of human himself, Nick Muntean's study of "trauma zombies" suggest a contradictory model for a more literal walking dead. In "And the

Dead Shall Walk,” Deborah Christie underlines that they “represent a profoundly modern shift in our cultural attitudes about death, where death is no longer a transition but an outcome: something we become, rather than somewhere we go” (62). This shift underlines the fact that dehumanization of the zombie as a product of the same culture which previously involved the individual as subject now grotesquely parodied by the zombies who wander aimlessly. It will be obvious in both films that what has been obliterated is the humanity itself “returning the humanlike inhabitants to what Slavoj Žižek has called the ‘zero level’ of humanity” (Christie 62). The existential anxiety exhumed at this point is with regards to that one could continue to live, but be nothing. The attempts of humanity to hide its zombie self have been failed with a knock on the door with the atom bomb and zombie is considered to be the error point of humanity. Considering those exposed to the radiation from the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and those prisoners of Nazi war camps, they were reduced to such a state of bare existence; therefore, the zombie depiction representing the feelings of terror called forth by these survivors could have even been innocent compared with what humanity offers for its own kind. Accordingly, the zombie films subsequent to Romero’s includes possible causes of zombification such as divine punishment, nuclear fallout, extraterrestrial invasion or contamination, biological warfare or pandemic plagues. Thus, zombie narratives “become a touchstone to decipher the deep-seated fears of individual humans in the contrived plurality commonly called civilization” (Christie 63). It could be inferred, then, humans and viruses can be equally cannibalistic as the zombie as they also contribute to the events of destruction and renewal. As for the historical and literary accounts of plague outbreaks, “Boccaccio’s *The Decameron* and Defoe’s *A Journal of the Plague Year*” will be signaling the fact that human is the ultimate virus for himself (Christie 63). When the depersonalizing forces of suburbia is

underlined in the films *Fido* by Andrew Currie and *The Stepford Wives* by Frank Oz, their connection to both the post-human and the zombie could be studied in terms of the inherent abjection of a homogenized suburban lifestyle. Julia Kristeva defines this state of abjection as being neither the subject nor the object in his book entitled *Powers of Horror*:

When I am beset by abjection, the twisted braid of affects and thoughts I call by such a name does not have, properly speaking, a definable *object*. The abject is not an ob-ject facing me, which I name or imagine. Nor is it an ob-jest, an otherness ceaselessly fleeing in a systematic quest of desire. What is abject is not my correlative, which, providing me with someone or something else as support, would allow me to be more or less detached and autonomous. The abject has only one quality of the object—that of being opposed to *I*. If the object, however, through its opposition, settles me within the fragile texture of a desire for meaning, which, as a matter of fact, makes me ceaselessly and infinitely homologous to it, what is *abject*, on the contrary, the jettisoned object, is radically excluded and draws me toward the place where meaning collapses. (1)

Indeed, the dehumanization of the person having neither the subject nor the object qualities through the removal of individual thought can be seen among the soldiers in modern warfare. Out of the apocalyptic struggles, as the wars between zombies and non-zombies come into conflict, new societies form and new civilizations solidify. “Out of strife, in the form of the human’s encounter with the zombie’s decayed corpse, comes, perhaps surprisingly, renewal” (Christie 65). It is high time, then, that the human noticed what is replaced may be the humans themselves.

A new society coming in and devouring the former is also indicative of the social and political structures enduring in the afterlife. In Matheson's novel, Robert Neville is legend not because he is the last man on earth representing human society but because "he is the single largest threat to a new society, one that superseded humanity" as noted in Deborah Christie's article entitled "A Dead New World: Richard Matheson and the Modern Zombie" (68). Furthermore, what matters is "whatever" that *is* as mentioned by Giorgio Agamben in his book *The Coming Community*:

The coming being is whatever being. In the Scholastic enumeration of transcendentals (*quodlibet ens est unum, verum, bonum seu perfectum*—what-ever entity is one, true, good, or perfect), the term that, remaining though in each, conditions the meaning of all the others is the adjective *quodlibet*. The common translation of this term as 'whatever' in the sense of 'it does not matter which, indifferently' is certainly correct, but in its form the Latin says exactly the opposite: *Quodlibet ens* is not 'being, it does not matter which,' but rather 'being such that it always matters'. (1)

Similarly, the moment of zombie and human cathexis is what characterizes the invasion of post-humanism into humanism. The qualities of human cannot be copied or reproduced thus demarcating the line between human and nonhuman. The post-human appears in fiction in a variety of contexts: "to designate an end to the era of social theory dubbed humanism, to indicate that our conceptual construction of what it means to be human is undergoing a profound transformation, and to account for the conflation of emerging technologies that show the balance of power between humans and machines is altering" (Christie 69). However, it is also underlined that "against the dangers of apocalyptic or 'complacent' post-humanism in a scenario based on the death

or replacement of humans, we should beware the grafting of the post human onto a liberal humanist view of the self” (Christie 69). That is to say, reading the zombie as an ontic object may reveal our own denial of what is inhuman in all of us. Therefore, when in 1954, just nine years after the Trinity test, Richard Matheson published his novel *I Am Legend*, Robert Neville, the protagonist of the novel, turned out to be the embodiment that human race was doomed to extinction with Neville being the sole surviving human doomed to battle not only with the outsiders but firstly with himself. In her article “And the Dead Shall Walk,” Deborah Christie continues to provide a closer look at this half man half animal automaton:

Neville is our touchstone in this apocalyptic landscape; he is our viewpoint and, as such, determines in large part the direction and scope of our understanding of this dead new world. Because Matheson strategically alternates scenes of Neville’s brutal pursuit of the vampires with flashbacks of the life Neville had before the plague, readers are placed in a position where they identify with Neville’s despondency and the wretchedness of having lost the very things that gave his life meaning. After both his wife and his daughter fall victim to the plague that has produced the vampires, Neville, and by extension the reader, regains some measure of meaning in the methodic destruction of what we perceive as the enemy. (72)

Neville loses his ability to recognize himself with its actual enemy within. In her book entitled *Powers of Horror*, Julia Kristeva makes a reference to this bereft I using the abject in Artaud’s text:

An ‘I’ overcome by the corpse—such is often the abject in Artaud’s text. For it is death that most violently represents the strange

state in which a non-subject, a stray, having lost its non-objects, imagines nothingness through the ordeal of abjection. The death that 'I' am provoked horror, there is a choking sensation that does not separate inside from outside but draws one of them into the other, indefinitely. Artaud is the inescapable witness of that torture—of that truth. (25)

Neville, thus, being the both the victim and the witness of his own end turns into the abject having lost his objects. His reluctance to move the dead body of his wife can be indicative of an attempt to preserve the body intact as a representation of life. While her death symbolizes an end where everything stood fixed, he tries to preserve her body as oppose to the Cartesian model of mind and body separation as if ensuring that her essence will also remain intact provided that the body does so. As stated in “And the Dead Shall Walk” by Deborah Christie, Neville’s failure in separating the mind from the body results in his confrontation with abjection:

Neville’s failure to separate mind from body, memory from corpse, results in his having to destroy what he had hoped to preserve. His memories now include his having to be the architect of [his wife’s] final destruction—her second death. Neville’s confrontation with the reality of her death—and undeath—is demonstrably part of what causes his reversal from identification to negation. (74)

The modern era of horror film, thus, redefines the monstrous by ascribing the victim quality to the hero. This is also an awakening reflective of the trauma a nation suffering. The bitter truth is that death is random and without purpose. No one dies for the greater good or to further the survival of others. The sight which displays a nation devouring itself is representative of the nation’s rejection of Cartesian mind and body of itself. As Christie proceeds in her article “And the Dead Shall Rise,” the social trauma

takes on its bodily form in the shape of a monster when the memory resides itself on the past:

Films, like zombie films, that project a futurity of events—even apocalyptic events—are by necessity utilizing recaptured, revised restructured visions of the past—past anxiety, past trauma, past hysteria. They are a form of social vaccination that revisits the horror of disease or trauma in order to prepare the social body for some future contamination or event. The spectacle of horror both familiarizes and distances the audience from the traumatic event depicted, seeming to depict something new but effectively redirecting the public’s attention to past events from which they have become desensitized by repeated exposure. Considered in this light, the depersonalization that is a characteristic of the zombie—bodies without souls—can be reconceived as a problem of identification, an unwillingness to recognize both similarity and difference. Robert Neville fails specifically to recognize the reality of his wife’s physical transformation, but more universally he fails to differentiate the living vampires from the dead ones; he cannot overcome the differences manifested by the plague to identify the post-human state of the living vampires. (77)

It has been made clear so far that dying itself has no purpose anymore, for those who die rise again as monstrous Doppelgängers of their living selves. The uncanny transformation of human beings into nonhuman forms is indicative of a far more universal blindness or apathy with the notion that there is no discernible difference between the living and the dead. The corpse of traditional humanism is as mobile as the walking corpses of the dead. These social corpses are “representative products of the

inherent and inseparable thing-character of human existence [with respect to] not only our future but our present in that they exist in a state toward which we all advance with the same inexorable motion known as human life” (Christie 80).

The travel of this melancholy angel as a self-annihilating nothing seems to be infinite. The swan song of the zombie myth then could be cited from the epilogue of *The Conspiracy Against the Human Race* by Thomas Ligotti:

Look at your body—
A painted puppet, a poor toy
Of jointed parts ready to collapse,
A diseased and suffering thing
With a head full of false imaginings. (11)

Looking deep inside, the human will see nothing but a vast emptiness carved out of their humanity. His failure in preserving his own existence in fact stems from the failure in the otherization of the self and a hungry childhood is, thus, created from the grave to the cradle. It will be of significance to listen to the zombie itself in their last breath in what Thomas Ligotti explains to be the nightmare of being in his book *The Conspiracy against the Human Race*:

For ages they had been without lives of their own. The whole of their being was open to the world and nothing divided them from the rest of creation. How long they had thus flourished none of them knew. Then something began to change. It happened over unremembered generations. The signs of a revision without forewarning were being writ ever more deeply into them. As their species moved forward, they began crossing boundaries whose very existence they never imagined. After nightfall, they looked up at a sky filled with stars and felt themselves small and

fragile in the vastness. Soon they began to see everything in a way they never had in older times. When they found one of their own lying still and stiff, they now stood around the body as if there were something they should do that they had never done before. It was then they began to take bodies that were still and stiff to distant places so they could not find their way back to them. But even after they had done this, some within their group did see those bodies again, often standing silent in the moonlight or loitering sad-faced just beyond the glow of a fire. Everything changed once they had lives of their own and knew they had lives of their own. It even became impossible for them to believe things had ever been any other way. They were masters of their own movements now, as it seemed, and never had there been anything like them. The epoch had passed when the whole of their being was open to the world and nothing divided them from the rest of the creation. Something had happened. They did not know what it was, but they did know it as that which *should not be*. And something needed to be done if they were to flourish as they once had, if the very ground beneath their feet were not to fall out from under them. For ages they had been without lives of their own. Now that they had such lives there was no turning back. (19)

It seems that the zombie is more than willing to preserve its “remnant” quality on earth. In the slaughterhouse of humanity, the last crumbs of civilization have long been wiped out before he wakes up. Zombie is, therefore, remains to be the “unnamable” irony since it is what we deny to relate our otherness to while we enjoy its presence without the otherness of which we cannot define ourselves.

CONCLUSION

The zombie, as a literary and philosophical pattern employed in post-human narratives, has earned a rightful reputation in the human myth. “Zombies [...] the abjection of Gothic undead, occupy a curious and significantly interstitial position, overlooked, perhaps, but all the more interesting for that” (Botting 40). The zombie poetry is indicative of the fact that dualisms with regards to body and mind, human and zombie, self and other could only merge in nothingness. Considered to be less than natural and also magical and primitive, yet also more than natural in their defying the line between life and death, these animated corpses of negation and abjection can take on various bodily forms such as animal-like humans, puppets or automatons with the sole purpose of constituting an otherness for the self. However, in the light of this study and afore-mentioned points, zombie appears to be more than a gothic-science fictional character creating thrill and dismay on the screen for the hunger driven unconscious of the audience leading to their catharsis. The zombie is rather an ontological confrontation for the long deferred adoption of *our-selves* as replaced by *their-selves*. When humanity enjoys the fictional products of fantasy literature in a seemingly sentient and self-consciously critical attitude, it appears that humans are not aware of their long-inherited apathy. The infinite temporality of the zombie suggests that we turn into what we eat. What harm could come from grabbing a bite of human flesh after all? The secret of the ultimate meaning of being a human is hidden in human’s own hubris and zombie being aware of this fact may now enjoy its long reign over humanity. If the world turns into

one of abjection with the negation of subject and object selves, then, what happens to the self itself all through this mess sounds to be a rather unfortunate question:

What is most uncanny about the self is that no one has yet been able to present the least evidence of it. Like the soul, that figure of speech which has long since been snickered out of existence, the self may be felt but never be found. It is a spectral tapeworm that takes its reality from a host organism and grows along with the physical matter in which it is encased. (Ligotti 101)

Humans' despair in their endeavor to find a human stating Descartes's "I think, therefore I am" amongst this wreck and nothingness, therefore, as Deborah Christie maintains in "A Dead New World" the human condition "seems woefully solipsistic in light of today's scientific and technological advances" (71). The psychological dualism implicit in determining self-identification and negation, or that which is me and that which is not me, is where the zombie incarnates. Our discomfort with that boundary that exists amongst us, that objectness of our inherent material makeup whereby we transition from human to post-human conveys a sense of body which is no longer a symbolic representation of the life that was once housed there. The zombie theory in the making presents a reality in a way that the basic instinct of humans is not pertaining to the matter of life or death but is rather with regards to the appealing fear of being in the threshold itself. Zombies manifest the fate of the modern human figure as socially abjected, economically outcast, homeless, workless, wretched, materially bound casualties of techno-capitalist innovations. They're us, but not quite. They render an automated pleasure ornamented by a dissatisfying sameness. Their repetition of the same always (and never) turns into a disclosure of otherness. Zombies are aimless,

useless, senseless, and destructive. They are the dead weight of whatever remains as Fred Botting maintains in “Zombie Death Drive: Between Gothic and Science Fiction”:

Zombies – figures of unproductive expenditure – are precisely those expended, rendered expendable in the process. They’re us. Hence the anxiety. A repulsion remains in the horror and laughter at the zombie – an unbearable recognition and disavowal of ourselves as too slow, lumbering and inflexible to cope, too corporeal and disconnected to be anything other than the jetsam of a virtual dematerialization [...] or, in horror, in recognition and repulsion of our zombie fate, with a counteridentificatory leap, spectators can reject and cast aside the zombie, becoming cyborg instead in a differentiation and re-pulsion that recognizes and effaces the very obsolescence of the zombie. (50)

Bidding farewell has never been easy, yet, “zombies look back – mirrors of the ragged residues of modern humanity; the anxiety and horror they embody, in contrast, evokes a dematerializing forward momentum – very peculiar angels of history” (Botting 51).

Zombies propose recognition of a human pattern which is an inherently uncanny phenomenon and is something the human behavior performs as if spontaneously. In this vein, the inevitability of death seems like a communicable disease of the human race and the modern Lazarus is doomed to be in despair. Therefore, it may necessitate further discussion whether humanity is the tension between finite and infinite; nevertheless, the concept of the zombie having a recent universal recognition may be the interpreter of the unseen world.

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