

# **Revenge of the Dammed: The Zombie as Ecological Trauma and Revenge in Flooded Landscapes**

**Simon Bacon**

## **Introduction**

This article considers the ecological trauma and subsequent revenge caused in relation to the flooding of the landscape due to the construction of dams. The building of dams to produce reservoirs or hydroelectric energy is not that new, nor is the dramatic effects such constructions have on the land or communities that are inevitably affected by them. However, recent texts and films such as *Beneath Still Waters* (Yuzna 2005), *World War Z* (Brooks 2006 and Forster 2013), and *Les Revenants* (Gobert 2012-present) have expressed these traumatic ruptures in the socio-ecological fabric through the body of the returning undead.

The trauma enacted on the landscape due to dams not only creates zombies as an embodiment of the ecological violence perpetrated but also, in some way, makes the landscape itself equally undead, seeing it locked in, or out, of time and unable to move on. This rupture in the natural order then causes it to expel the dead both as a symptom of its undead state but also as revenge on those that caused it. Ecological revenge, though, entails something of a rebooting or resetting of the current ecosystem where the traumatic wound of the drowned landscape causes the past to erupt into the present through the bodies of the undead and, indeed, the environment in the immediate vicinity of the dam and the submerged environment behind it.

Ecological trauma involves what might be termed a Gothicizing of the dam itself and the surrounding landscape, in the way that it sees an undying past haunt and/or erupt into the present. However, as this article will show this is not meant to eternally lock the present in the past but to offer the possibility of a different future.

## Zombies and Trauma

George Romero, father of the modern, non-vooodoo, zombie stated in his film *Dawn of the Dead* (1978) that ‘when Hell is full the dead will walk the Earth’. The examples looked at in this article may not follow this exact line of reasoning but the undead here are the product of an ecological purgatory where both life and death can no longer be distinguished. Indeed, the formerly fecund landscape, once flooded, becomes a traumatic wound in the environment, a barren aporia locked away from the life that continues outside of it. The zombies that emerge from the dark floodwaters held back by dams are a direct expression of this ecological trauma, the dead spurned by the soaked undead soil of the lake/reservoir bottom. As noted by Anna Froula, zombies are our ‘abject’ selves, the ‘corpse we will all one day become’ (2010: 196) and so just as humanity has made the landscape a ‘corpse’ by drowning it in reciprocal fashion it reflects and returns our own abjectness back. Unsurprisingly then, trauma and the undead are not unfamiliar companions though often more in conjunction with the ideological landscape rather than the physical one — that is not to say that the commercialism behind electrohydraulic dams is not without its ideological imperatives. As such, zombies have often been shown in colonial settings, particularly pre-Romero zombies, (Hakola 2015 and Luckhurst 2015), American cities and shopping malls (Blake: 2008) and in Nazi regalia (see Magilow, Bridges and Vander Lugt 2012) configuring ideas around Empire and colonialism, consumerism and liberalism, and historical trauma, respectively. It should be noted that many of these examples are tied to specific locations, though environmental ecology is not necessarily of primary importance.

The use of the flooded landscape is configured slightly differently though it is not a common feature of many texts or films, as mentioned by Peter Dendle there are not many ‘sustained iterations’ of submerged zombies in the new millennium, and less of those that involve dams. However, those that do encourage a very particular reading of the destruction of the environment and its repercussions for those that live nearby. As Jason J. Wallin observes, ‘it is the zombie that

commits to the unthought horrors of planetary contamination, toxification, purification and decay. It is in this way that the zombie might be thought of as a melancholic figure for its ethical commitment to the dark ecology of the planet' (Wallin: 2015: 144). This confirmation of the role of the zombie — and indeed its less volatile but equally threatening relation, the revenant — as a manifestation of a fracturing of the ecological balance of the world also directly relates its melancholic status to that of environmental trauma. Freud views melancholia in terms that are considered in the same way as psychological trauma where it is an open wound that leaves the afflicted unable to move on and forever locked into the moment the rupture occurred.<sup>1</sup> Further, one can view its 'ethical commitment' in terms of ecological revenge or a rebalancing of the biological dynamics of the environment. Dams are an example of the human restructuring of the landscape often with little thought of the ecological consequences above and beyond the immediate returns to the government that commissions them. The Three Gorges Dam in China, for example, is designed to produce electricity and increase the volume of shipping traffic along the Yangtze River but its construction not only displaced 1.3 million people but has had dramatic effects on biodiversity<sup>2</sup> (possibly causing the extinction of the Chinese river dolphin),<sup>3</sup> deforestation<sup>4</sup> and increased levels of water pollution.<sup>5</sup> The location itself provides an extremely gothic location with a huge river of foggy grey waters passing through a scarred and mountainous landscape. It is unsurprising then that the Three Gorges Dam provides the 'ground zero' for one of the examples here. In fact, the Gothicizing of the landscape is a vital part of the traumatizing of the environment and although many of the examples here take place in locations that were already quite visually dramatic or spectacular, the human violence wreaked upon them turns their more sublime aspects into something much more darker and foreboding. The first film to be looked at here makes much of the Gothicizing of the landscape but also links it directly to the nature of the dam itself which draws comparison with a huge, Gothic castle wall that keeps the ghost-ridden waters of the river behind it from washing away the town directly below it.

## Memories of the Dammed

*Beneath Still Waters* (2005) is set in modern-day Northern Spain and centres around the dam at Debaria which towers above the landscape around it. The dam is a huge Gothic presence in the film conforming to many tropes of the Gothic genre as well as intimating the traumatic acts behind its construction, as Jamieson Ridenhour comments ‘The Gothic edifice, always huge and crumbling [as we later discover the dam is] is the physical metaphor of both the rotten inner self of the villain [humanity] and a decayed and imposing history’ (Ridenhour 2013: 8). The film follows this, showing it as a huge stone edifice that quite literally stops time, as seen in the still waters of the title, that are held behind it. The dam itself is forty years old and when it was created it drowned the town of Marienbad as the floodwaters rose to fill the blockaded valley. As such, both the landscape and the town were removed from the natural flow of life at that time, producing a traumatic rift that is waiting to repeat the violence that created it. This idea of time being halted is shown as an unsuspecting photo-reporter is sent to dive into the still waters behind the dam to take pictures of the sunken town and its surroundings. As the diver approaches the town it, and the sunken landscape around it, are almost indistinguishable from one another as though covered in a huge blanket of grey/green mould — as though the residue of the time passing above it has settled upon the environment locking in the traumatic memories of the violence that created it. The dam itself then becomes something of a melancholic block on the traumatic rift of the flooded valley preventing it from being reintegrated into the socio-ecological fabric from which it was forcibly removed by human intervention. The positioning of the dam as being representative of human intervention is further reinforced by the manner in which its Gothic essence seems to bleed into the landscape around it so that the fog that drifting across the surface of the water is as much a product of the dam as it is of the flooded landscape.

However, cracks have begun to appear in the manmade construction as the drowned ecosystem attempts to remember itself and the intervention of the diver, who disturbs the blanket of

time, provides the final push to allow its memories of violence and trauma to escape<sup>6</sup> and allowing for the ‘terrifying eruption’ of the past into the present (Ridenhour: 8). These memories are necessarily excessive in nature, reflecting the wanton acts that created them, and they erupt in the form of the undead bodies of the people that did not escape Marienbad as it was lost to the waters. Within this, there is also a sense that the submerged ground will not accept the bodies of humans and so they are not allowed to naturally decompose and are eventually expelled from the earth. There is something of an echo here to apocryphal, historical stories from the Middle Ages where the excommunicated were rejected from consecrated soil. One could potentially argue that after causing the traumatic rift in the surrounding environment humanity has been excommunicated by the ecosystem which then summarily expels them from its soil.<sup>7</sup> Once expelled the landscape would then project its trauma onto/into the undead bodies. These zombies, literally undead memories given physical form, are released onto the nearby town of Debaria to enact revenge on the human community seen as responsible for the dam — which further includes the Earth as a whole — as well as destroying the Gothic edifice so that the valley can once again become part of the larger eco-system. Additionally, they configure a kind of human devolution in that, in contrast to the ‘civilized’ society that built the dam, they act in an almost bestial way not only eating flesh but performing sex acts on humans and objects alike. The revenge of the environment on humanity is to make them become animalistic, hyper-sexualized and violent — a release of the repressed — so that they will once again become dependent on the eco-system that they sought to control and exploit.

The next text very much continues with the idea of the undead being spurned by the drowned landscape manifesting both a violent past and a form of eco-revenge. However, this time it is seen in relation to a real-life dam even if set in a fictional near future.

### **Contagion of the Dammed**

*World War Z* is both a book and a film and the representation of the zombie as an eco-warrior and/or a vehicle of ecological revenge spans both texts and each gives a slightly different emphasis on the cause and effects of the undead on human civilization.<sup>8</sup> The novel uses the zombie as a force of change in global geopolitical power whilst the film more explicitly talks of the dangers of globalization and the inability to contain contagion within an ever-shrinking world which oddly combine to take the focused ecological outbreak in Brooks' novel to talk of a planetary eco-regulatory power in Forsters' movie.

In the novel, the narrator is an unarmed agent of the United Nations Post War Commission who has been tasked with collecting as much firsthand information about the recent global zombie outbreak. Part of this is tracing "Patient Zero" who caused the original outbreak/infection and who is discovered to have come from China and from a sunken village near the Three Gorges Dam. As Michael E. Webber writes, noting the real-life dangers of the project itself and the effects on the local environment:

One of the towns flooded by this dam is the City of Ghosts, which was built more than eighteen hundred years ago and contains temples and shrines dedicated to the underworld. In the novel, *World War Z*... the flooded City of Ghosts is also the source of Patient Zero. It is implied that our hubris and disrespect for the underworld spawned the zombies. Subsequently, when a child in the story was swimming in the reservoir behind the dam, he was bitten by one of those zombies, starting the outbreak. (67)

Hubris is identified by Brooks himself in the book and his narrator notes that "it [the City of Ghosts] has been an unlucky obstacle to China's next Great Leap Forward" (67) seeing it as a representation of a time when society and the land were strongly connected — the shrines being very much linked to their geographical location — and a past that was no longer needed.<sup>9</sup> The dam here once again stops time and represses the past and the trauma enacted on the eco-system in the

name of progress. However, not unlike *Beneath Still Waters*, it is awoken by an unwary swimmer — in this case, a young boy looking to salvage valuables lost to the waters in the sunken dwellings and shrines — and the traumatic undead memory of the landscape literally “bites” back. The bite infects its victim with the same violence that was experienced by the landscape. Here, the dead are not so much expelled from the submerged ground as the trauma itself which, once it has left the waters — the confines of the dam — is unstoppable and spills out across the world drowning the world in a flood of violent and contagious undead. The result is not a destruction of humanity but a reconfiguring of its priorities and geopolitical power — with the most ‘advanced’ countries being the worst affected. The zombie horde is only hemmed in by the environment itself as they are affected by extreme cold and gradually get slower and slower the colder it gets, allowing them to be killed more easily. As such, the contagion released by the drowned environment at the Three Gorges Dam was a self-regulating one that would only destroy humanity enough to change the balance between humanity and the eco-system.

Curiously, the description of the dam is limited to a critique of the Chinese rise to world economic dominance and the socio-ecological effects on the surrounding landscape making the former responsible for the latter through the medium of the dam itself. Making it representative of ecological exploitation and the misuse of technology in the pursuit of profit. Similarly, Forsters’ film does not show the construction itself but makes much of the metaphors of flooding and dams.

### **Patient Zero and the Unsolvable Mystery**

The film makes much of globalization and a world out of balance, as Kyle William Bishop observes, the movie begins with ‘clips of real news programs, and documentary footage [to] draw the viewers’ attention to issues of global climate change, international pandemics, travel restrictions, civic unrest, and other kinds of worldwide conflict and crisis’ (Bishop: 2015: 37).

Views or mentions of the Three Gorges Dam or the ecological violence undertaken and suffered in

its name are totally absent from the movie. Consequently, much is made of the hunt for Patient Zero by the narrator who is now called Gerry Lane. The first half of the film is powered by this search for the victim that started the contagion, whilst also implying that in doing so a miraculous cure will be found. The use of the idea of Patient Zero is common now in apocalyptic/outbreak narratives but it is not without its problems. As noted by Priscilla Ward, the dependence on locating a single source changes the focus of the outbreak narrative making it no longer about much larger systemic faults or conditions that need to be addressed and revised but places the blame onto a single perpetrator (Ward: 2008: 254-255). This is problematized in both versions of *World War Z* as in the book the source is not so much the young boy that was bitten but the sunken village itself and in the film the hunt ultimately leads nowhere. The notion of the village being Patient Zero emphasizes the environmental aspect of the outbreak and embodies something of what Peter Maryk suggests in relation to viruses being linked to some kind of global eco-system, '[the] Earth is a cell we [humans] are infecting. And nature is the Earth's immune system, just now sensing the threat of our encroachment, and arming itself to fight back...Viruses are the Earth's white blood cells and we are the disease' (in Ward: 259). In this sense, the zombies are the virus created by the Earth and released at the traumatic point of rupture, which is the drowned landscape behind the dam. Brooks' narrative hints at this but the film gives up on the chase to find the cause and instead it is finding a cure that becomes the goal of the latter stages of the story.

However, as mentioned earlier, metaphorical dams and floods seem to proliferate in the movie as though it was itself bitten by the undead memory of the book. And so, the image of the dam evolves from being the cause of the ecological infection and becomes the last line of defense, as seen in the many walled-in countries and communities that are attempting to protect themselves. None more so than the walled city of Jerusalem, which is shown as something of a huge, inverted dam to protect its inhabitants. It is oddly reminiscent of the dam in *Beneath Still Waters* being an enormous Gothic construction many meters high that looks reminiscent of a medieval castle. This sense of being outside of the modern world is quite apt as the environment outside of it is locked



out of living time just as the drowned landscape was in Yuzna's narrative. Here though the water is replaced by a sea of the undead that crashes upon the walls. This mirroring of the floodwaters that created the original ecological trauma in the body of the zombie horde is seen at its most potent when the undead manage to breach the walls of Jerusalem. *World War Z* shows its zombies as being attracted to the signs of human life, movement, noise, and smell, and when a group of survivors are allowed into the city their cries of celebration attract the attention of the undead. Drawn by the noise the zombies rush to the place in the wall where the sound is loudest and start climbing on top of each other to try and reach it. They do this in such volume and speed that they literally flow over the wall and into the compound. Once inside, the walled-in streets and tight alleyways funnel the zombie horde so that they crash and flow through the city like floodwaters claiming its inhabitants as their own. Unlike Brooks' novel, the climate has little effect on the undead, the planet seems to be on course for the total elimination of the human virus that is infecting it and so it is down to Gerry to discover a cure. He achieves this by realizing that the zombies have no interest in humans that are terminally ill as, in a sense, they are of the same order as the undead in being locked out of a living future. Gerry then infects himself with a curable deadly virus which makes him invisible to zombies which will allow humans to approach and dispatch the undead. The film ends with a certain measure of unease as it not only does not intimate what the long term effects of this procedure on humans might be but the reason for the original outbreak is never understood or discovered suggesting it might just as mysteriously start again.

Environmental trauma, then, remains the hidden cause in Forsters' film even though the symptoms highly suggest it and whilst the Gothic elements are largely limited to the figures of the undead themselves, their contagion marks the violent eruption of the past (and ecological trauma) into the present. The quest of infection to lock humanity in a traumatic past so that it mirrors that of the source of the zombies but will also allow the traumatized environment to rejoin the flow of life — here the zombification of humanity performs a reparative purpose and a meaningful recognition of the original violence.

The next text to be looked at here differs in many ways to those already examined through the notion of an unknown cause and even a non-definite outcome provides much of the Gothicizing impetus of the story. Here though, and more than the other examples looked at here, it is the landscape itself that refuses to accept the dead or a future with the living humans that attempt to inhabit and exploit it.

### **Undead Landscape**

*Les Revenants* (Canal+: 2012) differs greatly from the previous texts, not least in being a television series which allows for different more intricate ways of storytelling than either novels or films.<sup>10</sup> Also, because the undead involved are not zombies as such but the more traditional revenant, that is someone who has come back from the grave but is not driven to consume either the flesh or brains of living humans. Or at least the series seems to say that this is not the case whilst simultaneously suggesting that unseen by the living, there is something more sinister happening. The narrative takes place in a small community in the French Alps. Just outside of the town is a dam which is oddly unspectacular but it creates a large lake behind it which, at the start of the story, does not affect the town but does contribute to the highly Romantic and Gothic nature of the landscape that surrounds the town. In fact, in a similar spirit to walled cities in *World War Z*, the mountains and woodlands form something of a dam around the town. What it holds in as the series begins is the tragedy of the deaths of thirty-six children in a bus accident four years previously — caused by the driver swerving to miss a child in the road who, it is later discovered is, Victor, one of the first to return — that is until the mysterious appearance of one of the victims who have no memory of the accident or her death. Other people begin to return, not only those involved in the bus accident and the level of the lake behind the dam begins to mysteriously go down. It then transpires that 35 years ago the dam burst, flooding the village beneath it killing many of the inhabitants which also corresponds to the eldest of the returned, a young boy called Victor that died 35 years ago.<sup>11</sup> It is

intimated, however, that the original inhabitants of the drowned village might have also returned, but are remaining hidden, to enact some form of revenge. Meanwhile, the water in the man-made lake seems to be controlled by some unseen force as it mysteriously manages to flood the electric plant connected to the dam leaving the town without power and then floods the town itself dividing it in two and creating an 'isle of the dead' exclusively for the returned.

The undead here definitely appears to be a symptom rather than a cause and, although their returning has caused some to kill themselves, they do not carry a contagion as in *World War Z* or exhibit wildly excessive or violent emotions or actions. In fact, they seem as confused by their coming back as are their living family and friends. Which moves the Patient Zero categorization to the dam, but as mentioned above even that seems strangely unfinished. Consequently, it is the landscape around the town — the environmental wall — which appears to be the source of ecological revenge. This idea is reinforced in many ways, and potentially the most obvious is when the residents of the town try to leave but are unable to. One resident tries to swim across the lake to leave but keeps going in circles and two others try to leave by car but the road loops endlessly upon itself. As such the "dam" of the landscape forms its own traumatic wound that allows nothing to leave whilst it enacts its revenge on the inhabitants of the town for the village that drowned 35 years previously. This effect is increased with the appearance of the horde who are a large group of the returned, not associated with any of the inhabitants of the town, who appear and disappear from the forest almost as though they are part of it.

The landscape works in a similar way to that around the Three Gorges Dam but in a much more concentrated fashion. In many ways, it is reminiscent of the kind of Romantic landscape used in Werner Herzog's film, *Nosferatu the Vampyre* (1979), where the young innocent Hutter travels across rugged rock-faces and mountainside on his journey to Orloks (Dracula's) castle. Here the environment creates a dreamlike quality (Lüke: 2009: 159) and 'reflects a journey into unknown and foreboding territory' (Prager: 2010: 95). Consequently, the Gothicizing of the landscape not just embodies the previous trauma but is its undead agent creating a dreamlike land out of time —

in one sense a kind of purgatory.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, as the series progresses the landscape plays an increasing role in the unfolding drama/nightmare no longer functioning as just a backdrop but an active agent. This is partly due to its increasing connection to the waters behind the dam which mysteriously ebb and flow so as the lake goes down — at one point revealing some parts of the drowned village — it moves into other areas. Even the wildlife from the forest begins to encroach upon the town increasing the feeling that nature is returning to reclaim what was once its own. This is most strikingly seen when a large stag is seen roaming in a deserted but highly modern part of the urban setting, repeating a scene from *I Am Legend* (Lawrence: 2007) where a deer is seen walking down a road overgrown with plants in New York City, only for it to be suddenly pounced upon by a lion — the stag is also found dead but attacked by something with human teeth.<sup>13</sup>

What equally works towards the Gothicizing of the landscape is the notion of something buried or submerged deep in the ground beneath it. A point that is emphasized by the discovery of a large hole in the nearby mountainside which may or may not link to the lake, or something even more sinister. As such, the landscape mirrors the waters in hiding something deep below its surface, an undead memory that forces its way up to the outside world to have its revenge.

### **The Dammed and the Damming**

As shown, the dam and the environment it is placed in become something of an alien object shoved into the flesh of the Earth and subsequently causing the wounded body to fester and eventually expel the foreign object. The meaning of the dam, as the penetrative object, and the purpose of the response by the landscape remain strikingly similar across the examples described; the dam being a symbol of man's greed and hubris that threatens to destroy the delicate balance of the local ecosystem; the landscape's response is to react violently to the trauma enacted upon it in a reciprocally aggressive manner.<sup>14</sup> Whilst these generalities remain consistent, however, the specifics can vary quite dramatically. The dam is not always explicitly shown as the point of

Gothicization — though it is in Yuzna’s film —it consistently serves as a barrier between the undead and the living, the past and the present, and a shared history and an exploitative future. As such it acts as a physical and conceptual barrier between humanity and the ecosystem that it once depended upon. It is the nature of this separation, the traumatic act of drowning the landscape and cutting it off from the continuing life above it, that causes such a violent response. This response can then be seen in terms of a viral contagion or even something a little more limited, but its aim is to restore some form of balance within the environment making the destruction of humanity a side effect rather than the main objective, a means to a very particular end — destroying humans is the only way to recalibrate the ecosystem. However, at least in terms of the immediate vicinity, there does seem to be more concentrated violence, at least in *Beneath Still Waters* and *Les Revenants*, though this does not stop them from being interpreted as focused examples of a much larger intent; Yuzna’s returned fully intended to take their revenge across the globe and in Gobert’s series, all those that enter the town are drawn into its downward spiral into the unknown — an ecological singularity or dark ecology that draws everything into it. The undead themselves are constructed as something of a symptom of the ongoing ecological trauma/reparation and whether the rampaging, flesh-eating zombies seen in *World War Z* or the ontologically unsettling revenants of the television series, their goal is to unsettle and undermine human socio-economic systems.

It is worth remembering that whilst the examples here often appear to configure ecological revenge as a Gothicization of, or deadly eruption of undead memory into, the present, the form of reparation desired is not just a return to the past. It is more to serve as a reminder of how things were before the traumatic events occurred that symbolized humanities separation from the ecosystem from which they evolved and that a return to that offers a chance to rebuild towards a different future. Brooks’ novel is the nearest to showing something of this — Yuzna’s film is rather confused throughout and *Les Revenants*, cancelled after the second season, has still not fully resolved— where the narrative concludes with a re-organizing of geopolitics and resources, not least due to the huge drop in the size of the Earth’s population. Those that are left have far greater

respect for their surroundings and their place in a world that revealed how dangerous it can be.

More importantly, though, there is still hope that the new future, different from that envisioned both before and during the narrative of the outbreak, will be better.

---

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> See Sigmund Freud, *Mourning and Melancholia*

<sup>2</sup> Henrik Segers and Koen Martens, *The River at the Center of the World*. Springer, 2005, 73.

<sup>3</sup> Qing, Dai, *The River Dragon Has Come!: The Three Gorges Dam and the Fate of China's Yangtze River and Its People*. Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1997, 9.

<sup>4</sup> Qing, Dai, *The River Dragon Has Come!*

<sup>5</sup> Richard Jones and Michael Sheridan (May 30, 2010). "Chinese dam causes quakes and landslides". *The Times*. London. Retrieved January 25, 2011.

<sup>6</sup> In the film the submerged former citizens of Marienbad are shown to have been occultists who were chained to the floor of their church and were purposely drowned but their excessive faith see them as the perfect undead instruments of ecological revenge.

<sup>7</sup> Many thanks to Anthony Hogg for pointing me towards the work of Augustine Calmet and the English translation of his 1751 work *The Phantom World: Or, The Philosophy of Spirits, Apparitions, &c*, Vol. II (London: Richard Bentley, 1850), 91-92.

<sup>8</sup> It is worth noting that the other narratives here are adaptations of earlier texts, *Beneath Still Waters* is based on a book of the same name by Mathew Costello (1989) and *Les Revenants* is taken from a film of the same name by Robin Campillo (2004).

<sup>9</sup> There is a slight resonance here to the Japanese film *Versus* (Kitamura: 2000) where a woodland landscape called the Forest of Resurrection is a portal between this world and the other side/underworld and all who die there become undead and return intent on revenge, something not

---

unlike the explanation of the zombies in *World War Z* being created by the shrines to the underworld in the City of Ghosts.

<sup>10</sup> The series was also adapted by Carlton Cuse for American television and was called *The Returned* (2015-2015) but it failed to fully complete its first season. The plot closely follows that of the French series but suggests that the village was flooded because it was evil in some way, echoing somewhat the premise of *Beneath Still Waters*.

<sup>11</sup> Victor was shot in a home invasion and not by the dam breaking.

<sup>12</sup> This effect is slightly broken in the second series when people from outside enter the town, though they too succumb to the mysterious forces that reign within the ‘dammed’ enclave.

<sup>13</sup> This is one of the many instances where it is intimated that not all the returned are safe for the surviving human community.

<sup>14</sup> There is more than a suggestion here of the biblical story of the Tower of Babel where humanities pride and greed ultimately end in destruction and chaos.

### **Works Cited**

Bishop, Kyle William, *How Zombies Conquered Popular Culture: The Multifarious Walking Dead in the 21st Century*. Jefferson: McFarland & Company Inc., 2015.

Blake, Linnie, *The Wounds of Nation: Horror Cinema, Historical Trauma and National Identity*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008.

Brooks, Max, *World War Z*. London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., 2006.

---

Calmet, Augustine, *The Phantom World: Or, The Philosophy of Spirits, Apparitions, &c*, Vol. II [1751] translated by Henry Christmas. London: Richard Bentley, 1850.

Qing, Dai, Philip Williams and John G. Thibodeau (eds), *The River Dragon Has Come!: The Three Gorges Dam and the Fate of China's Yangtze River and Its People*. Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1997.

Dendle, Peter, *The Zombie Movie Encyclopedia: Volume 2, 2000–2010*. Jefferson: McFarland & Company Inc., 2012.

Froula, Anna, “Prolepsis and the ‘War on Terror’: Zombie Pathology and the Culture of Fear in 28 Days Later ...”, in Jeff Birkenstein, Anna Froula and Karen Randell, eds. *Reframing 9/11: Film, Culture and the “War on Terror”*. New York: Continuum, 2010, 195–208.

Freud, Sigmund, *On Murder, Mourning and Melancholia*, translated by Shaun Whiteside. London: Penguin Classics, 2005.

Jones, Richard and Michael Sheridan “Chinese Dam Causes Quakes and Landslides”, *The Times*, May 30, 2010. [http://www.timesonline.co.uk/multimedia/archive/00722/NEWS-28\\_China360\\_722095a.jpg](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/multimedia/archive/00722/NEWS-28_China360_722095a.jpg). Accessed January 25, 2011.

Hakola, Outi, *Rhetoric of Modern Death in American Living Dead Films*. Bristol: Intellect, 2015.

Luckhurst, Roger, *Zombies: A Cultural History*. (London: Reaktion Books, 2015).



---

Lüke, Martina G., “Nosferatu the Vampyre (1979) as a Legacy of Romanticism”, in John Edgar Browning and Caroline Jay (Kay) Pikart eds. *Draculas, Vampires and Other Undead Forms: Essays on Gender, Race, and Culture*. Lanham: The Scarecrow Press Inc., 2009, 153–166.

Magilow, Daniel H., Elizabeth Bridges and Kristen T. Vander Lugt, *Nazisplotstion: The Nazi Image in Low Brow Cinema and Culture*. London: Continuum, 2012.

Ridenhour, Jamieson, *In Darkest London: The Gothic Cityscape in Victorian Literature* (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press Inc., 2013).

Prager, Brad, “Landscape of the Mind: The Indifferent Earth In Werner Herzog’s Films”, in Graeme Harper and Jonathan Rayner eds. *Cinema and the Landscape*. Bristol: Intellect, 2010, 89–102.

Segers, Henrik and Korn Martens, *The River at the Center of the World*. New York: Springer, 2005.

Wallin, Jason J., “Dark Posthumanism, Unthinking Education, and Ecology at the Emd of the Anthropocene”, in Nathan Snaza and John A. Weaver eds, *Posthumanism and Educational Research*. New York: Routledge, 2015, 134–150.

Ward, Priscilla, *Contagious: Cultures, Carriers, and the Outbreak Narrative*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2008.

Webber, Micheal E., *Thirst for Power: Energy, Water, and Human Survival*. Westchester: Yale University Press, 2016.

---

## **Filmography**

*Beneath Still Waters*. Directed by Brian Yuzna (Barcelona: Fantastic Factory, 2005).

*Dawn of the Dead*. Directed by George A. Romero (Los Angeles: United Film Distributors zinc, 1978).

*Les Revenants*. Created by Fabrice Gobert. Paris: Canal+, 2012–2015.

*World War Z*. Directed by Marc Forster. Hollywood: Paramount Pictures, 2013.