

## Call for papers: “The Undead” theme issue of *Thanatos* 1/2019

by Kirsi Kanerva

*Thanatos* is a peer-reviewed, multi-disciplinary open access journal (<https://thanatos-journal.com/in-english/>) published by the Finnish Death Studies Association (<https://kuolemantutkimus.com/in-english/>). The theme of the *Thanatos* spring issue in 2019 will be “The Undead”.

The phenomenon of undead – the deceased who are absent, yet simultaneously present in the minds of the living by affecting their perceived realities – is known in various cultural and historical contexts. Revenants, living dead, ghosts, wraiths, vampires, ancestor spirits, saintly apparitions, restless souls, zombies, corpses reanimated by magic, decapitated heads that speak, angels – death has not always been seen as the terminal point in public imaginations; the dead do not always stop living or cease to be. They may manifest physically or appear as incorporeal beings; they may be passive objects or active agents. Sometimes the border between the world of the living and the world of the dead is crossed in dreams, visions and apparitions, or through various ritualistic means.

Narratives of undead may depict them as upholders of social norms and traditions, as helpers or harassers, as seekers of retribution or even as pure entertainment. They have also offered sites of alternative discourse where the structures of power can be challenged, questioned and criticized. They may have represented communal concerns or symbolized psychological traumata. The undead may be passive objects of magic without any free will of their own; they may consist of a group of unindividualized spirits or appear as an abstract un-personified force. Being undead may have been considered a threat or an opportunity, a dead person’s punishment or even his/her right.

*Thanatos* welcomes papers that discuss the undead from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, across different source materials and cultural-historical contexts, to be published in the journal's special theme issue. Topics covered may deal with such questions as:

Who, or what, are the undead? What is the role of the undead? What are the types and modes of their manifestation? What is the source of their existence? Where does the energy that reanimates, motivates or produces them originate from? What are the spaces (abstract or concrete ones) where the undead operate? What kind of culturally-mediated conceptions of the soul, the mind, individual and agency are reflected in people’s understanding of the undead? How have conceptions of the undead and of their agency changed as a consequence of various historical and cultural currents shaping people’s worldviews and ontological orientations (such as e.g. Christianization, secularization, urbanization, scientific and industrial revolutions).

We invite abstracts for articles to be submitted by September 5, 2018. The information about the acceptance of the articles will be sent by September 15th. The deadline for articles is November 30, 2018, after which the articles will go through a double-blind review process. The

revised articles should be submitted by May 1, 2019. The estimated date of publication is in June, 2019.

The primary publication language in *Thanatos* is Finnish, but we also accept manuscripts in English and Swedish. (However, the costs of proofreading for non-native English or Swedish speakers are the responsibility of the author).

Abstracts are to be sent to the editors responsible for the theme issue, Kirsi Kanerva (University of Turku), [ktkane@utu.fi](mailto:ktkane@utu.fi) and Miriam Mayburd (University of Iceland), [mam24@hi.is](mailto:mam24@hi.is).

For guidelines for the authors, please consult the journal web page at <https://thanatos-journal.com/in-english/> (in English), <https://thanatos-journal.com/pa-svenska/> (på svenska) or <https://thanatos-journal.com/kirjoittajalle/> (suomeksi).

For further information, please contact Kirsi Kanerva (University of Turku), at [ktkane@utu.fi](mailto:ktkane@utu.fi).