

Dead Pasts, Undead Futures

Identity and Memory in Isaac Marion's *Warm Bodies*

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1 INTRODUCTION

The first painting I ever did, years ago, I was just a kid. The diary where I kept my crushes, and the small black stone shaped like a heart that I found on the beach. I threw it all away. Threw it all away. Threw every fragment of simpler times, and I took that boy, I kneeled him down, put the gun up to his head...

Isaac Marion's Moon Colony: *We Kill Children. Dead Children*, 2007

The speaker of this Isaac Marion song goes through his things in his childhood home, throwing away the embodiments of his childhood memories. He looks at a childhood photo of himself, and he wonders who the boy in the picture may be. There is a discontinuity between him and his childhood self.

Personal continuity is based on recognition. We recognize ourselves and our loved ones on photographs that were taken while we were so young that we could not possibly remember the event ourselves. Thus, these events are integrated into our personal timelines and become a part of our identity. The speaker of the song, however, is unable to recognize himself in childhood pictures and objects that once carried meaning to him. He asks, "Who am I now that I am not a child anymore? Am I still the same person who did all these things?" The song thus addresses a rite of passage, of growing up. The speaker expresses this conflict rather strongly through the macabre metaphor of death: in order to grow up, we must kill the child inside us. Or do we?

In Marion's 2011 novel *Warm Bodies*, the author explores the options of dealing with the past while constructing a personal identity. In the novel, this death of the past is literal: the narrator and the protagonist of the novel is a living corpse, a zombie, who shambles through his dull un-life wondering who he might have once been and whether he is still the same person as then. Hence, the connections between personal continuity and memory become apparent. Instead of asking, "Am I still the same person?" the novel wonders, "How can I take my past and use it to reverse-engineer myself into something new?" At the same time, we somehow find we can relate to this monstrous creature that eats brains for a living. Do we not sometimes experience the same feeling of running in circles as the zombies do? Marion's *Warm Bodies* is a story of an apocalyptic scenario, of guts, blood and violence, but it is also a story of a quest for personhood.

1.1 Subject and Aims

Warm Bodies can be considered belonging to the genre of paranormal romance. It is a subgenre of romance developed from Gothic fiction, in which at the center of the plotline is a romantic affair between a human and a supernatural being, such as a vampire or a werewolf. (Percec, 2012, xi.) The 2013 movie adaptation of *Warm Bodies* by Summit Entertainment has been marketed as a passionate love story between a human and a zombie, in which zombiedom is a disease that can be cured through love. (Buckley 2013, 216.) Due to the movie advertisement, *Warm Bodies* has been popularly dubbed as "Twilight with zombies instead of vampires"¹. Though *Warm Bodies* has its similarities with its successors in the romance genre, many reviewers claim it is also an unique take on the zombie genre. (Buckley 2013, 217.) Beside the story of two star-crossed lovers, the novel tells the story of a young man seeking his place in the society – although this search is realized in rather macabre ways. Rather than "Twilight with zombies" the novel could be called a "Bildungsroman with guts and blood". The part of the zombie in Marion's novel is, before all, lonely. The zombies, or the Dead, as they call themselves, are all but unable to communicate with each other, and their interactions with the Living are necessarily violent and destructive. Zombiedom in *Warm Bodies* is before all signified by inner conflict between their monstrous zombie urges and the desire to form intimate social connections with others.

Isaac Marion was born near Seattle in 1981. (Marion 2011, retrieved on Aug 18, 2016.) He is a musician, artist, photographer and writer who has also worked as a heating installer, security guard, and a visitation supervisor for foster children. He currently lives in Seattle with his cat and cactus. (Simon and Schuster Author Page, retrieved on Aug 18, 2016.) In *Warm Bodies*, he explores the boundary between life and death and also, the human and the monstrous. The novel was the author's debut, and it has then been supplemented with a prequel novella, *The New Hunger* (2015). A sequel, *The Burning World*, is to be published in September 2016. (isaacmarion.com, retrieved on April 29, 2016).

Warm Bodies is set in a post-apocalyptic America, in a deserted city, though the exact location is not specified. The novel is narrated in first person by the protagonist, who is a zombie. Lacking a proper name, he calls himself "R". R lives with other zombies in an abandoned airport. Apart from

1 Referring to Stephenie Meyer's *The Twilight Saga*, a series of novels about a passionate love affair between a human teenager and a vampire. A culture of passionate "fangirls" has developed around the *Twilight* franchise. Summit Entertainment marketed the *Warm Bodies* movie to this very audience with a similar strategy, as is shown by Catherine Buckley in her article *The Heart-Throb Zombie: Teen Movies and Summit Entertainment's Construction of Warm Bodies*. (Balaji 2013, 215–226.)

the occasional hunting trip, the zombies' existence in the airport is rather uneventful. They do mimic human interactions and even sex; they raise families, take their children to school and even attend church. However, they seem to find no meaning in it. R even marries another zombie and the couple adopts two undead children, but he is ultimately unable to connect with them. For an undead being, however, R seems to have a rather rich inner life: he constantly ponders about his existence and has feelings of remorse about the zombies' brutal way of feeding on human flesh.

R's un-life takes an unexpected turn as he and the other zombies manage to corner a group of young Living on a fateful hunting trip. He devours the brain of a young man named Perry Kelvin and thus acquires his personal memories. Among their prey, he recognizes Julie, Perry's girlfriend – and suddenly he realizes that he no longer wants to eat her. Instead, he wishes to protect her. He takes her back to the airport, where the two slowly develop a way to communicate with one another. Though Julie is at first scared and confused, she gradually starts to trust this exceptionally sympathetic zombie. However, the other zombies are less open-hearted. Soon enough, Julie and R are forced to leave the airport, and Julie returns to her home in the stadium, where the survivors of the zombie apocalypse take refuge.

R, however, is not ready to say goodbye. He meets other zombies who, like him, have left the airport and attempt to behave and communicate like persons. With their help, R disguises himself as Living and follows Julie to the stadium. There he meets Julie's father, General Grigio, and her friend, Nora, and learns that life in the stadium is not all that different to his dull existence in the airport. Later, R is revealed as what he is to General Grigio, who refuses to believe that R is changing. Nora and Julie, however, decide to defend R. The relationship between R and Julie is the key to a bigger change that is to revolutionize the post-apocalyptic setting. Through their love, the zombie plague is conquered and zombiedom can be reversed: the Dead are given a chance to become Living again. Finally, the residents of the stadium put aside their differences and slowly accept the former zombies among them. In the end, it is not at all clear who exactly is Dead and who is Living. Death is, ultimately, a psychological rather than a physiological state.

The zombie is one of the few popular Hollywood monsters that come from outside of Europe (Kee 2011, 9). Interestingly, despite its non-western origin, it has accomplished to persist in western imagery for almost a century. Undoubtedly, the charm of the zombie mythos lies at least partially in its transformability; the zombie mythos has evolved and taken new forms alongside human civilization (Lauro & Christie 2011, 1). Thus, research on zombies can hint us on what exactly is

going on in our cultural environment. Zombies are everywhere in contemporary popular culture. They can be found everywhere from popular literature to literary fiction. They are in comic books, video games and films. They even step out of the silver screen into real life in games of zombie tag, zombie proms and zombie walks. (Lauro & Christie 2011, 1.) Traditionally, the zombie is the fiend, and the heroes are the survivors battling the oncoming zombie hordes. In fact, it is not common that readers or spectators are invited to consider zombies as persons or characters in the first place. It is therefore exceptional that Marion's novel invites the readers to identify with the monster, the zombie. However it can be seen from its countless other iterations in popular culture that the zombie mythos fascinates us. There must be a reason why zombies have managed to take over just about every nook and cranny in contemporary popular culture. Something about the monstrous is appealing to us. In this thesis, I will examine the zombies, rather than the ominous Other, as literary characters, and before all, as persons.

Zombiedom in *Warm Bodies* is signified by the loss of personal memory, and thus, identity. In fact, the protagonist R describes himself as "no one" (Marion 2011 = WB, 18). R's journey towards personhood and identity is one of the prominent subjects of the novel. Therefore, I intend to approach the novel by analyzing the themes of identity and memory. I will map out how the two concepts are interconnected, and how they relate to the description of zombiedom in the novel. Identity will be issued through the question of personhood and person-making characteristics, as an answer to the question "who am I?". It will be defined through personal continuity rather than through belongingness to certain social groups. Memory, on the other hand, will be assessed as a mediator between past, present, and future, and an aspect of diachronic continuity of personhood. I will address memory on both personal and social levels, and investigate how memory technologies are utilized in identity construction. Through the analysis of these two themes, I wish to discover some central meanings of zombiedom in the novel, and ultimately, find some answers to the question why contemporary popular culture seeks identification with the monstrous. I intend to focus on three specific research problems. Firstly, I will study how identity and personhood are constructed in the novel. Secondly, I will ask how memory contributes to the formation of identity. Lastly, I wish to inquire what, in the novel's reality, classifies Livingness versus Deadness, or what characteristics are attributed to the Living and the Dead.²

2 In my writing, I attempt to avoid the opposition "humans" versus "zombies". As the protagonist himself notes, this opposition is both senseless and inappropriate, "She is Living and I'm Dead, but I'd like to believe we're both human. Call me an idealist." (WB, 42.) As the border between human and monstrous in the novel is unclear, I find it more sensible to use the opposition "Dead" versus "Living", as is done in the narrative.

I will approach the subject through the theoretical framework of memory studies, a nascent, multidisciplinary field of research that deals with various memory phenomena. The methodologies within the field are diverse, including i.a. neuroscience, sociology and cultural studies. However I intend to focus on phenomenological aspects of memory research, also utilizing some terminology from the realm of psychology in my classification. As an aid, I will utilize the memory phenomenology developed by Paul Ricoeur. My methods, on the other hand, will rely on analysis of characters in the novel.

Central concepts that will be defined in the theoretical part of this work include identity (synchronic, diachronic and social), personal or autobiographical memory, and collective or superindividual memory. As is obvious, the field of terminology in memory studies is multifarious. I will attempt to retain the consistency in terminology as well as the readability of the text through comparison of concepts presented by different theorists. Other central vocabulary includes zombiedom³, paranormal romance and character in literature.

1.2 Motivation

Warm Bodies is an exceptional novel in its genre as it employs a rather unique characterization of the zombie mythos. Firstly, it is not completely new that zombies are portrayed as objects of sexual desire – in fact, the zombie mythos has quite a few iterations in the realm of pornography – however they are not usually considered capable of having romantic feelings. Generally, one would not expect a zombie to be portrayed as the target of romantic interests; zombies are usually not very pleasant to look at, and their potential for intelligent conversation is rather low. In addition, there is the ancient taboo of necrophilia which renders the zombies asexual (Cocarla 2014, 63), and its significance is even further amplified by the imagery of rotting flesh traditionally associated with zombiedom.

Even more interesting in the case of *Warm Bodies* is the fact that it is narrated from the point of view of the zombie – it is far more common in post-millennial zombie narratives to focus on the individual survivor rather than the embodiment of the plague. Angela Cirucci (2013, 23), however, claims that this is only the logical next step in the evolution of zombie narratives. The popularity of

3 There are several lexical items used to describe the state of being a zombie. "Zombiedom" is used by Christie and Lauro (2011), "zombiehood" by Greene and Mohammad (2010), and "zombiism" by Balaji (2013). I have chosen to use "zombiedom" for consistency.

zombie narratives is unquestionable, as representations of the undead are constantly worked upon and reinvented in popular culture. The question here is, why do we suddenly seek to identify with the monstrous? How come the rotting, raving undead have claimed a place in our hearts? Is it possible that our monsters are being tamed? These questions are what motivated my research in the first place.

Moreover, why study zombies and identity? Zombies, after all, are not very well known for complex cognitive patterns of identification. However, the relevance of the zombie mythos to popular culture is undeniable. Not only is it just about omnipresent in contemporary literature, comic books, video games and films (Lauro & Christie 2011, 1) – it is also very clear that the zombie mythos has evolved alongside western culture ever since it was introduced into the American cultural sphere in the early 20th century. Hence, through studying the zombie mythos we can find out a lot about our culture in general.

Secondly, is there a better way of looking into culture than analyzing what we fear? Horror narratives and thus, the imagery of the monstrous, have always represented the deepest cultural fears of our time. What we fear, furthermore, reveals what is important to us. In the last few years, the focus of zombie narratives has shifted from imagery of total annihilation to the issues of the individual survivors (Cirucci 2013, 23), thus suggesting that the fear of social organization coming apart has turned into fear of losing individual identity. But what does it mean, then, that the monsters in our horror stories are being tamed? Popular vampires such as Meyer's Edward or cartoon characters like Count Chocula have rendered the vampire myth possibly comical and definitely no longer scary (Collins & Bond 2011, 187). Whether the same thing is happening or has happened to zombies speaks a lot about our attitudes towards the monstrous. Christie and Lauro (2011, 4) ask, whether the zombies are becoming more human – or if humans are becoming more like zombies. In *Warm Bodies*, actually, it is questioned how humanness and zombiedom can be defined in the first place – having a heartbeat does not necessarily signify Livingness, and on the other hand, zombification is not irreversible.

The zombies in *Warm Bodies*, like the post-modern comic zombie, crave human brains. In western culture, brain is where the human consciousness rests – and so do the self and the identity of the person. By threatening the brain, the zombie threatens the most fundamental part of the human form: the self. Thus, questions of identity are ever-present in zombie narratives. Finally, the fact that *Warm Bodies* is generally considered a young adult novel points to the relevance of identity issues.

According to Robyn McCallum (2002, 1), ideas and representations of subjectivity underpin adolescent fiction. Subjectivity and identity formation are some of the major concerns in young adult literature. The author himself has stated that the novel was originally about him figuring out his own identity, as well as his connections to the rest of society and humanity. (Hall 2013, retrieved on Aug 18, 2016.) Therefore it makes sense to analyze the plotline of *Warm Bodies* as a quest for personal identity.

The side theme of memory alongside of identity proved important in the preliminary analysis of the novel's characters. Memory, says Ricoeur, constitutes the temporal dimension of the self. (Ricoeur 2004, 81.) Marion's zombies have lost their connection with their past, and they are left stranded on an abandoned airport, wondering who they might have been. The inability to remember prevents them from forming meaningful wholes out of their personal memories. On the other hand, the loss of past has made them indifferent to the present and the future as well. In this case, memory loss has indeed become loss of identity. Remembering and forgetting work as a motif in the novel, but they also form a side theme of their own. Thus the choice of memory research for an angle in this work is relevant. Through the analysis of the themes in the novel, I hope to find insight to what makes the readers want to identify with the monstrous.

1.3 Background

Warm Bodies is Isaac Marion's debut novel. The author was not committed to the zombie franchise prior to writing the book; in fact, in an interview with the Seattle Post-Intelligencer from the year 2013 he states that the story was a departure from what he regularly writes. He had not even thought of using zombies before. (Hall 2013, retrieved on Aug 18, 2016.) It would thus seem that the zombie imagery was consciously chosen by the author to emphasize certain themes in the novel. Thus the representation of the zombie mythos in the novel is not merely an agent for the aesthetic function of the zombie franchise; on the contrary, zombiedom is cleverly used as a literary device in the novel's post-apocalyptic setting. Zombiedom in the novel can be described as a symbolic state. The zombie mythos has, of course, been used throughout its history to underline a number of themes. It has developed alongside western culture, always depicting whatever fears were currently present in culture. *Warm Bodies* is thus continuation of a tradition which shows that zombies are not only the stuff of B-class horror movies.

In the light of the evolutive course of the zombie mythos, we cannot deny that the zombie is a transformer. It changes its form from horrible to comical, always projecting the fears and concerns that are central in our culture. It is thus not merely a product of popular culture but an expression of deeper cultural issues. Thematically, the zombie may depict the problematics of community and individuality, distinctions of life and death, or fear of losing control as well as being controlled (Lizardi 2013, 92). It is a personification of our mediated social perception (Balaji 2013, x). The zombies' usefulness as a cultural metaphor is surely one of the reasons why the undead are making appearances across all possible media. The zombie mythos both horrifies and fascinates us. It can be adapted to illustrate various themes, and at the same time, it speaks out to us on a visceral level. In the 21st century, the zombie has clearly become more than just a monster. Next, I will illustrate the cultural significance of the zombie through a brief historical overview.

1.3.1 Popular Culture and the Zombie Mythos

Started as a docile worker in Haitian folklore, the zombie has morphed "from exotic to evil" and further (Lauro & Christie 2011, 3). During the Great Depression, the zombie incorporated the disappointment of the working class in capitalist society. The zombie mythos reacted to the shift in popular culture after the nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 by fusing with the Arabic ghoulish mythos (Boon 2011, 55), and it also experienced a resurrection of a kind after the 9/11 terror attacks. Thus, the zombie is a very American image. One could of course ask whether the recent terror attacks on Paris and Brussels are going to start a wave of European zombie narratives. It is clear, however, that zombies have evolved with western culture and, as the editors of the book *Better off Dead*, the zombie experts Deborah Christie and Sarah Juliet Lauro argue, will continue to do so. Hence, studying the zombie mythos can reveal a lot about culture, per se.

As there are countless iterations of the zombie mythos, it is not simple to find an exclusive definition of zombiedom. Generally, zombies manifest certain semiotic traits which we understand as zombie-like. Murali Balaji describes the living dead as "flesh-eating monsters flocking to feast on the living" (Balaji 2013, x). Ryan Lizardi (2013, 92), on the other hand, phrases more specifically that the undead walk (or shamble) slowly, they have little to no high-end brain function, and they are usually dangerous. All of the previous, however, are rather descriptive and fail to provide an exhaustive definition of the zombie. Zombies come in all kinds of variations. They are not necessarily slow or dull-minded, they are not always aggressive and they do not necessarily

need to be even dead.

Then what is it that defines a zombie? Here, Boon (2011a, 7) provides a working definition that we can use: central for zombidom is the absence of some metaphysical quality of one's essential self. It can be called soul, mind, will or personality – zombies have lost something that previous to transformation defined them as human. In the long run, the zombie's central semiotic traits are the loss of free will and being controlled by something stronger than itself, be that a Voodoo master or an all-consuming craving for human flesh. In any case, the zombie's personal identity has somehow been compromised. Often this includes some form of amnesia and disconnection from one's former self.

The zombie mythos has its roots in Africa. The etymology of the word lies most probably in the word *ndzumbi*, meaning "cadaver of the deceased" in Mitsogho tribe of Gabon in West Africa, and the word *nzambi*, "spirit of a dead person", in the African Congo. (Lizardi 2013, 92.) The Nzambi was a deity and a religious figure of certain West African tribes. (Boon 2011, 51.) These traditional beliefs were transported along with African slaves into the New World. In the Caribbean, then, the African religious beliefs collided with western values. It was through this friction that the zombie mythos was born.

In Haiti, Nzambi acquired the new name *zombi*. It eventually came to represent, not a religious being, but a person whose internal consciousness and volition were absent. (Boon 2011, 53.) The Haitian zombie was a dead person that had been resurrected by a Voodoo priest, and was used as a witless slave (Hänninen 2015, 119). According to Chera Kee, the horror of the zombie was deeply rooted in the Americans' fear of Haiti as an independent black republic, which was then translated into a fear of Voodoo. The onset of the Great Depression in the late 1920's also invoked issues of control and even white slavery in popular culture. (Kee 2011, 16). Finally, the zombie mythos as it was came to represent any racial group and thus also the conflicts between the self and the Other. (Kee 2011, 9.) In early zombie films such as *White Zombie* (1932) and *I Walked with a Zombie* (1943) the zombies were presented mostly as colored people threatening the innocent, white female.

The Haitian zombie became known in the western culture in the first half of the 20th century. However, it was not until the end of the 2nd World War that the zombie was adopted as a truly western monster. In 1945, the United States of America dropped a nuclear bomb on Hiroshima, Japan. At this point, a significant shift away from modernism happened in western culture. Faith on

science ceased and the people felt that they could no longer rely on anything but themselves. And as the self was all that remained, the loss of self became the greatest fear. (Boon 2011, 56.) This shift also had consequences on the manifestation of the zombie mythos: the Haitian absent shell zombie became fused with the aggressive ghoulish mythology of Arabic origin. The zombie became the perfect Other that seeks to deprive the individual from their unique self. (Boon 2011, 56.) The zombies came to represent issues of identity. They started to threaten the brain, which was traditionally considered the homestead of personhood.

The modern zombie ghoulish was made popular by Richard Matheson's 1954 novel *I Am Legend*, which can be considered the first popular zombie apocalypse. Inspired by Matheson's work, George A. Romero directed his infamous film *Night of the Living Dead*, which at the latest presented the new zombie to the public. (Christie 2011, 67.) Before, as zombies were not actually rooted in any preexisting tradition, there was room to play with the conventions (Kee 2011, 20). What Romero did was codify the basic semiotic features of the modern zombie. They became a mass of people who, shortly after their death, rose to stumble toward the living in order to consume their flesh. The ones who were bitten by the living dead became fatally ill, and any form of death caused them to become zombies as well. The only way to kill them was to destroy their brain. (Lizardi 2013, 94.)

After the archetype of the modern zombie had once been codified into popular culture, it could be freely used by different media. Consequently, the zombie entered a postmodern crisis of sorts: artistic meaning was replaced by aesthetics in the media representations of zombies, and they were emptied of meaning. (Lizardi 2013, 96.) Zombie narratives then turned to represent violence or mere comedic abstraction. The zombie became the monster of class B horror films and pulp literature. A division happened in the presentation of the zombie mythos: there was the zombie as comedy, and the zombie as threat. (Elson & Bond 2011, 97.)

After the 9/11 terror attacks the zombie, again, became one of the primary figures social anxieties were reflected on (Cocarla 2013, 55). The images of absolute destruction inspired countless apocalypse narratives, and the zombie was often the main star. In the 21st century, the zombie narratives began to take a more hopeful tone. They no longer did necessarily portray the utter end of the human race; instead, new societies were constructed out of the ashes of the old. New millennium zombie apocalypses started to challenge their audiences to become "more fully 'human'", as Elson and Bond (2011, 188) state it.

Recently, the zombie has leaped of the page and become what can be called an extratextual monster. The zombie takes the form of social communal texts such as zombie walks, zombie mobs and zombie gatherings, which demonstrate the form of social insurrection devoid of content. (Lauro 2011, 209.) Ultimately, the zombie is a powerful cultural metaphor that is deeply embedded into our everyday culture and language. It has taken numerous forms, always reflecting the issues that are currently troubling the public sphere. The history of the zombie mythos thus shows its relevance in the study of culture.

1.3.2 "I am dead, but it's not so bad": Zombiedom in *Warm Bodies*

Marion's Dead fall under the archetype of the zombie ghoul, as they nourish themselves from human flesh. However, they are not pictured as a mass of shambling undead, but as persons who have lost the connection to their former selves and cope with it in different ways. The portrayal of the zombie in the novel is tragic, or tragicomic, rather than scary. Untypically for modern zombie narratives, the zombification, and thus death itself, in *Warm Bodies* can also be reversed.

As is typical for modern zombies, the Dead are clumsy, move slowly and have severe motoric difficulties. They are also unable to talk, apart from monosyllabic groans, "We grunt and groan, we shrug and nod, and sometimes a few words slip out." (WB, 4.) When the Dead get hungry, they form a hunting party and shamble to the nearby city to find some of the few Living survivors. When food is scarce, the Dead slowly become less animate and finally, stop moving – they become "full-dead". (WB, 6.) Harming the Dead physically does not stop them; the only way to kill them is to destroy the brain. When a Living person bitten by a zombie dies with their brain still intact, they will soon rise up as one of the Dead.

There are, however, different degrees of Deadness in the novel. The ones who are more animate seem to decompose more slowly than the others, but the ones who the protagonist describes as having "resigned themselves" (WB, 53) deteriorate very quickly, finally becoming skeletal creatures known as Boneys. The Boneys exercise power over the more animate Fleshies, acting as priests and judges. An atypical quality of Marion's Dead – that brings to mind the developing zombie society in Romero's *Day of the Dead* – is the fact that the Dead indeed seem to have something that closely resembles culture and social organization.

Moreover, it seems that zombiedom in *Warm Bodies* is more related to social than cognitive functions, "We may appear mindless, but we aren't. The rusty cogs of cogency still spin, just geared down and down till the outer motion is barely visible." (WB, 4.) At least the novel's protagonist, R, seems to have a rather rich inner life. However the Dead are all but unable to communicate their ideas and thus, form relationships. R, on the other hand, also reports inability to emote and the feeling of going around in circles, "want it... to hurt. But... doesn't." (WB, 51.) These can easily be recognized as symptoms of mood disorders such as depression. Nevertheless, the most striking feature in the zombies' psyche is the retrograde (and anterograde) amnesia they experience. The Dead have little to no memory of who they were before the transformation.

In conclusion, Marion's zombies exhibit some of the prominent traits of the zombie ghoul archetype. However, they do not clearly represent the zombie-as-comedy nor the zombie-as-threat form; instead, they can be said to embody another trend entirely, the zombie-as-tragedy. *Warm Bodies* invites the reader to regard the zombie as a person rather than a monster. Zombiedom as a literary device, in turn, can be considered a symbolic state, which can be battled and, finally, reversed. Having shown the significance of the zombie mythos as a cultural phenomenon and a literary device, I will now proceed to present my theoretical approach and methodology.

1.4 Theory and Methodology

The interplay between past, present and future seems to be a central topic in a lot of contemporary literature. In fact, it seems that contemporary culture is experiencing a "memory boom" of sorts. This may be partially due to present transformations of media culture; it is clear that memory in, for instance, literate societies is processed and conveyed differently than in illiterate ones. Olick et al argue that, in the present state of media literacy, memory has been marked by self-reflexivity, which both contributes to and helps explain the popularity of memory. (Olick et al 2011, 6.) Memory as a subject thus has a very contemporary resonance. (ibid. 36.) *Warm Bodies*, too, expresses the prominent cultural fear of losing memory. Hence, while attempting to relate my findings to contemporary popular culture, I came to use memory studies as my theoretical approach.

Memory studies is a multidisciplinary field of study that enables various disciplines such as psychology, history, sociology and literary studies to engage in a stimulating dialogue. (Erl1 2008, 2.) The relevance of this specific branch to my research comes from the fact that issues of memory

are strongly present in contemporary culture as well as research: while people dread the "living death" caused by the Alzheimer's disease, neuroscientists are searching its biological basis. While trauma victims attempt to deal with their post-traumatic stress, psychologists develop new therapies. Finally, while past politics of oppression seem to have become a key factor in constructing national and social identity, cultural theorists study the politics of victimhood. (Olick et al 2011, 4.) Because of the pervasiveness of these issues, memory studies has reached a high institutional status. (ibid. 36.)

Until present day, memory researchers from various fields have managed to conclude that memory is omnipresent. However, it is now widely accepted that memory is not merely situated in individual brains, but it in fact exists in social frameworks. It is enabled by changing media technologies, confronted with cultural institutions and shaped by political circumstances. Studying and theorizing memory, Olick et al argue, allows researchers to shift their focus from time itself to temporalities. Thus, through the study of memory, it can be understood what kind of categories people, groups and cultures utilize to make sense of their lives and their social, cultural and political attachments. (Olick et al 2011, 37.) Thus it can be seen how memory studies can be of use in analyzing the theme of identity.

Moreover, the nature of memory studies as a multidisciplinary project accounts for its terminological richness. The study of memory, Erll argues, must fundamentally be based on cooperation among different disciplines. (Erll 2008, 3.) These cross-connections allow me as a researcher to utilize terminology from e.g. the realm of psychology. Memory studies as an approach thus allows me to produce a thorough and multifarious analysis of the characters in *Warm Bodies*. Nevertheless, due to the vast amount of approaches used in memory studies, there is a danger that my work becomes incoherent. Therefore I have made the choice to present my theoretical approaches alongside with my analysis and thus integrate them into the analysis part of this work. My approach will be mainly phenomenological, utilizing Paul Ricoeur's phenomenology of memory. However, I will also use terminology from the realm of psychology in constructing a taxonomy of memory. Moreover, I will pass from individual memory to the direction of the collective; thus I will be referring to sociology where necessary.

My methods in this study will mostly rely on an analysis of the characters in the novel. By character I mean the literary representation of a fictional person. In modern literary studies, the content or the plot of a literary work is often seen as a function of the characters; thus the events of a book

generally follow from who the characters are and what their goals and circumstances are. (Mäkikalli & Steinby 2013, 71.) In contemporary literary studies the analysis of characters often focuses on the construction of identity, which is theorized in many human and social sciences, while literature describes these processes of identity work. (ibid. 78.) In structuralist narratology, characters were read as a linguistic and discursive formation. However contemporary narratology claims that readers generally interpret characters in literature as they were real persons; they are understood mimetically. Thus, a fictional character is understood as multidimensional even though not all of its characteristic are verbalized. (ibid. 72.) In this thesis, I will employ a mimetic understanding of the character. Thus it is possible to utilize the terminology of e.g. psychology and sociology in constructing my characterizations. I will mostly focus on the novel's protagonist R, as his journey towards personal identity is most prominent in the novel. However I will also consider the supporting characters, such as Perry Kelvin and Julie Grigio (Cabernet). For the sake of comparison, I will also take a look at the novel's questionable antagonists, General Grigio and the skeletal zombies dubbed Boneyes. I will begin with a psychological analysis of the characters' memory traits and then continue with a phenomenological analysis. This, I will attempt to link with the thematic contents of the novel.

In this thesis, I will move from the level of the individual to the direction of the social and the collective, stopping from time to time to examine the boundaries between these levels. I will begin with a short chapter where I present the central concepts I am going to utilize in my analysis. Then, I will focus on individual memory and personal identity, at the same time developing a psychological framework as the basis of my work in Chapter 3. In Chapter 4, I will study the corporeality of memory and how identities are constructed on bodily boundaries – and finally how these boundaries are crossed. Through the exploration of the boundary, I will cross into the realm of collective memory and identity and study how memory is conveyed. In Chapter 5, I will delve into the social significance of remembering. I will deepen my inquiries of the mediality of memory as well as its meaning as a means of power. Finally, I will finish my work with Ricoeur's thoughts on forgetting and forgiveness. Through these inquiries, I wish to analyze how identities are constructed in Marion's *Warm Bodies*, and how memory contributes to identity work. I will evaluate what characteristics separate the Dead from the Living in the novel. Ultimately, I wish to acquire possible answers to the question why we as readers are so fascinated by the living dead.

2 THEORETICAL APPROACH AND CONCEPTS

My central theoretical approach in this thesis is memory studies. Memory studies is a field of research which accommodates wide-ranging inquiries into different memory phenomena. It is multidisciplinary by nature, utilizing a number of different branches of science such as psychology, sociology and literary studies. (Pickering & Keightley 2013, 2.) Memory studies thus provides several possible approaches to the subject of memory. In this thesis, I intend to analyze the theme of memory in *Warm Bodies* through a phenomenological lense, also utilizing the terminology of psychology and sociology in my classification. Ricoeur's phenomenology of memory as presented in his work *Memory, History, Forgetting* will work as a guideline for this study. Mostly, I intend to integrate the applicable theoretical aspects in the analysis part of this study. In this chapter, however, I wish to present the central terminology of both memory and identity that I am going to utilize. In addition, I will present some central aspects of memory studies to set up my analysis.

2.1 Identity

The concept of identity per se is problematic. The original meaning of the word is "sameness": two entities A and B are identical to one another if and only if all the properties of one equate to those of the other. This numerical identity, however, is not relevant in this context. (Jungert 2013, 52.) What aspects, then, do contribute to the definition of identity? Firstly, there is the question of personhood – to whom or to what can personhood be attributed? There are a number of "person making characteristics", of which none are conclusive, such as self-confidence, rationality, autonomy, language and many others. (Jungert 2013, 53.) In this thesis, I will explore some of the aspects attributed to personhood in Marion's novel.

Identity is, in its most basic form, a conceptual tool of thinking about sameness and difference. It happens in terms of individual continuity and change over time, and, on the other hand, through social categorization or group affiliation. It is our tool to think about conflict and continuity within an individual person in times of rapid social change. (Hammack 2015, 11.) It has its roots in Enlightenment-era philosophical perspectives on memory and perception (ibid. 13), and its different aspects have acquired an important place in the realm of cultural studies, as social and cultural fluidity is characteristic to the postmodern era. Identity is concerned with sameness and difference at the level of social categorization as well as the level of individual consciousness and subjectivity.

(ibid. 12.) To our cause, the aspects of individual consciousness are of utmost importance, though it will be shown below that sameness and difference can only be produced in social contexts.

The concepts "identity" and "self" are often used interchangeably. Here, however, it makes sense to make a distinction between the two terms. In Hammack's (2015, 12) words, the difference between identity and self indeed lies in the social meanings of personhood, or, more specifically, in the polarity between the interior world and cognition of an individual person, and the exterior world of social meaning. Identity, says Hammack, deals with the properties of sameness and distinction that link the interior world of psychological experience and the exterior world of language and categorization. It means, simply put, identification with a group or a social context. It provides a sense of internal coherence and continuity for a person in particular social contexts, but it also serves to arrange the world into meaningful categories on both individual and social levels. The self, on the other hand, deals with a person's interior world and one's perception of it. The self is sometimes used interchangeably with the term "consciousness". Both aspects are crucial in the formation of personhood. In this thesis, I will begin by analyzing the psychosocial aspects of the self, passing on to identity in social contexts.

As Jungert (2013, 52) points out, there is not *one* conception of identity, as there is no single conception of memory. Identity is rather an umbrella term for different aspects of personhood. Jungert mentions, inter alia, the concept of synchronic identity, which considers the aspects that make a person a certain person at a certain point in time (and not e.g. several persons, as is the case in some psychological identity disorders). (Jungert 2013, 55) Secondly, he speaks of diachronic identity, which signifies the persistence of personhood through time (ibid. 56). Ricoeur, too, is concerned with the temporal persistence of identity: time is a factor of dissemblance and difference, and part of the fragility of identity indeed lies in the enigma of its temporal continuity. To maintain identity, one must posit a principle of permanence in time, like the invariable structure of an object whose parts will be gradually replaced. (Ricoeur 1994, 117).

Ricoeur separates two different sides of the term "identity": identity as sameness (German *Gleichheit*, French *mêmeté*) and identity as selfhood (*Selbstheit*, *ipséité*). There is a major difference between these two approaches. Ricoeur's *mêmeté* includes the previously mentioned numerical or quantitative identity, but also qualitative identity or extreme resemblance: if we say that persons X and Y are wearing the same suit, we imply that the suits are so similar that they are interchangeable. (Ricoeur 1994, 116.) The question of selfhood, on the other hand, is connected to the question,

”Who am I?” To compensate this gap, Ricoeur has established the theory of narrative identity, in which the person is perceived as a narrator, and their past self, as a character that is being narrated. (ibid. 118). Already 1980's psychologists agreed that the formation of personal narrative is a defining feature of identity. Individuals tend to construct and reconstruct their identities across their life course based on narratives. (Hammack 2015, 21.) In *Warm Bodies*, as will be shown later on, personal narratives help make sense of the characters' personal identities.

In this thesis, I will rely on Ricoeur and Jungert's ideas of identity as self-sameness over time. Moreover, I will explore the dynamic between personal identity and identity in social contexts. In the novel, memory works both as tool and material of personal identity. According to Ricoeur, consciousness and memory are basically the same thing. In the case of personal identity, then, sameness equals memory. (Ricoeur 2004, 105.) Memory is, therefore, a central building block of identity. Memory is what produces a person's persistence in time. Thus, it makes sense to view memory and identity as an interconnected system. Next, I will present the concept of memory I am going to utilize in this thesis.

2.2 What is Memory?

Though memory is all but omnipresent in present-day cultural studies (Olick et al. 2011, 3), establishing a conclusive definition of memory has proved difficult. In fact, Ricoeur resorts to citing the Greek philosophers Aristotle and Plato in creating his phenomenological sketch of memory. Plato, he formulates, defines memory as the present representation of an absent thing. Plato's definition of memory is based on the theme of *eikon*, image, thus enclosing the problematic of memory with that of imagination. Aristotle, on the other hand, sees memory as a representation of a thing that has been formerly perceived, acquired or learned. These aporia of memory and imagination, says Ricoeur, we can never completely release ourselves from. (Ricoeur 2004, 7.)

At this point, a difference must be made in language between the polysemic meanings of the word ”memory” in the English language. The word can signify both the intention and action of remembering (French *la mémoire*) and memory as the thing intended (*le souvenir*). (Ricoeur 2004, 22.) In addition, memory means the mental representations of thing past, which can be recalled through mental processes. An event is something that happens or comes about. On the phenomenological level, we remember what we have done, experienced or learned on a particular

instance. We remember appearances, faces of loved ones and words we have heard. People and things reappear in memory as being the same. This recognition is the basis of remembering. In the same way, we remember names, addresses, or telephone numbers. A different kind of remembering is the memory of things we have learned or acquired, rather than experienced ourselves, such as historical knowledge. (ibid. 23–24.)

Many authors, Isaac Marion among them, tend to approach memory on the basis of its deficiencies. Ricoeur, however, approaches the description of mnemonic phenomena through their capacity; what he calls "happy memory". He argues that we really have no other resource, concerning our reference to the past, than memory. Memory, then, includes an ambition of being faithful to the past. (Ricoeur 2004, 21.) This, however, is rarely possible because of the constructive function of memory. (Straub 2008, 221.) The opposite of memory, according to many, is forgetting; Ricoeur, however, wishes not to treat it as a pathological form, but as the "shadowy underside of the bright region of memory" (Ricoeur 2004, 21). I will show below that forgetting can, in many cases, be merciful.

Having defined memory, we will proceed to study Ricoeur's phenomenology of memory, which will be used as a guideline in the analysis part of this study. Finally, before proceeding to present memory studies as a branch of research, we will briefly study the matter of collective or cultural memory, which we will also utilize in the course of this work.

2.2.1 Ricoeur's Phenomenology of Memory

Ricoeur's phenomenology of memory begins with two questions: *Of what* are there memories? and *Whose* memory is it? (Ricoeur 2004, 3.) Thus he creates a sketch of both the subjective and objective side of memory, presenting the interplay between the subject of memory and its target. The Greeks, Ricoeur says, had two distinct concepts of memory, *mneme* and *anamnesis*. The former means passive memory, or memory as reappearing. It is the involuntary "popping into mind" of memories. The latter, on the other hand, signifies memory as an object of conscious search, also named recall or recollection. Thus, Ricoeur argues, memory per se is situated at the crossroads of semantics and pragmatics; to remember is either to have memory or to set off in search of memory. (Ricoeur 2004, 4.) Here, Ricoeur presents the opposition between memory as evocation and memory as search, involuntary and voluntary remembering.

Another distinction Ricoeur makes in Bergsonian terms is the one between memory and habit (*mémoire-souvenir* and *mémoire-habitude*). In both of these cases, the author presupposes experience which has been acquired earlier. However, habit as opposed to memory is anchored to the living present. It is unremarked as past. In contrast, memory is necessarily of the past. It is, thus, the issue of temporal distance that separates memory and habit. (Ricoeur 2004, 24.) These two types of remembering can be likened with the concepts of explicit and implicit memory as presented by Manier and Hirst (2008, 255). Though Ricoeur seems to place habit into an inferior position compared to memory, Fuchs (2012, 10) all but stresses the significance of what he calls "body memory", memory which is integrated into the lived-body, acting as a bridge between the past and the present. The importance of habit as a form of remembering should therefore not be underestimated, as can be seen from the corporeal memories which Marion's zombies manifest.

Thirdly, Ricoeur proposes a distinction between retention and reproduction. Retention, according to him, hangs onto the perception of the moment, which is retained as such in a person's memory. Reproduction, or secondary memory, on the other hand, is re-presentation of the remembered event "as it were". The reproduced event no longer has its foot in perception but it has really been anchored into the past. Imagination also has a central meaning in the reproduction of memory. (Ricoeur 2004, 35.) In the reproduction of memory, we can see its constructive nature; it tends to mend gaps in memory and, out of remembered details, construct a meaningful whole. (Straub 2008, 218.) Representation of memory as such can, on the other hand, be compared with episodic memory as presented by Jungert (2013, 25), which are signified by temporal specificity (Manier & Hirst 2008, 256).

Lastly, Ricoeur creates an opposition between reflexivity and worldliness of memory. We do not simply remember ourselves seeing, experiencing, and learning things – rather, we remember the situations in the world in which we have seen, learned, experienced. Reflexivity is an undeniable feature of memory; thus it traditionally belongs to a sphere of interiority, a cycle of inwardness. However, remembering always happens in a context, implying, in addition to one's own body, the bodies of others, lived space and the horizon of the world in which something has occurred. (Ricoeur 2004, 36.) This wordly, even social, contextualization of memory brings us to the concept of social remembering. In modern study of memory, remembering is not only attributed to a person, but the social contexts in which we remember.

2.2.3 Collective Memory

Collective memory is a term which is often used in an ambiguous way, and media, practices and diverse social structures are subsumed under this wide umbrella term. (Erll 2008, 1.) Therefore it is necessary to define our notion of collective memory. Erll (2008) uses the term "cultural memory" interchangeably with the terms "collective memory" and "social memory"; however, as J. Assmann (1995) attributes a more specific meaning to cultural memory⁴ I will use the term "collective memory" for what Erll defines as "the interplay of present and past in socio-cultural contexts" (Erll 2008, 2). This is a broad definition indeed, and thus it must be further elaborated.

Erll argues that the notion of collective memory is metaphorical before all else: the concept of remembering, which is a cognitive process attributed to individual brains, is metaphorically transferred to a socio-cultural level. Thus, one can speak of a "nation's memory" or a "community's memory". (Erll 2008, 4.) However, Maurice Halbwachs, known as the father of the concept, reminds us that remembering necessarily happens in social and cultural contexts. (Halbwachs 1985, 2.) The social context in which we currently find ourselves all but dictates the manner in which memories are stored in our brains: taking a stroll through the city with an architect produces memories different than doing so with a historian or a painter. Additionally, if we take a walk by ourselves, we inevitably carry with us our social relations through which our experiences are filtered. (ibid.) This is what Halbwachs calls *cadres sociaux de mémoire*, the social frameworks of memory. (Erll 2008, 8.) Echterhoff (2004, 75) on the other hand, speaks of collective memory as "superindividual" (*überindividuell*); memory is superindividual when it is being shared by at least two persons. Superindividuality is achieved, for example, through reminiscence of common experiences, for example when family members together reproduce a common Christmas celebration. This, he calls collective episodic memory. (Echterhoff 2004, 76.) Collective semantic memory, then, comes closer to what Erll calls cultural memory: it signifies external, societal, culturally organized encoding and storage of information. (Echterhoff 2004, 77.) Under the flag of collective memory, we will not consider only the common memories of social groups, but also the way in which remembering happens on a social level in a more tangible manner.

Ricoeur, too, has had his say on the notion of collective memory: he issues the question whether memory can be considered collective rather than individual. As memory can be attributed to the self, it can be attributed to others, he argues. (Ricoeur 2004, 128.) Different phenomena of representation

4 See 5.1.2

will generally be associated with social practices. The issues of collective memory, according to Ricoeur, will then be reformulated by historians in connection with their temporal dimension. It is history that offers schemata for mediating between individual and collective memory. (Ricoeur 2004, 131.) Erll, on the other hand, sees history as merely one mode of collective remembering. (Erll 2008, 7.) For our study, however, history is of surprisingly little importance; it is rather the individual and collective episodic memories as well as common cultural knowledge that are issued. A post-apocalyptic society pays very little attention to the representation of its history, which may contribute to the rootlessness the characters of the novel experience.

Finally, Ricoeur suggests that there be an intermediate level of reference between the individual and the collective: the level of close relations, who are situated along varying distances in relation between the self and the others. (Ricoeur 2004, 131.) It is this level, the level of family members, friends and significant others, that is of interest to this study in terms of collective memory. Though I refer to cultural knowledge on a broader level, I will focus on how superindividual memories are formed in the process of creating close interpersonal relations.

2.3 Memory Studies: A General Framework

As seen above, memory has been a subject of discussion in various fields of science ever since Plato and Aristotle's times. However, in the latter half of the 20th century, the discussion of memory has been taken to a new level. There has been a "memory boom" of sorts, which has only begun to wind down after the turn of the century. When the postwar modernist narratives of progressive improvement began to decline, nation-states had to turn to the past to shore up their legitimacy. (Olick et al 2011, 3.) In addition, the significant events of the 20th century contributed to the memory boom. The world had suffered through two world wars. It had witnessed the horrors of the Holocaust, which were considered the symbol of ultimate evil, and thus its memory came to symbolize the prevention of any future genocide. Finally, the world had experienced the end of colonialism and the fall of Communism. (Kattago 2015, 8.) These collective cultural traumata gave rise, in their part, to a broad field of the study of memory. Not surprisingly, from the 1960s onwards, the discussion on memory studies was led by German (and French) theorists. (ibid. 9.) The memory boom, therefore, unleashed a culture of trauma. (Olick et al 2011, 3.) States were now judged on how they atoned for their past, rather than their future. On a commercial level, this turn in identity politics were matched by a commodification of nostalgia and popularization of history.

(ibid. 4.)

The memory boom has given rise to countless branches of inquiry and scientific study, including but not limited to scholarship, memoir writing, and oral history projects. Neuroscience, psychology, cultural studies, and social sciences are occupied with memory. All these branches and more contribute to what has come to be referred to as "memory studies". (Olick et al 2011, 4.) Memory studies is a still nascent field of study to which a variety of disciplines have contributed using their specific methodologies and perspectives. (Erll 2008, 1.) It is, therefore, transdisciplinary by nature. The diversity of methodologies within the discipline makes for its strength, but also its weakness: the terminology used within memory studies is vastly rich, but also, disjointed. On the other hand, it is through interdisciplinary studies that the most striking discoveries within memory studies have been made: media studies and cultural history, as well as history and sociology, and even cognitive psychology and history. In fact, says Erll, memory studies as a field of study can only be successful when it is based on cooperation among disciplines. It is, therefore, fundamentally an interdisciplinary project. (ibid. 3.)

Memory studies deals with a manifold of memory phenomena, making inquiries into social psychology, political science, philosophy and aesthetics, drama and literary studies – the list could go on. (Pickering & Keightley 2013, 2.) Erll (2008) has developed a general framework for cultural memory studies, which acts on three levels. Firstly, the dimensions of culture and memory: material, social and mental. The study of social memory has its roots in social sciences. Material or medial memory, on the other hand, deals with e.g. literary and media studies. Mental or cognitive dimension of memory is associated with psychology and the neurosciences. (Erll 2008, 4.) Secondly, the two levels of memory, the individual and the collective. Collective memory can, consequently, be divided into biological and symbolic memory, the latter of which is concerned with media, institutions and practices by which shared pasts of societies are formed. (ibid. 5.) Thirdly, there are modes of memory, "the 'How' of remembering" (ibid. 6). This has to do with the imagined opposition between history and memory: Erll proposes that instead of this opposition, there be *modes of remembering* in culture, different manners of remembering. These would include e.g. remembering past events as myth, religious memory, political history, trauma, family remembrance or generational memory. These are but different ways of referring to the past. (ibid. 7.)

Some of the most prominent subjects of study in memory studies are cultural trauma (Kattago 2015,

8) and collective memory (Olick et al 2011, 16). The field has over the past twenty years proceeded outwards from individual memory and started to focus on broader dimensions of social memory. (Pickering & Keightley 2013, 2.) In fact, the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs with his work on *mémoire collective* is best remembered as the founding father of memory studies. He first articulated the idea of social remembering, as well as family memory and memory of religious groups, all considered fundamental aspects of collective memory. However, memory studies was from the beginning an international phenomenon, which was affected by names such as Freud, Bergson, Durkheim, Warburg, Bartlett, and Benjamin. (Erll 2008, 8.)

It was, however, in the 1980s when cultural studies took what is called a "narrative turn". After this, the concept of collective memory became vastly popular. The new cultural memory studies took shape in many different disciplines and countries. Pierre Nora, a French national historian, developed the concept of national *lieux de mémoire*, sites of memory, which were to serve as *aide-mémoires* for national identity. The Konstanz researchers Jan and Aleida Assmann, on the other hand, developed theories of memory and media in ancient societies. The new memory studies have been affected by historical and political change: when the generation who had experienced the Shoah⁵ began to fade away, the nature of Holocaust studies changed. Societies were now solely dependent on media in their commemoration of Holocaust victims. Moreover, the breakdown of communist states and other authoritarian regimes have inspired new memory phenomena. Finally, the constantly changing media culture of the 21st century has given rise to studies about the mediality of collective memory. (Erll 2008, 9.)

As noted above, memory studies is a still emergent field, and thus there are a wide range of different methodologies within it. This is an issue for the development of the field of study, as theoretical and conceptual dialogue must be accompanied by methodological dialogue. (Pickering & Keightley 2013, 2.) Erll notes that the issue with memory studies is that it is more practiced and theorized, and, moreover, within an array of different disciplines and academic cultures, which have their own vocabularies, methods and traditions. (Erll 2008, 2.) Thus the terminology used within memory studies is manifold and not necessarily consistent. Moreover, Pickering and Keightley argue that questions of method and methodology are crucial to the development of the field. Methodologies for memory studies must be discussed and made consistent; otherwise, the field will remain unable to move from its current state, where memory is investigated by different disciplines

⁵ A word widely used for the systematic eradication of Jews by the Nazi regime in the 1940s, sometimes considered both more specific and more politically correct than the word Holocaust.

in parallel – but in disintegrated ways. (Pickering & Keightley 2013, 3.)

In this thesis, following the general lines of development in memory studies, I will move from individual memory to the direction of social and collective memory. Moreover, my approach is indeed multidisciplinary, utilizing psychological, phenomenological and sociological aspects of memory. I am going to rely on Paul Ricoeur's phenomenological sketch of memory as presented in his 2004 book, *Memory, History, Forgetting*. I will support my arguments with the psychological studies of Michael Jungert on memory and identity, studies on the mediality of memory by Gerald Echterhoff, as well as ones on social remembering by Jan Assmann. Due to the labyrinthine nature of the field of memory studies, I will need to utilize varying terminology, which I will attempt to make more consistent through comparison of different theorists. Thus, my theoretical inquiries will mostly be integrated into the analysis part of the study. We have now taken a glimpse of the central concepts I am going to utilize. Next, I will continue laying the basis for my research by presenting a psychological framework for my study of memory.

3 INDIVIDUAL MEMORY AND IDENTITY

Zombiedom in *Warm Bodies* is, more than anything, a symbolic state. Rather than a corruptive disease, it is a destructive way of being human. When Julie speaks of "humans" and "zombies", R prefers the terms "Dead" and "Living" – after all, they are still human, only, they have ceased to live. (WB, 42.) In the course of the novel, the reader also finds out that zombiedom as a state is not irreversible, and the personhood that was once lost can be recovered. The novel asks who or what, in the end, qualifies as Living; is a heartbeat really the only requirement, or does leading a life actually demand something else? Of course, the most obvious difference between the Living and the Dead is that the latter feed on the former. Zombiedom can, however, be studied in social and cultural terms, so that issues of personal identity become defining traits of Deadness.

Memory, on the other hand, is of crucial meaning in the construction of personal identity: it constitutes the temporal dimension of the self. While memory mediates between past, present and future, it presents a dimension of personal continuity, of remaining the same over time. (Ricoeur 2004, 81.) More specifically, it is the narrative function of memory that works to incorporate the past into the identity. (Ricoeur 2004, 84.) By means of the stability personal narratives provide, the person or the character assures itself uninterrupted continuity over change. Memory provides the

person with permanence in time, which in turn contributes to sameness with oneself and thus, identity. (Ricoeur 1994, 122.) We can view memory as a portable database in which the person carries with them information of who and what they are. Thus, when the connection to this database is lost, the identity is also damaged. This seems to be the case with the zombies in *Warm Bodies*.

Memory, or lack thereof, is also a central motif in *Warm Bodies*. One of the central traits of Marion's zombiedom is amnesia: The Dead do not remember their past as Living persons and have thus lost the connection to their former identities. Consequently, even the present seems to have lost all meaning to the zombies. The memories that are there are rather blurry, and the zombies repeat certain behaviors without understanding their significance. The Dead try to cope with this disarray by living off Living people's memories and thus, their identities, but these identities are fleeting and unstructured. Not until R consumes the brain of Perry Kelvin does his undeath come to order. Through Perry's personal narrative and strong individual voice, R is finally able to "reverse-engineer" his own autobiography.

While the rest of this thesis takes place in the realm of phenomenology, this chapter presents a psychological approach to the functions of memory in identity construction. With this psychological analysis, I wish to lay grounds for the phenomenological explorations later on, and at the same time, present the taxonomy of memory I will later utilize in my research. In this chapter, we will take a closer look at the characters' relations to personal memories. We will examine how memory works for zombies, then ask whether there is psychological continuity between the zombies' former and present identities. Then, we will look at autobiographical and narrative identity in Perry Kelvin's case, and how the main character, R, begins to construct his own personal narrative. Finally, we will analyze the significance of names as carriers of identity and, ultimately, social meaning.

3.1. Zombiedom as Amnesia

Zombiedom in *Warm Bodies* can be regarded as a form of amnesia. The Dead have a "vague, vestigial knowledge of a world long gone" (WB, 4). They "recognize civilization – buildings, cars, a general overview – but we have no personal role in it. No history." (ibid.) The zombies, in other words, do remember central concepts about the world around them, but have little or no personal memories. What exactly do the Dead remember, then, and how does it influence the construction of their personal identities – or lack thereof? Human memory consists of several separate but

interconnected structures, which have been characterized in countless conceptual frameworks (Manier & Hirst 2008, 254.) Thus, though a person's memory is defective in one area, they may still excel in the other. Next, I will present a taxonomy of memory from the zombies' point of view. Then, we will issue the mind-body problem and the psychological and physical continuity of personhood.

3.1.1 Memory for the Zombies

Jungert (2013, 23) speaks of three main kinds of remembering. Firstly, there is practical or procedural memory, which is connected to complicated human actions, such as swimming or riding a bike. These procedures do not need to be consciously recalled in order to access them. In *Warm Bodies*, the Dead seem to have some hints of procedural memories: they for example imitate social interaction and sex, however they do not seem to be able to convey any kind of meaning out of these things. On the other hand, things like speaking or walking pose difficulties to all of the Dead. R laments over not being able to drive a car, though he has vague phenomenal memories of doing so. The Dead are also unable to connect concepts and ideas in their heads and therefore lack normal procedural skills. One could conclude that the zombies' procedural memory is defective. The counterpart of the procedural memory is, according to Manier and Hirst (2008, 256) declarative memory, which refers to both memory for experiences and memory for facts. Procedural memory means *knowing how* to do something; declarative, on the other hand, *knowing that* something happened. (ibid.)

According to Jungert, the second type of remembering is factual or semantic memory. It includes facts about the world and past events, such as names and dates (Jungert 2013, 24). Semantic memories do not possess temporal or spatial specificity and are thus not connected to specific personal experiences. (Manier & Hirst 2008, 256.) The Dead do remember the names of the things around them. At least R also is able to recall some things about his time in the airport: riding the escalators, power occasionally flickering on, and also having a friend, M (WB, 5). He also has memory of the spatial structure of the airport and has a place, an abandoned aircraft, which he calls home. However, neither R or the other zombies remember any facts about their past lives as Living persons – neither names, locations nor occupations.

Finally, Jungert speaks of personal or episodic memory (Jungert 2013, 25). This is what the Dead all

but lack. Jungert states that the special quality of this kind of remembering is its connectedness to personal experience. This connection to past experiences and also to contemporary identity is what differentiates episodic memory from semantic memory – there are, of course, also factual memories, dates and names, that have to do with one's past. Episodic memory is, in other words, qualitative memory of specific events. (Jungert 2013, 26.) It seems, nevertheless, that R does experience some episodic memories from time to time, "And then the fresh lemon zing of *poisson* in Paris. The burn of *tajine* in Morocco." (WB, 22). Manier and Hirst (2008, 256), on the other hand, emphasize the contextualization of episodic memories: they are clothed in temporal and spatial specificity and refer to personally experienced events. If R does have episodic memories of his past life, they seem to lack context. Moreover, semantic memories often start out as episodic memories; only, episodic memories often fade, leaving behind the vague semantic memory of what was learned. (ibid.)

Another useful distinction is the one between implicit and explicit memory, memory systems that are both psychologically and neurologically distinct. (Manier & Hirst 2008, 255.) Explicit memory means conscious recollection, what we generally consider "remembering" of "recollection", in contrast to what we consider "knowing" and "familiarity", which in turn are forms of implicit memory. (ibid.) The two types of memory operate on different neural levels, and I will argue below that implicit memory is in fact saved in the lived-body of the person rather than the brain (see 4.2.1.) One could argue that Marion's zombies have some implicit memory: they have names for things and some hints of procedural memories, but they are unable to consciously process their memories. Explicit memory in the zombies is somewhat defective, and conscious acts of recollection present them with difficulty.

Marion's zombies do have some hints of several kinds of memory. They have some procedural skills, semantic knowledge, and they even experience some episodic memories. What is, then, the nature of their amnesia? Here, I would like to present the concept of autobiographical memory. The boundary between episodic and autobiographical memory is vague. Autobiographical memory could be seen as a form of episodic memory specifically associated with the personal past; memory of events in one's life. (Jungert 2013, 43.) Marion's zombies have no autobiographical memory of their past lives to speak of. Jungert also states that autobiographical memories must have special meaning to the person: for example, a trip to the baker's may be saved as an episodic memory, but a trip to the baker's where one meets one's future partner for the first time is firmly integrated into one's personal timeline. These memories tend to be very detailed and emotional. (Jungert 2013, 45.)

Jungert theorizes that the emotional dimension of memory has an important role in integrating memories into one's life story. (Jungert 2013, 75.) The memories that the zombies have, however, tend to be vague and neutral – the inability to emote prevents the Dead from creating meaningful memories. Memories should also be strengthened and modified through social interactions and feedback (Jungert 2013, 51). Sociality and sharing memories help maintain the thread of memory that is the backbone of personal identity (Jungert 2013, 157–158). Nevertheless, as the zombies are unable to communicate with each other properly, they lack this possibility.

In conclusion, there is little or no psychological continuity between the zombie and the Living person they used to be. The zombies' life is rather uneventful, and very little new memories form. At least R, however, has some kinds of memories about his post-transformation life, but they lack structure – there is no chronology and, especially at the start of the book, scenes are presented as a sequence so that they are not causally connected. After Perry comes along, the episodic narrative starts to structure itself and R's journey for his lost personhood starts. But is he still the same person as before his transformation, or can this identity really be recovered? Whether the zombies' unives can be considered continuation of their lives as Living persons, will be discussed in the next section.

3.1.2 The Issue of Physical and Psychological Continuity

We have now analyzed the kinds of memory the Dead have, and how it contributes to the instability of their personal identities. The question remains, however, whether the zombies can be considered identical to the persons they were when they were still alive. This, in turn, leads us to ask what it means to be a person in the first place.

Larkin (2010, 16) presents two alternate views of personhood: *res cogitans* (a thinking thing) and a *res corporealis* (a corporeal thing). In the first case, that is to say, personhood is dependent on thoughts, memories, personality traits and so forth. A person ceases to exist as these cognitive functions stop. According to this psychological approach, Marion's zombies would be different from the Living persons they once were – one could state that their personality traits have changed so much that they could no longer be considered the same person. Thompson, however, notes that the same issue arises in many mind-altering conditions, such as Alzheimer's disease (Thompson 2010, 28). At which point does psychological continuity cease to be; can Grandma, who no longer recognizes her husband of 60 years, still be regarded as same old Grandma?

The bodily approach to personhood argues that personal identity remains intact as long as a critical mass of a person's material composition continues to exist (Larkin 2010, 17). A person, therefore, continues to exist (but *not* to live) post-mortem. In this case, it is rather irrelevant for the definition of personhood if said corpse happens to get up and start lumbering around. Larkin himself argues for physical continuity and, in his opinion, this can be seen especially well in zombie narratives.

The horror of zombie narratives, Larkin argues, comes from the fear of becoming a zombie (Larkin 2010, 20). Marion's Living characters seem to support this view: it seems to be customary to put a bullet in a person's head once they expire. Perry's father assures his son that he has made sure the boy's mother does not rise from the grave (WB, 30). Perry himself keeps asking his girlfriend whether she will be the one to "de-brain" him when he dies (WB, 56). Larkin claims that if people worry about what happens to their corpses once they die, they must intuitively believe that they continue to exist as corpses (Larkin 2010, 20). Herein lie both the terror and the tragedy of the zombie – though they are complete strangers, we have difficulty perceiving them as such, since we still tend to perceive them as persons.

The zombies, in the least, seem to think Larkin's argument to be true. They clearly long to restore the personal memories they have lost and ponder over their past identities. The lack of psychological continuity is what bothers them: they still perceive themselves as the persons they were while they were Living, but they no longer remember who these persons are, "You were a waitress. You were a student. Ring any bells? / It never does." (WB, 4.) This is why the zombies, or at least R, prefer to use the terms "Living" and "Dead" rather than "human" and "corpse" or "zombie"; they still consider themselves to be human.

For the Living, the issue seems to be a tad more complex. Issues of psychological and physical continuity are addressed through acts of commemoration of the dead. It seems that the Living need a physical object in order to mourn their dead. Dead, de-brained bodies are put to rest on a graveyard that occupies a space larger than the stadium itself. Julie for example, visits her mother's grave daily, brings her flowers and even talks to her. However, her mother's corpse is not in the grave, but her empty dress has been buried as a symbolic gesture. Moreover, Perry describes his own grave, "I think it's just my empty skull in there, though. You and your friends took most of me home for snacks, remember?" (WB, 160.) Here, Perry implies that the most important part of him is gone now that his brain has been devoured. This implies a dualism of sorts, a distinction that can be made

between a person's body and the self – although the self seems to be encoded into the brain, it can exist outside of the person's own body, as Perry keeps existing inside R. There is a complex dynamic between the "body" and the "soul", which will be further examined in 4.2.3. On the other hand, Perry's father reminds us that our dead kin continue to live through memories, "Bodies are just meat. /--/ The part of her that matters the most... we get to keep that." (WB, 30.)

Personhood can be viewed both from physical and psychological perspective. Marion's zombies seem to still identify as the Living person they used to be, though psychological continuity with that person has been broken. On the other hand, the novel implies a dualism of a kind, a mind which is corporeal but can, however, be passed on and continue to exist outside of the body. Moreover, the Living cherish the personhood of their deceased kin through objects of commemoration, which do not necessitate the departed person's physical body to be present. The novel, thus, argues for both physical and psychological continuity of personhood. Marion's zombies long for their lost identities and crave to be the Living person they used to be. However, they seem not to realize that identities must develop and change in order to continue existing. However, be there psychological continuity or not, the Dead must start forming new memories in order to reverse-engineer their lives into something new.

3.2 Identity as Narrative

Warm Bodies starts with a short passage of Herbert Mason's translation of the epic of *Gilgamesh*. On the next page, the author cites a passage that has been destroyed, denoted by, "...". The quotation reflects how cultural memory is slowly corrupted and lost over time. *Gilgamesh* comes up again in one of Perry's memories, and we are reminded how cultural memory lives on in words and stories, even though parts of it are distorted: "[The *Gilgamesh*] continues to touch the present and future because someone cared enough about that world to keep it. To put it in words. To remember it." (WB, 140.)

Letters, words and stories, however, escape the novel's zombie protagonist. The novel is narrated in the present tense to further amplify the fact that R's past, as well as his future, is blurry. All thoughts are here and now, and temporal relations have just about lost their meaning. However, towards the end of the book, the narrative becomes more opaque, more controlled. One could understand that R is thus taking control of his un-life and his personal identity – like Perry, who is a writer and

analyzes his past through narratives.

The purpose of memory is not only to save data; in fact, it is highly constructive in nature, as has been shown in numerous studies about false memories⁶. These constructive processes include the building of personal narratives, and hence, organizing memories into a whole that makes sense to the person and supports their perceived personhood. Biographic identity means the ability of a person to perceive themselves as an individual with certain personality features and a biographic history that is more or less coherent. On this basis, persons are able to decipher their present and imagine possible futures for themselves. According to Jungert (2013, 178), this biographic identity is crucial for the ability to lead a life as a person. Ricoeur, on the other hand, speaks of the narrativity of identity in his book *Oneself as Another* (1994). According to him, the problematic of personal identity can only be articulated in the temporal dimension of humanness. The narrative functions of memory contribute to the constitution of the self. (Ricoeur 1994, 114.) On the other hand, Ricoeur (2004, 448) notes that an exhaustive personal narrative is an impossibility: narrating one's past always includes selective forgetting. In Marion's novel, the zombies' narratives are broken in many ways. Next, we will analyse how identities can be reconstructed based on biographic memory, and how autobiographical reasoning can be seen as a healing process for both Perry and R.

3.2.1 Perry Kelvin and the Importance of Life Narratives

The factor that forces R to reconsider his zombiedom is Perry Kelvin, whose memories and emotions change his whole un-life. Perry is described by Julie as being a, "brilliant, fiery kid, so weird and funny and full of dreams" (WB, 55) before he is hit by the harsh realities of their post-apocalyptic life. This, Julie describes as "quitting his life", stating that real death was just the next logical step. (ibid.) In effect, Perry's death on a salvage trip is never considered a murder – rather, it is a beginning of a new life for both him and R. As R and Perry physically merge, their personalities become entangled, as well. The memories are narrated in first person, so it becomes unclear whether it is Perry who is experiencing them, or R. Whether Perry actually continues to live inside R's brain, or is merely a construction of R's mind, he is very real to R himself. He acts independent of R's consciousness, and has dialogue with him. Thus it makes sense to analyse Perry's character as a protagonist alongside R.⁷

⁶ For example, Loftus: see Jungert 2013, 194.

⁷ The dynamics between the characters Perry and R will be more closely examined in 5.2.3. For the time being, we are going to assume that they are indeed two distinct persons.

On his first appearance, Perry introduces himself with a, "I am Perry Kelvin, a nine-year-old boy growing up in rural nowhere." (WB, 16.) These are clear attributes related to personal identity – Perry seems to be very certain about who he is, or who he used to be. Different from this, R starts his story with, "I am dead, but it's not so bad." (WB, 3.) He has neither a name, age nor a home: death is the dominant attribute that defines him as a person. Although they are both physically dead, one could say that Perry has a strong sense of personal identity and R, in turn, has not.

Clearly, Perry has what R has not: he can emote, he has meaningful relationships, and he has the ability to form a life thread of some kind. Consequently, his memories are so powerful that he continues to exist in R's mind long after his death. These memories, finally, start living a life of their own, and a physical connection to his corpse is no longer required⁸. Perry, or the memory of him, is even able to converse with R, "'These are *my* memories, remember. You're the guest here.'" (WB, 61.) Perry becomes what can be seen as a mentor character to R. In the beginning, the memories come episodically, but later, Perry takes control of his memories and starts showing them to R as a sequence, telling his life story, "Because it's what's left of me, and I want you to feel it. I'm not ready to disappear." (WB, 114.) This, in turn, can be seen as Perry working on his autobiographical identity.

In psychodynamic psychology as developed by Sigmund Freud, memory had and has a central role in maintaining mental health. Self-destructive thoughts and feelings were addressed by Freud and his followers through the emotional processing of one's past. Especially important was the analysis of repressed experiences, which the patients were able to access through verbal narration of childhood memories. (Straub 2008, 217.) This "talking cure" is not far from what Perry experiences while mentally narrating his life to R. The repressed memories, in this case, the events that lead to Perry's suicide, are confronted again and again until the reasons behind the tragic events are revealed to both Perry and R. Memory must be "worked through" (Ricoeur 2004, 71).

"The gas station where I bought Coke slushies is on fire. The windows of my grade school are shattered." (WB, 29.) Though the memories are not always pleasant or beautiful, they are strongly connected to Perry himself – this is how he understands the world from his position as a person. Jungert states that memory is not only a tool of proving the continuity of one's personal life, but

⁸ In this case, physical continuity (R eating Perry's brain) becomes psychological continuity (Perry's personality continues to exist in R's mind). See 5.2.3.

also a constitutive element of the life of a person. Through memories, people become persons with a past. (Jungert 2013, 102.) A person's past, consequently, is how they define their relationship to the world around them. Jungert also argues that caring (or love) is a central element of biographic identity (Jungert 2013, 144): there is no need to construct a coherent narrative out of one's autobiography before there is something in one's life that one cares about. In Perry's case, this connecting factor is very clearly his girlfriend Julie, as his personal narrative is built around memories of her: their first meeting, the first time they made love, the first time meeting Julie's father... This affection for Julie is also what gives R a nudge to counteract the strict social norms of the zombie society.

On the other hand, one could also see Perry constructing a life thread out of his memories as he wants to be a writer. Writing is another medium of constituting the past and passing it on to future generations, as Colonel Rosso reminds Perry, "Writing isn't letters on paper. It's communication. It's memory." (WB, 139.) Perry openly renounces this view, but in secret, he writes on a book. However, he quits in the middle of a sentence as he can no longer think of how to continue, "Outmanned and outgunned, certain of death, he kept fighting, because—" (WB, 184.)

Based on Ricoeur's ideas on narrative identity, Habermas and Köber (2015, 149) developed the concept of autobiographical reasoning, the "process of thinking or talking about the personal past that involves arguments that link distant elements of one's life to each other and to the self in an attempt to relate the present self to one's personal past and future". Autobiographical reasoning may entail drawing conclusions about the nature of the world or life, which then represent elements of a person's consciousness. Drawing them out in narratives can in turn create continuity and thus, further the development of personal identity. (Pasupathi 2015, 167.) Moreover, autobiographical reasoning can aid to mend gaps that abrupt life changes have torn into one's personal timeline. (Habermas & Köber 2015, 155–156.) Through narrating his experiences to R, Perry works to integrate traumatic events such as becoming orphaned into his personal identity.

However slowly, we find out more about Perry's past, and he carefully constructs a vivid life story, explaining his thoughts and reasons, always returning to the point in time where he purposefully submits himself to the approaching zombie horde. The author uses Perry as a foil for the protagonist, implying that "death" is, in the end, just a matter of attitude. In the end, Perry needs to reverse-engineer his life just like R, whose heart has stopped ages ago. Through the process of narrating his own life, Perry learns to appreciate life in a different manner,

I don't know what the next page is for you, but whatever it is for me I swear I'm not going to fuck it up. I'm not going to yawn off in the middle of a sentence and hide it in a drawer. Not this time. Peel off these dusty wool blankets of apathy and antipathy and cynical dessication. I want life in all its stupid sticky rawness. (WB, 229.)

Perry no longer forms new memories, as he is physically dead. Nonetheless, we can assume that his consciousness continues to exist in some form. We witness Perry's life story and see him become the deeply troubled person he is at the moment of his death. By organizing his memories into a meaningful whole as he narrates them to R, Perry works through his own identity, as well. Looking back at his life, he seems rather amused, "I have perspective here. It's hard to take your life seriously when you can see it all at once." (WB, 161.) This way, personal narrative helps Perry cope with his issues and thus become whole again.

3.2.2 Reverse-Engineering Identities

Personal narratives, one could say, could be of use both to the Living and the Dead. Personal narrative is a mental process which constructs connections between experiences, helps structure one's life and also, in some way, anticipate the future (Jungert 2013, 84). As Julie comments in *Warm Bodies*, "My mom used to say that's why we have memory. And the opposite of memory: hope. So things that are gone can still matter. So we can build off our pasts and make futures." (WB, 115.) Narratives can also be used to make sense of events when no actual memories are present (Jungert 2013, 89). Perry, for example, can be seen working through his identity issues by narrating his life to R.

The Dead, on the other hand, can be seen as classifying their identities as episodic rather than narrative. This means that they perceive their lives as a set of separate events. There are very little causal relations between the scenes described by R at the beginning of the book, and the hints of his past life that are there are rather random, based on implicit memory more than anything else. Episodic identity, Jungert says, is generally perceived as empty and cold, and he even presumes that a person cannot be a properly moral being without a narrative identity. This may well be why Perry urges R to "reverse-engineer" himself. Next, we will take a look at how R starts forming new memories, and hence, (re)constructing his personal identity.

R does attempt to build an identity of his own: he surrounds himself with things he finds in the

abandoned city, attempting to make sense of them. Still, objects do not seem to grant him the kind of intimacy he craves for. He has a faint idea of what it is like to be alive, vague memories that have very little connectivity. He remembers what being hungry used to mean but is unable to feel the old hunger. "Sometimes when I 'sleep' here, I feel the faint rising sensation of flight, the blasts of recycled air blowing in my face, the soggy nausea of packaged sandwiches." (WB, 22.) As there are no meaningful relationships or emotions connected to these memories – as we have already concluded – they remain vague and impersonal.

Nonetheless, consuming Perry's brain seems to launch something inside R that is unheard of in the zombie society: desire. First, it is a desire to protect Julie, which is direct continuation of Perry's last thoughts, but it soon turns into desire for personal identity. He sits in the cockpit of his aircraft, "...willing a true memory to pop into my head. /--/ Something specific, bright and vivid. Something unmistakably mine." (WB, 23.) Identity is something that must be consciously pursued, nurtured and protected. However, it starts with the wanting. As R defends a chunk of Perry's brain from M, something extraordinary happens: R has formed an emotional bond. He wants this specific piece of brain tissue for himself, "This is *mine*." (WB, 27.)

For R, identity is something that is consciously fabricated. Perry asks him, "You think death isn't meaningful? /--/ Wouldn't you want to remember *yours* if you could? How else are you going to reverse-engineer yourself into something new?" (WB, 61.) R must, in other words, collect the bits and pieces of his former identity and put them together, but the result is going to be something entirely new. This is further emphasized by the fact that R, after his heart starts beating again, chooses to keep using the syllable name he used while he was still a zombie. The horrible things that he has done as a zombie are not forgotten, but accepted as a part of his new identity. Julie and her friend Nora's forgiveness seems to play a great role in this process. (WB, 171; 185.)

After R brings Julie to the airport, the narrative becomes less episodic, and events follow one another in a logical cause-and-effect order. Consequently, R's thoughts become clearer, he starts speaking in sentences and even forming memories of his own. On page 89, he consciously recalls a conversation he had with M – in his mind, however, the rather monosyllabic dialogue has been replaced by actual sentences. New memories are not only formed, but they are also processed by his mind. Memory is, in fact, constructive in nature; personal contents of memory are never stable. They are complex ideas that are constructed and reconstructed in the process of recollecting. (Straub 2008, 218.) Already in the act of perception, a stimulus is transformed into a *meaningful*

experience, which can then be memorized. (Straub 2008, 221.) Thus, the constructivity of memory depends on the emotional involvement of the person with the stimulus.

As soon as R has a fixed point in his life to cling to – or a meaningful relationship, to put it differently – his memories also start to become meaningful. He is able to reflect and reminisce. A personal narrative of a sorts starts to form.

What does it mean that my past is a fog but my present is brilliant, bursting with sound and color? /--/ I can trace a solid line from the moment I met Julie all the way to now, lying next to her in this sepulchral bedroom, and despite the millions of past moments I've lost or tossed away like highway trash, I know with a lockjawed certainty I'll remember this one for the rest of my life. (WB, 91.)

Towards the end of the book, R's narration also becomes more visible as he consciously takes up the part of the author,

I would like to end it here. How nice if I could edit my own life. If I could halt in the middle of a sentence and put it all to rest in a drawer somewhere, consummate my amnesia and forget all the things that have happened, are happening, and are about to happen. Shut my eyes and go to sleep happy. (WB, 186.)

However, he is determined that the unpretty details of life should not be excluded from one's personal narrative. The guilt, the anger and the sorrow are just another part of one's timeline, and they should not be disregarded. Perry seems to have reached the same conclusion on his journey with R. While Perry experiences a process of healing through working through his personal traumata, R learns that he must not escape his past. According to Habermas and Köber, the person who is remembering past events can be seen as a narrator; the past self as a protagonist. Here, narrative serves to link the present narrator with the past protagonist, for whose actions the narrator is also responsible. (Habermas & Köber 2015, 151.) Narrating one's life means assuming responsibility for one's past. The past must also be narrated in such a way that others who were involved find themselves being treated respectfully. (Habermas & Köber 2015, 162.) Autobiographical reasoning as a part of a healing process, therefore, means including negative as well as positive experiences into one's timeline and also taking responsibility of one's deeds. Only then can healing and, ultimately, forgiveness, take place. This, in turn, is a defining trait of Livingness in *Warm Bodies*⁹.

9 See 5.4.

The narrative functions of memory clearly contribute to the wholeness of personal identity. Perry, after R consumes his brain, works through his past leading up to his suicide, consciously constructing a life story through autobiographical reasoning. This, in turn, contributes to his mental healing. R, on the other hand, starts constructing his personal narratives from scratch. Emotional involvement with his past helps him construct a meaningful whole of his identity and mend gaps in his personal timeline. Finally, the idea of autobiographical reasoning emphasizes that also traumatic events must be included into one's identity in order for it to be whole. Remembering and thus, Livingness, requires involvement and assuming responsibility for one's past deeds.

Until now, we have viewed personal identity through the lenses of individual memory. We will now take a short glimpse into the realm of social memory and analyse how it contributes to personal identity. The fact that the zombies are unable to remember their names but emphasizes their lack of personal identity. However, as we will find out below, it is only in social contexts that personal names can be granted meaning. Thus also personal identities are constructed on collective memories.

3.2.3 Names

Personal names, says Ricoeur (2004, 129), give linguistic support to all operations of personal appropriation that gravitate around mnemonic nuclei. In most cases names that we call ourselves have been given by others, not ourselves; thus, names become conveyors of our position in a social field of actions. Personal names, thus, act as carriers of both individual and social memory. Names are central building blocks of personal identity, but their usage can also be seen as abusive: in *Warm Bodies*, for example, Julie has made the choice to use the surname Cabernet instead of her father's name, Grigio¹⁰. General Grigio, however, abruptly thwarts her attempts at independently expressing her personal identity, "I'll thank you not to replace our surname when addressing my daughter, whatever such 'revisions' she may have embraced." (WB, 165.) Grigio's message is that identities must be rigid and that they must be dictated through social contexts; changing the attributes connected to the self is, for him, downright mutiny. In some ways, he is right, too: names do carry social meaning. This may be a reason why the Dead cannot remember theirs. On the other hand,

¹⁰ Both names are also brands of wine, and appropriately, General Grigio is noted to have been a wine enthusiast in his past life. Here, Julie has taken the family's common hobby and used it to emphasize a certain aspect of her identity: resigning from an obvious connection to his father while maintaining a more subtle hint of belongingness to a family. On the other hand, the name Cabernet can be seen as a parody of the name Grigio, which annoys the General.

assuming a new name when identity is altered is of significance, as well.

As noted above, the Dead do not have names, or they do not remember them, "I'm sorry I can't properly introduce myself, but I don't have a name anymore. Hardly any of us do. We lose them like car keys, forget them like anniversaries." (WB, 3.) Our hero R refers to himself with a syllable, as does he to his friend, M. However, these syllables are not considered names in the actual sense of the word. Names are particularly fascinating to R; he finds one of the most attractive features in his zombie wife to be the fact that she has a name tag pinned to her chest (WB, 9). However, he cannot read the tag, and neither can she, "She doesn't even have a syllable one, like M and I do. She is no one." (WB, 10.)

The zombies' monosyllabic "names" are considered inferior to actual given names. This, however, changes, when Julie names R "R", "How about I just call you 'R'? That's a start, right?" (WB, 44.) The single syllable is thereby given meaning in a social context; only then does it become a *name*. At the end of the book, R makes the conscious choice to keep using the name Julie has given him instead of a more common one,

I thumb through the index of names in my brain. Complex etymologies, languages, ancient meanings passed down through generations of cultural traditions. But I'm a new thing. A fresh canvas. (WB, 238.)

It is, hence, the social context in which a name is given that grants it meaning. Personal names mediate between personal and social identity. On the other hand, R consciously ignores generations of cultural knowledge when he chooses his name. The name R also carries with it his personal history as a zombie and his struggle to live again. The name Julie, on the other hand, becomes something of a war cry to the zombies who are struggling to transform. The name carries with it so much meaning that it can replace entire sentences, even conversations: using her name, R convinces Julie of his peaceful intentions at their first meeting, and also, defends her against the other zombies, "Julie', I say yet again, as if this were an irrefutable argument. And in a way, it is. That one word, a fully fleshed *name*." (WB, 66.)

Like language and memory, names are important indicators of Livingness. Therefore, the zombies who have recently started to breathe again start their new lives by naming themselves: M, for example, becomes Marcus (WB, 235). Though these names have not been granted in a social context, they gain social meaning through verbal interactions, "Talk to them. /--/ I know it's scary at

first, but look them in the eyes. Tell them your name and ask them theirs.” (WB, 234.) The fact that the Dead do not remember their names seems to keep them from forming social connections; however names must be granted social meaning before they can be used as such.

We have now studied the memory of the zombies and concluded that it is their autobiographical memory that they experience issues with. We have also described how personal narratives can be useful in identity work. We have seen that negative emotions such as shame and guilt must be integrated into one's personal timeline in order for it to be whole. Finally, we have explored the boundary between the memory and identity of the individual and those of the group by studying the significance of personal names. Next, we will proceed to further illustrate the boundary of the individual and the social. For the zombies, this boundary equals to the physical boundaries of the body.

4 BODY, BOUNDARY AND MEMORY

Marion's zombies are anthropophagous, or, in other words, they feed on human flesh. In fact, they require human flesh to survive. They are unable to nourish themselves from the meat of nonhuman animals, and even recently killed human flesh provides them with mere sustenance. This puts an uncanny as well as tragic note on R's character: the actions his Undead body requires from him evoke in him both horror and sadness. The cannibalistic tendencies of the living dead can be seen as a metaphor of our desire to consume (Jones & McGlotten 2014, 2) as well as representations of repressed primal urges (Clark 2010, 198–199). However, in Marion's novel, anthropophagy seems to be more than mere meaningless consumption: by consuming the brain of a human, the zombies get to live parts of these persons' memories before the life fades, “-- for about thirty seconds, I have memories. Flashes of parades, perfume, music... *life.*” (ibid.) In this context, flesh (or, more specifically, the brain) becomes a carrier (in the sense of A. Assmann, 2011, 232) of memory, and consumption, a way of conveying it. In this chapter, we will explore the corporeal aspects of memory as well as incorporation as a medium of conveying experience.

In *Warm Bodies*, memory and identity exist on a most fundamental, corporeal level: memory is preserved in flesh, inside bodies. Consequently, it can be transmitted by consuming the body, or in other words, through incorporation. Maggie Kilgour (1990, 4), who has previously done groundbreaking research on cannibalism in western literatures, defines incorporation as an act in which an

external object is taken inside another. Incorporation enforces an absolute division between inside and outside, but at the same time, it dissolves the opposition it appears to produce. Correspondingly, in *Warm Bodies*, the boundaries between persons and bodies appear to dissolve as the zombies consume the Living: the autobiographic memories of the Living are acquired by the zombies and identities become intertwined.

As the zombies are all but unable to communicate, anthropophagy assumes the function of verbal correspondence. As a medium of transmitting memory, it is rather destructive – ultimately, the victim's memories are extinguished, and although hints of their previous identities carry on to exist inside the zombies' bodies, new memories are no longer formed. Later on, the novel proceeds to present less destructive ways of conveying memory, such as music or photography. Thus, collective memory is presented as sharing rather than consuming.

Interestingly, also less destructive forms of interpersonal communication are expressed through metaphors of incorporation. Portrayals of kissing and sexual intercourse are associated with the desire to merge with or consume the other. Similarly, Simon Clark (2010, 201–202) sees the zombies' act of consuming flesh as a demonstration of repressed sexual urges that reactivates the whole body as an erogenous zone, so that intercourse is no longer limited to mere genital contact. Eating is thus seen as a form of total bodily pleasure, an equivalent of sexuality for the zombies.

Finally, through imagery of incorporation, boundaries between persons and thus, processes of individuation are studied in a very material manner. Through the corporeal medium, autobiographic memory becomes collective memory – however it can be questioned whether this kind of memory can really be considered social, as it is not based on mutual interaction. On the other hand, in R and Perry's case, memory and identity are shared in a most fundamental manner, so that in the end it becomes unclear whose memories are in question. In this chapter, we will attempt to drill into the core of corporeality and explore the various ways in which memory and identity are encoded in bodies.

4.1 Bodies and Boundaries

"I feel a sharp pain as they snip something, and suddenly I am less. I am no one but myself, tiny and feeble and utterly alone." (WB, 60.) Through Perry's brain, R experiences the beginning of Perry's life, him becoming a person, an "I". Next, baby Perry is handed over to his mother, whom he

experiences as "immense, cosmic" and "the world". Though it is surely not possible to consciously remember one's own birth, an imprint of the moment where his identity began seems to be recorded somewhere in his body. According to Freud, the interaction between mother and baby is how a child first begins to perceive itself in relation to the surrounding world. As the child realizes that the mother's breast, its primary source of nourishment, is actually an object outside of itself, it attempts to restore the primal relationship with the mother with means no other than eating. In this way, according to Freud, the process of individuation is from the start cannibalistic in nature. (Kilgour 1990, 12.) Perry's "blank white mind" (WB, 60) originally perceives nothing but the difference between him and his mother. According to Ricoeur (2004, 81), the fragility of identity comes from the confrontation with others. The other is perceived as a danger to one's own identity. The opposition between inside and outside is thus a crucial factor in identification.

Incorporation as a concept is based on the opposition of inside and outside. It relies on the experience that what is "inside" one's body is a coherent structure and can be defined against what is "outside" of it. This is also a basis for a crude system of values according to which that which is outside is good and that which is inside is bad. (Kilgour 1990, 4.) The uncanny, the alien, is the most primal source of fear. To maintain control over these alien factors, what is outside must be drawn to the center until there is no category of outsideness left and inner stability is once again secured. (Kilgour 1990, 5.) This assimilation from center to periphery is performed through the act of incorporation, in which quite literally an object is taken inside another so that the opposition between inside and outside is dissolved. (Kilgour 1990, 4.) In *Warm Bodies*, this happens when the Dead consume the Living: as the zombies acquire the personal memories of the Living, the opposition between life and death becomes unclear. Incorporation has to do with the nostalgia for total unity and oneness (Kilgour 1990, 4). In the case of the zombies, this means endlessly assimilating the outside to the inside. For them, this merely leads to loss of information and individual identity, "We view ourselves the same way we view the Living: as meat. Nameless, faceless, disposable." (WB, 74.)

Eating, per se, is a horrifying act: it is a means of assuming total control, it is violent, it is sexual. Moreover, it breaks the illusion of bodily autonomy that the inside-outside opposition tries to uphold; it forces us to cross the boundary between ourselves and the world. The inside depends upon substances that come from the outside. (Kilgour 1990, 9.) In order to survive, the body must incorporate elements from the outside into itself. Thus, the need for food exposes the vulnerability of our individual identities. On a social level, this is enacted in the need for commerce with others,

through which the individual is integrated into a larger body. (ibid. 7.) This dependency on the outside may just provoke the zombies to defend their vulnerability through violence – the desire to become one with another easily turns into aggression (Kilgour 1990, 8).

At the same time, the Dead seek to connect with the living through incorporation; however, this type of interaction is merely destructive, as the victim is usually annihilated. R, for one, expresses a wish to form a friendship with one of his victims, "I'll introduce him to everyone, and maybe we'll stand around and groan for a while. It's hard to say what 'friends' are anymore, but that might be close." (WB, 7.) However, he is unable to restrain himself from destroying the brain, quasi-condemning himself to loneliness. This is only changed when R consumes the brain of Perry Kelvin, who for some reason continues to exist inside his body.

On a less corporeal level, the zombies seem to seek identification with their peers, as well as the Living. These mental acts of identification, however, seem to be out of their reach. The body, for one, is a coherent structure and its boundaries are carefully defined, but the territory of the mind is not defined just as clearly. The self attempts to know other humans and take them into itself to create its identity. (Kilgour 1990, 10.) This can be achieved through verbal communication, another oral activity very similar to eating but less destructive. (Kilgour 1990, 8.) In *Warm Bodies*, language, both spoken and written, acts as a marker for Livingness: the zombies are unable to comprehend texts, and can only utter a few syllables in a row, which leaves their communicational capacities somewhat lacking. To mend this gap, the zombies are forced to fall back on the crudest physical aspects, forcing connections through violent consumption. In conclusion, the zombies fear and hate the outside and thus want to assimilate it with the inside. On the other hand, incorporation is a way of seeking communion and social connection with the Living, thus being assimilated and accepted into the society. According to Kilgour, acts of incorporation are often extremely ambivalent, taking place between the extremes of the most intimate possible identification and total autonomy, and control over others. Therefore, others are treated as food and all exchanges are reduced to the opposites "eat or be eaten". (Kilgour 1990, 18.) In the light of these realizations, we will consider incorporation as breaking of bodily boundaries and also as a means of assuming control.

4.1.1 Why Zombies Eat Brains

Cannibalism can be considered a dominant western mode of producing meaning through exclusion. (Guest 2001, 1.) As already mentioned, it creates an opposition between the inside and the outside, and at the same time, seeks to stabilize the difference. In the western context, however, it also marks a boundary between civilization and savagery (ibid. 2). This is another element that the zombie mythos uses to induce horror in its audience: the zombies' cannibalistic tendencies make them the Other, and on the other hand, an embodiment of carnal desires that wish to eradicate civilization (Clark 2010, 199). In Marion's novel, the difference between the Living and the Dead is constructed through cannibalism; the zombies are ruthlessly othered by General Grigio and others for being anthropophagi. Interestingly, the younger generation seems to have a more matter-of-fact attitude towards the fact that zombies eat people, possibly because they have grown up in a world where very macabre actions have been normalized. Julie and Nora, for example, can see that the zombies "can't help it" (WB, 132). They need human flesh to survive.

For the zombies, or at least R, nourishing themselves is a contradictory issue. Hunger is a very holistic experience for them, felt with the whole body, "The new hunger is a strange feeling. We don't feel it in our stomachs – some of us don't even have those. We feel it everywhere equally, a sinking, sagging sensation, as if our cells are deflating." (WB, 6.) The hunger forces the zombies out to prey on the Living scavenging in the ruins of the abandoned city. Although the hunts bring a spark of life into the zombies' otherwise dull existence, eating is not a joyous communion for them – it is an act of violence that gives them only temporary satisfaction. Tragically, R is able to relate to his victims, "Eating is not a pleasant business. I chew off a mans arm, and I hate it. I hate his screams, because I don't like pain, I don't like hurting people, but this is the world now." (WB, 7.) Still, cannibalism seems to be the only option for the zombies, as they are looking for something they themselves have lost and can only be acquired through the most violent acts of incorporation.

If a zombie manages to save a Living person's brain, the person will rise up and become a zombie themselves. However, this would require focused intention, which the zombies lack. R hopes to compensate the abrupt end of his victim's life by granting them a new one, but he is unable to do so, "But I don't. I can't. As always I go straight for the good part, the part that makes my head light up like a picture tube." (WB, 7.)

The very act of consuming the flesh of the Living is described in vivid and powerful language,

"relentless visions of blood in my mind, that brilliant, mesmerizing red, flowing through bright pink tissues in intricate webs and Pollock fractals, pulsing and vibrating with life." (WB, 13.) This is in clear contrast to the more neutral diction that is used to describe the zombies' unives. The otherwise grey and dull landscape is suddenly vividly colored. Thus it is shown that it is not mere sustenance that the zombies crave for: consuming flesh allows them to experience beauty and possibly even happiness in a world where their emotions are otherwise dulled. This can only be achieved by consuming living human flesh, not dead or nonhuman, "Even bright red meat from a freshly killed rabbit or deer is beneath our culinary standards; its energy is simply incompatible, like trying to run a computer on diesel." (WB, 37.)

The hunting parties also bring "leftovers" or "takeout" back to the airport for the ones that are unable to hunt for themselves (WB, 8), but this is just sustenance. The scraps serve to prolong their unives, but they are described to be deprived of something. "What [the new hunger] craves is closeness, that grim sense of connection that courses between their eyes and ours in those final moments, like some dark negative of love." (WB, 8.) To put it differently, the Dead yearn for meaningful relationships and physical intimacy in the most macabre way. Dead flesh cannot satisfy this need as it does not enable them to interact and connect with the victim.

In the end, the act of eating is joyless, the gratification, fleeting. To further emphasize the destructiveness of this way of life, R and his friend M are shown to use human brains as "drugs" of a kind, retreating to an empty bathroom to share a brain and savor its fading memories. Watching his friend, R ponders, "When he wakes up, this will all disappear. He will be empty again. He will be dead." (WB, 25.) Ultimately, the zombies' need for brains illustrates their overall confusion about their lives, and their loss of personal identity; by consuming others, they attempt to mend the gap in their own mindset, "I don't know why we have to kill people. I don't know what chewing through a man's neck accomplishes. I steal what he has to replace what I lack. He disappears, I stay." (WB, 8.) Still, like the whole course of the zombies' unives, consuming brains is ultimately an act of meaningless repetition, "I eat until I stop eating, then I eat again." (ibid.)

4.1.2 Otherness, Incorporation, Assimilation

Eating is a means of asserting and controlling individual and also cultural identity. There are rules to eating; what we are allowed to put into our mouths and also, how we do it, is culturally regulated.

However, eating itself is symbolic for assuming control. According to Kilgour (1990, 7), eating creates total identity between the eater and the eaten while insisting total control of the latter by the former. For Marion's zombies, this assimilation of the outside to the inside via incorporation is a crucial means of both neutralizing and constructing difference. On the first hand, the zombies pursue total identity, eradicating life, personal memory and thus difference. On the other hand, especially the Boneys seek to maintain the opposition between the eater and the eaten, the predator and the prey, the Dead and the Living.

Before actually entering one of the stadiums where the Living find shelter from the Dead, his mental image of the Living is based on his imagination. Compared to his dull and grey life, the stadium seems like a paradise, and he feels envy, "I assumed it was perfect, that everyone was happy and beautiful and wanted for nothing, and in my numb, limited way I felt envy and wanted to eat them all the more." (WB, 147.) The difference R has constructed in his head makes him *want* to consume the Living and to eradicate that difference, albeit the act of eating bids him the possibility the experience the paradise inside the walls for a brief moment. However, when R gets to see the stadium from the inside, he is forced to see that the Living are not very different from the Dead, seeking shelter from a hostile world, "*Just a grid of nameless streets filled with nameless people?*" (WB, 148.) Julie even predicts that the Living in the stadium are all going to merge into a "big mindless amoeba" (ibid.). Noticing that there is little difference between the Living and the Dead, R no longer feels the need to assimilate the Living.

However, it is not just the Dead who attempt to eradicate difference: the stadium itself is portrayed as a tool of homogenization through the imagery of incorporation, "*Climb into my mouth, [the stadium] teases. Come on, kids, don't mind the teeth.*" (WB, 215.) In the stadium, everyone is required to wear the same clothes. Nourishment is strictly controlled, and there are strict fitness routines everyone must comply with. Maintaining personal identity is a struggle. The executor of these acts of symbolic incorporation is Julie's father, General Grigio, who is himself constantly juxtaposed with the Boneys – the Boneys, like Grigio, are responsible of maintaining a certain homogeneity at the airport, among the zombies. Actually, he seems to be the other end of a contract made with the Boneys, keeping up the barrier between the Living and the Dead, "The Dead don't change, Julie – They are not people, they are things!" (WB, 198.) Similar to the Boneys, Grigio attempts to force certain identities and worldviews on the young residents of the stadium. In the case of his daughter and her friend Nora, he does not succeed, but Perry finally succumbs, changing the fundamentals of who he is, [Julie:] "You were pretty cool before Dad got his claws into you."

(WB, 95.)

Grigio is portrayed as rigid and emotionless as the Boneys, and his skeletal self is revealed under a human skin, "His face is empty now, expressing absolutely nothing. Just skin stretched over a skull." (WB, 224.) Like a zombie, he seems to feel no pain when he is stabbed into the ankle. Finally, Grigio himself is consumed by the Boneys in the most ritual act of incorporation, which he himself refuses to fight (WB, 226). Interestingly, Grigio's flesh is not actually incorporated by the Boneys, but "pieces of flesh fall through its hollow jaw and hit the roof." (ibid.) Thus, it is the act of eating through which Grigio is assimilated; it is violent and the Boneys are unable to nourish themselves from it – it is therefore just neutralizing difference in a most macabre way. Through the juxtaposition of Grigio and the Boneys, it is shown that death is not a precondition of zombiedom – it is rather rigid ideals and the wish to assimilate others to these beliefs.

The Boneys, on the other hand, express the extreme form of incorporation: complete assimilation and total identity. Like Grigio, they promote a rigid world view and tolerate no change – thus it is only appropriate that Grigio is consumed, or assimilated, by the Boneys. They mean to build up an opposition between the Living and the Dead, but by consuming Grigio they manage to show that the opposition does not exist. Ultimately, the Boneys' aim seems to be total oneness and eradication of all difference. They have no language as they have no vocal chords, but R can hear their humming inside his head, "WE ARE THE SUM OF EVERYTHING. /--/ YOU WILL BECOME US. WE WILL WIN. ALWAYS HAVE, ALWAYS W—" (WB, 212.)

Anthropophagy breaks barriers between people in a tangible manner; it produces absolute unity and absolute connection. In *Warm Bodies*, this happens on a more than symbolic level, as the eater acquires the experiences of the eaten. However, this is not productive, as the intimacy of the one means the annihilation of the other. Through incorporation, no real connecting happens. This is true in all Living-Dead interactions until R decides to bring home Julie. Julie and R present another model of incorporation, one that does not assimilate but in which they both receive something from one another. This is expressed through the physical act of kissing which, as an oral activity, comes very close to the act of eating. This seems to foil the meaningless interaction between the eater and the eaten. Unlike Boneys, R and Julie use their difference not to assimilate, but to create something completely new,

Our tongues taste each other, our saliva flows, and Julie bites my lip. I feel the death in me

stirring, the anti-life surging toward her glowing cells to darken them. But as it reaches the threshold, I *halt* it. I hold it back and hammer it down, and I feel Julie doing the same. (WB, 223.)

Here, R and Julie connect on a corporeal level, further emphasized by the exchange of bodily fluids as well as biting. However, though the plague in R attempts to assimilate Julie, the two tackle it through common effort. Something entirely new happens, "It's coming from Julie, it's her scent but it's also *mine*. (ibid.) In Kilgour's words, this kind of incorporation can be compared to communion rather than cannibalism; it sets up a complicated system of relation and it is difficult to say who exactly is trying to eat whom. Here, unity is created – not through absolute identification – but obfuscation of identity and rigid roles. The absolute boundary between the eater and the eaten appears to disappear, so that the identities of the two are no longer fixed; they emerge through an exchange that involves balancing between identity and differentiation. (Kilgour 1990, 15.)

4.2 The Body as a Medium of Memory

Bodies remember. Memory is not merely a set of information stored inside the brain; it is the totality of the embodied subject's dispositions. Through memory, the person is able to react to present situations on the basis of past experience. (Koch et al 2012, 2.) Memory is stored in complex ways in bodies, places, objects and bodily interactions between the person and the surrounding world. As noted above, in *Warm Bodies*, memory exists on a deeply corporeal level. However, there is difference to be made between body memory and body as memory technology; what we mean by body memory is how the person's experience is recorded on a physical level, so that the body unconsciously reacts to external stimuli. Marion's protagonist experiences some somatic echoes of his past life, and physical objects and places sometimes trigger reactions in him that can only be explained in terms of body memory. On the other hand, corporeal memory exists on another level as well: in the novel's reality, the memory that is stored in the brain can be passed to another person through the act of consuming it. This is in turn explicit memory that is decoded by the zombie as the brain dissolves in their body. Before we return to the imagery of incorporation, we will need to study the two different ways in which corporeal memory is presented in the novel.

In 3.1, we considered practical or procedural remembering one of the three main kinds of remembering. Ricoeur (2004, 24–25), in fact, sees implicit memory rather as "habit". He opposes habit to memory because, he argues, memory is generally in the past, as habit is realized in the present. Thomas Fuchs, however, broadens the view of implicit memory with different categories

that have to do with body memory. According to him, there must be a memory of the body apart from the conscious memory, a memory of habit which is formed through repetition and exercise. Body memory denotes the totality of a person's bodily capacities, habits and dispositions. (Fuchs 2012, 10.) Moreover, body memory has to do with individual identity, as well: a person's history exists and is expressed through bodily habits, movement and behavior. (ibid. 9.) Still, body memory is not exclusively implicit: it may actually open doors to explicit, episodic memories through mnemonically loaded places, objects and events Fuchs calls "memory cores". (ibid. 19.) As a concept, they come close to memory cues or traces, as presented by Halbwachs (Erl 2004, 7). R himself denotes that his past life is still present in his body. Places and objects trigger some vague memories in him, and in the end, even episodic flashbacks.

Still, it must be noted that even explicit memory is corporeal in nature: disregarding externalizations such as books and archives, episodic memories are stored in the brain as patterns of interconnected neurons, which are corporeal objects and thus susceptible to physical forces. Memory is of course encoded into the body in countless ways, but usually, they only carry meaning for the person themselves. In *Warm Bodies*, however, zombies have the ability to decode and recall the information that has been recorded by the brain. For the Dead, the brain is a memory technology, even an externalization of memory. This extraordinary feature could be regarded as a superpower were its practical applications not so macabre.

4.2.1 Body Memory

In 3.1.3, we considered different views on personhood and bodily as well as psychological continuity. Thompson (2010, 28) asked whether personhood is conserved in mind-altering diseases such as Alzheimer's. Fuchs, on the other hand, reminds that, although dementia may deprive a person of their explicit memories, bodily memory is still retained. The history of a person's life is conserved in familiar sights, smells and feels, even though the origin of this familiarity is no longer clear to them. (Fuchs 2012, 20.) Memories of the body may not be detailed; rather, they are implicit memories that cannot be expressed in terms of language. The knowledge is in the person's lived-body and comes forth by means of bodily effort rather than specific details or episodic memories. (Fuchs 2012, 10.) Similarly, though Marion's zombies seem to have lost connection to their explicit personal memory, their bodies still remember – and are capable of recording new information and new habits. As Fuchs argues, explicit memory is directed from the present to the past, mediating

between the present moment and past events. In contrast, implicit memory does not directly represent the past – it re-enacts the past through the body's performance in the present. Thus, it can be said that body memory is indeed our lived past. (Fuchs 2012, 11.)

According to Jungert, memories can be unclear though still present, disappear partially or wholly and then return at a later point. (Jungert 2013, 60.) He, too, brings up the concept of implicit memory: in contrast to explicit, autobiographic memory, this type of memories need not be conscious. They are, so to say, memories of behavior. This includes aspects that have molded the personality and character of a person, as well as spontaneous responses that are "encoded" into the person, though they might not consciously recall them. (Jungert 2013, 75.) Fuchs would call this incorporative or even intercorporeal memory. (Fuchs 2012, 12.) One could ask whether the past identities are still in some way present in the zombies. They do, after all, have distinct personalities and ways of reacting to certain stimuli, albeit distinct ways of moving and existing in their bodies, "She doesn't lurch or groan like the rest of us; her head just lolls from side to side. I like that about her, that she doesn't lurch or groan. (WB, 9.) R himself wonders whether some sort of somatic echoes of his past exist, "*Maybe we're not blank. Maybe the debris of our old life still shapes us.*" (WB, 89.)

Fuchs speaks of six different kinds of body memory: procedural memory, situational memory, intercorporeal memory, incorporative memory, pain memory and traumatic memory. (Fuchs 2012, 12.) Procedural memory, as already noted in 3.1, has to do with patterned sequences of movements and handling of instruments, for example. Situational memory likewise has to do with practical implicit knowledge of the world: it means familiarity with recurrent situations that allows us to assess a situation and handle accordingly. (Fuchs 2012, 14.) The zombies have some hints of procedural memory, which has however been assessed above. For our cause, intercorporeal memory seems to be the most relevant.

Intercorporeal memory, says Fuchs, is a bodily knowing of how to interact with others. It is a memory for the dynamics and undertones present in interactions with others. (Fuchs 2012, 15.) Consequently, these memories contribute to the overall pattern of expression and posture that is an essential part of one's personality, such as basic attitudes, typical reactions and relational patterns. (ibid.) In the interactions between the zombies, some form of intercorporeal memory seems to be present: they have implicit knowledge on how one is to interact with friends or lovers, like smiling or holding hands, "I reach out and take her hand. We walk off the conveyers with our arms stretched

across the divider. /--/ This female and I have fallen in love. Or what's left of it.” (WB, 10.) However, this intercorporeal memory seems to lack meaning, and thus interactions between zombies seem to prepare no enjoyment to the zombies themselves. The Dead remember having sex and attempt to re-enact it, but the bodily interaction without the social connection seems meaningless,

There they were, naked, awkwardly slamming their bodies together, grunting and groping each other's pale flesh. He was limp. She was dry. They watched each other with puzzled expressions, as if some unknown force had shoved them together into this moist tangle of limbs. Their eyes seem to ask each other, "Who the hell are you?" as they jiggled and jerked like meat marionettes. (WB, 59.)

It seems that the zombies have knowledge of *what* is done and *how* it is done, but it is the *why* they are missing. On the other hand, R is also unable to remember how to have peaceful interactions with the Living, aggression towards them so deeply encoded into his body, "I hold out my hands, making soft noises through my lips, but I'm helpless." (WB, 19.)

Nonetheless, Fuchs reminds that there is no strict separation to be made between explicit and implicit memory; through re-enacting the past, implicit memory establishes access to the past itself. It may thus unexpectedly open a door to explicit memory. Sensations of smells or taste, familiar melodies or the atmosphere of familiar places may act as a trigger to revive the past. (Fuchs, 19.) Like in the famous passage of Marcel Proust's *In Search of Lost Time* (1913–1927), where the protagonist gets to relive moments in his childhood through tasting a *madeleine* pastry, memories hide within a complex of bodily sensations and implicit recollections or meanings. (Fuchs 2012, 20.) Similarly, the lost, pre-apocalypse world is occasionally summoned into R's conscious mind by familiar sensations, "A citrus tang pricks my nostrils. Glowing Florida orchards in summer." (WB, 172.) Later on in the novel, R is even able to summon explicit recollections of past events through memory of place, "My mind flashes back to the last time I was in this car. Frank and Ava joyriding through their Golden Age romance, a warm bubble of blossoms and birdsong and smiling eyes in Technicolor blue." (WB, 215.)

The zombies use their body memory to make sense of the past they can no longer explicitly remember. Not only do they attempt to figure out each other's past identities based on what they wear (WB, 4) – occasionally, places or objects trigger faint memories in R, over which he then ponders, "Sometimes [the 747 jet] even tickles my numb memory." (WB, 22.) Memory of exotic smells and tastes leads R to think that he may have traveled a lot in his past life. In addition, though

Living food or beverages have no meaning to him, he feels a faint buzz of intoxication when tasting Julie's beer, "Maybe a distant memory of the drinking experiences left from my old life? If so, apparently I was a lightweight." (WB, 45.)

The memories of those whom the zombies have consumed also seem to contribute to their body memory: "stolen" memories are triggered by places and objects, as well. R entering the stadium for the first time provokes the collective voice of everyone he has ever consumed to recite a historical overview of how the world ended and how the stadiums came to be. (WB, 120.) Seeing Perry's grave triggers in R the memory of Perry's final day. (WB, 154.) On the other hand, familiar objects and sights occasionally summon explicit memories much in the manner of Proust's madeleine,

Mrs. Rosso knitted [the hat] for Julie's seventeenth birthday. Perry thought she looked like an elf in it and started speaking to her in Tolkien tongues whenever she put it on. She called him the biggest nerd she'd ever met, while playfully kissing her throat and— (WB, 183.)

Thus it seems that, when the brains of the zombies' victims are incorporated into their bodies, their memories are, as well. Objects and sensations that were once familiar to the victims may then function as memory cores that open passages to their past. Below, we will examine how the body acts as a medium to convey memory.

Hence, the body is not just a physical structure with clear boundaries, nor is it a realm of sensation and movement – it is also a historically formed body that carries with it memories and experiences that have left their traces, though invisible, on a most tangible, physical level. (Fuchs 2012, 20.) Not only personhood is stored in the body, as concluded in 3.1.3; it is also the personality, the social habits and ways of being that make us who we are. Memory that is encoded into our bodies may surprisingly reveal aspects of our pasts that we were previously not aware of. After all, in A. Assmann's word, what we call forgetting is generally a form of latent memory, to which we have lost the password; when we, by chance, get it right, a piece of sensually lived past may suddenly be summoned back. (A. Assmann 2004, 48.)

Then again, R also reminds us that not all body memory is constructive or useful. Sometimes, it is necessary to recognize the habits encoded into our bodies, and then break them. Breaking the circle of custom and routine is the first step in the process of un-zombification.

My reflex is to shrug. The shrug has been my default response for so long. -- I remember that feeling that jolted through me the moment I woke up yesterday, the feeling of *No!* and

Yes! That feeling of anti-shrug. (WB, 74.)

4.2.2 The Body as a Medium of Memory

”Behind us, in the valley where we used to swim and pick strawberries, eat pizza and go to movies, the valley where I was born an discovered everything that's now inside me, plumes of smoke rise.” (WB, 29.) In this passage, Perry looks back at his hometown as he and his father are leaving it for good. It is a demonstration of how memory of place serves to shape one's identity – but most importantly, it is stated that the discoveries Perry has made in his life are now ”inside him”. His memories are encoded into his body. In the event of narrating the experience, the memories are in turn being decoded by R, a spectator of his memories. For R, Perry's body serves as a carrier of episodic memories like a diary or a tape would. But what exactly is a medium of memory, and how does the body act as such?

In *Warm Bodies*, of course, the boundary between individual and collective memory is unclear, as the zombies attack a person's individual memory, forcing upon it a superindividual nature. The memories that are produced through consumption of the brain are episodic in nature: they represent a ”mental travel through subjective time” (Echterhoff 2004, 71). They are, however, not the zombies' own memories, but they assume the role of the victim – thus memory is conveyed between individuals. Here, individual memory becomes collective in a sense: though the victim is annihilated, their experience continues to exist outside their person. Still, no real communication happens and no real social connection is formed between the individuals.

In his article *Das Außen des Erinnerns (The Outside of Remembrance)*, Gerald Echterhoff asks how memory is conveyed first, on the individual level and then, on the collective level. (Echterhoff 2004, 61.) Through his media concept, we are able to examine the body as a medium of memory. Memory is conveyed on three stages: encoding, storage and retrieval. (Echterhoff 2004, 65.) Firstly, encoding means the process of recording an event in the form of a code or information; according to Echterhoff, this can be accomplished as externalization in written or visual form, but also through sensory registers. (Echterhoff 2004, 65.) Experiences of events, sensory information and emotion are encoded into the brain, presumably in the form of connectivity between neurons. Through encoding, the memory is recorded *inside* the body, like Perry reports.

Secondly, the memory is stored in the brain. Here, Echterhoff refers to external objects such as

writing tablets, drawings or computer disks, which can be compared with cognitive or neuronal systems of representation. (Echterhoff 2004, 65.) Aleida Assmann (2011, 232) refers to this kind of objects as "carriers". The nature of the technology used, of course, has an influence on the nature of the message that is finally decoded: their materiality, capacity and limits, as well as how long the information can be stored, changes the nature of what is finally recalled. (Erll 2004, 14.) In *Warm Bodies*, the brain is portrayed as the perfect memory carrier, as the experience is transmitted just like the person perceived it and is limited merely by the person's perception. In addition, it seems that the zombies are even able to decode the information that has been forgotten, like R experiences the memory of Perry's birth (WB, 60). The capacity of the brain is, of course, not temporally unlimited, and it seems that when the brain dies, only the most powerful memories remain,

As residual life energy fades from the brain, the useless clutter is first to go. The movie quotes, the radio jingles, the celebrity gossip and political slogans, they all melt away, leaving only the most potent and wrenching memories. As the brain dies, the life inside clarifies and distills. It ages like a fine wine. (WB, 59.)

Here, A. Assmann's view on trauma seems fitting, "only what does not cease *to give pain* remain's in one's memory." (A. Assmann 2011, 234.) Consequently, it is the most emotional memories that disintegrate last, and thus, by consuming chunks of Perry's brain little by little, R gets to go deeper and deeper into Perry's most painful memories, creating a narrative of a kind. This can be understood to contribute to the autobiographical reasoning that helps Perry reverse-engineer his own identity.

Finally, memories are retrieved from the brain in an actualization of the encoded and stored information. Echterhoff (2004, 65) mentions that retrieval is prompted by triggers of retrieval (cf. Fuchs' memory core, Halbwachs' cue or trace), any object, event or cognitive process that is somehow connected to the phase of encoding that specific memory. In *Warm Bodies*, I would argue, the act of eating the brain becomes the trigger of retrieval. For example, when R attacks Perry, the brutality of the situation triggers memories that somehow remind him of the present. The feeling of sunlight burning his neck becomes connected with him hitting his head on the edge of a desk. Visions of blood around him remind him of a stain of tomato sauce on his shirt on a distant birthday. (WB, 17.) Of course, a near-death situation is bound to be a powerful memory cue, as people are often reported to see their life flashing by in a life-threatening situation.

According to Astrid Erll (2004, 14–15), the mediality of memory on a material level depends on three components. There needs to be an instrument of communication such as writing or image.

Also, media technologies such as stone or pen and paper are needed. Finally, there has to be cultural objectifications, concrete media offers. Above, we have seen how the body works as a media technology in *Warm Bodies*. To conclude, we will consider a passage where the corporeality of memory is shown in a very concrete manner,

[Julie's] body contains the history of life, remembered in chemicals. Her mind contains the history of the universe, remembered in pain, in joy and sadness, hate and hope and bad habits, every thought of God, past-present-future, remembered, felt, and hoped for all at once. (WB, 222.)

Memory is thus encoded into the body on a biological level in chemical bonds, but also on a social level in emotion and habit. These can be compared to Erll's instruments of communication. These are then stored into the body and the brain. The concrete media offers, as Erll puts it, could then be the specific memories that can be decoded from the body. Here, however, we have stepped out of the realm of individual memory and into the collective – the passage speaks of "the history of life", something that is common for all mankind. Thus it makes sense to view memory transmittance and its social contexts.

4.3 Body, Incorporation and the Social

We have now studied the ways in which bodies remember and how this relates to the queer way memory is transmitted between the Living and the Dead. Next, we once again return to the imagery of incorporation. In the previous subchapter, we already lightly touched on the subject of collective memory. I would argue that, in addition to being a means of constructing boundary and assuming control, incorporation is the zombies' morbid attempt to convey memory on a social level. Thus it makes sense to speak of collective, or even more specifically, superindividual memory. According to Ricoeur (2004, 96), memory is personal in nature. Memories cannot be transferred into the memory of another. The "mineness" of memory is, in fact, a primary distinctive feature of personal memory. This belongingness to the person, in turn, makes the transfer of memories from one consciousness to another so difficult. (Ricoeur 2004, 126.) For Marion's zombies, however, it is indeed possible to transfer memories between consciousnesses. This feature contributes to the monstrosity and unnaturalness of the zombies.

In the social sense, the zombies are little more than consumers: they incorporate information and, unable to retrieve it, never give anything back. Similarly, they listen but cannot speak. The zombies crave intimacy and contact with each other as well as the Living, however their way of realizing it

is violent and destructive. Another shift in the nature of the zombies' memory happens when R consumes Perry's brain; Perry refuses to be archived, his memories keep returning, forming a field of superindividual memory inside R's body. Perry never gets completely incorporated into R. Instead, the two identities coexist and intertwine, nourishing each others' identity work.

In this subchapter, we will consider imagery of incorporation as a form of communication and conveying social memory. Then, we will study the significance of intertwining identities and interpersonal relations in the healing process of both Perry and R.

4.3.1 Cannibalism as Communication

"People who cannot talk to each other, bite each other." (Kilgour 1990, 16.) The idea of cannibalism as a form of symbolic communication is not new; actually, the image of cannibalism is often connected with the failure of words as a medium. (ibid.) Spoken language, like eating, is performed with the mouth, and thus it can be seen as a sublimated form of incorporation. Marion's zombies, as concluded above, seek intimacy and connection with the Living through the most aggressive act of breaking boundaries. Although they need the flesh to survive, the act of eating is also a desperate attempt to communicate, "They will eat anyone, anything, anywhere, because they can't fathom any other way to interact." (WB, 104.)

This corporeal form of communication is in fact very effective as such, as the message need not be distorted by the medium of language but it is conveyed as such; the zombie receives the whole experience of the victim complete with smells, sounds and associative patterns. Still, the memories are fleeting in nature. They fade quickly, and the very act of consuming the brain prevents any new memories from forming. It seems, however, that some somatic traces of the people eaten are saved inside the zombies' bodies, "It's not Perry's voice – it's everyone's, a murmuring chorus of all the lives I've consumed, gathering in the dark lounge of my subconscious to reminisce." (WB, 120.) The victims' experiences are therefore not truly annihilated but merely moved to a realm where they can no longer be consciously retrieved. As concluded above, certain physical memory cores can summon the memories forth once again. With this in mind, we can see how the Dead attempt to "live" off Living people's memories, but however vivid those memories are, they are not their own and never last long. The Dead, lacking personal memory and thus identity, try to acquire new memories by blindly consuming the memories of others. It may well be that the memories fade so

fast because the zombies are unable to connect them to their nonexistent personal timelines. It is, however, "the best [they] can do." (WB, 7.)

Though the interactions between the Living and the Dead are rather violent, incorporation can also be perceived as a peaceful way of communicating and connecting,

Sometimes I wonder if [M] has a philosophy. Maybe even a world view. I'd like to sit down with him and pick his brain, just a tiny bite somewhere in the frontal lobe to get a taste of his thoughts. But he's too much of a toughguy to ever be that vulnerable. (WB, 13.)

R wants to have a taste of his friend's brain in order to strengthen the social connection between them, an act comparable with confidential conversation. However R himself notes that the act of eating a person's brain is very intimate, and that his friend would not consent to that sort of thing. This is the other downside of the body as a "perfect" memory carrier: when the victim's brain is eaten, they themselves are unable to regulate what sort of information the eater acquires. Consenting to someone picking your brain is like allowing them to read your diary.

Zombies therefore attack and steal people's most intimate memories, which is something that should be accomplished through consensual communication; it is information that should be acquired bit by bit by earning the person's trust, rather than by force. The Dead wish to form social connections through consuming the brain, however their violent method allows them no real connection. They are never really satisfied as they are unable to acquire what they long for. For M, for example, women's memories are "like porn" (WB, 19) and nothing more.

In like manner, when R starts to form actual meaningful relationships, he no longer needs to feed; he gets to share Julie's memories through language and conversation. As a matter of fact, R goes quite a long time without feeding. However the connection of zombie urges and desire for intimacy is again shown when R experiences a brief relapse back to his zombie ways while in the stadium. Julie gets harrassed by an old acquaintance, and she and her friend Nora ask for some privacy to discuss the event. R, then, feels left out, "I look back and forth between them. They wait. I turn and walk out of the bar, feeling too many things at once." (WB, 174.) Consequently, R starts to feel an urge to listen to Julie's journal on her portable cassette player, which he carries in his pocket much like bits of Perry's brain while they were still in the airport. "I know these are confidences I should have to earn through months of slow intimacy, but I can't help myself." (WB, 175.)

This, in turn, leads to aggression and the reawakening of zombie urges. R knocks out the men that insulted Julie, then runs off, "I just need to get away from all these people for a minute, collect my thoughts. I'm so hungry. God, I'm so hungry." (WB, 176.) Finally, his drunken lumber attracts the attention of a guard and a rainshower reveals R for what he is. His newly acquired words fail him and, in the end, he sees no other option but to attack the guard,

His life force rushes into my starved body and brain, soothing the agony of my hideous cravings. I start to tear into him, chewing deltoids and tender abdominals while the blood still pulses through them – but then I stop. (WB, 178.)

However, while it is his fear of losing connection with Julie that leads R to once again seek intimacy through cannibalism, it is also the image of Julie in his head that gets him to gather himself and stop. Through his relationship with Julie, R is forced to realize how to find friendship and confidentiality in less invasive ways.

Clearly, eating is the zombie equivalent of communication in a world where no other options can be imagined. When it becomes possible for R to acquire social memories and form social connections in other ways, he no longer has the need to feed. As Perry puts it, "*You won't starve, R. In my short life I made so many choices just because I thought they were required, but my dad was right: there's no rule book for the world.*" (WB, 178.) Perry, in turn, is the one to initiate the change in R in the first place. He remains in R's mind as a mentoring voice of sorts, and R structures his own identity through Perry's memories. At the same time, stuff of Perry's memories flows into R's, and in the end it is unclear which memory belongs to whom. Next, we will take a closer look at R and Perry's intertwining identities.

4.3.2 Is Identity Synchronic? Perry and R

Incorporation assumes total distinction between inside and outside, eater and eaten. On the other hand, the law "you are what you eat" obscures identity, thus making it impossible to say for certain who is who. (Kilgour 1990, 7.) This statement is realized on a tangible level in *Warm Bodies*, when R consumes Perry's brain. As a consequence, an unlikely as well as uncanny relationship begins. The question how, or in what form, Perry continues existing after his death, is a constant topic of pondering for R; though his brain has been consumed and merged with R's body, Perry continues to exist as what seems like a separate entity. The difference between these two persons is not absolute, but Perry still becomes what can be considered a mentoring character who guides R through his

transformation. At the same time, however, Perry realizes something ground-breaking about his own life. Thus the two assist and feed each other's identity considerations.

Sasha Cocarla considers the problem of Perry's existence in her article *A Love Worth Un-Dying For* (2013). According to him, it is possible that it is Perry's spirit or ghost that is trying to communicate some specific messages to R. It may also be that the consumption of Perry's brain has created a hallucinatory effect of some kind – the fact that R and M enjoy bits of brains like intoxicating substances supports this view. The most likely explanation for Cocarla is, however, that Perry's brain triggers dream-like states in R, so that Perry's memories merge with R's memories and thought processes. Thus Perry's presence is both literal and imagined. (Cocarla 2013, 64.) As we have concluded above, in the novel's reality, memory and identity are encoded into the body, and when a zombie consumes its victim, the victim becomes one with it. Thus, Perry's mind is integrated into R's body on a very concrete level. This is illustrated through a queer pregnancy metaphor, which also hints at the fact that something novel is brewing inside R, a new thing to be born of their extraordinary union, "I feel a lurch in my stomach, a queer sensation like what I imagine a baby kicking in the womb might feel like." (WB, 154.)

In fact, Cocarla sees the relationship between R and Perry as a queer romance in a milieu of heteronormative, neoliberal ideals (Cocarla 2013, 63). The two are in various states of death (ibid. 64) and, in addition, their shared romantic feelings with Julie queers their relationship (ibid. 65). R acquires romantic feelings for Julie because Perry had them. (ibid. 66.) Thus, through his afterlife in R's body, Perry gets another chance to realize his love for Julie post-mortem, as he was unable to do this while he lived.

In the course of the story, an intimate relationship is formed between R and Perry, and as the last bit of Perry's brain is consumed, R feels like he has lost a loved one. Also, he ponders what is left of Perry, "I feel as if I have lost someone dear. A brother. A twin. Where is his soul now?" (WB, 63.) Originally, R has a dualistic approach to personhood; he speaks of "soul" and "mind" as separate from the body. However, as has been described above, the relationship between the self and the body is far too complex to be reduced to dualism. As R himself wonders, "Am I Perry Kelvin's afterlife?" (ibid.) Later on, he is to notice that Perry still somehow exists in him,

His brain is gone, his life evaporated and inhaled... yet he's still here. Is it a chemical flashback? A trace of his brain still dissolving somewhere in my body? Or is it actually *him*? Still holding on somewhere, somehow, somewhy? (WB, 92.)

Here, we can of course ask who is "him" – Perry's soul or something else? R himself is keen to divide the body and the mind, but in fact the two are deeply integrated into each other. The fact that memory and identity are encoded into the body and can be transmitted that way seems to dissolve the possibility of any kind of dualism. In fact, Perry no longer exists without R, "-- because we're the same damn thing. My soul, your conscience, whatever's left of me woven into whatever's left of you, all tangled up and conjoined." (WB, 161.) Perry and R are separate in the sense that they can exchange opinions and have a conversation, but on a deeper level, their identities are tangled and intertwined. This can be seen, for example, in R's recurring dreams that utilize the stuff of Perry's memories.

The two also act as foils for each other. Perry's life in the months leading to his death is described as joyless and lonely, quite like R's in the airport. Identities are being forced upon him by the repressive atmosphere of the stadium, much like they are forced upon R by the new hunger and the Boneys. According to Cocarla's reading, R longs for the familiarity of Perry; his memories seem so familiar that it depicts the life he himself may once have had. (Cocarla 2013, 64.) Perry's life then comes to a brutal end. Learning from Perry's experiences provides R with the opportunity to change the course of his life. Similarly, through R's healing process and the autobiographical reasoning associated with it, Perry is able to put his own life in order and then, pass on. "Toward whatever's next. /--/ You're going to help me get there, and I'm going to help you." (WB, 161.)

In the second place, later on in the story seems to assume the part of Perry, e.g. by conveying his messages to Julie. By handing Perry's unfinished novel over to Julie (WB, 184), R can be seen to continue Perry's mission on earth. At one point, he even identifies himself as Perry, regarding some of Perry's memories as his own, "'You've never been [to the roof]', Julie says. / I look her in the eye. 'Yes I have.' / There is a long silence." (WB, 220.) It can be said that, in a sense, R *becomes* Perry by eating his brain; it is something that has never happened with any of his victims. Possibly, it is his affection to Julie that finally manages to turn the tide.

According to Cocarla (2013, 65) Perry disappears from R's mind and the pages of the book either due to his brain being eaten up or the fact that Julie replaces Perry as R's trusted friend. This is, however, not entirely accurate. As we have seen above, Perry keeps coming back after R has finished eating his brain, and he continues to exist even while R and Julie are romantically involved, encouraging R to take care of his "little girl". In fact, Perry only leaves R in the last pages of the

book, when the battle is finished, "Okay, corpse, a voice in my head says, *I'm going now.* /--/ *But we won, right? I can feel it.* (WB, 229). One could say that Perry has now reached a point in his healing process that he (or his soul) can move on; similarly, R has passed the threshold from death to life and can now manage on his own. Still, in the last scene of the book, R and Julie are seen sitting on the same red blanket Julie and Perry always used to sit on. (WB, 237.) Perry's influence never actually disappears from R's life; though the two never become absolutely identified, their identities are mixed. On the other hand, as Perry's father states, it is through remembrance that we keep our loved ones alive. (WB, 30.)

Finally, one can ask whether it makes sense to analyze Perry as a character separate from R. As we have seen above, Perry can be read as a chemical trace lingering in R's body, but also, a spiritual entity, a soul, a ghost. Perry himself provides an answer to this problem, "All this time I've been talking to you, are you just... leftovers from your brain? Or are you really actually you?' / He chuckles. 'Does it really actually matter?'" (WB, 161.) Whatever it is that causes Perry to keep existing long after his death, he still has influence on R, and his memories convey between Perry's past and R's present. In this way, the conveyed memory becomes superindividual, be it then that the two individuals exist in a single body. "Are you Perry's soul?' / 'Maybe. Kind of. Whatever you want to call it.' /--/ 'Whatever I am, 'R', I'm in *you.*'" (ibid.) Perry is therefore the key for R's newfound ability to form and convey collective memory.

In this chapter, we have studied the bodily and corporeal aspects of both memory and identity. We concluded that zombies eat brains firstly in order to mend their incomplete identities, secondly to construct difference and assume control. Then, we studied how memory is encoded into the body in *Warm Bodies* and how it differs from how bodies generally remember. Finally, we considered cannibalism as the zombies' morbid attempts at communication, and how Perry and R's memory and identity are tangled up due to the fact that Perry's body is embedded into R's. Also, we concluded that, though zombies are doomed to fail at their attempts of conveying collective memory, R and Perry indeed manage to create superindividual memories of a kind. In the next chapter, we will move on to consider these social aspects of memory.

5 SOCIAL REMEMBERING AND MEMORY TECHNOLOGIES

In the previous chapters, we have studied autobiographical memory and personal identity, as well as how personhood is perceived by others. Moreover, we have analyzed how memory is conveyed on a very tangible, so to say medial level. In the course of our inquiries, we have from time to time touched the subject of remembering in social contexts, or what has been called collective memory. The concept of collective memory was first presented by Maurice Halbwachs, who concluded that memory always happens in social contexts. Our memories are summoned back to our conscious mind by other people, even the memories of events that we have experienced by ourselves. Halbwachs argues that the physical presence of other people is not required for collective remembering: in any case, we carry with us countless persons we have interacted with, and each of these persons have an influence on the act of remembering. (Halbwachs 1984, 2.) In a very similar manner, R carries with him the persons with whom he has interacted on a most fundamental level. Thus, even the zombies' memories cannot escape social contexts – in fact, the importance of social remembering is even emphasized by the fact that the zombies carry no personal memories of their own.

In the course of this work we have also concluded that there are similarities between the society of the Living in the stadium and the disconnected group of zombies in the abandoned airport. Though the Living interact with each other daily, it seems that little to no real social bonds are formed, *“Take away the culture, the commerce, the business and pleasure; is there anything left? Just a grid of nameless streets filled with nameless people?”* (WB, 148.) Like the Dead, the Living have gathered in one place for the general feeling of safety, but they merely coexist: they are just as lonely as the zombies. *“No one writes, no one reads, no one really even talks.”* (WB, 70.) Lacking social bonds, the Living, too, struggle to remember. In fact, it seems that they are overly eager to forget. The duty of remembering thus falls on the few who still have hope. Julie Grigio is one of these devoted carriers of memory.

Memory, or the will to remember, is on top of language one of the most important indicators of Livingness in the novel's reality. Remembering is a responsibility, and even the most horrible details of the past must be remembered and integrated into one's identity in order to lead a life. Perry commits suicide in order to forget; R memorizes the Latin names of body parts in order to more thoroughly understand his responsibility for his past. Remembering is hard work. However, there

are moments of light to it, "that warm feeling that crept into my face for the first time as we shared a beer and a plate of thai food." (WB, 145.) Here, R looks back on his "first date" with Julie, and right away, Nora comments that he looks more Living.

In this chapter, I intend to analyze the meaning of memory in social contexts. We will study the differences in remembering in Living and Dead societies, utilizing Assmann's ideas on cultural and communicative memory. Next, we will explore the mediality of memory and how cultural products are used to convey memory in social contexts. Finally, I will conclude the analysis part of this study with Ricoeur's thoughts on positive forgetting and forgiveness.

5.1 The Living and the Dead

According to Halbwachs, remembering can generally be considered collective as all personal thoughts and feelings have their roots in specific social milieus and circumstances. (Halbwachs 1984, 14.) Thus, physical objects and memory traces are always perceived through the eyes of those who we have interacted with. This is especially interesting in the case of the zombies, as the social circumstances that once molded their thinking seem to be gone. Instead, they carry with them the thoughts of those they have consumed. For example, on his tour of the stadium, R's narration is filtered through the thoughts of all the Living persons he has eaten. Zombies do carry collective memories, though the nature of the interactions that birthed them is rather macabre.

Here, Halbwachs presents another central point on social remembering: emotion. He claims that the person who feels the most love will also be able to remember more details of interactions with their loved ones than the ones who have loved less. (Halbwachs 1984, 8.) It can be read that Julie Grigio's affectionate relationship with her late mother inspires her to keep up the society's memories. Ricoeur suggests that, between the poles of individual and collective memory, another stage should be added: that of close relations, who convey a memory of distinct kind. (Ricoeur 2004, 131.) They are "others as fellow beings, privileged others" (ibid. 132). This would add to the figure of superindividual remembering the axes of proximity and emotion. In this context, it may be more crucial to identity construction to inspect superindividual memories from the viewpoint of close relations, such as friends or significant others. This, in turn, could be related to Jan Assmann's concept of communicative memory, a form of memory conveyed through everyday communication¹¹.

¹¹ See 5.1.2

However, remembering is not easy. Julie's father, John Grigio, seeks to eradicate the memory of his late wife in his everyday life, but does reminisce about her while intoxicated. (WB, 137.) It may well be that his desire to forget has also alienated him from his daughter, who, in contrast, puts a lot of effort into remembering. Thus, the life goals of survival and higher mentality are contrasted, "I mean obviously, staying alive is pretty fucking important... but there's got to be something beyond that, right?" (WB, 71.)

This subchapter will explore the importance of remembering in social contexts. We will see how remembering is seen as superior to oblivion despite its hardships. Then, we will once more assess the memories of the Living and the Dead, this time in a social context.

5.1.1 The Duty of Remembering

Remembering is not an easy task, and oblivion can be seen as liberating. However, in *Warm Bodies*, it is stated that even the unpleasant things one would rather forget should be remembered and integrated in one's identity in order to lead a life as a person. The Dead, if they wish to be included into the Living society, must stop running from their past and accept the things that happened while they were Dead. Sometimes, however, it seems more desirable to forget about the traumatic events of the past. R, for example, does not want to bring up the things he feels guilty about when Julie confronts him about the events of the fateful hunting trip, "Why does she have to ask me this. Why can't her memories just fade to black like mine. Why can't she just live with me alone in the dark, swimming in the abyss of inked-out history." (WB, 54.)

As concluded above, the core of zombiedom in *Warm Bodies* is forgetting. Though for the zombies, the inability to remember is seen as a fault or a disability, the Living in turn are struggling to forget. Perry, for example, attempts to drown the grief of his father's death in work that is aggressive and also dangerous, "I don't want to remember. I want to join Security. I want to do dangerous stuff. I want to forget." (WB, 140.) Finally, Perry all but lets R kill him in order to free himself of his sorrow and yearning, "... tomorrow I won't miss anyone." (WB, 156.) Perry gets another chance to assess his life through his memories when R goes through them. Julie, on the other hand, first seeks oblivion in drugs and alcohol, "All the shitty stuff people do to themselves... it can all be the same thing, you know? Just a way to drown out your own voice. To kill your memories without having to

kill yourself.” (WB, 57.) After her mother's death, Julie takes up the responsibility of remembering.

In a society where everyone yearns to forget, Julie tries her everything to keep memories from disappearing. She writes a journal and later, keeps a tape journal. Whatever the situation, she always has an anecdote to share. It seems that she is trying to act as memory for the whole society, “We have to remember everything. If we don't, by the time we grow up it will be gone forever.” (WB, 26.) But why bother to remember, when everyone else has given up on the past as well as the future?

Julie herself provides a possible answer to this problem, ” -- it's about passing on who we are and what we've learned, so things keep *going*. So we don't just *end*. Sure it's selfish, but how else do our short lives mean anything? (WB, 149.) Without memory, and conveying it, single lives have no meaning. Memory must be shared in order for it to be meaningful. On the other hand, memory also helps close gaps between generations and make sure that humanity itself continues to exist.

Even more importantly, memory is what conveys between past, present and future,

My mom used to say that's why we have memory. And the opposite of memory—hope. So things that are gone still matter. So we can build off our pasts and make futures. /--/ Mom said life only makes sense if we can see time how God does. Past, present and future all at once. (WB, 115.)

Only on the basis laid by the past is it possible to construct a future. When the past is lost, the future loses its meaning as well. This is definitely true for the zombies, “The future is as blurry to me as the past.” (WB, 5.) Memory, one could say, helps us navigate in a maze of temporality – without memory, there can be no future and no hope. Thus, Julie feels obligated to remember. Ricour (2004, 89) writes that we are indebted to those who have gone before us, as those people still exist in us. This debt obligates us to respect these others and preserve their material as well as mental traces.

Ricoeur writes about a duty of memory as manipulation or abuse of memory. Duty of memory is required in situations like that of Middle Europe remembering the horrid events of the Second World War. Through a duty of remembering, then, justice is brought to the victims of these events. Justice, in turn, turns memory into a project. (Ricoeur 2004, 86–87.) It seems justice is indeed what forces the zombies to remember; justice to those whose lives they have ended. This is a rather cruel way to go, but it is needed to reconstruct their identities. R, for example, takes remembering as a responsibility, memorizing the names of the tissues he is accustomed to rip through from Nora's

medical reference book,

The knowledge feels grotesque in my mind but I grasp it and hold it tight, etching it deep into my memory. /--/ Because I don't deserve to keep them anonymous. I want the pain of knowing them, and by extension myself: who and what I really am. (WB, 141.)

Remembering or commemorating his victims, and thus, admitting his guilt is a crucial step on R's journey back to Livingness. In contrast to the R who, at the beginning of the novel, wished Julie to be as oblivious as he, has now also taken up the responsibility to remember, thus laying the basis for his own future. Here, we face a new definition of Deadness. Dying equals forgetting, giving oneself up to oblivion. Living, on the other hand, requires memory so that it can continue through the present generation and the next. In the next subchapter, we will examine further aspects of Living and Dead memory.

5.1.2 Cultural and Communicative Memory

Building on concepts established by Halbwachs, Jan Assmann divides collective memory into two distinct categories: cultural and communicative memory. (J. Assmann 2008, 109.) Cultural memory is distanced from everyday life and its horizon does not change with time; it is maintained through cultural formations such as rites and monuments, and institutional communication such as practice and observance. (J. Assmann 1995, 129.) Communicative memory, in contrast, refers to the varieties of collective memory that are based on everyday communications. (J. Assmann 1995, 126.) Communicative memory conveys history in terms of autobiographical memory and recent past. Its media are living, embodied memory and communication in vernacular language. (J. Assmann 2008, 117.) Marion's zombies use incorporation in order to communicate, to transmit autobiographical memory to peers; hence it can be considered an attempt at communicative memory.

However, as J. Assmann notes, communicative memory takes place between individuals, partners who can change roles. (J. Assmann 1995, 126.) The relationship between the zombie and its victim, at the same time, is transfixed. Communicative memory, so Assmann, means composing socially mediated memories in relation to *groups*, so that each individual forms their own socially mediated memory of the situation. (J. Assmann 1995, 127.) For the zombies, this never happens, as the partner generally ceases to exist and is thus no longer able to form memories. Though they attempt at communicative or group memory, the zombies could rather be seen as archives of data that

quickly outdate and lose their significance. (see A. Assmann 2008, 103.)

Deadness is signified by a rigid, cultural knowing that leaves no space for negotiation. It is the memory of the Boneyes, "*No need to speak. No need to listen. Everything is already known. She will not leave. We will kill her. That is how things are done. Always has been. Always will be.*" (WB, 81.) This is a twisted version of J. Assmann's cultural memory: it is carried by institutions, such as priests and teachers. Cultural knowledge is a text that has been written into the mind of these specialists. (J. Assmann 2008, 114–115.) In the Dead society, the Boneyes are the most obvious carriers of cultural memory. Of all the zombies, they are the only ones not constantly plagued with confusion, but they always know exactly what they are doing and where they are going. Their function as carriers of the past is made even more obvious through an intertextual reference to Medieval etchings of the *dance macabre* motif. (WB, 50.) On the other hand, their knowledge of the world is unchangeable, and thus they are horrified when something breaks the "state-approved program of their lives" (WB, 82).

Cultural memory is conveyed through rituals and performances (J. Assmann 2008, 117). It is mostly the Boneyes' job to take care of these rituals: they lead the services at the airport's own "church". Similarly, the other zombies' lives are perceived as performing a routine, repeating the same actions from day to day, "I ride the escalators several times a day, whenever they move. It's become a ritual." (WB, 5.) The zombies are unable to realize anything outside of the routine; the cultural knowing is rigid and allows no thinking, "We don't... think... new things." (WB, 54.) It is, however, not only the zombies who realize themselves through rituals. The Living are described to be, "flooding the world with copies of themselves just because that's tradition, that's what's done." (WB, 149.) In the stadium, it is Grigio who is seen as the prime carrier of cultural memory.

Cultural memory in J. Assmann's sense, however, is not supposed to be rigid; transitions in cultural memory happen through autobiographical and communicative memory. (J. Assmann 2008, 117.) Communicative memory, however, scarcely exists among the Dead, and thus there can be no change in the cultural knowledge conveyed by the carriers. Here, communicative memory can be seen as an indicator of Livingness. Especially the young Living in the stadium are frequently portrayed in everyday communicative situations, sharing their memories and ambitions. They are, in contrast to the more rigid cultural memory carriers, able to change their worldview and revise their identities.

For Julie and her friends, remembering happens in social situations which can be described through the mode of reminiscence: the act of making the past live again by evoking it with others. (Ricour 2004, 38–39.) They reconstruct common memories through conversation, summoning the common image of airplanes in the sky, "My mom used to say it looked like Etch A Sketch. It was so beautiful." (WB, 26.) This act of reminiscence is also strongly connected to physical proximity, emphasizing the social aspect of remembering. Even the zombies team up as they journey towards Livingness (WB, 106).

Memories, in Julie's opinion, need to be shared and conveyed. Like the zombies, the Living yearn to share their thoughts and know each other. Julie encourages Perry to write his book, if only for her to read, with the words, "At least his thoughts would get out of his head, right? At least *someone* would get to see them." (WB, 97.) Even the most traumatic memories benefit from sharing¹². Julie is able to talk to R, who of course cannot answer, about the most painful issues in her past, "It's weird, I never talk about this stuff with anyone, but you're... I mean you're so quiet, you just sit there and listen. It's like talking to God." (WB, 56.) Communicative memory happens in vernacular language and everyday situations (J. Assmann 2008, 117), but even autobiographical memories must be remembered socially.

Finally, rigid cultural knowledge is not enough, neither for the Living nor the zombies, "Memory can't overtake the present; history has its limits. Are we all just Dark Age doctors, swearing by our leeches? We crave a greater science. We want to be proven wrong." (WB, 211.) The breaking of the routine is one of the prime indicators of Livingness, the aspects that separate the Dead from the Living. Slowly, the Nearly-Dead pass from ancient cultural knowledge into the realm of living, communicative memory.

5.2 Memory and Mediality

In Marion's novel, bodies and brains act as media of memory in the form of memory storage. Above, we concluded that accessing and conveying these memories requires violence and is thus a destructive practice. However, the mediality of memory also takes other forms in the novel. Through literary texts, music and images, identities are molded, memory is stored, and finally, new memories are formed in social contexts. Here, the author presents alternative ways to form intimate connections on the level of collective memory. Different media, such as writing, can act as

¹² This is, of course, rather similar to the talking cure we discussed in 3.2.1.

technologies of memory, but they can also be mediators that enable the forming of superindividual memories, as is the case with R, Julie and their common interest in popular music.

Objects and things can act as media of memory in two ways: externalization and trace. Externalization is the traditional concept of media functions as memory; a medium is itself seen as memory, or at least a memory carrier. (Ruchatz 2004, 86.) A medium is therefore seen as a tool of storage. (Echterhoff 2004, 65.) Trace, on the other hand, conveys directly between the past and the present. It is not seen as a representation of the past, but rather a result of past events. Before it can act as a trace, an object must be identified and encoded as a carrier of meaning, and it is always related to a specific event in the past. (Ruchatz 2004, 89.) The function of traces is to trigger memories that may not have been consciously accessible before. (Echterhoff 2004, 65.)

Ann Rigney, on the contrary, sees the mnemonic functions of media as a process rather than a monument. Memory carriers must be constantly invested with new meaning lest they be forgotten. (Rigney 2008, 345.) Artistic works such as books or paintings, moreover, are not merely artefacts but also agents: they do not carry cultural significance in themselves, but rather act as signifiers of their reception, commentaries, parodies and imitations they have inspired. (ibid. 349.) In *Warm Bodies*, cultural products like this seem to have lost their meaning: previously famous artworks such as (ironically) Dalí's *Persistence of Memory* hang on Julie's wall, because the society appears to have forgotten about their importance. Julie and Nora, on the other hand, still seem to cherish this lost cultural meaning, "We'd be legendary art thieves if anyone still cared." (WB, 130.)

Books and reading, while impossible for the zombies, appears to be an important means of conveying and storing memory to those who are still interested in doing so. Julie writes in her journal, Perry works on a series of novels. The children in the stadium, however, barely have the chance to learn to read, so communication must be achieved through images rather than text. Illiteracy is an element in the corruption of collective memory both in the airport and the stadium. While words and texts as media of memory fail, other media must be used. The Boneys use photography to convey their rigid conception of cultural memory, while a more private kind of photography is used for communication and promoting less violent lifestyles. Finally, Julie and R find a common language and create common memories in the form of music. In this subchapter, we will study how different media are used to create collective memory.

5.2.1 Stories and Writing

Text can be seen as an externalization of memory, before all. Text can convey narratives and experiences expressed in words, and as a communication instrument, it can be used throughout various media. Thus, it is seen as a very effective form of conveying memory. However, utilizing this technology also requires specific skills that are not in-born. Reading and writing must be encoded into body memory before they can be effectively used. (Fuchs 2012, 12.) Marion's zombies, however, have lost this ability though some of their procedural memory remains, "The letters spin and reverse in my vision; I can't hold them down." (WB, 10.) It seems that zombiedom is also characterized by a severe degree of alexia. Instead of reading, zombies attempt to find information through incorporation; reading is, in many cases, metaphorically paired with eating and consumption. (Kilgour 1990, 9.)

The function of text as a conveyer of memory has been considered secondary among the Living in the stadium, as it is not crucial for survival,

We taught [the children] how to shoot, how to pour concrete, how to kill and how to survive, and if they made it that far, if they mastered those skills and had time to spare, then we taught them how to read and write, to reason and relate and understand their world. (WB, 121-122.)

However, as can be seen from the zombies' fate, Livingness is also signified by the ability to read, and thus, the ability to remember. The street signs in the stadium have been replaced with simple symbols to compensate the growing illiteracy among the citizens, but symbols as conveyers of meaning are less specific than words and often lead to misunderstanding, "Cow Avenue!" / "It's not a cow, it's the Devil. Cows and the Devil both have horns." (WB, 125.) Reading books is, in the end, not among the basic needs that human beings require in order to continue existing.

Perry, on the other hand, strives to be a writer, but in a post-apocalyptic setting, his wish brings forth the question of why books and literature are important. Nora wonders whether it is sensible to write fiction as there is no book industry left. Though the literary institution has ceased to exist, Julie finds it important that one still reads and writes, "Well *I* [read.] Who cares if there's an industry behind it? If everyone's too busy shooting things to bother feeding their souls, screw them. Just write on a notepad and give it to me. *I'll* read it. (WB, 97.) The function of text as externalization is emphasized here; Julie worries that Perry's thoughts need to get "out of his head"

(ibid).

Despite this, Perry finally gives in to the demands of the society and quits writing. Writing is considered unimportant as it is not crucial for survival – however it can be argued that it still remains an important means of remembering and identity formation in a post-apocalyptic society. Fictional narratives, says Rigney, build on existing memories, thus creating cultural frames for later recollections; they are stabilizing factors in cultural remembrance. (Rigney 2008, 350.) As Colonel Rosso educates Perry over a salvaged copy of the *Gilgamesh*, "Writing isn't letters on paper. It's communication. It's memory." (WB, 139.) Literature thus means more than just an externalization of memory.

Even in the hardest of times, human beings have the need to convey memory to the generations to come. And it is in the form of stories that memories survive; narrative is an effective mnemonic tool from which all acts of remembrance are originally drawn. (Rigney 2008, 347.) This is one of the reasons that fiction is considered meaningful in the midst of a struggle for survival.

[The Gilgamesh] was written over four thousand years ago on clay tablets by people who tilled the mud and rarely lived past forty. It's survived countless wars, disasters, and plagues, and continues to fascinate to this day, because here I am, in the midst of modern ruin, reading it. (WB, 139.)

The significance of the ancient epic of Gilgamesh lies in the fact that it works as a connection to generations who have long since passed. Thus, story as a conveyer of memory again mediates between past, present and future.

The world that birthed that story is long gone, all its people are dead, but it continues to touch the present and future because someone cared enough about that world to keep it. To put it in words. To remember it. (WB, 140.)

Above, we have spoken of the obligation of memory toward the generations passed. The characters in Marion's novel respect their deceased loved ones by remembering them, commemorating them. As Rosso says here, memory is a form of caring; what one loves, must be put in words so that it may continue to exist. Thus, if one cares, one must write fiction.

Literacy provides a convenient means of remembering; however, if one does not want to remember or be remembered, there is no need for reading or writing. Thus the children in the stadium are not necessarily taught how to read. Learning to read becomes an important milestone on R's journey to

Livingness, as it allows him to form new connections with the past he does not remember, "I don't have the answers she's asking for, but I can feel their existence -- " (WB, 136.) The first words he manages to read are in fact song lyrics; a form of text that can be seen to function as a trace rather than externalization. It is music that first provides R with the tools of communicating and remembering.

5.2.2 Music

Isaac Marion himself is a musician. His 2007 solo album *Dead Children* was intended as a companion piece for *Warm Bodies*¹³; it also includes a *Warm Bodies* remix of the song *We Kill Children*, which is cited at the beginning of this work. The importance of music to the author himself is apparent in the novel, as it is music and common listening through which R and Julie find common ground and are able to communicate and reminisce. Lacking language, R utilizes music to convey meaning, "People used to say music was the great communicator; I wonder if this is still true in this posthuman, posthumous age." (WB, 57.)

As a medium of memory, music can be seen as trace rather than externalization; songs are considered vehicles of reminiscence and glue particular experiences to memory. Musical memories reflect and construct experience, but they also tend to alter every time they are recollected. Additionally, musical memories are often articulated through narrative devices. (van Dijck 2009, 107.) Pop songs, on the other hand, are signifiers of individually lived experiences, but also items of cultural memory. (ibid. 108.) For Julie however, music is neither a means of conveying information nor mere entertainment, "Music is *life!* It's physical emotion— you can touch it! It's neon ecto-energy sucked out of spirits and switched into sound waves for your ears to swallow."¹⁴ (WB, 54.) Music creates affect; not through sound nor words, but through signs of feeling and experience encoded into it. (van Dijck 2009, 108.)

When R first brings Julie into his home, she is obviously terrified. R attempts to comfort her, but as he has no language and little intercorporeal memory of how the Living interact, Julie ends up being even more afraid. Finally, R resorts to music to get his message through, "The record plays. It's Frank Sinatra. /--/ My head sways vaguely in time with the music as verses float through the jet cabin -- " (WB, 22.) Here, recorded music is used as a means of communication. Firstly, the music

¹³ The album is available for free download on Bandcamp: <https://isaacmarion.bandcamp.com/album/dead-children>

¹⁴ Interestingly, another metaphor of incorporation is used here, thus juxtaposing the act of listening (or consuming) music with the zombies' cannibalistic tendencies. Again, eating is seen as a means of transmitting memory.

itself works as a sign of affect; secondly, R's act of peaceful listening conveys his message of peaceful intentions, "The terror has faded, and she regards me with disbelief." (ibid.)

Individual musical memories arise in the context of social practices, such as communal listening. These practices then create contexts for reminiscence and become tools of identity construction. (van Dijck 2009, 114.) Over dinner, Julie and R share the earbuds of an iPod. In addition to creating a physical connection between them through the cable, they also form a connection through music and commenting on the piece, "You know John Lennon hated this song? /--/ He thought it was meaningless gibberish." (WB, 47.) Though R is only able to utter four syllables in a row, they manage to have a downright discussion on music. However, it seems that this kind of connection only happens over classics such as The Beatles or Frank Sinatra; the "dark, dissonant, brutally clanging chants that dominated the airwaves during the last gasps of civilization" seem to leave R "tuned out" and let Julie withdraw into her own world. (ibid.) This may well be because R's collection of records ends at 1999 (WB, 53) and his emotional connection with newer, unfamiliar pieces is not sufficiently strong to evoke affect.

Interestingly, as Julie carries with her an iPod, R's personal collection of music consists only of vinyl. R reports that the concrete movement of the disc is "more real" and "more alive" than digital music. (WB, 52.) This also portrays R's desperate urge to remember – according to van Dijck (2009, 109), people expect that playing a record will each time produce the same response, as if the past itself were a record. Technologies of recorded music are a crucial part of the act of reminiscence, and personal memories evolve through the interaction with these apparatuses. (ibid. 111) R's choices in music, as well as sound technology, therefore echo his longing for the past he has lost.

Finally, though music is first used as a means of communication only, through the act of common listening, it helps construct what can be called collective episodic memories, episodic memories concerning more than one person. Collective episodic memory is in question when two or more persons consciously reminisce on a common past experience. (Echterhoff 2004, 75.) In the airport, R comforts Julie by playing Frank Sinatra's *You're Sensational*, "Frank's buttery baritone says it better than my croaky vocals ever could had I the diction of Kennedy." (WB, 57.) Later on in the novel, as Julie mourns her mother, R summons the memory of that moment through awkwardly singing the same song. (WB, 153.) Here, music acts both as a trace and a tool of reminiscence.

Music, as writing, is seen as a means of communication. On the other hand, music is always loaded

with personal and cultural memory, and the signs of emotion in it are good for creating affect. In *Warm Bodies*, communal listening of recorded music works, instead of spoken language, as a trace of memory and a tool of reminiscence. Through music, R and Julie create common memories that would otherwise have to be narrated through language. This is another less violent option for connecting through incorporation; in fact, at the end of the book, Sinatra's music is used to convert some of the still-Dead zombies in the airport.

5.3 Photography, Memory and Zombiedom

In *Warm Bodies*, photography is shown as an important means of remembering. However, it is also shown to alter reality. It is used on the first hand to create and justify certain, rigid versions of reality, but on the other hand, it can also be used to show alternative interpretations, communication, and emotion. As a technology of memory, photography assumes different functions. It can be considered a radical externalization (Ruchatz 2008, 369) but also, a trace. A photograph can be taken as evidence of past events, so that the situation of its origin can be reconstructed. (ibid, 370.) Angela M. Cirucci (2013, 19) argues that photographs are intuitively understood as evidence of events that have really occurred. We automatically assume that photographs represent reality. Since the invention of the early daguerreotype, people have used this to their advantage. The content and setting of photographs can be carefully planned or even altered to support a certain version of reality. Photographs are, by all means, both building blocks of personal narratives and tools of power.

According to Locke's theory of psychological continuity, personhood ends where memory ends (Jungert 2013, 60–61). Thus, when we are looking at our own baby photos from a time we ourselves can no longer remember, we cannot say that we are still the same person as the child on the photo. Cirucci, instead, sees old photographs as zombie versions of ourselves, "[I] must admit that it's me, but at the same time, it's not." (Cirucci 2013, 26.) Like zombies, photographs have an element of the uncanny to them: they are of course familiar, but the persons we were at the moment the picture was taken do not have the same experience and self-conception as we do. Thus, they are strangers.

Structuring personal identity through photographs is deeply embedded into western culture. However, the nature of photography has radically changed over time. Cirucci claims that these

processes have also altered our way of remembering and constructing identities, as our media culture relies more and more heavily on visual images. The omnipresence of photographs through e.g. social networking sites makes sure that past identities follow us wherever we go, thus jeopardizing our ability to renew and reinvent ourselves. (Cirucci 2013, 17–28.) However in *Warm Bodies*, those who submit themselves to the waves of change are the ones to conquer the challenges of a post-apocalyptic setting. Next, we will analyse how photographs are used to enforce certain identities, and how it relates to contemporary media culture.

4.3.1 Photographs as a Means of Identity Construction

In his book *Camera Lucida (La chambre claire, 1980)*, Roland Barthes ponders the dimensions of photography and images. He writes that, due to the rigid nature of the photograph, a person can never be identical to their picture. (Barthes 1985, 17.) Barthes sees photography as a death of a kind: he describes the act of taking his picture as the photographer consciously embalming him into a death which the photographer, himself, fears. (ibid. 20.) According to Cirucci, Barthes is saying that the specific identity that is captured in a photo is a past identity, and there is no returning to that fixed point in time and that specific person (Cirucci 2013, 21). Photographs are always fixed images of certain versions of reality. These past selves, Cirucci argues, are what we use to create our current identities. As already mentioned, people's blind trust to the truthfulness and objectiveness of photos can also be used against them.

In Marion's novel, the Boneys tend to carry Polaroid cameras with them. They record conflicts between the Living and the Dead, then go around showing brutal images of zombies being slaughtered to the inhabitants of the airport, especially to children. The pictures are taped onto walls all around the airport, and they cannot be avoided. This is how photography is used to reinforce a certain image of reality, in this case, the antagonism between the Living and the Dead, which is taken as a given by the zombies. When R acts against the unwritten rules of the airport by protecting a Living person from other zombies, the Boneys respond with a flurry of photographs, "It says, *I rest my case*, and *That's the way it is*, and *Because I said so*." (ibid.) Photographs are seen as proof that certain truths about the world hold and cannot be changed. The fact that the Living and the Dead are enemies is recorded as such as a part of the zombies' cultural memory. Publicly distributed photographs, such as the ones taken by the Boneys, can be considered icons or monuments, which can then be canonized as a part of cultural memory. (Ruchatz 2008, 375.) Public

photographs thus lose their temporal connections and, as the situation around the image can no longer be reconstructed, they must be considered externalizations rather than traces. Through the omnipresence of these photographs, the Boneys pass their cultural memory to the other Dead.

Equally important, however, is the way photography is used in a more private setting to make sense of the world. In an abandoned house, R and Julie goof around, taking pictures of each other. For R, this is an opportunity to inspect his own physical being from the outside – and hence recognize the connection between this physical body and his own consciousness, "It's me, R, the corpse that thinks it's alive --" (WB, 87.) This is also the first time R actually refers to himself by the name Julie has given him. The photograph, in a way, act as a signifier of a personal identity that is slowly starting to develop. Julie, on the other hand, reminds him that identities must be consciously worked upon, "You should always be taking pictures, if not with a camera, then with your mind. Memories you capture on purpose are always more vivid than the ones you pick up by accident." (WB, 87.) The function of private photography is considered to provide evidence and prompt the act of remembering. Private photos are used to intentionally retrieve memories. (Ruchatz 2008, 373.) Thus they can work as *aide-memoires* where memory seems to fade, avoiding the pressing nature of cultural memory that is conveyed through more public photography.

Later, Julie leaves R a note in the shape of two photographs, one of herself waving, and another one holding a hand against her chest. (WB, 101.) R smears one of the photographs with his fingers in an attempt to physically connect with Julie on the picture, but that is no use. He leaves the picture behind, refusing to "make Julie a souvenir" (ibid.). Though pictures may be precise visual depictions of persons, they cannot replace actual relationships and real physical intimacy.

Cirucci reports that in recent years, there has been a change in the nature of photography. Firstly, the introduction of digital photography has brought about the possibility to edit the reality presented by photos: one can take a thousand photos with a digital camera and just as easily delete the ones that are "bad", or present a version of the reality that is undesirable. In addition, technology has developed so that it is even easier to edit the photographs. Photographs are thus being used to promote a certain "idealized self". (Cirucci 2013, 19.) Secondly, the focus of the picture has shifted from the landscape and the group to the individual. (ibid. 21.) Cirucci believes that this development is mostly due to the effect of online social networks, such as Facebook, on our lives. (ibid. 22.) Jeremy Sarachan argues that, due to these networks, the significance of the photograph has also changed: photos are no longer meant to be fixed and timeless. Small, portable cameras

result in "real, casual and convenient depictions of everyday life" (Sarachan 2010, 53). Through modern communication technology the images can be displayed, and can very easily be switched to new ones in a constant recreation of the self. (ibid.) Cirucci, however, believes otherwise. According to her, our past images continue to haunt us in online social networks.

5.3.2 The Zombie Baggage and Cultural Memory

Cirucci argues that, in modern times, past events and relationships continue to shape us even after we have moved on with our lives and are renewing our identities. Before the Internet, photographs could be stored in scrapbooks or in a shoebox under the bed – today, they continue to haunt our newsfeed weeks, months and even years after posting them. Hence, we are unable to shake off the memories that defined our identities in the past. Cirucci calls this our "online zombie baggage" (Cirucci 2013, 24). If we link this idea with Barthes' views of photography as death, we can see how we are constantly haunted by our "zombie selves" on the Web.

The meaning of zombiedom, Cirucci argues, is none other than failure to free oneself from the chains of the past, instead clinging to already-defined identities. Instead of attempting to maintain our comfortable old lives, we must make a change in order to stay alive. This is also why the focus of modern zombie narratives has shifted from annihilation to survival – understanding ourselves and our new identities in a thoroughly changed world. Further, she sees that the logical next step is for the zombies to start taking up personalities of their own. (Cirucci 2013, 23.) Marion's R would be, based on Cirucci's ideas, one of the survivors struggling to maintain his personal identity in the midst of a horde of walking dead. Marion's zombies have no memories of their own. Instead, they let visual narratives made by others define who they are.

General Grigio is seen to display photographs in his office: there are some pictures of him, "--overlooking a crumbled London. Then bombed-out Paris. Then smoldering Rome." (WB, 156.) R and Julie's self-portraits, however, are handled in a very different manner: rather than showcased, they are very quickly discarded, and their meaning is rather in conveying a message and expressing emotion in that precise moment. It is hinted that the nature of these photographs is fleeting in comparison to General Grigio's photos that are put on a wall to showcase his grotesque view of reality. Cirucci says that the zombies, "remain locked forever in the illusion of the past, unwilling to accept the truth, and because of this, have already died." (Cirucci 2013, 24.) In like manner, Julie

blames his father for being already dead as he is unable to accept change. (WB, 198.)

The most stunning image, however, of these haunting past identities, are the Boneys, the skeletal zombies who are in charge of the zombie horde in the abandoned airport, who consciously use visual narratives to shape the identities of others. Interestingly, it is in the Stadium among the Living where R first realizes something ground-breaking about the Boneys,

The universe is compressing. All memory and all possibility squeezing down to the smallest of points as the last of their flesh falls away. To exist in that singularity, trapped in one static state for eternity – this is the Boney's world. They are dead-eyed ID photos, frozen at the precise moment they gave up their humanity. That hopeless instant when they snipped the last thread and dropped into the abyss. Now there's nothing left. No thought, no feeling, no past, no future. Nothing exists as the desperate need to keep things *as they are*, as they *always have been*. (WB, 169.)

The Boneys themselves are described as photographs, fixed versions of reality. Like photographs, they are omnipresent, they do not negotiate, and they have no other way to convey meaning but meaningful visual narratives. Their identities are described as both "frozen" and "dead", emotionless and unable to change. The Boneys are Barthes' monstrous photographs. The fact that R realises this while watching the Living in the Stadium watch an old football game on the screen but emphasizes the significance of communication technology in their apparent "death". Again, we notice that death in *Warm Bodies* is but a very rigid state of mind.

In the epilogue of the book, photos are once again used to promote certain lifestyle. This time, however, it is no longer pictured as grotesque: there are pictures of children playing, pictures of couples, pictures depicting intimacy and emotion. Here, visual narratives are used to show the zombies another, less destructive way of being human. The images have apparently been taken by survivors in happier times (a picture of the Grigio family in a water park is also there), and thus they represent past, "dead" identities as well as the Boneys' targeted propaganda. In turn, they present an idealized version of the world. Cirucci writes that it is only natural to construct an idealized version of oneself by photographs – in the end, people would rather have themselves and others remember the "good" parts of life (Cirucci 2013, 22). As R's zombie wife looks at these pictures, she starts breathing again. In the end, the omnipresence of photographs seems to be an effective way of remembering and identity work, a means to understand one's position in the world. However, one should not rely solely on rigid images, as can be seen from the fates of the Boneys and Mr. Grigio.

5.4 Forgiveness and Forgetting

I would like to conclude the analysis part of this thesis with Ricoeur's thoughts on forgetting and its more gentle cousin, forgiveness. Hereto, we have viewed forgetting as amnesia, as a disability. Generally, forgetting is considered a weakness, an attack on the reliability of memory. Memory, in turn, defines it self as a constant battle against forgetting. At the same time, the figure of a person who is unable to forget anything strikes us as monstrous. (Ricoeur 2004, 413.) At this point, it is necessary to remind ourselves of the fact that forgetting indeed is a necessary counterpart of memory. Oblivion can also be merciful; the Living in Marion's novel sometimes yearn to forget their harsh reality, "When that happened with Perry, I would have loved to be more... like you [R]." (WB, 52.) Remembering can be painful; forgetting also means not feeling and not needing to take responsibility. Ricoeur speaks of two types of forgetting, profound forgetting which is signified through the complete eradication of both psychical and cordical traces, and backup forgetting, in which the traces are preserved. (Ricoeur 2004, 414.)

However, in *Warm Bodies*, it is stated that in order to live as a person, one must remember. This includes acceptance of the most vile things in one's past, starting from the loss of one's loved ones, ending with violence and murder. How, then, can actions, which are to be considered inhuman or even evil, be remembered while still preserving the capability to act as a person? Here, Ricoeur presents a two-way dilemma: firstly, there is the issue of the fault which paralyzes the power of a person to act as a capable being. At the other end is the problem of lifting this existential incapacity, or whether it is even possible. This, in turn, is designated "forgiveness". (Ricoeur, 457.) How can fault be reconciliated? Must it be forgotten in order for forgiveness to happen?

The fault is the presupposition of forgiveness. (Ricoeur 2004, 459.) Forgiveness is only possible if someone can be accused of something and deemed guilty. (ibid. 460.) The fault in the zombies' case is clear: they have caused suffering to the Living they have consumed, as well as their loved ones, and the boundary between the Living and the Dead is partially constructed on this fault. The experience of fault, however, is given essentially in a feeling. (ibid.) Thus, no forgiveness can happen before the fault is recognized. As the Dead are essentially unable to emote, they are also unable to assume fault. Hence they cannot be held accountable of their actions. John Draeger (2010, 119) argues that zombies lack the cognitive sophistication to be accountable for their actions. He compares zombies to plants drawn to sunlight and concludes that they cannot be subjects to moral condemnation. The zombies' violent behavior depend on basic desires for sustenance. (Vargas 2010,

49.) Zombies as such carry no fault – however, if they wish to be considered Living, they must become imputable and accept the fault.

Taking responsibility of one's actions is in fact one of the first milestones the Dead achieve on their journey back to Livingness. It begins with R, who has sincere feeling of remorse about killing the Living; however, the cultural knowledge conveyed by his fellow Dead tells him that there is no other way to act. There is a change, however, when R consumes Perry's brain. When he first confronts Julie, she asks him what happened to her companions and why it was her R saved. (WB, 28.) Here, R observes another way of being: existing in a social context. He also realizes that he has caused Julie suffering, "I am the lowest thing. I am bottom of the universe." (ibid.) He escapes the situation, but it has stirred something in him. Similarly, the Dead who accompany R on his journey to the stadium start to feel guilt for their actions; though they must feed on the way, they seem to show some respect toward their victims, "They take no leftovers. They dry their bloody hands on their pants and walk in an uneasy silence." (WB, 116.) Imputability, or holding oneself accountable for one's actions, is an important signifier of Livingness. According to Ricoeur, it is also an integral dimension of a capable human being. (Ricoeur 2004, 460.)

A guilty person, says Ricoeur, assumes his fault, and this way, internalizes an accusation even though there is no accusation from the outside. The fault points to the author behind the act, as it is persons, not their deeds, that courts punish. (Ricoeur 2004, 489.) This contributes to the unforgivable character of the guilty self. Fault is in nature unforgivable and hence, forgiveness is also impossible. (ibid. 490.) In the end, it is the dynamic between fault and forgiveness that constructs and neutralizes the difference between the Living and the Dead. Forgiveness enables Julie to view R as a person behind his fault, and forgiveness is required in order for the citizens of the stadium to embrace the Nearly-Dead in their midst. But how can there be forgiveness when fault is, in essence, unforgivable?

Forgiveness, in the end, depends on the possibility of separating the agent from the action. (Ricoeur 2004, 490.) Interestingly, it seems that though fault is internalized both by the zombies and the citizens of the stadium such as Grigio, Julie and her friend Nora do not impute the past evils to the zombies. Instead, they accuse an unknown force, "the plague", an enemy which must be struggled against, "Because it wasn't you. It was the plague." (WB, 171.) They do not recognize the fault in R, but he himself does. This complete externalizing of fault is the extreme form of drawing a line between the actor and the agent. The trust between Julie and R, and later, R and Nora, is based on

the confidence that R is capable of something other than the violent deeds he has committed before. As Ricoeur puts it, "You are better than your actions." (Ricoeur 2004, 493.) Nora, in fact, comforts the nervous R by telling a story of how Julie and she first met each other, "I fucked her boyfriend, and she hated me, and then time passed and a lot happened, and somehow we came out the other side as friends. Crazy, right?" (WB, 171.) Here she shows R that there can indeed be forgiveness for the most unacceptable actions, "It's a shitty world and shit happens, but we don't have to bathe in shit." (ibid.)

In order to be forgiven, one must realize the fault and become imputable of one's actions. Through forgiveness, the Dead can be welcomed back to the society of the Living. On a personal level, however, a crucial step on the road to forgiveness is confession. First, Julie does not know that R has killed his boyfriend. R is afraid to confess it to her, and the dilemma accompanies him throughout the whole book, pressing his relationship with Julie. During his relapse in the stadium, however, R realizes that he indeed must take responsibility for his actions, "I don't deserve them. Her warm memories. I'd like to paint them over the bare plaster walls of my soul, but everything I paint seems to peel." (WB, 181.) His confession is not verbal, but it is very carefully thought: he gives it to Julie in the form of a gift, Perry's unpublished manuscript that he retrieves from Perry's old room.

My hands hang limp at my sides. "I'm sorry", I say.

With her eyes closed, her voice muffled by my shirt, she says, "I forgive you."

I raise a hand and touch her straw-gold hair. "Thank you."

These three phrases, so simple, so primal, have never sounded so complete. So true to their basic meanings. (WB, 185.)

In confessing to Julie, R must rely on her love for him. At the same time, he risks their whole relationship; should Julie not accept his apology, he will be left alone with his guilt. In the stadium, Julie has the power to annihilate R's existence with one word, and though this confession, the power is even more tangibly in her hands. It is, however, love which has the power to bring about forgiveness, "If love excuses everything, this everything includes the unforgivable." (Ricoeur 2004, 468.)

Amnesty as a form of instructed forgetting comes close to the idea of forgiveness. (Ricoeur 2004, 452.) However I would argue that forgiveness includes in fact more remembering than forgetting. Rather, the fault must be integrated into a person's identity. It must be accepted and then moved aside. Of course the fault must be moved from active memory. Still, rather than forgetting, one must

remain imputable for one's actions in order to be forgiven. If forgiveness must be described as forgetting, it is, in Ricoeur's words, forgetting that preserves. Ricoeur sees forgiveness as an incarnation of higher power that is even religious, filling the gap between the unforgivable fault and the impossible forgiveness. (Ricoeur 2004, 467.) However in *Warm Bodies*, forgiveness is signified by the simplest gestures, realization of the fault, confession, and three simple phrases, "I'm sorry" – "I forgive you" – "Thank you". There is no use trying to escape the guilt, as there is forgiveness. The integration of the fault in the social field of memory happens through confession, through honesty, and finally, through caring and love. Only then is it possible to move over the fault and start over, "I want a new past, new memories, a new first handshake with love. I want to start over, in every possible way." (WB, 173.) The final condition of achieving Livingness is, therefore, forgiveness.

6 CONCLUSION

Marion's zombies have a difficult relationship with their past: one constructed on small hints and random guesses. They cannot remember who they once were and thus cannot figure out who they are in the present. On the other hand, the Dead are so obsessed with their nonexistent past that they fail to look forward. Thus, things remain static – as both the Boneys and General Grigio wish them to. Only through the breaking of the routine can the Dead be brought back to life, preventing dead pasts from turning into undead futures. In this thesis, I have studied the subjects of identity and memory in Isaac Marion's *Warm Bodies*. I have researched what constitutes each of the concepts, and also explored how the two are interconnected.

I have utilized several theorists in the realm of memory studies in order to work out the relationship between memory and identity. Loyal to the nature of memory studies as a field of study, my approach has been multidisciplinary. I constructed my theoretical approach on Ricoeur's phenomenology of memory. Furthermore, I mapped out psychological aspects of memory based on Michael Jungert's findings. Finally, I moved on to the mediality of memory and the sociological aspects of superindividual memory as presented by, among others, Jan Assmann and Gerald Echterhoff. To keep track of the multifarious terminology, I presented most of my theoretical findings in the analysis part of the work. My methods mainly had to do with the analysis of characters in the novel, especially the protagonist R. I began with a psychological analysis of the characters' memory traits, then moved on to phenomenological analysis, which I then linked with

thematic contents of the novel.

The original aim of this thesis was to to define some central meanings of zombiedom in the novel. I also sought insight to the question why the monstrous fascinates readers to the extent that they wish to identify with the living dead. I wanted to know why the zombie has become such a beloved character in popular culture and whether it had to do with the transformation of western culture in the 21st century. It turned out that questions of this amplitude could not be exhaustively answered in one thesis; however, I have discovered some aspects of the matter, which I will focus on in the reflection part of this chapter. At the beginning of the thesis, I asked how identities are constructed in *Warm Bodies*. Furthermore, I planned to explore the meaning of memory in identity construction. Finally, I asked what factors are used to differentiate between the Living and the Dead; in other words, what traits are required of a person in order for them to qualify as Living?

I began my analysis by developing a general taxonomy of personal memory in psychological terms. I concluded that Marion's zombies have issues with both implicit and explicit memory, but that the core of zombiedom lies in the lack of autobiographical memory. Next, I explored the issues of personhood by taking a look at psychological and physical continuity, concluding that though the zombies still identify as the Living persons they once were, the Living view that the most important part of a person are the superindividual memories associated with them. Then, I described how personal narratives can prove useful in identity work.

Chapter 4 was concerned with the corporeal aspects of memory and identity. I noted that zombies eat brains firstly to fix the gaps in their personal identities, but also to assume control over the Other. Next, I studied how the body acts as a memory medium in the novel and how it can be compared to other forms of corporeal remembering. I then returned to the issue of physical versus psychological continuity and presented how Perry and R's identities are entangled, both prompting and questioning dualism.

In the final analysis chapter, I examined the social aspects of memory and focused more on superindividual memory. I studied the characters' motivations for keeping up their memories. Secondly, I presented the memories of the Living and the Dead through the opposition between cultural and communicative memory. Thirdly, I explored the functions of different memory media in construction of superindividual memory. I concluded that literature is an important mode of remembering because of what Ricoeur calls "a duty of remembering". Music, in turn, is a medium

of not only memory, but also communication. I presented how superindividual memories are constructed through acts of common listening. Photographs, on the other hand, are seen by the author as images of fixed identities, which prove as destructive in the course of the novel. Finally, I turned my attention to Ricoeur's thoughts on forgiveness and forgetting, concluding that in order to become a person, one must assume responsibility of one's deeds.

One of the central research questions of this thesis was how identities are constructed in *Warm Bodies*. From this followed the question how personhood can be defined in the first place. The synchronicity of identity proved problematic in the case of R and Perry, as Perry ends up sharing a body with R. It was concluded that though Perry and R can be considered separate characters, their identities are intertwined and it is not always clear even from the narration which one of them is currently narrating. The question of personhood was also issued through the problematics of physical and psychological continuity. The zombies in the novel still seem to identify as the person they used to be before they died. Thus, the body would be the carrier of identity, which would speak for physical continuity. On the other hand, the Living seem to prompt a dualism of some kind: a soul or mind that can continue existing separate from the body. Perry's continued existence within R speaks for this argument. Finally, Perry's father's notion that persons continue to live in their loved ones' memories is another argument for psychological continuity of sorts. The synchronicity of identity in this case remains rather unclear.

The diachronic aspect of identity is mostly realized through memories and personal narratives. Therefore, Marion's zombies can be seen to strive for their diachronic identity when they struggle to remember their past selves. It seems, however, that it is not merely the nostalgic past that is needed in order to construct an identity: we have seen that also negative experiences and emotions, such as shame and guilt, must be integrated in one's timeline. Perry speaks of "reverse-engineering" zombie identities, hinting that identity should be constructed out of memories. In R's case, however, it does not seem to matter who he was prior to his transformation; instead, he chooses to look forward and construct a new identity in a new social context.

Thirdly, identities are constructed socially. Marion's zombies eat brains in order to mend their absent identities, invading and stealing others' memories as their own. On the other hand, their cannibalistic tendencies are also a means of constructing difference between the Living and the Dead. Social identity, consequently, is based on the concept of difference.

Next, I asked what significance of memory has in the construction of identities. It is important to note that zombies have little to no memories of their own, and thus, mostly identify as "no one". I concluded that the zombies' autobiographical identities can be seen as episodic rather than narrative, and thus they have no conception of selfhood. The interactions between R and Perry are seen as a "talking cure" that allows Perry to access some of his most traumatic memories and thus, heal. R's new identity, on the other hand, is constructed through autobiographical reasoning, the act of narrating and thus giving meaning to one's memories.

Marion's zombies have no personal memories, but they do have body memory e.g. in the form of personality. Also, they have intercorporeal memory that allows them to mimic some social interactions amongst themselves. More importantly, in the novel, explicit memory is encoded into the body, and the zombies have the ability to decode it. The body or the brain hence acts as a medium of memory. These media are then used by the zombies in order to construct identities out of other people's memories – however, the memories mostly fade and the zombies fail miserably. Cannibalism is seen as a morbid form of communication and sharing collective memory. However, the novel also presents less destructive ways of developing social bonds: collective memory can also be formed and conveyed through different memory media, such as books and text, and more importantly, music.

The final research question was what factors differentiate between the Living and the Dead. The key to Livingness is will, as says the title of the first part of the novel, *Wanting*. The memory of the Dead is mostly unintentional; things just randomly *pop* into their minds. The Greeks called this type of memory *mneme*. Remembering, however, must be a conscious effort. There must be an intention, a wanting. This, the Greeks called *anamnesis*. Livingness is, therefore, an object of conscious effort and emotion. Memories and words must be consciously organized into a meaningful whole. Another important indicator of Livingness is language, and thus the ability to convey collective memory. As the Dead are unable to speak, they compensate the need for social bonding by feeding on other people's memories, at the same time breaking very tangible barriers between persons. Cannibalism is, indeed, "a dark negative of love".

Dying in *Warm Bodies* equals forgetting, giving oneself up to oblivion. The Dead (even those who are still classified as Living) do not have the will to face the past. In contrast, the Living, such as Julie, value the past in order to construct a better future. Finally, an important signifier of Livingness is imputability. In order to become Living, the Dead must assume responsibility of what

they have done after their transformation. When the fault has been recognized, it can be forgiven, and forgiveness per se is a condition of being accepted into the society.

The aim of this study was to find meanings for the imagery of zombiedom in *Warm Bodies*. I approached the subject through the concepts of identity and memory, which proved as relevant for the subject, as it seems the relationship with the past is of utmost importance to the definition of zombiedom in the novel. In researching the means of identity construction in the novel, I ended up mapping out the central building blocks of personhood. Thus, I have also managed to issue one of the most central problems in zombie research: what is the relationship with the zombie and the Living person they once were? Finally, I explored the relationship between people and their pasts, and managed to pair these findings with issues of identity construction. Some of my most fascinating findings were the connection between zombiedom and social connectivity, and how cannibalism acts as a means of communication and social bonding. Additionally, the idea of memory as responsibility, especially in the case of literature, proved as interesting. It can thus be said that the research questions posed at the beginning of this thesis have been answered, and that relevant findings were made.

Though the research questions were answered, my research inspired a number of other questions that could not be fitted into this work. There were aspects concerning e.g. the corporeality of memory that could not be studied thoroughly: Dylan Trigg's (2012) insights on memory of place and, especially, on airports as non-places, seem like a matter that should be looked into. The function of cultural memory as a tool of power could also be analyzed more deeply. Moreover, for the sake of consistency, I decided not to study the novel as an example of the romance genre. Examining how personal identity is compromised in a love affair could give some interesting insight to the matter of identity in the novel. Therefore, *Warm Bodies* as a romance may prove as a relevant angle for future study.

The motivating factor behind this study was the question whether the zombie mythos is becoming tamed: why has the zombie turned sympathetic rather than scary? An all-out answer to this question could not be provided; however, some speculations about how the zombie mythos is represented in this particular book could be made. It is probable that the change in attitude toward zombies has its roots in the postmodern crisis that the zombie mythos experienced already in the 1970s, when the zombie turned to represent comedic abstraction. (Lizardi 2013, 96.) Thus, the zombie is considered tragicomic than scary. However, in Marion's novel, the reader gets to identify with a zombie

narrator, which cannot be considered entirely comical or even satirical. Why is it, then, that we wish to see ourselves in the zombies?

What we fear says a lot about who we are. That is one of the reasons why I have chosen identity as my viewpoint in this thesis. In the case of *Warm Bodies*, it is death that we are afraid of. Death, on the other hand, means not death per se, but a symbolic state that is signified by losing one's own will and being stuck in rigid cultural knowledge and world view. On the other hand, it means escaping one's emotions and one's own past. This, in turn, is central to the construction of postmodern identity, which must be constantly reinvented. Postmodernity says we must not stay in one place, but balance between several, constantly changing identities. One simply must not become passive. In my Bachelor's thesis, which I wrote on national identity in Max Brooks' novel *World War Z*, I concluded that the zombie apocalypse serves to shake the society out of a Huxleyan dystopia. It urges the readers to be active and not submit to the demands of the majority. In some ways, *Warm Bodies* sends out the same message: one must not cling to rigid cultural knowledge, but give way to change. However one must not forget the past, for only through the lenses of the past is it possible to look forward. It may well be that we seek to identify with the Dead because we find ourselves in a constant struggle for ever-changing postmodern identity, so to say running a race against death.

The morals of a zombie novel can often be revealed by looking at who survives the oncoming apocalypse. *Warm Bodies*, consequently, asks who can be classified as Living, and therefore, a survivor. In the novel, the survivors are those who remember the past and manage to answer for their deeds. On the other hand, the survivors do not cling to rigid cultural knowledge, but allow their identities to develop. Those who stick to their rigid ideals and differences tend to lose hope, and thus, classify as Dead. Perry loses his strength while pursuing the ideals set by General Grigio; Grigio himself fails to accept the changing world around him and is later devoured by the Boneys. In contrast, R, who accepts change and looks forward, who cares, and who assumes responsibility for his past deeds, is the ultimate survivor in this book: with the help of his newfound friends, he manages to beat death itself.

One of the most astonishing images in the novel is that of Dead children, little zombies who still carry in them the memory of what it is like to be a child: they play, laugh and have fun despite the fact that their hearts have stopped beating. They are not pre-programmed to feed off Living people, like the grown-up zombies are.

They giggle and laugh, though it sounds choked through their dry throats. We've bleached their brains, robbed them of breath, but they still cling to the cliff edge. They resist our curse as long as they possibly can. (WB, 12.)

Zombiedom is, thus, imposed on the children by the society and cultural knowledge that is taken for granted by the adults. However, as soon as the children are allowed to, they start to live again; the curse quickly wears off them, and they are the ones seen helping rehabilitate the older Dead in the airport in the epilogue of the novel. This opposition between childhood and adulthood is central to the subjects of cultural memory and identity construction in the novel. The children do not die by themselves. Zombiedom is something that is taught, forced on them from the outside. This rigid cultural knowledge is what we must resist, like the children, as long as we can.

Who're those boys, who're those kids on the TV?
Who're those girls, who're those kids in the paper?
I don't know where they may have been buried,
and I don't know why they all have to die but they do.
They all die. All kids die. We kill them.

Isaac Marion's Moon Colony: *We Kill Children. Dead Children*, 2007

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