



Science-Fiction Fanzine

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Special message to our readership

Dear readers,

I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to contribute Fantasy/SF related book and or movie reviews, articles on upcoming technologies, commentary, etc...

Feel free to send me your feedback by e-mail or contact me by phone:

E-mail: leybl_botwinik@yahoo.com. Tel: Leybl_botwinik 054-537-7729

Wishing Aharon a speedy recovery,

Leybl Botwinik, assistant editor

חדשות האגודה – אוגוסט 2014 The Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy

מתחילה הגשת הסיפורים הקצרים לפרס עינת!

פרס עינת, פרס לכתיבה ישראלית מקורית, יוצא לדרך. השתתפו בתחרות כתיבה בז'אנר הספרות הספקולטיבית: הגישו סיפור קצר באורך של 1,500–5,000 מילה, העוסק בנושא "סודות", ושלושת המקומות הראשונים יזכו את כותביהם בפרסים כספיים. הזוכים יוכרזו במהלך פסטיבל "אייקון 2014". לפרטים נוספים היכנסו [לאתר הפרס](#) או עשו לייק לעמוד הפרס בפייסבוק.

פרס גפן

נפתחה ההצבעה בשלב הסופי של פרס גפן לשנת 2014! חברי אגודה יכולים להצביע כבר עכשיו [בטופס המקוון!](#) הציבור הרחב יוכל להצביע בפסטיבל "אייקון 2014", ב-12–14 באוקטובר.

מועדון הקריאה של חודש אוגוסט

יעסוק בספרו של אלדוס האקסלי "עולם חדש מופלא". המועדון יתקיים בשני מוקדים:

ירושלים: ביום שני 25.8.14, בשעה 19:30, בבית הקפה "תמול שלשום", רחוב יואל משה סלומון 5, ירושלים.

מנחה: [גלי אחיטוב](#). **בת"א:** ביום חמישי, 28.8.14, בשעה 19:30, ב"קפה גרג", ויצמן 2, ת"א. מנחה: [דפנה קירש](#).

לצורך היערכות למספר המשתתפים, יש להירשם מראש דרך כתובת הדוא"ל של המנחה.

רצוי להביא למפגש עותק של הספר. הכניסה חופשית ואינה כרוכה בתשלום או בחברות באגודה.

לוח האירועים של האגודה

כל האירועים המופיעים במכתב, יחד עם אירועים נוספים, מופיעים כולם ב**לוח האירועים שלנו**, המקבץ שפע אירועים מעניינים, ז'אנריים או כמעט ז'אנריים, הרצאות, סדנאות, מפגשים ועוד.

לקבלת עדכונים שוטפים על מפגשי מועדון הקריאה ברחבי הארץ ניתן להצטרף ל**רשימת התפוצה** או ל**דף האגודה**

בפייסבוק. <http://www.sf-f.org.il> More Society information is available (in Hebrew) at the Society's site:

This month, we're continuing our series of articles about Zombies – It's MOVIE TIME!

UNDEAD Reborn: About Zombies – PART III

by Leybl Botwinik

4.0 Movies: A Zombie by Any Other Name...? (Some of the serious "Zombie" flicks)

This time round, we'll take a look at some of the many Zombie movies. We'll do a short summary of the main plot and Zombie(-like) features, and point out any significant twists vis-à-vis the Zombie lore, and as compared to other films.

In one source on the Web (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zombie_movie), 370 Zombie movies in various languages are listed. From what I understood, the list is based on the presumption that Zombies either make up the main plot line, or that there is at least one significant Zombie in the story. In fact, there are about 90 films with the word ‘**Zombie**’ in the title. The author of the list states that it is not comprehensive.

The list is alphabetic by movie title, and after sorting by year, we see that the earliest recognized film is from 1932 “**White Zombie**”. According to the Web summary, it is of the traditional voodoo type tale.

Following is a breakdown I prepared, of the number of films produced per decade:

<u># of films</u>	<u>Period</u>
3	1932-1939
6	1940-1945
5	1952-1959
12	1961-1968
25	1971-1979
58	1980-1989
34	1990-1999
160	2000-2009
54	2010-2014 (Note: 5 more years to go in this decade ☺)

We see a steady progress, with a significant increase in the 1980s and a decline in the 1990s. However, there is a tremendous jump in the first 10 years of this 21st century (2000-2009). The last figure of 54 films is for the past 4 years – which is also a significant number. By the 1970s and surely by the 1980s the term ‘**Zombie**’ is used to describe undead that become so – and propagate and spread their symptoms dramatically over a large geographic area – by a plague or something in the blood. The original **Zombie** – that is local and created and controlled by some ‘Master’ by virtue of magic, drugs, hypnotism, or psychological manipulation – is virtually forgotten.

4.1 Serious **Zombie** Movies

The following is a short list of some **Zombie** movies, starting from the 1960s to today – of the more serious and ‘scary’ variety. The summaries presented fall far short from being reviews. Instead, their purpose is to discuss the ‘**Zombie**’ angle in the story’s plot.

Plague of the Zombies (1966)

This may well be one of the last of the ‘traditional’ **Zombie** Voodoo-magic stories filmed. People mysteriously ‘die’ of an unknown plague in a small town and are buried. A short time later, their graves are empty and they are resurrected and put to work by their Voodoo master. Very over-simplistic, but the ‘**Zombie**’ characteristics are what we would expect from the resurrected: slow and befuddled. They are only as aggressive as they are ordered to be – or according to the level of control imposed on them.

Last Man on Earth(1964) / Omega Man(1971) / I am Legend(2007) / I Am Omega(2007)

Four (4) film adaptations were made of [Richard Matheson's](#) 1954 [novel](#) *I Am Legend*. The first – and probably least known, is from 1964 - *Last Man on Earth* – was a US co-production filmed with Italian actors. The main star, however, is Vincent Price who tells the tale of himself, as a sole human survivor of a bacteriological plague. The disease affects the blood and turns people into ‘**Zombie-like**’, very slow moving, but violent undead. In the book, they are more vampire-like and can talk. Here they are just slow-witted, slow-bodied and aggressive. It’s been said, that this first

movie – particularly the blank-look and jerky movements – inspired Romero’s 1968 ***Night of the Living Dead*** (see further on). Apparently, Matheson didn’t like this film adaptation of his book.

The next permutation of the book was the 1971 version entitled ***The Omega Man*** (with Charlton Heston as the main star), followed by the 2007 remake with Will Smith promoted with the original book title – ***I Am Legend***. I’ve been told that for commercial purposes, two endings to the 2007 film were made: one was pessimistic, and one was optimistic for the future of mankind. That same year of 2007 also saw a made-for-video-only production ***I Am Omega***.

Although the storylines deal with a worldwide plague, the manifestation is more vampire-like, with the victims being sensitive to light, for example, needing human blood to survive, and are killed by a good stake to the chest (assuming the heart) by the story’s hero. Most ‘Zombies’, in the post 1960s films, can only be killed by shooting them in their brains or by decapitation.

Night of the Living Dead (1968+1990)

Very popular movie directed by George A. Romero – considered to be **the** inspiring movie for setting basic ‘plague-Zombie’ characteristics and behavior (e.g. requirement to shoot them in the brain, and that they are slow-moving and only when in masses, extremely dangerous). The original 1968 film is said to have sparked the ‘plague’ of movies of this genre (i.e. non-voodoo Zombies), and may well be the ‘father’ to such Zombie movies.

Two versions were produced with the same and very similar storyline, but with subtle differences, particularly vis-à-vis social messages. For example, in the 1968 version, the main female lead is a woman who is in deep shock/trauma and can’t do anything – what was probably expected behavior of women in the 1960s – and she eventually dies. In the 1990 version, the main female lead arms herself and fights for her life – eventually surviving the ordeal.

Dawn of the Dead (1978+2004)

With the success of his ***Night of the Living Dead*** Romero went on to produce other Zombie movies. In this one, a group of people try to survive in a shopping mall after escaping from Zombies who are running rampant all over the US. The Zombies are a result of a plague. Normal humans, who are bit, die and then wake up as mindless and violent Zombies that can only be killed by being shot in the head.

There are two versions of the movie, one made in 1978, and one in 2004 – I saw both versions, and there was nothing particularly ‘new’ vis-à-vis the Zombies and their plague-like characteristics. The only difference between this and other movies I have seen is that in this story, some Zombies take a few days to turn, others just minutes – depending on the extent of injury, or possibly how quickly the disease can spread via the arteries and open cuts (for example, a surface bite takes longer to kill and “en-Zombie” a person, whereas a bite to the neck produces almost immediate Zombie-ism).

The 1978 version is less scary than the 2004 version (where the Zombies are much more aggressive) – and there is more social commentary than in the updated version.

Resident Evil (2002-2015)

Based on a popular Japanese video game from 1996 – takes place in the not too distant future. The original movie from 2002 was very popular, and more movies were produced in 2004, 2007, 2010, and 2012 (with an upcoming one planned for 2015). The movie productions also include one animation.

The Zombies in the movie are all aggressive, but ‘normally’ so, except for a few that were trained by a mad scientist to be intensely aggressive. In addition to the Zombie danger, the original movie also has the survivors contending with an out-of-control thinking computer that controls the underground facility they are stuck in, as well as mutated – super-enhanced beasts. Dogs also become Zombies, as do other

creatures – not just humans – and some also mutate to be super-fast and super dangerous creatures. In one of the later movies, there are Russian Zombie soldiers who can actually drive military vehicles and shoot with machine guns.

The heroine of most of the movies, Alice, has multiple clones of herself created by one of the stories' mad scientist, and she has also developed a certain immunity to the plague, and also a kind of telekinesis and other mind powers.

In addition to the main theme of the Zombies, there are many additional elements – which I assume are derived from the video game – to make the experience more interesting and varied.

28 Days Later (2002) + Sequel: 28 Weeks Later (2007)

In the original movie, “*28 Days Later*” (2002), a group of Animal Rights activists break into a lab experimenting on monkeys, only to unleash a virus called the “Rage” that wipes out almost everyone in England – turning them (within 20 seconds) into wildly raging ‘Zombies’ that are hard to kill and very fast and very aggressive killers.

The hero of the story is a young man who wakes up from a coma 28 days after the outbreak, to find London devastated. He joins a few survivors who are lured by a promise of safety about 400 km north of London by a recorded army radio message promising salvation and security.

The second movie begins with a scene from the beginning of the “Rage” outbreak, where one survivor manages to escape an attack of the “Rage” Zombies, as everyone in his group is systematically killed and turned. We are then switched to the main body of the movie, several months later, after all of the Zombies – right across the UK – have died of starvation. The US, leading a NATO military force, cordons off a small island in the London area and about 15000 survivors and refugees are repatriated to the UK.

The sole survivor from the beginning of the movie, meets up with his kids and lies to

them about how Mom died (he abandoned her) – only to discover she in fact survived. Apparently, she had a genetic anomaly in her blood that saved her from turning – but because she is a carrier, the virus spreads again – beginning with her husband who bashes her to death in his rage attack. The only hope for humankind lies in one of the children whose blood may also contain the same immunity as his father.

The Undead (2003)

A quaint Australian fishing village is overcome by meteorites that turn its residents into the ravenous undead, leaving a small group of those unharmed to find a way out. The story contains an element of SF – in that the ‘plague’ is alien in origin, and the aliens show up to intervene – or did they deliberately start it? One man – who had claimed to have once been abducted by these aliens – fights back, and leads these survivors.

There are some elements of humor or satire in the movie – it’s not entirely serious (apparently, the ‘Down-under’ view on life is different than almost everyone else’s on this planet of ours ☺).

Severed (2005)

Environmentalists vs. Lumber Company in a forest. One of the lumberjacks accidentally cuts himself with a chainsaw that was cutting through a tree that had been experimented on by the company (injected with a genetic substance to increase the tree’s size and strength and speed of growth). He becomes infected, and the rest is history.

Nothing new, except for the tree experiment / environmentalist angle: The ‘Zombies’ are typically mindless, staggering about until a normal person appears, then they become extremely aggressive and attack in a bloodthirsty manner. Once bitten/gored, the victim dies and is either eaten, or becomes one of them.

It seems script writers are trying to cash in on the ‘Zombie’ for movies and will think up the most outrageous ideas, wringing out its appeal to the last drop (of gore). At this

point, I think to myself: What will movie-makers come up with next? Maybe Zombies at a Passover meal, infected by Matzah balls or worse: Gefilte fish (with its traditional gelatin, it is a combination of the BLOB and Zombie-like anyway). It will probably be called something like: *The Zeyde and the Zombie* (you heard it here first!).

The Dead (2010)

An American army engineer, the sole survivor of a plane crash, has to run the gauntlet across Africa, battling with the living dead. The actors playing the Zombies do it very well: Vague looks, stumbling, foot-dragging walk; Zombies staggering and just blundering about until normal humans are identified, and then they all converge and attack said human. This film is considered a very sober and serious Zombie movie, and contains some elements of racial issues as well.

Zombie Hunter (2013)

This movie is a poor man's *Mad Max*. It takes lots of guts to see this film, and of course, you also get to see lots of guts and gore flying around. Incidentally, the movie also includes suped-up/mutated Zombies reminiscent of the ones in *Resident Evil*. Possibly the same computer graphics/FX animators?

World War Z (2013)

The entire world is infested by a very virulent plague turning normal humans into raging and extremely fast and violent 'Zombies' in as little as a few seconds after being bitten. Brad Pitt is a UN investigator whose assignment is to accompany some high level scientists to Korea to try to figure out the source and possibly how to deal with the outbreak. Unfortunately, he is the only survivor of that mission.

Having heard that the Israelis have locked down their country – even before the outbreak had become so widespread, he continues on to Jerusalem to find out what they know. From there to a World Health Organization (WHO) facility in Wales.

The Israeli/Jewish angle requires more discussion which I'll do in a later chapter. One other interesting and novel idea we discover in the movie, is that North Korea is practically untouched by the spreading plague, for a very simple reason: 23 million North Koreans were ordered to pull all their teeth within a 24 hour period, so the disease could not be transmitted by bites – Now that's new! (The North Koreans are thus also suspect of being the originators of the plague – but no one bothers to blame them, since everyone is trying to survive.)

WARNING: Here's a movie spoiler but may help you survive any such plague: On the way to the first stop in South Korea, the hero is told by the chief scientist (before he is killed), that ...Nature has a way of protecting its children – no matter what. ..

As the scenes progress, our hero – who specializes in being very observant – notices that some humans are entirely ignored by the wildly ravaging Zs and guesses that it is because they are ill or very, very old – so the Zs ignore them and only seek 'fresh' and healthy victims. He understands, that although there may not be a cure, being 'sick' may provide some sort of camouflage from the killing/feeding instincts of the Zs. This would give humans a chance for survival, as well as the opportunity to get close to them without being recognized as such – to fight back at close range.

Walking Dead TV Series (2010-)

The TV series is so popular, that it's already into its 5th season. Although I've only seen all of the first season and a few episodes of the 2nd, there doesn't seem to be anything especially innovative. In fact, in many instances, the Zombies take a secondary place within the scope of the plot, and most of the intrigue is among the survivors, making the story more of a soap-opera than a suspense or 'Horror' show.

On a side note, the hero of the TV series is a police officer that was in a coma in a hospital – and like the comatose hero of "*28 Days Later*" (2002) – wakes up and leaves an empty hospital to a new and ugly reality.

Summary

All told, I've only managed to study several dozen films, and there are a few hundred to choose from (in various languages). Most of the Zombies (and how to deal with them) follow similar patterns, scenarios, and rules. Here and there, we see some innovative ideas, but more often than not, the Zombies are secondary to the plot, since there is a lot of human-to-human interaction, intrigue and conflict.

In addition, after seeing so many of these movies, I seem to have become 'immune' to the actual horror, and these 'dark side' Zombies are not so scary anymore. Although the future during a potential Zombie Apocalypse looks quite bleak, it is quite feasible to assume that thanks to the movies, we are now better equipped to deal with them.

***Next time:** The lighter side in Zombie movies: Romance and Humor in the World of the Undead.*

Quote of the month:

"16 most Expensive Substances in the World"

Sir/Ma'am. Your Antimatter... Will that be Cash or Credit?

I just came across a great source of interesting links/articles on a website called "Learnist". The one I'd like to introduce you to is called "*The 16 most expensive substances in the world*". Not that I'm overly materialistic, but the title just grabbed my interest, so I thought I'd invest some time studying this. First you should know, that each of the 16 materials is presented like a slide with a short description, and at its bottom left, there is a link to a full article about the topic area/material.

I began speculating on what indeed the list might contain: gold, diamonds, other precious stones? How about artificially created substances like medicines or chemicals? Well, yes ... and no. There are some surprising ones on the list too, although I'm pretty sure that there are other precious materials that weren't listed: The very first on the list – #16, Saffron – goes for \$11/gram. Compare that with Gold as #15 (\$56/gram)... and Diamonds as #3 (\$55,000/gram => WOW, are diamonds that expensive? No wonder they're a girl's best friend. They can be mine too... anytime ...).

However, heavily tipping the scale, and rather astronomically, is antimatter (weighing in at an incredibly whopping \$6.2 trillion/gram) – here's a quote:

“Antimatter is composed of antiparticles, which have the same mass as particles of ordinary matter, but have opposite charge and other particle properties. When particles and antiparticles meet, there is a larger release of energy, in the form of high-energy photons (gamma rays), neutrinos, and lower-mass particle–antiparticle pairs.

The reason antimatter is so expensive is that it's very, very hard to make, and does not last long in our regular-particle-filled world: antimatter is currently made in batches that are measured by the number of atoms, and lasts only minutes. This video from the Science Channel website gives one specific hypothetical use of antimatter: long-distance space travel.”

To see the full list, take a look at:

<https://learni.st/users/SteveSegovia/boards/29279-the-16-most-expensive-substances-in-the-world>

Now I'm sure that between the listed items, there are other more (or equally) expensive substances. Still, the list is quite fascinating. When we come to the final – most expensive one, however, many questions crop up. For example: Who would spend 6 Trillion\$ to create antimatter that will only last a short while? Or: How does one hold/contain antimatter without destroying the Universe? And how does one create it, or find it?

And finally – from the above quote – what does antimatter have to do with space travel? Anyone willing to guess? Would you like to write up a short, layperson's speculation on how this fits in?

How about just taking a look at the related video clip:

<http://www.sciencechannel.com/tv-shows/sci-fi-science/videos/sci-fi-science-using-antimatter.htm>

Feel free to comment.

Leybl Botwinik, Assistant Editor

CyberCozen Archives

For those who are unaware, one of our more devoted and enthusiastic members, Oleg Sverdlov, has collected and published an online source of PDF files of *CyberCozen* from 1998 to today.

There is also a special collection of '*Best of Cybercozen 1992-1993*' and '*Best of Cybercozen 1993-1994*' put together by another of our enthusiasts, Eli Eshed.

See at: <http://www.kulichki.com/antimiry/cybercozen>

Enjoy!

Flash Gordon in Hebrew – By Eli Eshed

A few weeks ago Eli Eshed, one of our members who writes in Hebrew about popular culture (including, Tarzan, Comics, and Science Fiction), sent me a link to his very interesting Hebrew site **Yekum Tarbut** "יקום תרבות" – See at: <http://www.yekum.org/>

The site includes many articles, including a series of articles for fans and lovers of "**Flash Gordon**" comics – about the Hebrew versions that were published in Israel in the mid-1970s and in particular early 1980s. The site includes samples of the Hebrew comic, as well as of the English, plus links to his other Flash Gordon write-ups.

See his Hebrew article (just published on the 8th of August) about the comic "*The Cosmic Tower*" at: <http://www.yekum.org/2014/08/פלגאש-גורדון-במעמקי-כוכב-נגה/>

Keep up the good work, Eli – בהצלחה!

- L.B.

We'd love to hear your thoughts on the above subjects and we may publish some of them!

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