Zombie Culture in Past and Modern Mythologies

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Raising the Dead

One of the earliest instances of the dead rising from the grave is in Mesopotamian Epics and mythology. Ishtar, the goddess of fertility, beauty, and war often threatened to call upon the dead and release them onto the living. This, beyond the idea of the dead rising, is also one of the first instances of an apocalypse.

Haitian Slave Rebellion

During the periods between kidnapping native Africans and the Haitian slave rebellion, the idea of hell became synonymous with working endlessly with no autonomy. The mind is lost, and the body is trapped in labor. After the rebellion, this idea combined with VooDooism and became an urban legend.

Romero and the Revolution

George A. Romero is an American actor and writer who is most noted for his creation of *The Night of the Living Dead*, a movie and franchise inspired by both Haitian legend and cannibalism. While movies existed prior that more accurately represented Haitian legend, this Romero’s kickstarted the genre.

The Modern Zombie

The Genre

After Romero’s franchise took off, the concept of the “living dead” was prevalent in almost every form of media. Movies, books, and art become focal points to develop the zombie culture to heights hitherto unseen. In modern society, this culture has been introduced to and furthered by video games. With the advancement of graphics and technology, zombies take on new shapes and forms with every installment.

The Symbolism

- **Capitalism**
- **Mindlessness**
- **Oppression**
- **Nazism/War**
- **Mob Idealism**

Zombie culture is an accurate term to use for modern installations of zombies because of the many unique aspects it entails. Zombie apocalypses typically have hordes, giant groups of zombies that overwhelm anything they face. This idea often represents topics such as capitalism, mindless oppression, and nazism. Nazi zombies in particular have become popular in video games and movies.