

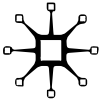
THE MEDIEVAL MOTION
PICTURE

THE POLITICS OF ADAPTATION

Edited by

*Andrew James Johnston, Margitta Rouse, and
Philipp Hinz*

palgrave
macmillan



THE MEDIEVAL MOTION PICTURE

Copyright © Andrew James Johnston, Margitta Rouse, and Philipp Hinz, 2014.

All rights reserved.

First published in 2014 by
PALGRAVE MACMILLAN®

in the United States—a division of St. Martin's Press LLC,
175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010.

Where this book is distributed in the UK, Europe and the rest of the world,
this is by Palgrave Macmillan, a division of Macmillan Publishers Limited,
registered in England, company number 785998, of Houndmills,
Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS.

Palgrave Macmillan is the global academic imprint of the above companies
and has companies and representatives throughout the world.

Palgrave® and Macmillan® are registered trademarks in the United States,
the United Kingdom, Europe and other countries.

ISBN: 978-0-230-11250-6

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

The medieval motion picture : the politics of adaptation / edited by
Andrew James Johnston, Margitta Rouse, Philipp Hinz.
pages cm—(The new Middle Ages)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-230-11250-6 (hardback : alk. paper)

1. Middle Ages in motion pictures. 2. Film adaptations—History and
criticism. 3. Middle Ages in literature. I. Johnston, Andrew James, editor
of compilation. II. Rouse, Margitta, 1970– editor of compilation. III. Hinz,
Philipp, 1973– editor of compilation.

PN1995.9.M52M44 2014

791.43'658—dc23

2013040004

A catalogue record of the book is available from the British Library.

Design by Newgen Knowledge Works (P) Ltd., Chennai, India.

First edition: April 2014

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

CONTENTS

<i>List of Figures</i>	xiii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xv
<i>Notes on Contributors</i>	xvii
Introduction: Temporalities of Adaptation <i>Andrew James Johnston and Margitta Rouse</i>	1
1. “Now Is the Time”: Shakespeare’s Medieval Temporalities in Akira Kurosawa’s <i>Ran</i> <i>Jocelyn Keller and Wolfram R. Keller</i>	19
2. Dracula’s Times: Adapting the Middle Ages in Francis Ford Coppola’s <i>Bram Stoker’s Dracula</i> <i>Cordula Lemke</i>	41
3. Rethinking Anachronism for Medieval Film in Richard Donner’s <i>Timeline</i> <i>Margitta Rouse</i>	57
4. Otherness Redoubled and Refracted: Intercultural Dialogues in <i>The Thirteenth Warrior</i> <i>Judith Klinger</i>	79
5. Crisis Discourse and Art Theory: Richard Wagner’s Legacy in Films by Veith von Fürstenberg and Kevin Reynolds <i>Stefan Keppler-Tasaki</i>	107
6. Adaptation as Hyperreality: The (A)historicism of Trauma in Robert Zemeckis’s <i>Beowulf</i> <i>Philipp Hinz and Margitta Rouse</i>	129
7. Perils of Generation: Incest, Romance, and the Proliferation of Narrative in <i>Game of Thrones</i> <i>Martin Bleisteiner</i>	155

CHAPTER 8

ARTHURIAN MYTH AND CINEMATIC HORROR: M. NIGHT SHYAMALAN'S *THE SIXTH SENSE*

Hans Jürgen Scheuer

The Quest for the Sixth Sense

An eye-catching arrangement of numbers glowing red against a black background dominates one of the promotional posters of M. Night Shyamalan's *The Sixth Sense* (US: Hollywood Pictures, 1999).¹ The numbers enumerate the five senses: 1 *sight*—2 *sound*—3 *smell*—4 *taste*—5 *touch*. The unlabelled number six, alone, takes the form of a fiery wreath enclosing a child's silhouette. A laconic *subscriptio* states: "Not Every Gift is a Blessing." Although, strictly speaking, the image is not part of the movie itself, it nevertheless provides important paratextual information. In emblematic form, the poster gestures toward some of the central questions the film raises as its narrative unfolds: Which unearthly, burdensome, or cursed gift must remain unnamed? How will the sixth sense, for which there is no other word, be displayed, and what can be perceived with it: both by the film's main protagonists Malcolm Crowe, child psychologist, and Cole Sear, his patient, whose telling names point to an obscure, dark form of (fore)sight? How do we, the viewers, perceive (with) this sense? And how is the sixth sense related to the camera's eye, and modes of cinematographic communication?

The film's sophisticated screenplay and the careful performance of its most crucial moments immediately caught the attention of a wide variety of critics; an interest that has been sustained to this day. Curiously, most responses to the film barely touch upon the sixth sense as the central

aspect of the film. Usually, the sixth sense is merely considered in terms of plot motivation, as an interface to the supernatural. In the few cases where the sixth sense actually is credited with greater significance, it tends to be treated as an aspect of cinematographic self-referentiality, whereby the cinema is “the true sixth sense.”² Nobody ever mentions the sixth sense’s historical and artificial constructedness as an actual *sense*, that is, a human faculty of sense perception grounded in a long history of imagination and perception. Even when inner vision is discussed, as, for example, in Nils Westboer’s study,³ the analysis of the cinematic images and their relation to the history of perception tends to be replaced by a discussion of cognitive theory (as pertaining to the physiological basis of constructivism).

Much previous research has been directed toward an interest in the film’s precarious form of communication between the living and the dead, a communication no longer represented in the modern world by means of collective family memory or traditional spirituality. Theological readings, for instance, approach the film for the echoes and transformations of religious concepts of transcendence in popular culture.⁴ Similarly, on the basis of Freud’s distinction between mourning and melancholia and Lacan’s notion of “belatedness,” psychoanalytical (re-)readings examine the film for representations of compromised sexuality.⁵ Other psychoanalytical discussions of the film address the Oedipal triangle and the upheavals within middle-class nuclear families, stressing disruptions through the loss of a father (in Cole’s case), a childless marriage (in the case of Malcolm and his wife Anna), or a murdering parent (in the case of Kyra, a girl poisoned by her mother). All these instances show the concept of the family as severely threatened, or as having become entirely obsolete.⁶

Narratological analyses of the film use varyingly elaborate conceptual tools to rediscover the primary difference in epic form between fable and *sujet*⁷ and focus on the narrative’s duplication through an auto-revision of the plot structure which, after the ending has been revealed, requires us to completely rework our initial understanding of the plot.⁸ Further narratological studies take a more specific route examining the conditions of the fantastic,⁹ following Todorov’s notion of the “uncanny event”¹⁰—in the case of *The Sixth Sense* the visual and auditory presence of the dead.

Critics especially concerned with movie aesthetics focus in particular on the horror genre and its self-reflexive turn at the end of the twentieth century.¹¹ And studies grounded in the history of philosophy connect the movie’s horror to Aristotle’s theory of catharsis,¹² or regard the film as an example of the Cartesian Cogito’s skepticism toward the dream/daemon-controlled experience of the five senses and the soul.¹³

It was, however, a medievalist who made a very simple, but hugely significant observation outside the well-worn paths of psychoanalytical, narratological, (post)structuralist and feminist criticism. Kevin J. Harty noticed that Shyamalan’s narrative possesses a clear subtext making his film a “true cinematic translation of the Arthurian myth.”¹⁴ Strangely enough, Harty’s fascinating contribution has made no discernible impact on the film’s critical discussion.

I wish to read Harty’s observation—that *The Sixth Sense* constitutes a fully valid film adaptation of the Arthurian legend—in conjunction with medieval discourses on the nature of the sixth sense, discourses that previous commentators of the movie neglected entirely. Exposing the film’s underlying Arthurian narrative structures will show that Shyamalan’s concept of the sixth sense is also a full-fledged adaptation of a premodern notion of image perception underpinning the imagination of Arthurian romance. Located in the interstice of adaptation studies and medieval film studies, my reading is interested in the ways in which the filmmakers’ affinities with medieval concepts of otherworldliness drives *The Sixth Sense* not only on the plot level, but also aesthetically in its treatment of horror, a treatment relying on fundamentally premodern concepts of perception.

As will become apparent, Shyamalan’s use of Arthurian allusions demonstrates that Arthurian romance does not primarily promote a model of individual psychological development, as Harty sees it. Rather, it displays a concern with the contact between the living and the dead in the medium of a narrated and imagined “common sense,” albeit seen from the perspective of a modern director and screenwriter—a contact that Shyamalan attempts to simulate or perhaps even to bring to life through the genre of horror.

Communicating with the Dead

This is how the first encounter between Dr. Crowe, child psychologist, and Cole Sear, his patient, is introduced: Waiting on a bench from where he can observe Cole’s house, Malcolm is studying his notes. A close-up of his anamnesis record highlights four observations: “parental status—divorced,” “acute anxiety,” “socially isolated,” “possible mood disorder.” We are shown this document twice and may note that the same words are used for the separate cases of Vincent Grey, aged 10 (dated January 19, 1989) and Cole Sear, aged 9 (dated September 1998).

Vincent’s name is all too familiar from the film’s beginning. In a confrontation taking place roughly a year before the scene outside Cole’s house, former patient Vincent, now an adult, lurks inside Malcolm’s house to take revenge because the therapist failed to treat him. Vincent shoots

Malcolm in the stomach, commits suicide, and leaves the doctor fighting for his life. After one last view of the wounded man, who, lying on his back appears almost unharmed, there is a cut to black, lasting several seconds, before the film's main part begins. We see a street, and a subtitle ("The next Fall—South Philadelphia") draws our attention away from the shock of the attempted murder.

Crowe's waiting would seem to be a continuation of his publicly admired but nevertheless troubled working life. His reading the notes of an old case that ended in violent aggression suggests that a traumatized psychologist awaits his opportunity to redeem himself: Malcolm Crowe is confronting his earlier failure by treating another child with Vincent's symptoms.

At first, he misses the right moment to initiate contact with the boy and follows him into a church. Cole hides in a pew with his toy figures, most of them cowboys as well as toy soldiers of the American Civil War. Re-enacting scenes of suffering and death, the nine-year-old lets one of the figures speak in Latin—transposing a psalm verse from the perfect to the present tense: "De profundis clamo ad te Domine"¹⁵ [Out of the depths I cry unto thee, O LORD]. This is the one toy figure that does not belong to US-American history: a knight complete with shield, great helm, silver hauberk, and flail (figure 8.1). Cole positions him on one of the pew's arm rests, thereby making the knight look down as from a stage. Malcolm's first conversation with Cole takes place in these strange circumstances. During this first talk, Malcolm already explicitly refers to



Figure 8.1 Cole Sear introducing the knight motif in Shyamalan's *The Sixth Sense*.

distant Medieval Europe and its concept of *sanctuarium* for the persecuted and oppressed.

This brief sketch shows how the film's first scenes already introduce the plot's most crucial elements. As will become clear over time, the symptoms Vincent and Cole share are caused not by a mental illness, but are the result of a special gift: Both boys are capable of seeing the dead. But this fact is only revealed toward the middle of the film when the boy finally shares his secret with the therapist and says: "I see dead people." Thus, the sixth sense is initially characterized as an *organon* of participation in the supernatural, as a form of perception that establishes an unearthly connection with the dark side of existence and turns its possessors into social outcasts.

Malcolm Crowe's medical report on his earlier patient, Vincent Grey, contains both a misleading psychopathological analysis of the phenomenon as well as a correct observation, the significance of which the doctor has yet to fully understand:

Vincent seemed totally distracted by his surroundings—almost as if people were lurking in the corners asking him questions at the same time as I was—like he was looking for something in my office.

During his second attempt at grasping the condition afflicting both boys, Malcolm is just as ignorant of his own actual situation. He has no insight into what will turn out to be the film's unforgettable moment of revelation. This revelation has an overpowering effect on the viewer because it suddenly inverts what appeared to be a clear and unquestioned distinction between madness and reality, with Cole supposedly representing madness and Malcolm firmly fixed in the real world.

Eventually we understand that Malcolm's visible existence is facilitated entirely by his patient's sixth sense. The therapist did *not* survive Vincent's attack and is communicating with Cole as a dead person in a parallel world, which is open only to those endowed with a special supernatural gift. Otherwise, this parallel world remains completely closed off to the other five senses. Under "normal" circumstances, the interaction between the two worlds is at best instantaneous and abrupt, as in the scene where Malcolm throws a stone through his wife's shop window, thereby interrupting the ostensible approaches of a potential new partner. Ordinary human beings are either incapable of perceiving this kind of interaction at all or do not perceive it as disrupting the scope of the "real" within the world of the living.

Further, we learn from Cole that the dead are not aware of their condition. They move among the living as though they were alive themselves

and see only what they want to see. Hence they prove incapable of explaining irritating perceptions, such as their persistent failure to communicate even with their loved ones. Since they have no notion of their own state of being dead, the dead fail to understand the basic distinction between life and death. Their ignorance of their own death, as well as of the “co-existing” realities of the living and the dead, creates the familiar symptoms on both sides: anxiety, isolation, and a troubled frame of mind. Among the living this situation is expressed as the suppression of unresolved mourning and unatoned guilt; among the dead, in extreme cases it appears as “madness”—as a raw fury at an environment that will not acknowledge their presence, no matter how much they have to say and how hard they are trying to say it.

In such circumstances this fury is capable of leaving physical traces on other people’s bodies: On the skin of those who possess the sixth sense, supposed “psychos” like Vincent and Cole, it leaves traces of direct physical aggression; on the skin of the less perceptive “normal” people, it is still noticeable in the form of sudden chills, spine-tingling and hair-raising. These are the vegetative impulses of horror, the manner in which visceral feelings respond to the unseen supernatural.

The narrative twist at the film’s close dissolves this division of the two spheres by employing an exemplary, artificially expanded model of communication. On the one hand, Malcolm is transformed from an excluded dead person into a helpful ghost, who is thus enabled to depart from his mortal life without anger. On Cole’s advice, he finds a way of giving his wife a last sign of his love while she is sleeping; something which, due to his disproportionate professional dedication and ambition, he failed to do while still alive.

On the other hand, the audience, who had previously uncritically shared Malcolm’s purely medical perspective on the boy, now witnesses how Cole’s social isolation is transmuted into a particular form of inclusion made possible by the sixth sense. Once the narrative has exchanged its “problem case,” the apparent “freak,” for the traumatized psychologist, the audience is permitted to share in a *sensus communis* with the protagonists. Viewers are confronted with urgent questions regarding the community of the living and the dead; they are forced to acknowledge the dialectic character of the film images, the apparent clarity and coherence of which is suddenly disrupted, and which are now revealed to be riddled with previously unnoticed contradictions.

In the light of Shyamalan’s film’s fantastic success, one could perhaps say that the sixth sense, at least for as long as we reflect on the film, becomes something akin to the fictive “common sense” of a global reception community. Created by the medium of film, the sixth sense becomes

a sense of the second order, shared by the movie’s main characters and its audience via a modern form of the premodern *koinē alsthēsis*. It is the sixth sense’s two fundamental characteristics, its pathologically exclusive aspect and its socially and aesthetically inclusive aspect, that explain the two protagonists’ relationship on a basis of reciprocity. Malcolm’s gift of the healer makes it possible for him to help Cole, while Cole’s supernatural gift facilitates Malcolm’s redemption. This reciprocity does not, however, explain the appearances of knights throughout the plot and the curious layer of meaning they add to the film. It is here that Harty’s attempt at an interpretation starts.

Harty points out the enormous significance of the school play in which Cole Sear plays the role of a young King Arthur after having overcome his fear of the dead:

Unexpectedly, the Arthurian myth is...central to the plot of M. Night Shyamalan’s *The Sixth Sense*, the much-acclaimed sleeper of 1999...Having confronted his fear, Cole seems changed and finds himself cast in the central role of a school play. Actually, this play is the second staged in the film. The first stars a pompous and over-acting classmate, Tommy Tammisimo, as a Doctor Doolittle-like character who talks to animals. Cole has only a bit part in this first play. The second play is, however, the story of the sword in the stone, and here Cole is cast in the central role, while, in a nice touch, Tommy plays the village idiot. As a narrator solemnly intones, “only the pure of heart can take the sword from the stone,” Cole as the boy Arthur easily pulls Excalibur free. Cole is cheered by his classmates who carry him on their shoulders in triumph. Malcolm and the other members of the audience join in the acclamation for what is clearly now a reborn Cole.¹⁶

The theatre scene Harty describes is actually the fifth of a series of six (!) steps which build up a momentum whereby Cole becomes increasingly associated with an imaginary chivalric world.

- (1) The *leitmotif* of chivalry is already introduced when Cole is playing with his toy figures in the church (figure 8.1).
- (2) It features again in Cole’s next meeting with Malcolm when the psychiatrist visits the boy at home. In this scene, from a hiding place behind the living room sofa, the boy answers a series of questions about his family situation. Eventually Cole emerges and expresses his desire to be healed, wearing a balaclava helmet that resembles the great helm of the toy knight in the church.
- (3) At the same time that this scene is taking place, we see Cole’s mother upstairs in her son’s bedroom where she discovers his notes, which she regards as an expression of worrying fantasies, but which

are really an account of the furious outbursts of the dead visiting him. The child's bedroom reveals much about Shyamalan's attention to visual detail. Cole lives in a run-down house in a room with anaglyphic wallpaper conjuring up images of old European chivalric nobility. It features a *fleur-de-lis* relief, an echo of the heraldic lily once part of the French kings' coat-of-arms from the end of the twelfth century onwards and which is now associated with the cult of devotion to the Virgin Mary.

- (4) There is another toy knight on the dresser wearing a helmet with a red plume.
- (5) The Arthurian play, on which Harty's interpretation focuses, sees its conclusion in a triumphant gesture of self-empowerment. Drawing Excalibur from the stone, Cole as Young Arthur symbolically celebrates his victory over his fear of the dead as well as his integration into the community of the living.
- (6) Finally, after the performance, Malcolm and Cole meet one last time in front of one of the school's medieval-style stained glass windows. While the boy swings a cardboard sword with youthful exuberance, he sets the stage for the movie's final narrative twist by telling his therapist how he can break the silence between himself and his wife Anna. Following Cole's advice and speaking to her while she is asleep, Malcolm will come to realize that her silence is not the result of a marital crisis and that it is actually his death which precludes communication with Anna.

According to Harty, the Arthurian allusions emphasize the success of a double healing process. The Arthurian theme introduces a significant element of medieval myth into the interaction between Cole Sear and Malcolm Crowe, interweaving the healing powers of Arthur with his tutor Merlin's famous gift of sight.

The Sixth Sense, a film that on its surface seems far removed from the world of Camelot, nonetheless marks an Arthurian return. The boy Arthur returns, here as Cole Sear...to heal himself...and, most importantly, to heal Malcolm Crowe, a man who thinks it is his responsibility to heal Cole. As a "see-r", Cole finds himself cast both in the role of Merlin and in that of the boy Arthur, though at first he seems much less than he turns out to be, a trope readily found in any number of earlier versions of Arthur's childhood. He also has a connection to the once and future since Cole helps the dead, haunted by their past, and he uses his ability to communicate with the past to lay out the future for himself...and even for Malcolm, who initially also serves as a kind of Merlin figure, a supernatural guide, it turns out, who helps Cole to understand the unique role he is called upon to play.¹⁷

Significant as Harty's focus on the Arthurian subtext of Shyamalan's *The Sixth Sense* is, in my opinion his emphasis on developmental psychology in the form of the "drama of the individual gifted child" means that his analysis focuses too much on the therapeutical side of the story, and neglects the mythical thinking that provides Arthurian narrative's basic structures since the concept of Arthur's return is based not only on his role as a healer and savior, but also on the perambulatory Round Table community's ambiguous role itself.

If we see them in mythical terms, King Arthur, Queen Guinevere, and their knights hold court on both sides of the divide between the living and the dead—as if there were no rigid topographical separation between them. They switch between belonging to one group and the other, with the effect that individual heroes or mediators can also switch and thus establish instances of communication between this world and the other at special (holy) times and in distant (magical) places.¹⁸

The place to which Arthur originally or essentially belongs can never clearly be fixed: Should he be regarded as a sovereign over his territory (within the circle of his paladins) or as a prince of the underworld (with a fairy queen or other Persephone-like beauty at his side)? Do the repeated attempts to kidnap Guinevere or other members of the court lead them into the "waste land" of death, or do they result in the court's being shocked out of some death-like rigor? Is Arthur's unquenchable desire for stories due to his ostentatious *joie de vivre* or to his vampiresque and morbid preoccupations?

Hartmann von Aue's prologue to his *Iwein* leaves the reader in no doubt that Arthur is indeed a great and worthy name, but that it belongs to a dead man, who is only called to life as an imaginary construct—in stories and in the imagination. It is only through such artistic devices that "his countrymen are right when they say that he lives today."¹⁹ This same logic, which the medieval storyteller had already discovered, applies also to Shyamalan's *The Sixth Sense* which, in the name of Arthur, engenders the encounter between the living and the dead.

Arthurian Otherworlds in *The Sixth Sense*

It is remarkable to what extent Arthurian otherworldliness can be traced throughout *The Sixth Sense*—even in the smallest of details. Drawing on several narrative configurations significant to Arthurian romance, I will show how the medieval adaptations of the *matière de Bretagne* underpin the film's concepts of otherworldliness and the mythical manner in which the film's communicative levels involve the sixth sense. I choose my examples from the Middle High German reworkings of the Arthurian material, but

I take them to be representative of the structures of European Arthurian fiction in general.

Medieval Arthurian romance tells of encounters and exchanges between Arthur's court and the fantastic world of adventure associated with it, constantly posing new challenges both to the royal couple and to the Round Table. If these challenges were not met, the court would collapse under the strain of its many contradictions that are, ultimately, never resolved. The inevitable self-destruction of the Round Table at the end of Arthur's reign remains a lurking threat, casting its shadow over each new attempt at telling of adventures. In this regard, the tasks to be faced, and to be told in the King's presence, help postponing the unavoidable catastrophe. Every victory the Knights of the Round Table achieve is accomplished against the backdrop of the ubiquity of death and the certainty of ultimate failure.

Up until the beginnings of the final disaster, simple but strictly upheld values both tie the court together and keep it on edge. This fragile stability is reflected by the royal couple itself—Arthur and Guinevere. The fundamental conflicts of the court can be found between *êre* [honor] and *minne* [love] as well as between the genders: While the knight does everything in order to defend and enhance his honor by remaining ever generous and keeping his word, the lady gains unjustified notoriety as an unfaithful woman due to her exceptional power to arouse *minne*. Repeatedly, she becomes involved in situations whereby she falls into the hands of a third party, in most cases one of her partner's arch rivals, who clearly has sexual intentions. In some cases this state of affairs is caused by Arthur's own obsession with honor, which leads him to make a promise to a mysterious guest, a promise only to be redeemed by placing the queen in peril.

The constant conflict between *êre* and *minne* can also be said to characterize the relationship between Malcolm and Anna. On the evening when Vincent Grey (the "bogyman" and otherworldly envoy) attacks Malcolm and abruptly interrupts his relationship with his wife, Malcolm has just been honored by the mayor of his home town and is enjoying the pinnacle of his public recognition as a child psychologist and "son of Philadelphia." As in the Arthurian legend, the perfect marriage of king and beautiful queen remains childless. Malcolm's vocational ambition to heal the sick sons of Philadelphia's damaged families seems to be more important to him than the love of his wife and having a family of his own.

Anna, too, seems to be risking her marriage. After the attack on her husband, she welcomes the advances of a colleague, which must appear to Malcolm as proof of her infidelity. We can see the parallels between Guinevere and Lancelot—or whatever the constantly changing kidnappers/rescuers of the queen may be called.

The impaired balance between the two parties forces Malcolm to confront the crisis—just as Arthur, or any other knight acting as the king's representative, would have done to redress the court's shame. At the end of this process, Malcolm respects Anna's need for love, accepts his own death as well as the fact that he belongs to the realm of the dead.

This then, is the "nucleus" of the Arthurian epic tradition, especially as seen in studies of its German versions: a "dual course" situation in which the hero (as representative of a community in crisis) is obliged to confront his own mortality while attempting to restore the balance between courtly love and honor as part of a task that can only be accomplished at the second attempt. This dual course model has its structural roots in a typical mythical configuration: the passage through the Otherworld, the Celtic Immram.²⁰ The paradigmatic couple must experience a passage through death coming from both directions: from that of the dead as well as from that of the living.

The mythological "dual course" of the Arthurian tradition involves scenes that share with Shyamalan's film the concept of an internal rupture. In the so-called Count of Oringles-episode in Hartmann von Aue's *Êrec*, for example, the knight falls from his horse "half-dead"²¹ as a result of wounds that reopen again and again. Erec's lady, Enite, immediately embarks on a lengthy widow's lament in which she implores God to speed her own death with such vehemence that her cries are heard by the Count of Oringles. Oringles appears both as a rescuer, since he saves Enite from suicide, and as the swift executor of her death wish, since he takes both her and her seemingly dead companion to his castle which bears the telling name of "Limors": literally, "the death." Here, Oringles attempts to make Enite his wife—displaying clear parallels to Pluto's abduction of Persephone. However, Enite persistently rejects his advances. When she ignores repeated commands to eat with him, he strikes her in her face twice, whereupon her cry of pain awakens the life that remains in Erec. This remaining life derives from Enite's own heart which, in exchange for his heart, had previously migrated into Erec's body and stayed alive when he died:

When she then called out his name, Erec recognized her at once and could readily tell that she was in some manner of distress, though he knew not how or where. No longer did he lie there, but once he recognized her voice, he jumped up in fury and stormed fiercely into the hall where they were all gathered. A great many swords were hanging nearby on a wall. Erec seized one of them. Anger in ample measure welled up inside him. With the very first lunge he slew the host along with two others, who were sitting on either side of him. The rest then took to flight. No one present heeded the dictates of good breeding, for not a one of them there

could be seen stepping aside and saying: "After you, my lord." For whoever found the way out took to flight (such were their likes!), the laymen pushing ahead of the priests. Despite all claims to high standing in the Church, none was accorded special treatment, be he abbot or bishop. All the court was fleeing this hall... They began beating a retreat and running about in mad confusion. Many a fine warrior cowered underneath the benches, contrary to all the knightly code. There is one thing which is quite common, and which I fail to find at all surprising: that any man fearing for his life often-times flees from great turmoil to ensure his safety, retreating from the valley for the security of the fortress. These men, however, were fleeing *from* the castle and were slipping off into holes like mice. The wide castle gates were for them too small and narrow, both inside and outside the portals, so that they dropped over the wall in a throng thick as hail, for they were driven on by frantic fear. Limors was left abandoned by all the people... No one amongst them, save for Lady Enite, dared to wait about for Erec, Enite was most delighted to see the dead man.²²

This is not a legal court scene anticipating the terrors of Judgment Day. Instead, what is presented is an inverse world where usual hierarchies no longer apply, since the boundaries between life and death are lifted for a carnivalesque moment: Once Erec has subdued his fierce opponent, the inhabitants of the realm of the dead, Limors, flee and the couple can escape. In taking the passage through death the couple has resolved its conflict: "[A]ll her grief melted into happiness and her joy was multiplied."²³

The extent to which Erec's "resurrection" at the end of the "dual course" is anchored in mythical thinking can be seen in another Otherworld motif used by Shyamalan. Enite's consistent refusal to partake of the food of Limors suggests that she has learned the lesson of the Persephone/Proserpina myth. Whoever consumes but the merest morsel in the realm of the dead, even the pip of a pomegranate, will remain there forever. Committing this error Persephone became a bride of Hades. She is unique among the population of the underworld as Dis/Pluto offers her the privilege of leading a double existence. She is allowed to spend half her time among the living and another half among the shadows in a rhythm bound to the seasons of the year, a rhythm which keeps the two spheres rigidly separate.²⁴ In ancient myth, it is absolutely forbidden that the living and the dead convene at the same table.

Another instance of the same set of mythical notions is Arthur's custom of leaving the splendors of the royal banquet untouched and closed to the court until a new tale is served. This leaves him and his dependents at risk of starving to death. However, what he seeks to achieve through this peculiar custom is nothing less than to use the tales brought by the outsiders for the purpose of creating a community encompassing both the

living and the dead. For the adventures always take place on the threshold of otherworldliness and attract representatives from the worlds of the living and the dead alike. What might appear to be no more than a royal whim actually constitutes Arthur's creation of a space where the dead are permitted to express themselves—and this is precisely what the dead want. It is only on condition that their stories are dealt with satisfactorily that the court can finally meet undisturbed to enjoy the feast.

In Shyamalan's film, too, the dead become peaceful and are capable of resigning themselves to their fate as soon as they get the opportunity to tell their stories. As long as they remain unheard and ignored they are a burden and a danger to the living.

Disturbing banquets do not feature in Shyamalan's film. The film's famous restaurant scene does, however, illustrate that there can be no exceptions to the rule that the living and the dead may never share a meal together. Commemorating their wedding anniversary alone, Anna is joined by Malcolm who believes himself to be late—though not as late as he actually is. Entertaining the movie's audience with a lesson in failures of perception and insurmountable communication breakdowns, Malcolm's apologetic monologue demonstrates that his thoughts are exclusively with his patient and not on his wife, let alone their celebratory dinner.

In the context of my argument, another narrative configuration of the Arthurian tradition is pertinent: The *enfances*, childhood memories, stories in which Arthur himself or a knight of the Round Table are presented in their youth. As this type of narrative, too, derives from an otherworldly concept, it typically creates, as Nicola Kaminski puts it, a "narrative of the unfathomable."²⁵

Heinrich von dem Türlin's encyclopaedic Gawain-novel *Diu Crône* (*The Crown*), depicts the young hero as very inexperienced. One of his first expeditions leads him to Amurfina, the personification of courtly love, where he is handed a love potion which deletes "his entire, as yet incompletely formed, identity... suddenly and without trace"²⁶:

Gawein and Amurfina drank all of the mighty potion, which quickly so bewildered his senses that he didn't know who he was and fancied he had always been the lord and master of the land; he accepted this idea at once. The knight completely forgot his past, knew neither his name nor his position, and thought that the lady had been his wife for over thirty years. His heart, which had been as firm as a diamond and had never turned away from a brave act, was now brittle and weak and did not recognize itself. Knighthood would have to regret deeply this change, but Lady Love and Amurfina, with whom he was now united and whose spirits now governed

him; were pleased. His choice had brought him both gain and loss: he had won her love and lost his reason. Yet I would think the man more simple than a child with whom the two were separated. (V. 8660–94)²⁷

Under the influence of the love potion Gawain begins to act as though he were a second Arthur (V. 8741), with Amurfinas as his Guinevere. By shifting his self-image from that of an adolescent to that of a ruler married for 30 years, he allows a logic of cracks and leaps in time to take effect which trigger strange inversions of perception. On an artfully decorated golden bowl, which Amurfinas presents to him while he is seated for a feast, he recognizes scenes from adventures that the engravings tell him are from the life of Gawain. The pictures recall events that cannot belong to Gawain's memories at this time and which are already part of legend, as if Gawain (alias Arthur II) had already been dead for some time. The deeply confused hero, who lacks a stable identity, can only escape from this confusion by snatching "one of the knives on the dish before him," then driving it "through his hand to the table below." Stabbing his own hand, he can rip through the veil of this otherworldly perception. Leaping up from the table he ends the feast, to return to the world of the living and his former life.

The situation becomes even more bizarre when Gawain is overtaken by the logic of the moving images on the stage where his living body is performing. There he encounters the "other Gawain" (V. 16523), a likeness of himself. This likeness is called Aamanz and is beheaded by the evil knights Zedoech and Gygamet, but not without Gawain's assistance. The presentation of the battered head before Arthur and Guinevere shocks the Round Table into a state of paralysis. The sight of the head literally "mortifies" the court. Several thousand verses later, the returning Gawain recalls the horrific spectacle thus: "[W]hile I was away looking for adventure, I was brought back here to the court dead."²⁸

Given the highly complex *histoire* of Gawain, which is persistently disrupted by examples of such *entrelacements*, it is possible, with some effort, to understand this sentence as a paradox; against the backdrop of the adventure-seeking knight's otherworldliness the paradox becomes immediately evident: Both the dead and the living, the aged and the youthful Gawain can be presented to the audience in the same image, his contradictory and separately active *imagines* ultimately belong to the same body.

Shyamalan visualizes this mythical simultaneity of the incommensurable (the living dead) by making every dead person in the film perform a characteristic turn of the body, the significance of which the viewers realize, but not the dead themselves: The woman in the kitchen, whom the audience and Cole first believe to be the boy's mother, displays her

slashed veins as she turns around; the young boy who tells Cole to follow him when he appears in the latter's bedroom, lacks part of the back of his head due to a bullet wound; this, too, is revealed only when he turns around. When Kyra lifts her head in her first encounter with Cole, the suddenly emerging flow of vomit reflects her struggle against poisoning; the friendly lady, who can be seen in half-profile in Cole's dressing room before the theatrical performance, later turns her head and the burns reveal her to be a victim of the fire that took place in his school many years before. Finally, the fatally injured cyclist appears with her fresh wounds next to the car in which Cole and his mother are waiting in the traffic jam caused by that very woman's accident.

Much like the images of martyrs in Catholic churches, the dead in Shyamalan's film also bear the stigmata of their violent deaths. Through strategic turns, they present these scars to those who possess the sixth sense: first to Cole and to the audience, before eventually, in the surprising final "twist" of the plot, they also become visible to Malcolm as he instinctively looks behind himself and notices the blood on the back of his shirt oozing from his bullet wound.

The Sixth Sense makes only one exception to the rule of depicting the dead as the living dead: This is when Cole is confronted face-on with the three hanged corpses in the staircase of his school building: a father, a mother, and a child. However, this group belongs to a different theme of the film—that of the "happily reunited," but utterly failed nuclear family. Such "happy" families are only depicted twice, each time with Shyamalan's Hitchcock-like sarcasm: in the advertisement for cough medicine, which is recommended for illness in the family, and on the gallows, where the nuclear family's "small happiness" is presented as a completely dead, classical horror scenario.

Horror and the "Sense of Sensing"

But how does Shyamalan's concept of horror differ from the mere presentation of fear-inducing corpses?²⁹ This question can best be answered by drawing attention to yet another characteristic of the sixth sense. In addition to its spiritual, social and aesthetic dimensions, the sixth sense also has a physiological one, which is rooted in premodern conceptions of the very depths of the soul and is therefore inaccessible to modern notions of psychological causality. Moreover, this idea of the sixth sense is closely linked to the premodern concept of the origin and effects of inner images, considered as pneumatic *phantasmata* and *imagines agentes*.

Drawing on classical medical teachings as well as classical theories of the soul, Giorgio Agamben has reconstructed the theoretical grounds for

a “pneumophantasmology,” which also forms part of the mythical basis of the Arthurian epic traditions of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.³⁰ Daniel Heller-Roazen has since expanded Agamben’s project to a veritable archaeology of the sixth sense.³¹ His focus is particularly on a forgotten, but nevertheless significant tradition in the development of aesthetics, which, in the sphere of cognitive perception, refers to an older, alternative model than to the psychology of the conscious.

According to Heller-Roazen, classical authors of ancient philosophy did not conceive of self-awareness as a form of cognition. For them, “awareness and self-awareness tended to employ a set of expressions linked semantically and etymologically to the name of a capacity that, in distinction to reason, has often been viewed as one of the lower faculties of the soul and that, more often than not, has been considered a characteristic as much of animal as of human nature. For they spoke of perception and, more simply still, of what they called sensation.”³²

Heller-Roazen explains³³ that in *De anima* Aristotle distinguishes between the five senses, ranking them in order—from sight down to touch/feeling. However, by doing so, he creates a problem for himself: On the one hand, tactility is unique as a sense (with a special sensory organ—the flesh—and a specific, if invisible medium of contact). On the other hand, unlike the organs required for the other senses (eyes, ears, nose, and tongue), this organ required for feeling seems to exist as one with the medium that makes the sensation of touch possible. Furthermore, touch seems to exist only as an inner capacity. At the same time, the “inner touch” constitutes the founding principle for all sensory perception. After all, sight, hearing, smell, and taste all come about as the result of encounters between a stimulus and the specific organ of perception via a medium. Touch/feeling thus becomes the fundamental sense or even the “alpha sense” without which none of the other senses were capable of operating. Thus *tactus* becomes bearer of an indispensable sensory function; a function that nevertheless is difficult to explain since it presents itself as a “total sense” [*aísthētikón pantōn*], which perceives, combining and comparing, everything that is apprehended by the five senses.³⁴ It is the “inner touch” that facilitates complex perceptory processes and thereby forms its *koinē aísthēsis*—the sixth sense as a “sense of sensing”:

Complex sensation and the sense of sensing, too, are now said to number among the capacities of a single common dimension of sensation. Together, they form the functions of a “dominant sense organ” (*kyrion aísthēterion*), which . . . “remains for the most part simultaneous with touch.”³⁵

Under the terms of pneuma theory, the Aristotelian solution to the problem of complex perception seems irrefutable: Pneuma is a ubiquitous transmitter that has a sophisticated material structure. It is here that the soul and the environs can make contact via inner images of that which is perceived as well as of the emotions, feelings, and fantasies attached to the perceptions. These ideas remained influential all through the early modern period and are still evident in enlightenment thinking.

As a product of a culture of the external, cinematically recorded, and projected image, Shyamalan’s film is capable merely of reminding us of the pneumatic-phantasmatic nature of the inner image. Shyamalan nevertheless manages to evoke the sixth sense as understood within classical perceptual physiology with all the means available to him as a filmmaker. The most striking instance of this is a melancholy gesture of loss.

A keen observer will note that, after his death, Malcolm does not touch a single person throughout the film—not even Cole when he accompanies him and speaks to him at close range. This dramaturgical necessity of avoiding any physical contact beautifully demonstrates that there is simply no way in which cinematic technology can represent images of the inner touch. Hence, the film painstakingly preserves two boundaries as absolutely impassable: that between life and death just as much as that between film image and phantasm.

The only way to visualize the latter is through ghosts, which Shyamalan conjures by establishing an implicit genealogy of the (six!) most important technical media of representation, just as if he were searching for material echoes of the lost sixth sense. In this way his cinematographic narrative makes use of various forms of technology or media, all of which hark back to the world of the dead: writing, in the form of Malcolm’s medical notes; photography, with the distant light reflections of the disembodied, yet present, dead; audio cassette recordings, which Malcolm constantly rewinds until he actually hears one of the voices of the dead who drove Vincent Grey to madness (which confirm that Cole’s secret is true); video recordings, as messages from the dead; puppet theater, behind which Kyra’s death from poisoning can be seen as a “play within a play”; and finally television, whose shallow advertising images form a negative counterpart to the sixth sense. As they are ultimately meaningless, it suffices for Cole to throw a shoe at the television in order to silence these—literally “sense”less—images.

These ghostly recordings are merely the traces of phantasms, which the technical machinery involved has captured by chance, but they are not the actual *imagines agentes*, which in premodern theories of sense perception were imagined as belonging both to the individual organs of sense

perception and the overarching sixth sense and which like the living dead, out of necessity, coexist with the outside world.

Shyamalan's engagement with the ghostly phantasms begins right at the start of the film with an allegory of the filmed image itself, as cinema's affinity with phantasms is simulated and deconstructed in the first two shots. First we see the filament of an electric light bulb glowing red in a completely darkened room. This is the same cellar room in which the dead Malcolm later uncovers the phenomenon of the "dead people," their troubles and their need to communicate. After the first cut, Anna enters the cellar to fetch a bottle of wine to celebrate Malcolm's award. Once she has taken the bottle from the rack, she notices the extraordinary chill. She rubs the bare skin on her arms and her breath becomes ragged from her shivering. Something strange seems to be present in the room, though it does not make itself known; not even when Vincent Grey confronts Malcolm and Anna upstairs, threatening his former therapist with a gun. Even in this scene, which concludes with Malcolm being shot and Vincent Grey's subsequent suicide, apart from the audiovisual shock effect, the actual horror is indicated only by the scars and scratches on the intruder's skin.³⁶

The entire exposition can be interpreted as a critical experiment on the capacity of the medium of film to represent the sixth sense. Its comprehensive sensory faculty remains bound to the *tactus*, the feeling of the skin, at all times. To meet these prerequisites cinematographically, Shyamalan primarily uses the aesthetic means of cinematic horror. Triggering bodily effects (such as shuddering, causing the hairs on the neck to stand on end, goose-bumps, and stomach-lurches), horror in *The Sixth Sense* is nothing other than an art form that seeks to simulate and externally reactivate the submerged inner "sense of sensing" in the aesthetic conditions circumscribed by the projected image. Shyamalan's motion picture does not allow us to fully share the sixth sense as such; it does, however, permit us—not least through its re-enactment of Arthurian otherworldliness—to witness the undead existence of phantasms.

Notes

1. My analysis is based on the double DVD *The Sixth Sense, Platinum Edition*, published by VCL Communications in 2004.
2. Cf. Katherine A. Fowkes, "Melodramatic Specters. Cinema and *The Sixth Sense*," in *Spectral America. Phantoms and the National Imagination*, ed. Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), p. 202 [185–206].
3. Cf. Nils Westboer, *Der innere Blick. Zur Konstruktion von Sehen und Wissen in M. Night Shyamalan's The Sixth Sense, Unbreakable und Signs* (Saarbrücken: VDM, 2008).
4. Cf. Robert Hurley, "Purgatoire et anagnôrisis dans le film *The Sixth Sense*," in *Religieuses* 26 (2002): 53–65. Sabine Bobert, "Auferstehungskonzepte im populären Kinofilm: *Matrix I, The Sixth Sense, Alien 4—The Resurrection, Hinter dem Horizont*," in *Systematisch praktisch. Festschrift für Reiner Preul zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Wilfried Härle, Bernd-Michael Haese, Kai Hansen, and Eilert Herms (Marburg: Elwert, 2005), pp. 393–414. The Christian-dogmatic aspects of the film are examined by D. Brent Laytham in: "Time for Hope. *The Sixth Sense, American Beauty, Memento and Twelve Monkeys*," in *The Gift of Story. Narrating Hope in a Postmodern World*, ed. Emily Griesinger and Mark Eaton (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2006), pp. 69–83.
5. Cf. Georg Mott, "The Vanishing Point of the Sexual Subject: *The Closet, Hedwig and the Angry Inch, L.I.E., The Sixth Sense, The Others, Y Tu Mamá También*," in *Psychoanalytic Review* 91.4 (2004): 607–14.
6. Cf. Laurence A. Rickels, "Recognition Values: 'Seeing *The Sixth Sense* Again for the First Time,'" *Other Voices* 2.2 (2002). available at: www.othervoices.org/2.2/rickels/index.html; Kathy Smith, "The Emptiness of Zero: Representations of Loss, Absence, Anxiety and Desire in the Late Twentieth Century," *Critical Quarterly* 46.1 (2004): 40–59. On Shyamalan's film as a typical example for the representation of the psyche of children or women in Hollywood cinema, see Jerrold R. Brandell, "Kids on the Couch. Hollywood's Vision of Child and Adolescent Treatment," in *Celluloid Couches, Cinematic Clients. Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy in the Movies*, ed. Jerrold R. Brandell (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2004), pp. 19–45 and Marilyn Charles, "Women in Psychotherapy on Film. Shades of Scarlett Conquering," in *Celluloid Couches, Cinematic Clients. Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy in the Movies*, ed. Jerrold R. Brandell (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2004), pp. 67–93.
7. Cf. Erlend Lavik, "Narrative Structure in *The Sixth Sense*. A New Twist in 'Twist Movies?'" *The Velvet Light Trap* 58 (2006): 55–64.
8. Cf. Jonathan Eig, "A Beautiful Mind(fuck): Hollywood Structures of Identity," *Ejump Cut*, available at: www.ejumpcut.org/archive/jc46.2003/eig.mindfilms/text.html. For details on the aspects of deliberately initiated illusions using red herrings and perception routines, see Britta Hartmann, "Von der Macht erster Eindrücke. Manoj Night Shyamalan's *The Sixth Sense*," in *Aller Anfang. Zur Initialphase des Spielfilms* (Marburg: Schüren Verlag, 2009), pp. 338–57.
9. Cf. Fowkes, "Melodramatic Specters," in *Spectral America*, pp. 202–3.
10. Tzvetan Todorov, *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1975), p. 32.
11. Cf. Cynthia Freeland, "Horror and Art-Dread," in *The Horror Film*, ed. Stephen Prince (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004), pp. 189–205.
12. Cf. Angela Curran, "Aristotelian Reflections on Horror and Tragedy in *An American Werewolf in London* and *The Sixth Sense*," in *Dark Thoughts*.

- Philosophic Reflections on Cinematic Horror*, ed. Steven Jay Schneider and Daniel Shaw (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003), pp. 47–64.
13. Christopher Falzon, *Philosophy goes to the Movies. An Introduction to Philosophy*, 2nd edn. (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 34.
 14. Cf. Kevin J. Harty, “Looking for Arthur in All the Wrong Places: A Note on M. Night Shyamalan’s *The Sixth Sense*,” in *Arthuriana* 10.4 (2000): 57–62. The quote is taken from another context in which Harty reuses his text in a slightly modified form: Kevin J. Harty, “Cinema Arthuriana: An Overview,” in *Cinema Arthuriana. Twenty Essays*, ed. Kevin J. Harty, 2nd revised edn. (Jefferson, NC: McFarland 2002), p. 29 [7–33].
 15. Psalm. 130:1.
 16. Harty, “Cinema Arthuriana,” p. 28.
 17. *Ibid.*, pp. 28–29.
 18. Anne Wawer writes of the otherworld concept of Celtic mythology, which forms the basis for the *matière de Bretagne*: “[T]he other world—actually the Realm of the Dead—[is] not differentiated from the world of the living. Our world and the other world cross over, intermingle, it is only that mortals cannot perceive the members of the other world. Selected members however, may switch to the sphere on the other side” (Anne Wawer, *Tabuisierte Liebe. Mythische Erzählschemata in Konrads von Würzburg Partonopier und Meliur und im Friedrich von Schwaben* [Cologne: Böhlau, 2000], p. 27 [the editors’ translation]). In his epic work on the Roman civil war (*De bello civili/Pharsalia*), Lucan was the first to remark on the essential difference between Celtic and other ancient religions being the lack of distinction between the worlds of the living and the dead. He writes of the druids: “To you alone is granted total knowledge of the gods and heaven’s powers—or total ignorance. Inhabiting deep groves in remote woods, you teach that ghosts do not head for Erebus’ silent home or for the colourless realm of Dis below, but the self-same spirit rules the limbs in another sphere. If what you sing is known in fact, then death is the mid-point in prolonged life. Without a doubt the people overlooked by Arcos are fortunate in their mistake, not to be oppressed by that greatest terror, fear of death. This explains their warriors’ willingness to rush upon the sword, their spirits keen for death, and their belief that it is cowardly to spare a life that will return” (Lucan, *Civil War*, trans. S. H. Braund [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999], pp. 14–15).
 19. Richard H. Lawson, *Arthurian Romances, Tales, and Lyric Poetry: The Complete Works of Hartmann von Aue*, trans. Frank J. Tobin, Kim Vivian, and Richard H. Lawson (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), p. 237.
 20. Cf. Walter Haug, “Vom Imram zur Aventure-Fahrt. Zur Frage nach der Vorgeschichte der hochhöfischen Epenstruktur (1970),” in *Strukturen als Schlüssel zur Welt. Kleine Schriften zur Erzählliteratur des Mittelalters* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1989), pp. 379–408, and “Erec, Enite und Evelyne B. (1979),” in *Strukturen als Schlüssel zur Welt. Kleine Schriften zur Erzählliteratur des Mittelalters* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1989), pp. 464–82.

21. Hartmann von Aue, *Erec*, trans. Michael Resler, University of Pennsylvania Press Middle Ages Series (University Park, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), p. 125.
22. Aue, *Erec*, pp. 139–40.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 140.
24. It is important to note the differences in terms of time and space that exist between the different forms of half-life in ancient myth: the underworld is not to be confused with otherworldliness.
25. Cf. Nicola Kaminski, “*Wâ ez sich êrste ane vienc, Da: ist ein teil unkunt.*” *Abgründiges Erzählen in der Krone Heinrichs von dem Türlin* (Heidelberg: Winter, 2005).
26. Kaminski, *Abgründiges Erzählen*, p. 29. Cf. also the chapter titled “Puer-senex-Figurationen,” pp. 41–56.
27. Heinrich von dem Türlin, *The Crown: A Tale of Sir Gawain and King Arthur’s Court*, trans. J. W. Thomas (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1989).
28. Türlin, *The Crown*, p. 254.
29. Cf. Jack Morgan, *The Biology of Horror. Gothic Literature and Film* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2002).
30. For the meaning of perception theory for medieval narratives, see Joachim Bumke, *Die Blutstropfen im Schnee. Über Wahrnehmung und Erkenntnis im Parzival Wolframs von Eschenbach*, *Hermæa* 94 (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2001); Haiko Wandhoff, *Ekphrasis. Kunstbeschreibungen und virtuelle Räume in der Literatur des Mittelalters*, *Trends in Medieval Philology* 3 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003); Christina Lechtermann, *Berührt werden. Narrative Strategien der Präsenz in der höfischen Literatur um 1200*, *Philologische Studien und Quellen* 191 (Berlin: Schmidt, 2005).
31. Cf. Giorgio Agamben, *Stanzas. Word and Phantasm in Western Culture*, trans. Ronald L. Martinez, *Theory and History of Literature* 69 (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1993); Daniel Heller-Roazen, *The Inner Touch. Archaeology of a Sensation* (New York: Zone Books, 2007).
32. Heller-Roazen, *The Inner Touch*, pp. 21–22.
33. Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 21–41 (Chapter 2: “The Aesthetic Animal” and Chapter 3: “The Primary Power”).
34. *Ibid.*, p. 36.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
36. The approach of a dead person is always announced by Cole’s breath becoming visible in front of his face and rapidly dropping temperatures. This presence remains bound to indexical signs of pneumatic apparitions until we discover Cole’s secret together with Malcolm: “I see dead people.” It is only from this time onwards that dead people’s presence is shown in a mimetic “true-to-life” form with visible images of the dead. I am greatly indebted to Lydia Bichel for pointing out this significant detail to me.