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H. P. Lovecraft: Life and Work

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Prohlašuji, že jsem práci zpracoval samostatně a čerpal jsem jen z uvedených pramenů a literatury.

Plzeň, duben 2014

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Děkuji vedoucí mé bakalářské práce Mgr. Kamile Velkoborské, Ph.D. za pomoc a podporu při zpracování.

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1 INTRODUCTION

This Bachelor thesis deals with the life and work of an American writer Howard Phillips Lovecraft. The objective of this thesis is the depiction of Lovecraft's life, his influence on magical practice and also his influence on popular culture. The key objective is to introduce H. P. Lovecraft as a writer and creator of a fictional grimoire and to find out which area Lovecraft influenced most significantly and why.

This thesis is divided into four main chapters and those are divided into several subchapters. The first chapter deals with the life and legacy of H. P. Lovecraft in detail. In short it depicts the life and work of several of his followers.

The second chapter is called 'Selected Works by H. P. Lovecraft'. In this chapter several Lovecraft's stories are depicted, their main plot and comparison to the relevant movie adaptations.

The third chapter is called 'Lovecraftian Magic'. This part deals with magic because Lovecraft had significant influence on it, particularly on the so-called chaos magic. In this chapter the reader will find general information about the chaos magic, the influence of Lovecraft on it and description of a ritual based upon it. For this purpose I conducted an interview with Pavel Ungr who is a practising magician. Because Lovecraft composed into his works a mythical book *Necronomicon* that became popular and it was one of the reasons why Lovecraft had an impact on magic, this chapter also deals with this book and its versions. Last but not least this chapter depicts the Lovecraft's fictional mythology 'Cthulhu Mythos' and describes its several entities.

The last chapter deals with Lovecraft's impact on popular culture, in this case music, video games, and festivals.

The final part of this thesis is conclusion and its objective is to give summary of the whole thesis.

2 HOWARD PHILLIPS LOVECRAFT

2.1 The Life of H. P. Lovecraft

Howard Phillips Lovecraft was an American horror writer and poet. He became known for writing the genre supernatural (weird) fiction. He was a tall, very thin man with short hair and long jaw. [1]

He was born in Providence, Rhode Island in 1890. Lovecraft came from a wealthy family. His grandfather, Whipple Van Bure Phillips, was a prosperous businessman. Lovecraft's mother was of English origin. The origin of the ancestors of his mother can be traced a number of centuries back. The fact that he was of English origin had great influence on his behaviour and interests. He was interested in everything English and used to behave like a nineteenth century English gentleman. [2]

When Lovecraft was three years old, his father Winfield Scott Lovecraft suffered a nervous breakdown. He never recovered from his illness and died in 1898. He did not have much influence on H. P. Lovecraft because he worked as a commercial traveller and did not spend too much time at home with his family. After his father had died, Lovecraft was brought up by his mother Sarah Susan Phillips Lovecraft, his two aunts, and his grandfather. [3], [4]

It was his grandfather's private library what had great impact on young Lovecraft. He spent a great amount of time there and was studying mostly history and mythology. [5]

Lovecraft suffered from nervous disorder. His health was very uncertain. The fact that he was disabled allowed him to read many books. When he was a child, Lovecraft adapted the pseudonym of 'Abdul Alhazred'. Lovecraft used this name for naming the author of the mysterious book Necronomicon that appears in several of his stories. [6]

After the death of Lovecraft's grandfather in 1904, Lovecraft and his family had to move from their house. Lovecraft suffered very much from the loss of his birth-house and contemplated suicide [7].

Because of his weak health, Lovecraft did not spend much time in school. He was often ill and his attendance was very sporadic. Another alleged reason why he did not spend much time in school was that Lovecraft was very talented and clever. He was mostly educated at home by private teachers. In 1908 he suffered a nervous breakdown and it disabled him to finish his high school studies. [8], [9]

The very first story in the genre supernatural fiction that H. P. Lovecraft wrote was called 'The Noble Eavesdropper' in 1896. At the age of eight, he discovered the work of Edgar Allan Poe who became Lovecraft's influence for the whole life. Among his earliest tales is for example 'The Beast in the Cave' (1905), 'The Picture' (1907), or 'The Alchemist' (1908). In some of his early tales, Lovecraft tried to record his dreams and weave them into his tales. [10], [11]

After those early tales he gave up writing fiction for almost ten years because he did not feel any motivation to write anymore. In 1917 he started to write tales again and the first tale was called 'Dagon'. Lovecraft was not only a writer; he also worked as a spelling checker and ghost writer of other amateur writers. That became the main source of his income throughout the following years. His job was to correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Lovecraft sometimes, however, re-wrote the whole story if he felt like it. Writing fiction was only a side income for him. [12]

An essential moment in Lovecraft's life happened on July 4, 1921 in Boston at amateur journalism convention where he met a Russian woman of Jewish origin who would become his wife. Her name was Sonia Haft Greene and she was seven years older than H. P. Lovecraft. They had known each other because Greene was one of the authors whom Lovecraft checked their literary works. Sonia Haft Greene and H. P. Lovecraft got married on March 3, 1924. They lived together in Brooklyn in New York. [13]

However, within two years their marriage was in trouble. Lovecraft and Greene started to live separate lives. Lovecraft moved back to Providence where he lived until his death. Finally, after five years of marriage Lovecraft and Sonia Haft Green got divorced. [14]

In March 1923 J. C. Henneberger founded a new magazine named 'Weird Tales'. That was important for Lovecraft's life because this magazine became a place where he published most of his stories. In addition, he became one of the most significant writers [15]. Lovecraft was also offered to become an editor of a magazine affiliated to 'Weird Tales' but he rejected it. The reason was that he would have to move to Chicago and for him it was unacceptable because Lovecraft was a huge patriot of Providence and did not want to move so far from his city. [16].

In 1929, Lovecraft's tale 'The Dunwich Horror' was published in Weird Tales. For that story he earned 240 Dollars. Until that time it was his best paid story. However, this story was so terrifying that the publisher of Weird Tales denied publishing any other Lovecraft's story until 1931 [17].

In 1934, Lovecraft started to complain about health problems; he had problems with digesting food. But he did not look for any doctor. Two years later he was diagnosed a colon cancer and Bright's disease. At that time it was no longer possible for him to recover from the illness [18]

H. P. Lovecraft died on March 15, 1937.

2.2 The Legacy of H. P. Lovecraft

Lovecraft was a xenophobic person [19]. It is ironic that he married a woman from Slavic country of Jewish origin and many of his friends were Afro-Americans.

All of his stories bar one were published in magazines. The only exception was 'Shadow over Innsmouth' (1936).

Throughout his career, Lovecraft started friendship with many people by correspondence. His friends were mostly his peers, other writers, or fans. One of his correspondents was also Sonia Haft Greene who later became his wife. Some of his letters were later officially published. Between the years 1965 and 1976 five volumes of letters under the title 'Selected Letters' were published. [20], [21]

After his death and with no printed book and with many stories scattered in several magazines, nothing indicated that Lovecraft would become such important and influential author of the twentieth century. However, things began to change soon. His friends August Derleth and Donald Wandrei founded a company called 'Arkham House' whose aim was to preserve and publish Lovecraft's tales in a hard-cover book. In 1939 the company released a collection of Lovecraft's tales 'The Outsider and Others'. After that many other collections were released and translated into many languages [22]

Nowadays, after more than seventy-five years of his death, Lovecraft is one of the best-known American writers of supernatural fiction of the twentieth century.

2.3 Followers of H. P. Lovecraft

This part of the thesis deals with the followers of H. P. Lovecraft. The followers were mostly writers who were friends of H. P. Lovecraft and who were influenced by him and used to write fiction in the same way Lovecraft did. Below are depicted several authors who are generally considered to be Lovecraft's followers.

2.3.1 August Derleth

August Derleth was born in 1909 in Soak City in Wisconsin. He wrote his first stories when he was thirteen. His favourite authors were for

example Father Finn, Thornton Burges, A. Conan Doyle, or H. P. Lovecraft. In 1926 August Derleth made an initial appearance in the magazine *Weird Tales*. He wrote also during his university studies and in that time he wrote his autobiographical novel that was called *Evening in Spring*. In that time he also wrote imitations of Sherlock Holmes that were entitled *The Solar Pons* stories [23].

August Derleth was not only a writer. He also operated a Ranger's Club for young people, worked as office worker and president of the local Board of Education, organized a Parent-Teacher Association etc. August Derleth also worked as lecturer American Regional Literature in Wisconsin University. In 1939 he founded, together with Donald Wandrei, a company called Arkham House that started to release collections of Lovecraft's stories [24].

August Derleth was a friend of H. P. Lovecraft. They started to correspond with each other in 1926 and Derleth was allowed to contribute in the so-called Cthulhu Mythos, the fictitious mythology invented by Lovecraft, although the title was made up by Derleth. [25]

To Derleth's Lovecraft-like works belongs for example *The Lurker at the Threshold*, *Someone in the Dark*, or *the Mask of Cthulhu*. [26]

August Derleth died in 1971.

2.3.2 Donald Wandrei

Donald Wandrei was born in 1908 in St. Paul in the state of Minnesota. In 1927 the magazine *Weird Tales* published his story 'The Red Brain'. Donald Wandrei studied at the University of Minnesota and in 1928 got a bachelor degree. In the same year Wandrei published a book called 'Ecstasy and Other Poems'. In 1931 he published 'The Dark Odyssey'. In 1932 Donald Wandrei got a Ph.D. degree. In 1939 Wandrei became a co-founder of Arkham House. From 1942 to 1945 served in American Army during the Second World War. [27]

Donald Wandrei was one of the friends of H. P. Lovecraft and also a member of the so-called 'Lovecraft-Circle'. Wandrei also convinced a publisher of *Weird Tales* to publish Lovecraft's story 'The Call of Cthulhu'. Donald Wandrei also came with the idea of publishing sonnets for the magazine *Weird Tales* which has an influence on Lovecraft because Lovecraft then published also series of sonnets called 'Fungi from Yuggoth'. [28]

He died in 1987.

2.3.3 Robert E. Howard

Robert E. Howard was born in 1906 in Peaster in the state of Texas. Robert E. Howard was a popular writer of fantasy, horror. He became famous for his works *Solomon Kane* and *Conan the Barbarian* that were also adapted to movies. His favourite writers were for example Jack London, H. P. Lovecraft, Mark Twain, or Arthur Conan Doyle. Howard started to write when he was a child and in his fifteen he published his first story 'Spear and Fang'. Howard also published his stories in the magazine *Weird Tales*. In 1928, Howard published his first story with the character called *Solomon Kane*, 'Red Shadow'. [29]

H. P. Lovecraft and Robert E. Howard corresponded to each other and became friends. Howard also wrote supernatural fiction in the style of Lovecraft although he became known mostly for his Conan stories. To the 'Cthulhu Mythos' stories belong for example 'The Children of the Night', 'The Thing on the Roof', or 'The Black Stone', 'Dig Me No Grave', or 'The House in the Oaks'. [30]

As mentioned earlier, Howard's works were adapted to movies, for example *Conan the Barbarian* (1982) and *Conan the Destroyer* (1984) with Arnold Schwarzenegger in the main role; *Kull the Conqueror* with Kevin Sorbo (1997), or *Solomon Kane* with James Purefoy (2009).

Robert E. Howard died in 1936. [31]

2.3.4 Clark Ashton Smith

Clark Ashton Smith was an American writer, poet and painter. He was born in 1893 in Long Valley, California. He did not achieve any secondary school degree. His formal education ended with primary school.

Smith published his works in the magazine *Weird Tales*. He started to correspond with Lovecraft in 1925 and they continue to do it until the Lovecraft's death. Smith was known for his fantasy and horror stories and also for contributing to Cthulhu Mythos (see chapter 4.4). To the Mythos he added new creatures.

He also wrote stories dealing with Cthulhu Mythos, for example 'The Hunters from Beyond', 'The Light from Beyond' or 'The Tale of Sattampra Zeiros'. [32]

All four authors mentioned above were members of the so-called 'Lovecraft Circle'. It contained all authors that were in touch with Lovecraft either personally or by correspondence. It was about authors that were influenced by Lovecraft or about authors that had an influence on Lovecraft in some way. [33]

3 SELECTED WORKS BY H. P. LOVECRAFT

I am more interested in scenes – landscapes and architecture – I have a very real affection for the old town with its ancient steeples and belfries, hills and corners, courts and lanes, all reminding me of that eighteenth century and that Old England which I love so well.

[34]

Wild nature, mountains, old abandoned villages where an ordinary person is not welcome, that is a common element in Lovecraft's tales. In the tales it is futile to seek a real 'happy end'. The main character either dies or becomes insane for the rest of his life.

It is significant for Lovecraft's tales that he connects fiction with reality. One of Lovecraft's habits was to give fictitious names to real places. Lovecraft often mentions fictional towns in the state of Massachusetts such as Arkham, Dunwich. Another example is the Miskatonic University in Arkham. In reality the Miskatonic University is the Brown University in Providence. [35] Lovecraft also uses real and fictitious characters that appear throughout his stories or that are connected with Necronomicon. For example the translator of the Necronomicon from Arabic language, Theodorus Philetas, is fictitious character. On the other hand Olaus Wormius or Pope Gregory IX are real people who lived [36, 37]. Lovecraft, for example, makes references to and quotations from mysterious books so well that one might consider it to be real. Some of his tales are set in a specific period of time so that it seems to be real. Lovecraft also used to give names for some places, books or daemons that were invented by his friends, for instance the mysterious book Unausprechlichen Kulten whose author, according to Lovecraft's stories, is Friedrich Wilhelm von Junzt invented friend of Lovecraft Robert E. Howard [38].

In the next part will be compared several of Lovecraft's stories and their movie adaptations. First, there will be depicted the main plot of the original story and then will be compared the plot of the story with the relevant movie adaptation and differences between them.

3.1 The Call of Cthulhu

3.1.1 The Main Plot

The Call of Cthulhu is the most famous work by H. P. Lovecraft. The work is divided into three chapters. The main character is a great-grandnephew of a famous scientist Dr. George Gammell Angell. The name of the main character is not mentioned.

The first chapter is entitled 'The Horror in Clay'. In this chapter Dr George Gammell Angell dies in mysterious circumstances at the age of ninety-two. As the main character was his heir, he found by his dead great-uncle a small box of modern origin but ancient design. It contained a figure of a monster and a document called 'CTHULHU CULT'. This document was divided into two parts. The first one described weird dreams and sickness of Henry Anthony Wilcox who was the first to show Dr Angell that box; and the second one was narrative of Inspector John R. Legrasse. Wilcox was a man known to Dr. Angell (Wilcox came from a family of good reputation) who experienced a very mysterious sickness that occurred between March 23 and April 2, 1925 and then suddenly disappeared. Wilcox was in delirium. He had dreams of

great Cyclopean cities of Titan blocks and sky-flung monoliths,
all dripping with green ooze and sinister with latent horror. [39]

The second chapter is called 'The Tale of Inspector Legrasse'. The main plot of this chapter is a revelation of a voodoo cult by Legrasse in 1907. A group of policemen with Legrasse as their commander discovered a dark cult in a deep forest. Some members of the cult were shot

and many were arrested. As the prisoners said, they had worshipped the 'The Great Old Ones'.

'The Madness from the Sea' is the last chapter of this tale. It brings a reader back to the days March 23 to April 2, 1925 when Wilcox experienced his sickness. During that time the group of mariners on the ship 'Emma' were on the open sea when the mighty city of R'lyeh had emerged from the sea.

The Thing of the idols, the green, sticky spawn of the stars, had awaked to claim his own. The stars were right again, and what an age-old cult had failed to do by designs, a band of innocent sailors had done by accident. After vigintillions of years great Cthulhu was up again, and ravening for delight [40].

The men decided to explore one huge pillar with great door on the top. When one man managed to open that door the Great Cthulhu was free again. All of the men except captain Johansen were killed either by Cthulhu or by madness.

At the very end the main character starts to fear that he knows too much and is about to die soon [41].

3.1.2 Comparison of the Tale and Movie

The movie the Call of Cthulhu is likely the most successful movie created by H. P. Lovecraft Historical Society (more about it in chapter 5.2.1). It was recorded as a silent retro black and white movie. [42] This movie is a faithful adaptation of the original story and the retro style in which it was recorded passes the horror atmosphere from the original story on the movie very well. Although it is a very faithful adaptation, there are also several slight differences from the original story.

The first difference comes at the very beginning of the movie. In the movie the narrator is a patient in an asylum and has an interview with a

man and the narrator wants him to burn all the evidence of the Cthulhu Cult. In the story the narrator is not at an asylum at all and also in the original story are not mentioned any intentions to burn the document Cthulhu Cult.

Another difference is that the original plot begins with the recalling of the death of the narrator's great-uncle Professor George Gammel Angell who was probably killed by a nautical-looking black man although the movie begins, as mentioned, in the asylum and there it comes to light that Professor Angell died of a natural death while sleeping.

Unlike the original story, in the movie Mr Wilcox, who reports to Professor Angell his nightmares, was from March 23 to April 2 1925 in delirium and was sent to the local hospital. In the original story it is said the he was at home.

A difference also comes when in the original story the crew of the ship Emma was attacked by unknown ship Alert and after a winning fight the crew of Emma captured Alert because Emma was heavily damaged.

In conclusion it is good to be said that the movie The Call of Cthulhu is a faithful adaptation of the original story with several differences.

3.2 The Dunwich Horror

3.2.1 The Main Plot

This tale is set in the small village of Dunwich near Arkham, and its close environment. The main characters are Wilbur Whateley, Lavinia Whateley, Old Whateley, and Henry Armitage.

Wilbur Whateley is an offspring of a human being and a supernatural entity because he is a product of an intercourse between Lavinia Whateley and Yog-Sothoth, one of the Great Old Ones. Wilbur also had a secret twin brother who was not of human shape and was more like Yog-Sothoth. Lavinia Whateley is a daughter of Old Whateley. It was generally

known among citizens of Dunwich that Old Whateley was practising black magic and that was the main reason why people avoided him.

Since his birth, Wilbur was growing up very fast and always looked much older than he really was. That was the main reason why he was hated by other villagers. Here we may find an association to Lovecraft himself because as well as Wilbur Whateley, Lovecraft was also a precocious child.

When Wilbur was old enough his aim was to get the Necronomicon from any university throughout the world but without any success. His concern was to bring to life his twin brother. He finally decided to steal the Necronomicon from Miskatonic University in Arkham. His mission was accomplished. His brother came to life but did not survive the magical ritual.

After that professor Armitage found it essential to read the Necronomicon where he could find the magical incantation to send Wilbur's brother back into his world. He was led by his conviction the creature is a danger for the whole mankind. Although he was frightened by reading the Necronomicon, Armitage fulfilled his task and managed to erase the creature from this world [43].

It was – well, it was mostly a kind of force that doesn't belong in our part of space; a kind of force that acts and grows and shapes itself by other laws than those of our sort of Nature [44].

3.2.2 Comparison of the tale and movie

In 1970 the movie of the same name was released. [45]

If one skips the beginning of the story by Lovecraft, where the environment and nature around the village of Dunwich is described, the story and the movie begin with the birth of Wilbur Whateley and his secret twin brother who does not have a human shape. After that, however, the plot

splits. In the original story the growing up of Wilbur is depicted in detail. In the story Wilbur is depicted as a precocious child who always looks older than he really is and is also smarter than children at his age. In the story the older he gets the more devilish and goatish his face looks.

The plot of the movie begins, however, with the adult Wilbur who looks for the book *Necronomicon* at the Miskatonic University in Arkham. In the movie Wilbur is depicted as a handsome man whose charm impresses young lady Nancy that works in the library of Miskatonic University and she allows him to study the *Necronomicon*. Wilbur then asks doctor Armitage to borrow the *Necronomicon* in order to study it at home. Doctor Armitage refuses. Wilbur persuades Nancy to stay with him in Dunwich for a weekend. Nancy then becomes one of the main characters because Wilbur wants to sacrifice her in order to raise the Great Old Ones, although in the original story Nancy does not appear at all. In the original story the Wilbur's house is depicted as a farmhouse, in the movie it is depicted more as a mansion. In the Lovecraft's story Wilbur's grandfather, Old Whateley dies of natural death; in the movie Old Whateley dies when he wants to stop Wilbur from raising the Great Old Ones and falls from the stairs.

The greatest difference comes when Wilbur decides to steal *Necronomicon* from the library. Originally he reads the *Necronomicon* in the library, then tries to raise his twin brother and shifts his shape due to some formulae and then he dies. In the movie Wilbur only steals the *Necronomicon* and kills a policeman who tries to stop him. In the movie Wilbur's twin brother is kept under a lock in the upper storey of his house. Nancy's friend releases it when she tries to save her and dies. Wilbur's brother then kills several people of Dunwich and destroys Wilbur's house.

Lavinia Whateley originally disappears after Wilbur had grown older and is never seen again, but in the movie she becomes mad after Wilbur's birth and is held in an asylum where she dies. The original story ends when Dr. Armitage uses formulae from *Necronomicon* in order to

send Wilbur's twin brother back to his world, while in the movie Wilbur Whateley tries to sacrifice Nancy and Dr. Armitage uses formulae to destroy Wilbur. In the original story, the formulae go:

Ygnaiih...ygnaiih...thflth'ngah...Yog-Sothoth...Y'bthnk... h'ehye –
n'grkdl'lh... [46]

In the movie the formulae go:

N'ghe'ghi'ma!... Ygnaiih'ngah... Ygnaiih'ngah... N'ghe'ghi'ma!...
N'ghe'ghi'ma!... N'ya'ghe'amaa... N'ya'ghe'amaa... N'ya'ghe'amaa...
[47]

In both cases Dr. Armitage is successful and Wilbur and his brother die. Nevertheless, at the very end of the movie it comes to light that Nancy is pregnant, probably with Wilbur.

3.3 The Case of Charles Dexter Ward

3.3.1 The Main Plot

The Case of Charles Dexter Ward is a novel that was first published in 1941, four years after Lovecraft's death.

The main characters of this novel are Charles Dexter Ward who was a member of a prominent family; Joseph Curwen, he was Ward's ancestor; and Marinus Bicknell Willett, the doctor of Ward.

The story tells about an eccentric young man Charles Dexter Ward who is imprisoned in an asylum for mentally ill people. The story begins with the real end of the plot. Charles Dexter Ward disappears from the asylum on very strange circumstances. The last one who saw him was Dr. Willet, Ward's doctor, few moments before Ward had left. Then the story returns back in time.

Charles Dexter Ward was an eccentric person but when he started to be concerned with the discovery of his ancestor Joseph Curwen, he had become obsessed. Charles Dexter Ward was so similar in face to Joseph Curwen that it was almost impossible to tell them apart. Joseph Curwen was a ship entrepreneur who lived in eighteenth century. His reputation was very evil. He was a necromancer and mass murderer. He also owned an edition of the infamous book Necronomicon. People knew of him that he was weird; the most significant point was that he never seemed to grow old in his face.

The doctor reveals that Ward was so determined to get to know his ancestor that he even moved to the house that used to be Curwens. Then he also bought a house in the village of Pawtuxet where it was said to be the base for Curwen's crimes. Ward became so obsessed with Curwen that he recovered the ashes of Curwen in order to bring him to life with the help of magical formulae. He was successful and Joseph Curwen came to life again.

Doctor Willett then decides to explore the house in Pawtuxet. He finds out that under the house is a huge labyrinth of catacombs. During his journey through the catacombs, Willet reveals the truths about Curwen, his crimes, and also that he used to collect dead bodies of the wisest people in the world in order to gain their knowledge.

After that Willett manages to get into Curwen's laboratory in the house where Ward now should live. In the laboratory Willett manages to raise a spirit. After that he faints and wakes up in another room with a piece of paper in his pocket with a note that he must kill Joseph Curwen and destroy his body. Dr. Willet persuaded Ward to go asylum. After a while Dr. Willet found remain in the original library in the Ward's birth-house. After that he found out that the person who was sent to the asylum was not Charles Dexter Ward but it was Joseph Curwen and that Curwen killed Ward. Joseph Curwen then pretended to be Ward. Dr Willet then

goes into the room where Curwen is accommodated and with the help of magic formulae kills Curwen [48].

3.3.2 Comparison to the Movie (The Resurrected)

In 1992 the movie adaptation *The Resurrected* was released. [49] The first thing that one can see is, in comparison to the original story that was published in 1941, that the movie is set into the modern time.

The original story and the movie both begin with the disappearing of Charles Dexter Ward from an asylum. There is, however, a slight difference because in the movie the window that Ward was thought to escape through was on a cliff but in the movie the window was situated above a street.

Since then several things are different. In the original story Charles Dexter Ward was sent to asylum by agreement of his father and Dr. Willet. Dr Willet was the last person who saw Charles. In the movie, however, the last person who saw Ward was a private detective John March who was hired by Ward's wife Clair Ward in order to investigate Charles's very weird behaviour because he did some alchemical experiments, he also became very obsessed with occult practices and raising dead people. In the movie John March substitutes the role of Dr. Willet. Then he moved to the farm in Pawtuxet that used to be Curwens. In the original story neither Clair Ward nor John March are mentioned, as well as neither Dr. Willet nor Ward's father are mentioned in the movie.

In the original story the life of Joseph Curwen is depicted in detail. In the movie is his life depicted very shortly. Another difference is that in the original story appears Dr. Allen as Ward's servant, in the movie is the same servant named Ash. And the second servant is originally of Portuguese origin and his name is Gomez, in the movie the second servant is of Chinese origin and his name is Raymond. In the original story there is depicted a Ward's journey to Europe in order to get some books and ma-

terials dealing with occultism and to meet some people that are experts on occultism and magic. In the movie there is no Ward's journey to Europe at all.

In the original story Charles Dexter Ward is very obsessed with occultism and in his library in his birth-house he tries to raise some entities. His parents are concerned for him and it goes so far that Ward moves to the house in Pawtuxet that stands on the same place as Curwen's. In the movie Ward has his laboratory in a shed outside his house. He then also moves to Pawtuxet but he did it because his wife put pressure on him to move his experiments somewhere else.

In the movie Ward has very frequent consignments of raw meat and coffins with dead bodies. Different is also the exploration of catacombs that are situated below the Ward's farm in Pawtuxet. In the original story there is Dr. Willet alone and at the end of his journey he manages to raise some ghost and then faints; in the movie the ones who explore the catacombs are detective March, his colleague, and Claire Ward. At the beginning they are sceptical to anything supernatural but then they arrive to Ward's laboratory and March spills some kind of elixir on a raw meat and the meat comes to life. When they come across some creatures that were products of unsuccessful experiments, his colleague Lonnie is attacked by one of those creatures and dies. At the end March blows the catacombs up. In the suitcase that March found in the catacombs are bones and a jacket that belonged to Ward. March came to conclusion that those bones were Wards. That was different from the original story where dr Willet found Ward's remain in his library.

The ending of the original story and movie differs slightly. In the story Dr. Willet uses magical formulae to destroy Curwen. The formulae went:

'OGTHORD AI'F GEB'L – EE'H YOG-SOTHOTH NGAH'NG AI'Y
ZHRO!' [50]

In the movie Curwen kills a doctor that came into the room because Curwen started to behave like a beast. Detective March threw some kind of elixir on the spilled bones of Ward so that Ward's bones came to life and the skeleton killed Curwen and together with Curwen dies also the Ward's skeleton. In the movie March does not use any magical formulae.

In conclusion it is convenient to say that the movie 'The Resurrected' is a relatively loose adaptation that is set in modern time but the core of the plot is in accordance with the original story 'The Case of Charles Dexter Ward' written by H. P. Lovecraft.

3.4 The Nameless City

There is no movie adaptation on this tale but because it is generally considered to be the first Lovecraft's tale dealing with 'Cthulhu Mythos', only the main plot of this tale will be depicted there.

3.4.1 The Main Plot

The Nameless City is the first story that is concerned with 'The Great Old Ones'. This tale is written in the first person view and the main character is not named.

The plot deals with the main character travelling to the Nameless City in an Arabian desert. He was the first living man who ever dared to see that area.

It was of this place that Abdul Alhazred the mad poet dreamed on the night before he sang his unexplainable couplet:

That is not dead which can eternal lie, and with strange aeons even death may die [51].

The main character decided to explore that city. At first he found two small temples of so small height that he was unable to even stand upright

in them. The next day he discovered another temple. That one was higher than the others. The main character found a tunnel that led into the depths of the temple. At the wall he looked up to paintings of an ancient race. He wondered why there were not depicted any burial rites and why death is not depicted at all.

The deeper he was getting the greater fear he was seized with. At the very end of the corridor he heard a strange sound and the legion of ancient race appeared behind him. He got so mad that he found himself repeating Alhazred's unexplainable couplet. Then he was plunged away and survived but he became mad forever [52].

In conclusion to this chapter it is convenient to mention that the common element of the movie adaptations on works by H. P. Lovecraft is that they are mostly low-budget and/or amateur movies with no or little commercial success. The movie adaptations in this thesis are of an older date with the exception of 'The Call of Cthulhu' that was released in 2005. In addition, movie adaptations on Lovecraft's works are mostly made for the fans of Lovecraft, not for the mainstream audience. There is no movie adaptation for the story 'The Nameless City' but because it is considered to be the first story incorporated to the Lovecraft's fictional mythology 'Cthulhu Mythos', I depicted the main plot of the story.

4 LOVECRAFTIAN MAGIC

Lovecraft is connected with magic because the fictional book *Necronomicon* that appears in his several stories and its usage for raising of the Great Old Ones was composed into magical practise.

Lovecraftian magic is closely connected to the so-called Chaos Magic. Chaos Magic first appeared in the late 70s of the twentieth century when the punk rock music was at its top. That was the time when first groups dealing with chaos magic appeared. The founders of Chaos Magic are considered to be Pete Carroll and Ray Sherwin. [53] This kind of magic is also called Left Hand Path magic. [54]

At the beginning there appeared informal groups whose objective was to experiment with this new trend. As it is evident from the title, Chaos Magic is not based on system. It is a very individualistic thing. According to Phil Hine, who is a well-known magician and author among chaos magicians, Chaos Magic was soon considered to be ominous. He says that it was because of three things. Firstly, because Chaos Magic is very individualistic, it was disapproved by traditional schools of magic; secondly, chaos was closely connected to anarchy; and thirdly some books and articles dealing with Chaos Magic were considered to be blasphemous, or dangerous. [55]

It is useful for a person that practises Lovecraftian magic to record his or her dreams and keep a diary of dreams. Those dreams in which appears some kind of indication of the myth might become a basis of an astral framework of imagination. On this basis a magician practices other meditations. Phil Hine says that if one observes the dreams, they might become more realistic and those dreams might continue to creating a story. [56]

It is generally believed by magicians that practising magic dealing with Cthulhu Mythos, or generally Chaos Magic might be dangerous. One must be mentally very strong and know himself or herself perfectly. When one is mentally unstable, practising this kind of magic might cause prob-

lems. Phil Hine describes that during practising he stopped eating regularly, washing himself or going out. [57]

From the interview with Pavel Ungr, also known under the nickname 'Cody', it follows that practising Mythos Magic means going very far in history, to the creating of the Earth because the Great Old Ones, according to Lovecraft, were here before the creation of our planet. And that kind of journey may cause mental problems. Cody does not recommend this kind of magic to any interested person who is mentally weak or who has to deal with any personal problems. He says that practising magic that is connected with some kind of mythology means to adopt qualities and attributes of the deities. And if one adopts attributes of 'The Great Old Ones' (more about it in chapter 4.5) whose attributes are chaos and disorder, one may be absorbed by it so much that he or she becomes mad. Cody compares this kind of magic to driving a car. When there is a mad driver, then he is dangerous for himself as well as for others. But when there is a skilled driver who knows what he is doing, then it is safe. The same is with the Mythos Magic. Cody also says that unlike other kinds of magic, where are some kinds of authorities, in Cthulhu magic there are no authorities and the person practising this kind of magic is all on his own. One has nothing to rely on [58].

There is a Czech group dealing with this kind of magic.

This group, for example, created rituals based on their practise and other materials such as stories by Lovecraft, works by his followers, or Simon Necronomicon (see chapter 4.3). The creation of ritual consisted also of meditation and personal gnosis which means that the rituals were based on the personal experience that goes beyond rational perception. The rituals were self-made and were based also on the materials mentioned above [59].

Considering rituals, there are so-called seven gates of the Necronomicon. It follows that a magician who is interested in this kind of magic

and who creates rituals based on the Simon Necronomicon must go through those seven gates. Each gate is connected to a deity. The practising magician must walk through all the gates in order to be prepared. It is agreed that this is a long-term job. For the Czech group it meant a year. If there is a difference between the magical practise in the Czech Republic and in the USA it is difficult to say. Cody says that he and the group were in touch with some Americans dealing with this kind of magic but they were not communicative. For example the members of the Warlock Asylum, which is an American blog dealing with the book Necronomicon and Cthulhu magic, were very aggressive during the communication [60].

This Czech group also used to organise a so-called Lovecraftian march through Prague.

This march was based on the story called 'The Last Feast of Harlequin. This march was organised on winter solstice. It was based on the contrast of the so-called two worlds. One world is the contemporary commercial Christmas time. In this case it meant relishing the Christmas atmosphere by having food in McDonalds, having drink on the Old Town Square etc. Then the members changed their clothes from civil clothes to black coats and white masks. The masks had to be painted according to the will of each participant. Then the contrast to the commercial part came, which meant the perception of Christmas time as a pagan feast and feast of winter solstice. At the beginning of this part there is a small ritual and then the group walked mutely through Prague and visited significant historical sights such as St. Vito's Cathedral, Prague castle, Charles Bridge, or Old Town Square. The group stopped at those historical sights and meditated for a while. The march lasted around four hours. The start was at Prague Castle and the end at Florenc. Then came a ritual at the end and after that the group went to a pub to get warm and to have a drink. [61]

With this event I wanted to show how an example of a magical ritual based upon Lovecraft's works can be performed. Nevertheless, as mentioned above, this kind of magic is very individualistic and there may be many other ways how these kinds of rituals can be performed.

Below are described several versions of the Necronomicon.

4.1 Lovecraft's Necronomicon (Al Azif)

Necronomicon is a mysterious book that appears in several tales by Lovecraft. According to Lovecraft the title 'Necronomicon' comes from the Greek language and this title was given to the book by fictitious person Theodorus Philetas who translated Necronomicon into Greek from Arabian language. [62]

According to Lovecraft this book was written in 8th century AD in Damascus by a mad Arab poet Abdul al Hazred who came from Sanna'a in Yemen. The original title of the book was Al Azif. The words Al Azif describe a sound of insects that are heard at night. By Arabs this sound was considered to be a howling of demons. Lovecraft said that in 1228 Olaus Wormius translated the text from Greek into Latin. As mentioned earlier, Olaus Wormius was a real person who lived in 16th and 17th century. In 15th century Necronomicon was printed out in Germany, in 16th century the Greek text was released in Italy and in 17th century the Spanish translations of the Latin text were released [63].

In tales by H. P. Lovecraft that are concerned with 'Cthulhu Mythos' such as 'The Dunwich Horror' or 'The Case of Charles Dexter Ward' Necronomicon is considered to be a godless and proscribed book that is kept at the fictitious Miskatonic University in the city of Arkham. It contains incantations for the purpose of evocation of entities known as the Great Old Ones. The Great Old Ones are a pre-human race that appears in tales by Lovecraft, for example in 'The Call of Cthulhu', 'The Dunwich Horror', or 'At the Mountains of Madness'. They came on the Earth from stars

and ruled the world in very far history, shortly after the creation of the Earth [64]. The particular entities will be described in chapter 4.4.

Although the book *Necronomicon* appears in several stories, Lovecraft never reveals the complete content of *Necronomicon*. In some stories there is a short citation and only in the *Dunwich Horror* a whole page from *Necronomicon* is cited.

According to Cody, the contents of the *Necronomicon* are considered to be stories, some kind of mythology of the Great Old Ones [65].

4.2 Giger's *Necronomicon*

Giger's *Necronomicon* is a book by Hans Rudolf Giger. He comes from Switzerland. He wrote this version of *Necronomicon* in 1977. Originally it was published by Sphinx Verlag.

This book consists mostly of pictures and the introduction was written by Clive Barker, a famous English horror and dark fantasy writer. Hans Rudolf Giger became also known for his contribution for the movie *Alien*. [66], [67]

4.3 Simon *Necronomicon*

Simon's *Necronomicon* is a book published in 1977 by occult shop The Magickal Childe under a fictitious name Simon. This grimoire is partially based on Cthulhu Mythos. In particular it contains names of entities used in Cthulhu Mythos. Partially it is based on ancient Sumerian mythology and demonology. Except those two sources this book is also influenced by British occultist, philosopher and writer Aleister Crowley. In the book is also used a language that pretends to be Sumerian. There are some words that come from ancient Sumerian language but the language itself was made up by the authors of this book [68]. The British author Dave Evans also says that the Simon *Necronomicon* is not authentic. [69]

In his article, Peter H. Gilmore says that Simon Necronomicon is a mixture of “pseudo-Sumerian and Goetic ritual”. [70]

The result is that Simon’s Necronomicon is a fictitious book in which different things from different areas are mixed together and it was released under the title Necronomicon. Cody says that this book does not contain the Mythos Magic in the true sense of the word but going through it can prepare a practising magician for the ‘real’ Mythos Magic. Even though there are names of some entities that are very similar to ‘The Great Old Ones’ such as Kutulu, the Czech group did not pay attention to them and they dealt only with the concept of the seven gates. As mentioned earlier, each gate is connected to a deity. Each deity represents a planet. For example a deity called ‘Shammashudu’ represents the Sun, ‘Isis’ stands for Venus etc. But this has nothing to do with Lovecraft and the title ‘Necronomicon’ was given to it probably for reasons of marketing. Cody says that this book was created by Peter Levenda who should be the person called ‘Simon’. [71] Peter Levenda is an American writer who focuses mostly on history of occultism. [72]

This book was firstly created as a test for adepts on this kind of magic that were associated with the shop Magickal Childe to recognize the fiction. Only then the book appeared in the shop for the public. Nevertheless this book became very popular and aroused a boom of books that bore the name Necronomicon. Since then the Necronomicon started to be considered the grimoire of black magic. [73]

Even though Lovecraft readers have been very interested in Necronomicon and tried to get it and even though there are magicians practising magic according to Necronomicon and Cthulhu Mythos, one must keep in mind that the original book under the name Necronomicon is a complete invention by Lovecraft, and therefore fictional. [74], [75] However, the authenticity of the material which a practising Chaos magician works with is irrelevant. The most important is if the material is useful and works for the magician. [76]

4.4 Cthulhu Mythos

Several tales by H. P. Lovecraft became known for their fictional world known as 'Cthulhu Mythos'.

Lovecraft, however, did not invent the title Cthulhu Mythos. His friend August Derleth, the founder of the company Arkham House, came up with this title. [77]

Although the 'Cthulhu Mythos' was a myth that Lovecraft composed into several stories, the stories themselves did not possess common characters, time, or environment [78]. On this topic Lovecraft said:

All my stories, unconnected as they may be, are based on the fundamental lore or legend that this World was inhabited a tone time by another race that, in practising Black Magic, lost their foothold and were expelled, yet live outsider, ever ready to take possession of this earth again [79].

The first tale that 'Cthulhu Mythos' appeared in was called 'The Nameless City' (1921). The last tale dealing with 'The Great Old Ones' (see chapter 4.5) was 'The Haunter of the Dark' (1935). The most famous and influential tale was called 'The Call of Cthulhu' (1926). Throughout the decades, many adaptations on this tale were made.

Although Lovecraft wrote a huge amount of stories, he did not believe in the supernatural phenomena and entities. He was a rational and materialistic person [80].

4.5 The Great Old Ones

The Great Old Ones are a mythic race that created and ruled the Earth in a prehistoric era, even before dinosaurs. In Lovecraft's stories they are worshipped by occult cults. In the tales by Lovecraft, those entities are considered to be

Forgotten by mankind but they are at the same time ever-present, lurking at the frontiers of order, in places where the wild power of nature can be felt [81].

In Lovecraft's tales, the Great Old Ones are mainly connected with wild nature and lonely or historic places.

At the first sight one might compare Cthulhu Mythos to the ancient mythologies such as Greek, Celtic, or Nordic mythology. That kind of pantheon was connected to the Earth and the gods possessed human attributes. There is nothing like that in the pantheon of The Great Old Ones. They do not possess qualities that are typical for gods in other mythologies. They are archetypes of the deep far universe. Because The Great Old Ones are not human there also is not a hierarchy of a typical pantheon. It means there is no real ruler and or subordinates and there also are not any relations between them. [82]

In Lovecraft's stories, most characters that come into contact with the Great Old Ones either die or become forever mad only from a mere look at them.

There are many entities of the Great Old Ones. Considering the basic pantheon of the Great Old Ones there are around ten to fifteen of them. They are for example: Yog-Sothoth, Azathoth, Nyarlothep, Shub-Niggurath, Dagon, and Cthulhu [83].

The Great Old Ones is not the only race that appears in Lovecraft's stories. Another race that appears in Lovecraft's stories, for example in the story 'At the Mountains of Madness', are Shoggoths. This race was depicted as servants of the Great Old Ones [84], [85].

Below are described several of the most important Great Old Ones.

4.5.1 The Great Cthulhu

According to H. P. Lovecraft the pronunciation should be “Clutu’, with both ‘u’'s long, on another occasion he vocalised it as ‘K-Lütl-Lütl’ and Robert H. Barlow claimed he pronounced it as ‘Koot-u-lew’” [86].

“In his house at R’lyeh dead Cthulhu waits dreaming” [87]. This is the ritual chant that was sung in the tale ‘The Call of Cthulhu’. Cthulhu is distinguished from ‘the Great Old Ones’ as their ‘High Priest’. Cthulhu has a tentacled head and scaly body with underdeveloped wings [88], [89].

Cthulhu is buried in the sunken city of R’lyeh in the deep ocean. He is buried in his tomb and waits until the time comes for ‘The Great Old Ones’ to rule on the Earth again.

The stirrings of Cthulhu send telepathic ripples around the world, bringing waves of disturbance – visions, nightmares, mental breakdown – and causing artists to produce strange images whilst in a dream-like state [90].

This is best seen in the tale ‘The Call of Cthulhu’ (the story is depicted in chapter 3.1).

4.5.2 Yog-Sothoth

Yog-Sothoth knows the gate. Yog-Sothoth is the gate. Yog-Sothoth is the key and guardian of the gate. Past, present, future, all are one in Yog-Sothoth. He knows where the Old Ones broke through of old, and where They shall break through again [91]

This excerpt from ‘The Dunwich Horror’ shows the role of Yog-Sothoth. He serves as a gate to different time dimensions. The greatest reference to Yog-Sothoth is in ‘The Dunwich Horror’. Another reference to

Yog-Sothoth can be found for example in the tale 'The Case of Charles Dexter Ward'. He is an entity of a great power. His power exceeds the abilities of 'Cthulhu' [92], [93].

4.5.3 Nyarlathotep

Nyarlothep is an entity of The Great Old Ones that differs from the others. Unlike the others, Nyarlathotep has the ability to shift his shape and become a human. Nyarlathotep is first mentioned in the short story 'Nyarlathotep' (1920). In this story he appeared as a man very similar to an Egyptian Pharaoh. This is the reason why he is often depicted as a black man from Egypt. He wears a black coat. But underneath his body consists of worms. He is the only one of the Great old Ones who is depicted as a human but instead of a face there is only blackness [94].

He serves as a messenger of the Great Old Ones and his objective is to communicate with humans. Nyarlathotep plays a significant role in the tale 'The Dream Quest of Unknown Kaddath' where he also bears the face of a Pharaoh. In another shape appears Nyarlathotep in the tale 'The Haunter of the Dark' (1936). In that tale Nyarlathotep appears in the form of a being with wings, burning eyes, and with three lobes [95], [96].

4.5.4 Azathoth

Azathoth gnaws hungrily in chaos amid pounding and piping and the hellish dancing of the Other Gods, blind, voiceless, tenebrous, and mindless, with their soul and messenger Nyarlathotep. [97], [98]

Azathoth is considered to be ruler of the Great Old Ones. He embodies a nuclear chaos of the universe [99]. Lovecraft first used the name Azathoth in the short story of the same name that he wrote in 1922.

Azathoth is mentioned in several stories such as *The Whisperer in Darkness*, *The Thing on the Doorstep*, or *The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kaddath*. The latter was first published after Lovecraft's death, in 1943.

4.5.5 Dagon

Dagon is a god that, as well as Cthulhu, lives under the sea. Lovecraft first used the name Dagon in the short story called 'Dagon' in 1917. Although according to Lovecraft stories, Dagon is the god of the race Deep Ones, writer August Derleth incorporated Dagon into the Great Old Ones. [100], [101], [102]

Dagon appears also in the novel *Shadow over Innsmouth* which contains a secret cult called *The Esoteric Order of Dagon*. [103]

4.5.6 Shub-Niggurath

This entity is also called 'the Black Goat of the Forest with a Thousand Young'. Shub-Niggurath is mentioned for example in the story *The Whisperer in Darkness*.

...is the Lord of the Wood, even to... and the gifts of the men of Leng... so from the wells of night to the gulfs of space, and from the gulfs of space to the wells of night, ever the praises of Great Cthulhu, of Tsathoggua, and of Him Who is not to be Named. Ever their praises and abundance to the Black Goat of the Woods. Iä! Shub-Niggurath! The Goat with a Thousand Young! [104], [105]

4.5.7 Yig

Yig is depicted as a snake god or half-human father of serpents. He was a feared god of some Native American tribes. Although he is depicted as a devil god, Yig sympathized with those who showed reverence for him. [106], [107]

As mentioned earlier, there are many entities of The Great Old Ones. The followers of Lovecraft have added many other entities. The most prominent of them was August Derleth. He made so significant changes in the Cthulhu Mythos that he was criticized for it. [108]

4.6 Esoteric Order of Dagon

Esoteric Order of Dagon is an order that unites people dealing with magical practise of Cthulhu Mythos. There are also people such as artists, actors that are devoted to the legacy of H. P. Lovecraft. The name of the cult is based on the self-named cult that appeared in the Lovecraft's story *The Whisperer in Darkness*. Members of this cult were for example Kenneth Grant or Peter Smith. Both were very important people for development of the Mythos Magic. [109], [110]

4.7 Haunters of the Dark

Haunters of the Dark are a magic group that was founded in 1999 in London. The main objective of this group was not "worshipping the Great Old Ones but identification with them as avatars of a 'post-human' metamorphosis". [111]

It is convenient to say that not all magicians practising chaos magic practise also Lovecraftian magic. Lovecraftian or Mythos magic was composed into Chaos Magic because the Great Old Ones come from very far universe where no order is and that represents chaos.

From this chapter it follows that Lovecraft and the pantheon of the Cthulhu Mythos, or the Great Old Ones and the book *Necronomicon* had a significant influence on magic and this area is the most influenced by Lovecraft.

5 LEGACY OF WORKS BY H. P. LOVECRAFT

5.1 Music

There are or have been several artists or groups that were inspired by H. P. Lovecraft. As mentioned earlier, probably the most famous band that was inspired by Lovecraft is the American band Metallica. That is for example the song 'The Call of Ktulu' from the album 'Ride the Lightning' [112]. According to the interview that James Hetfield, frontman of Metallica, gave the magazine Canoe, admitted that their songs 'The Thing That Should Not Be' from the album 'Master of Puppets' [113] and 'All Nightmare Long' from the album 'Death Magnetic' [114] were also inspired by Lovecraft. He said that it was about the hounds of Tindalos. [115]

Perhaps the second best known band that was inspired by Lovecraft is 'Mercyful Fate' that comes from Great Britain. It is about the song 'The Mad Arab (Part One: The Vision)' from the album 'Time' (1994) [116] and the song 'Kutulu (The Mad Arab Part Two)' from the album 'Into the Unknown' (1996). [117]

Another band worth mentioning that is concerned with H. P. Lovecraft is German heavy metal band 'Necronomicon'. This band was founded in Germany in 1984. In the lyrics, this band deals with the Great Old Ones. Until today Necronomicon has released eight albums. [118] Most of the bands play rock or metal genre.

5.2 Video Games

5.2.1 The H. P. Lovecraft Historical Society

The H. P. Lovecraft Historical Society is an organisation founded in 1984. The title was given to the organisation in 1987. Until then it was a group of friends that developed a live version of the game 'The Call of Cthulhu' under the name 'Cthulhu Lives'. In 1987 the organisation began to release a newsletter 'Strange Eons' that was released every month for

the next two years. The organisation has a seat in Glendale, California. It is an organisation that unites players of the video-game *The Call of Cthulhu*, in particular its live version and produces other video-games with the theme *Cthulhu Mythos*. The H. P. Lovecraft Historical Society is not dedicated only to playing video-games. It also produces amateur movie adaptations on stories by H. P. Lovecraft. The most successful movie that this organisation has produced is *The Call of Cthulhu* that was released in 2005. Other movies are for example ‘*The Testimony of Randolph Carter*’ (1987) or ‘*The Whisperer in Darkness*’ (2011). [119]

The H. P. Lovecraft Historical Society is primary organisation devoted to *Cthulhu Lives*. The HPLS motto is “*Ludo Fore Putavimus*”: a Latin phrase meaning “We thought it would be fun”. And by-the-way, we pronounce it as “cuh-thoo-loo” [120].

5.3 Festivals

5.3.1 NecronomiCon Providence

NecronomiCon Providence is a four-day convention that takes place every two years in Providence, Rhode Island. It is organised for people that are interested in life and work by Lovecraft. It is organised by a non-profit organisation ‘*The Lovecraft Arts and Sciences Council, Inc.*’. This organisation cooperates with experts and enthusiasts on the general impact of Lovecraft’s work on modern world.

Parts of the convention are also workshops, panel discussions, reading of books as well as concerts, art exhibits, or historic tours in the city of Providence. The visitors of this festival come from the whole USA. Some visitors come even from Europe or South America. [121]

5.3.2 The H. P. Lovecraft Film Festival & CthulhuCon

This festival was founded by Andrew Migliore in the USA in 1995. This festival supports H. P. Lovecraft through movie adaptations of his works by professional and amateur movie makers. It takes place in Portland and in Los Angeles. Both festivals take place twice a year, in spring and in autumn. This festival also participated on the festival NecronomiCon Providence with projecting several short movies such as 'Cool Air', 'The Outsider', or 'Nyarlathotep' that were created between the years 1996 and 2013 under the patronage of The H. P. Lovecraft Film Festival. [122]

In conclusion it is convenient to say that H. P. Lovecraft had a significant impact on modern popular culture. His stories have been composed into lyrics of songs by music groups, often rock and metal music groups, such as Metallica. Movie and fan festivals that are connected to the life and work by H. P. Lovecraft have been organised there.

6 CONCLUSION

This thesis dealt with the life and work of H. P. Lovecraft. The main objective was to depict Lovecraft's life, the influence on magic and on popular culture.

The first chapter depicted life in detail and in short his followers.

In the second chapter I described the main plot of several stories by Lovecraft. Then I used comparative method to find differences between Lovecraft's stories and relevant movie adaptations. I found out that the movies were mostly loose adaptations and that the movie adaptations are mostly low-budget and they were created for fans of Lovecraft.

The third chapter dealt with Lovecraft's influence on magic. Lovecraft influenced magic because in his works he created some kind of mythology, later named 'Cthulhu Mythos', which was composed into magical practise. I also described several entities of 'Cthulhu Mythos' called 'The Great Old Ones'. The third chapter also dealt with the book 'Necronomicon' that Lovecraft mentions in his works. I described several versions of 'Necronomicon'.

The aim of the last chapter was to find the influence of Lovecraft in popular culture. In that case it was music, video games and festivals. Considering music, I chose two heavy metal bands. Considering video games, there is a company 'Lovecraft Historical Society' that started as a fan group of the video game 'The Call of Cthulhu' and then they have started to record amateur movie adaptations on Lovecraft's works. Then I found out that in the USA a film festival that presents movie adaptations on Lovecraft is organised and there is also a fan festival that deals with all that is connected to Lovecraft.

The main goal of this thesis was to introduce H. P. Lovecraft and to identify the area H. P. Lovecraft influenced the most. From reading his stories, watching movie adaptations, conducting the interview with Pavel Ungr and from the frequency of songs, computer games and festivals influenced by Lovecraft, I came to the conclusion that the area that Love-

craft influenced the most is magical practice. The reason probably is that his pantheon depicted in the Cthulhu Mythos fits well with the Chaos magical philosophy and practice.

7 ENDNOTES

1. See appendix 1.
2. *Fear of the Unknown*, movie.
3. Joshi, *Introduction to an Epicure in the Terrible: A Centennial Anthology of Essays in Honor of H. P. Lovecraft* [online].
4. Tenebrous, *Cults of Cthulhu*
5. Ibid.
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8.4 Personal Interviews

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9 ABSTRACT

The objective of this thesis is to depict the life and work of H. P. Lovecraft, to describe his influence on magic, popular culture, to describe the main plot of several stories, and with help of the comparative method to find differences between his works and movie adaptations. The main objective is to introduce H. P. Lovecraft as a writer and creator of a fictional grimoire and to find which area Lovecraft influenced most significantly.

This thesis is divided into four main chapters. The first chapter depicts the life of H. P. Lovecraft and his followers. The second chapter describes the main plot of several stories and the comparison with relevant movie adaptations. The third chapter deals with the magical practise based on Lovecraft's stories and the fourth chapter describes Lovecraft's influence on popular culture, particularly on music, video games and festivals.

10 RESUME

Hlavním úkolem této práce je vylíčit život a dílo spisovatele H. P. Lovecrafta, popsat jeho vliv na magii, populární kulturu, popsat hlavní děj několika jeho děl a s pomocí komparativní metody najít rozdíly mezi díly a filmovými adaptacemi. Hlavním cílem je představit H. P. Lovecrafta jako spisovatele a tvůrce fiktivního grimoáru a zjistit kterou oblast Lovecraft ovlivnil nejzásadněji.

Tato práce je rozdělena do čtyř hlavních kapitol. První kapitola líčí život H. P. Lovecrafta a jeho následníků. Druhá kapitola popisuje děj několika povídek a porovnává je s odpovídajícími filmovými adaptacemi. Třetí kapitola se zabývá magickou praxí založenou na Lovecraftových povídkách a čtvrtá kapitola popisuje Lovecraftův vliv na populární kulturu, konkrétně na hudbu, počítačové hry a festivaly.

11 APPENDICES

Appendix 1

H. P. Lovecraft



http://lovecraft.wikia.com/wiki/Howard_Phillips_Lovecraft

Appendix 2

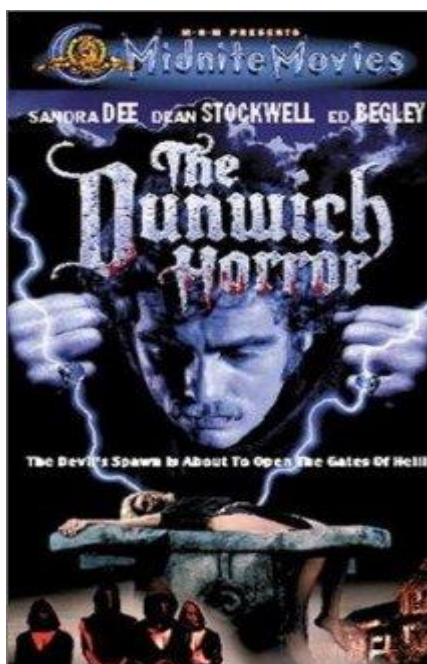
The Call of Cthulhu



http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0478988/?ref_=nv_sr_2

Appendix 3

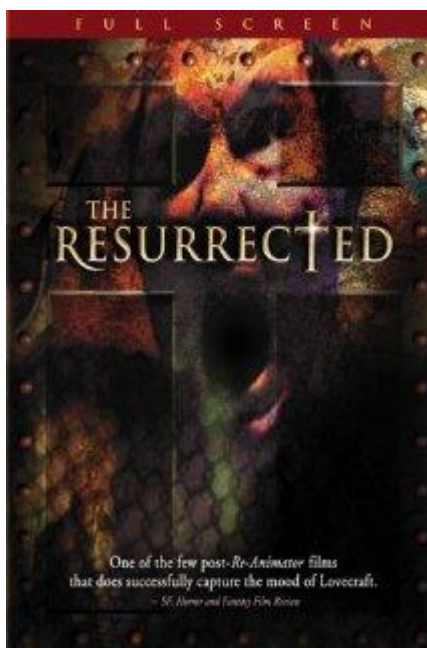
The Dunwich Horror



http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0065669/?ref_=nv_sr_1

Appendix 4

The Resurrected



http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0105242/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1

Appendix 5

Cthulhu



<http://lovecraft.wikia.com/wiki/Cthulhu>

Appendix 6

Yog-Sothoth



<http://lovecraft.wikia.com/wiki/Yog-Sothoth>

Appendix 7

Nyarlathotep



<http://lovecraft.wikia.com/wiki/Nyarlathotep>

Appendix 8

Azathoth



<http://salmanos.deviantart.com/art/Azathoth-80076689>

Appendix 9

Dagon



<http://velvetcat.deviantart.com/art/Dagon-209847056>

Appendix 10

Shub-Niggurath



<http://verreux.deviantart.com/art/Shub-Niggurath-the-Black-Goat-252093358>

Appendix 11

Yig



<http://www.deviantart.com/art/Yig-Father-of-Serpents-203648509>

Appendix 12

Ride the Lightning – back cover



<http://www.coveralia.com/caratulas/Metallica-Ride-The-Lightning-Trasera.php>

Appendix 13

Master of Puppets – back cover



<http://www.coveralia.com/caratulas/Metallica-Master-Of-Puppets-Trasera.php>

Appendix 14

Death Magnetic – back cover



<http://www.coveralia.com/caratulas/Metallica-Death-Magnetic-Trasera.php>

Appendix 15

Time – back cover



<http://www.coveralia.com/caratulas/Mercyful-Fate-Time-Trasera.php>

Appendix 16

Into the Unknown – back cover



<http://www.coveralia.com/caratulas/Mercyful-Fate-Into-The-Unknown-Trasera.php>