

Abstract

The dissertation presents a comprehensive view of the issue of revenants in the environment of the Bohemia lands of the early modern period, i.e., between 1500 and 1800, in which the dichotomy of the official attitudes of the Church on the one hand and the popular view of the afterlife on the other is intertwined. The thesis contains a representative sample of revenant stories from the early modern period, on which socio-cultural subthemes in which ghosts play a role are studied. In particular, the popular "haunted house" and "Mass of Dead" stories have deeper roots in the past, and their typical features and development are discussed in detail. The key role of religion is acknowledged, and the concept of purgatory was particularly relevant to the Bohemian lands in the Baroque period. Many cases are of telling value for the study of the history of emotions and for the understanding of contemporary socio-cultural attitudes. The observed phenomena are compared with aspects of the same in other countries of the European continent – Great Britain, Germany, Poland, Austria, and Slovakia. The comparison is based on the study of the secondary literature on the subject published so far and the aim is to place the developments in the Bohemia lands in the European context.

Keywords

Revenant; early modern period; grave; Bohemia lands; Europe; haunted house; werewolf; purgatory; fext; Mass of Dead; treasure