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'Fro Paris to Inglond'? The danse macabre in text and image in late-medieval England

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CHAPTER 7

Food for worms – food for thought

The appearance and interpretation of the 'verminous' cadaver in Britain and Europe

SOPHIE OOSTERWIJK

Britain has many surviving examples of 'transi' *or cadaver tomb monuments and brasses, which range from so-called 'double-decker' tombs juxtaposing an effigy of the deceased* 'au vif' *with a representation of the corpse below to single cadaver effigies, skeletons, and shroud effigies. One variety that appears to be much rarer in Britain than elsewhere in northern Europe is the effigy infested with vermin, of which the brass of Ralph Hamsterley (d. 1518) at Oddington is the most obvious example. However, appearances can be misleading and there is a risk of misinterpretation, partly due to a lack of understanding of regional differences in iconography. This paper aims to provide a wider cultural context to the cadaver effigy in Europe, including the 'verminous' variety, whilst discussing four English monuments at Lowthorpe, Oddington, Flamborough and Tewkesbury that have previously been claimed as examples of this particular type.*

In a chapter on the depiction of the corpse in his 1976 book *Das mittelalterliche Grabbild*, Kurt Bauch described and illustrated the double effigy of a husband and wife in the collegiate church of St Martin at Lowthorpe in Yorkshire (Fig. 1) as a typical example of 'macabre' tomb iconography. It is worth quoting the description in full, as it raises some interesting issues about regional variations in iconography:

> There are even starker images of the corpse. The English monument of a married couple in Lowthorpe (Yorks.) is supposed to date from 1389, although it feels older. The two figures are positioned side by side, just like the upright yet recumbent draped figures of the earlier fourteenth century. However, strings of roots grow out of their bodies, uniting in a thicker trunk between them. Toads are crouching all around, bent towards them whilst appearing to be eating away at the corpses. The idea that carcasses are thus sucked out and consumed by the creatures of the animal world is here still visualised in the severe style of the monumental fourteenth century and purely as a motif: the figures still appear untouched and totally symmetrical. Toads and root strings are evenly distributed. [*author's translation*][1]

The supposed feature of strangling roots on such a monument is curious, to say the least; similarly, the early date and unusual overall design of the Lowthorpe monument should have raised some doubts.

The monument at Lowthorpe, which is earlier than Bauch claimed, probably commemorates Sir John Heslerton and his wife.[2] The Heslerton family had succeeded the Louthorpes to the manor of Lowthorpe by the late thirteenth century, and the collegiate church of St Martin was founded by Sir John in 1333 with six perpetual chantries; he died around 1350. The monument was originally situated in the chancel, where one would expect to find an important church benefactor buried, but it suffered erosion when left exposed to the elements after the demolition of the chancel; it is now situated in the south-west corner of the nave. The style of the monument suggests that it was probably

1. Fourteenth-century double tomb monument probably commemorating Sir John de Heslerton and his wife, collegiate church of St Martin, Lowthorpe, Yorkshire.
Photo: Dick Visser

commissioned in Sir John's lifetime, which would have made it the earliest known example of a 'verminous' cadaver monument in Europe. As we shall see, Bauch's macabre interpretation was wrong yet understandable in the context of German iconography: an earlier German visual tradition of toads feasting on human bodies probably influenced his perception of the Lowthorpe monument.

Cadaver monuments do come in many varieties, and their striking appearance has inevitably led to a host of interpretations, including antiquarian stories explaining local examples of the emaciated variety as faithfully portraying people who had died while trying to fast throughout Lent or who had starved to death because they could not leave their hiding place for fear of persecution or arrest.[3] The verminous cadaver effigy, however, is a more extreme type that has engendered its own often fanciful interpretations. Thus the single limestone cadaver on the Renaissance double-decker tomb of Reynout III van Brederode (1492–1556) and his wife Philippote van der Marck (d. 1536/7) in the Grote Kerk in Vianen, the Netherlands (Fig. 2a–c), was known locally as the 'drowned man', with legend explaining its appearance as resembling the state of the body of the deceased when recovered after six weeks in the water of the river Lek, covered with eels.[4] For a proper understanding of late-medieval cadaver effigies and their varying appearances, including the occurrence of vermin, one must look at both the moralising literature and other macabre imagery of the period.[5]

Terminology and emergence of the cadaver effigy

The cadaver effigy – or *transi*, which is the term more commonly used on the Continent – first appeared in the late fourteenth century, several decades after the arrival of the Black Death in Europe in 1347: a time lapse that makes a direct link between the two unlikely, quite apart from the fact that there already was a much older tradition of cadaver imagery in medieval art and literature.[6] Famous continental examples of cadaver effigies include the emaciated corpse of the royal physician Guillaume de Harcigny (d. 1393) from Laon and the verminous effigy of François de la Sarra (d. *c.*1363) with its infestation of toads

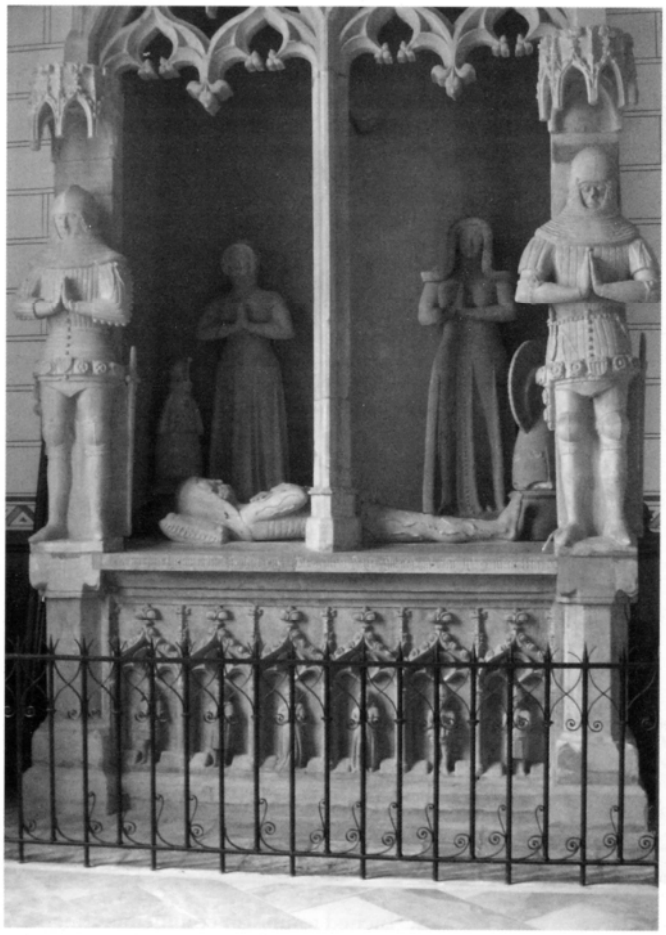
2a. Renaissance double-decker monument to Reynout van Brederode (1492-1556) and his wife Philippote van der Marck (d. 1537), erected *c.*1542 in the Grote Kerk in Vianen, the Netherlands, with a painted wooden classicist canopy of *c.*1655 attributed to Jacob van Campen.
Photo: author

above

2b. Detail of the head of the limestone cadaver effigy on the Brederode tomb at Vianen.
Photo: author

right

2c. Detail of the organs inside the chest cavity of the cadaver effigy at Vianen.
Photo: author



3a–b. Tomb monument to François de la Sarra (d. *c.*1363) in the village church of La Sarraz, Vaud, Switzerland.
Photo: Otto Kolbl

and worms in the village church of La Sarraz (Vaud), Switzerland (Fig. 3a–b).[7] Comparisons have also been drawn with the skeletal figure on the painted tomb at the bottom of Masaccio's 1427 fresco of *La Trinità* at the church of Sta Maria Novella in Florence, but the cadaver effigy as such does not appear to have found favour in Italy, which is another argument against any connection between this iconography and the Black Death.[8]

The cadaver effigy does, however, occur as far north as Sweden. An incised tomb slab of 1429 commemorating an unmarried girl named Ingeborch, discovered during the 1961 excavation of a Franciscan friary and now preserved in Nyköpingshus Castle at Nyköping, shows a crowned corpse with a semi-skeletal face (Fig. 4): serpents or large worms encircle her limbs and slither through her mouth, whilst two toads are squatting on her chest and abdomen – another striking example of the verminous variety of cadaver effigy.[9] When the *transi* arrived in Britain around the same time it was evidently a foreign design imported from the Continent. Nonetheless, as a visualisation of bodily corruption it matched both a religious culture and macabre imagery already present in this country, as will be discussed below.

The cadaver effigy comes in many varieties, from newly dead corpse figures

4. Incised slab with a verminous cadaver representation, commemorating an unmarried girl named Ingeborch, 1429, now in the Nyköpingshus Museum, Nyköping, Sweden.

Photo from the F.A. Greenhill Collection, reproduced by courtesy of the Francis Coales Charitable Foundation.

5. Incised tomb slab commemorating Abbot Jehan de Blaisy (d. 1439), Saint-Seine-l'Abbaye, Côte d'Or, France.

Photo from the F.A. Greenhill Collection, reproduced by courtesy of the Francis Coales Charitable Foundation.

to emaciated or skeletal remains, often displayed naked in their shrouds.[10] The monument to Archbishop Chichele (d. 1443) at Canterbury Cathedral, completed by 1427, is traditionally regarded as the earliest example of a carved cadaver monument in England, although it has been suggested that the single cadaver effigy at York Minster may be older still.[11] The phrase 'omnibus horribilis, pulvis, vermis, caro vilis' (horrible to all, dust, worms, my worthless flesh) from Chichele's epitaph was adopted by Henriette s'Jacob as a new set of terms to distinguish between the corpse (*caro vilis*), the emaciated cadaver (*pulvis*) and the verminous cadaver (*vermis*), but few authors have endorsed this terminology.[12] Before too long, other cadaver monuments were erected elsewhere in England, and also in Wales, although they are extremely rare in Scotland.[13] Some, such as Chichele's or Bishop Thomas Beckington's (d. 1465) in Wells, were commissioned by patrons in their lifetime, serving them as reminders of their own mortality and the transitoriness of the body that they might still be pampering, but also of the fact that all men are equal in the face of Death.

There was also undoubtedly the intention to impress contemporary and later viewers with the piety of those thus commemorated, especially as some of these earlier double-decker monuments have open arcades that allow a clear view of the cadaver effigy, which has led some scholars to compare their appearance with that of saints' shrines or even Easter sepulchres.[14]

Cadaver monuments continued to be commissioned in the sixteenth century and beyond, but with changes in appearance and meaning. The more morbid varieties of cadaver representation increasingly make way for a more idealised depiction of the corpse, as evident in Conrad Meit's two separate double-decker monuments with recumbent effigies to Margaret of Austria (d. 1530) and her husband Philibert 'le Beau' II of Savoy (d. 1504) at Brou, Bourg-en-Bresse: although the contract between Margaret and Meit stipulated that she should be shown as 'morte de huit jours' her *transi* looks remarkably fresh.[15] One curious feature is that medieval double-decker monuments commemorating more than one person usually feature a single cadaver effigy, as at Vianen, which could suggest a symbolic rather than a representative function.[16] However, on single monuments they were probably intended as representations of the corpse of the deceased, such as Alice de la Pole's female cadaver at Ewelme or the lost effigy of Isabel Despenser, Countess of Warwick (d. 1439), at Tewkesbury Abbey, whose will stipulated 'my Image to be made all naked, and no thyng on my hede but myn here cast bakwardys'.[17]

In Renaissance France, the naked but not yet decomposing *transi* figures were certainly meant as representations of the deceased, as evidenced by the three stylishly executed double-decker monuments at the royal abbey of Saint-Denis with double cadaver figures below and the couples shown *au vif* kneeling atop their monuments.[18] It should be noted, however, that Catherine de Médicis (d. 1589) rejected the first, more brutally realistic version of her cadaver effigy by Girolamo della Robbia for her joint monument at Saint-Denis in favour of a more flattering *transi* in a Venus-inspired pose carved by Germain Pilon; the first – unfinished – version is now in the Louvre.[19] Earlier patrons had fewer qualms about the depiction of bodily decomposition, with vermin in some cases carrying this idea to its most extreme form.

The interpretation and context of the cadaver effigy

In his chapter 'The Vision of Death', the Dutch historian Johan Huizinga claimed that whereas ascetic meditation had always 'dwelt on dust and worms', it was only in the late fourteenth century that artists began to depict the full horrors of decomposition.[20] This is certainly true of tomb imagery. Cadaver effigies were the ultimate *vanitas* emblem and a warning against human pride: they exemplified the transitoriness and ultimate fate of the human body as opposed to the immortality of the soul. This contrast is illustrated by the incised tomb slab commemorating Abbot Jehan de Blaisy (d. 1439) at Saint-Seine-l'Abbaye (Côte d'Or) in France, which shows the abbot's corpse already in an advanced state of decomposition, although above his head his soul is only just being carried up to Heaven (Fig. 5).[21] As such, these monuments served as a warning to the living, and so artists often went to great lengths to visualise the body's ultimate decay.

The moral lesson for the beholder provided by cadaver effigies was certainly not new in England, where an Anglo-Saxon homiletic tradition of a meeting between the body and the soul was developed further in twelfth-century poetry, with an emphasis on the humble nature of man's last abode, the signs of corruption, and worms feasting on the body.[22] Against the realisation that one's mortal remains are inevitably subject to corruption, there was the solemn belief that at the Last Judgement the soul would be reunited with the resurrected body as famously expressed in Job 19:25–26:

> For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and in the last day I shall rise out of the earth. And I shall be clothed again with my skin: and in my flesh I shall see my God.[23]

Therefore, those who chose a cadaver monument may also have wanted to express their faith in God's power to restore these corrupt remains to their former glory at the Resurrection.

Interesting within the English religious and historical context are the last wills of (suspected) Lollards, which tend to emphasise the testator's own unworthiness in a rather extravagant manner and express nothing but contempt for the testator's earthly remains.[24] Sir Thomas Latimer's will of 13 September 1401 (proved 20 April 1402) is typical in its instructions for burial:

> [...] and my wruchud body to be buryid were that evere i dye in the nexte chirche yerd God vouchesaff and naut in the churche but in the uttereste corner as he that ys unworthi to lyn therinne save the mercy of God [...][25]

In a similar vein, William Stourton's Latin will of 20 July 1410 stipulates a simple burial of his 'putrid body, naked as it came into the world except for a linen cloth'; the Latin will of Philip Repton (or Repyngton), an abjured Lollard and later bishop of Lincoln, also consigned his 'putrid body to be food for worms'.[26] The wording in these wills seems to match the visual impact of cadaver effigies rather well. Yet the double-decker monument at Lincoln Cathedral commemorates not Bishop Repton (d. 1424) but his successor Richard Fleming (d. 1431), who had long since turned away from his earlier Wycliffite tendencies.[27] For it was not Lollards who opted for such a monument – as Latimer's will illustrates, they scorned any form of pomp or display – but rather the higher (orthodox) clergy.

Expressions of contempt for oneself and for one's earthly remains were not confined to Lollards: even Thomas Arundel (d. 1414), Archbishop of Canterbury and scourge of heretics, referred in his Latin will to his 'foetid and putrid cadaver'.[28] However, the ostensible humility of semi-nude (archi)episcopal cadaver effigies lying in their rough shrouds contains a hidden irony: whereas ordinary mortals in this period had only a shroud for their final costume, medieval clergy were traditionally buried in their vestments, with bishops wearing their episcopal rings as a sign of their status. Clerical cadaver effigies are sometimes distinguished by their tonsure or by additional attributes such as a pastoral staff or a mitre, as on the monument of Bishop Bush at Bristol Cathedral (Col. pl. 1a–b), but they are otherwise shown naked in their shrouds, thus carrying the suggestion that they, too, represent mere mortals equal to the rest of mankind in the eyes of God whereas the reality of medieval burial practice was rather different.

Cadaver imagery appealed not only to the clergy. Edward IV's own expressed desire for a cadaver monument remained unfulfilled after his death in 1483, but similar sentiments are found in the elegiac poem *On the death of the noble prince, King Edward the Fourth*, formerly attributed to John Skelton, which compares the king's ultimate fate to that of Alexander the Great and Sampson: 'Were not wormes ordained their flesh to frete [*eat*]?'.[29] Whereas the Lancastrian faction may have shown a particular preference for cadaver monuments, Edward's sister Margaret (d. 1503), third wife of the Burgundian duke Charles the Bold, was also commemorated with a curious *transi* monument in the church of the Grey Friars at Malines.[30] Her monument was lost in the repeated waves of destruction that hit the city during the war with Spain in the later sixteenth century, but it is recorded that Margaret was depicted kneeling on one side of an arched doorway to the choir with her patron saint behind her, and on the other side as a crowned corpse wrapped in a shroud with three Franciscan friars attending. A fortunate survival is the tombstone of the painter Jan van Eyck's brother Hubert (d. 1426), who began the famous Ghent Altarpiece that Jan sub-

sequently finished. Now housed in the lapidarium in the ruins of St Bavo Abbey at Ghent, the large incised slab still shows the outline of an incised skeletal figure that originally held a brass tablet with a recorded verse epitaph in Dutch in which the deceased is identified as Hubert van Eyck, once a famous painter, but now food for worms (Fig. 6).[31]

6. Cadaver tombstone of the painter Hubert van Eyck (d. 1426), formerly situated in the Cathedral but now in the lapidarium at St Bavo Abbey, Ghent: the original inlay and brass tablet are lost.

Photo: Didier Jugan

Of course, without indications of identity or status a single cadaver effigy can easily succumb to complete anonymity if its (inlaid or painted) epitaph and any records of its commission are lost, thus taking the exercise in humility and self-negation perhaps further than the patron originally intended, even though the didactic message remains unaffected. It has been suggested by Nicholas Orme that the single cadaver effigy situated in an arched recess in the north choir aisle of Exeter Cathedral may have been deliberately left without a name because of cathedral rules against lesser clergy being commemorated with an effigy, carrying instead the surviving Latin hexameter text: 'Ista figura docet nos omnes premeditari qualiter ipsa nocet mors quando venit dominari' (This figure teaches us all to bear in mind how Death itself destroys [us] when it comes to reign).[32] The suggestion that one of the possible candidates for this elaborate monument – William Browning, one of Bishop Lacy's canons, whose 1454 will stipulates burial in the north choir aisle near the 'image' that he himself had commissioned – may only have been given permission to erect a cadaver monument for edification purposes, rather than as an actual identifiable memorial, is not convincing. Any patron would surely have wanted to claim as his own a costly sculpted monument in a cathedral that moreover does feature shields, even if they no longer show heraldry.[33] In fact, as will be discussed later, the issue of colour on cadaver monuments goes much further than lost painted heraldry.

Yet the cadaver effigy was undoubtedly meant to have a didactic as well as a commemorative purpose. It is the visual answer to the *ubi sunt* (where are they now?) theme popular in the literature of the period, which is evident in the poetic lament for Edward IV and which one also finds in the work of the Scottish Chaucerian poet William Dunbar (1465?–1530?), *e.g.* in his poems *Of manis mortalitie* and *Lament for the makaris* with its famous refrain from the Office for the Dead, 'Timor mortis conturbat me' (fear of death disturbs my mind).[34] In this genre of moralising elegiac poetry, writers recall famous

heroes from the past whose bodies have long since turned to dust or become food for worms, concluding that this is ultimately the inescapable fate of all mortals. Another poem previously attributed to John Skelton (*c.*1460–1529), *Upon a dead man's head*, with its contemplation on 'Death hollow-eyed, / With sinews withered, / With bones shivered, / With his worm-eaten maw, / And his ghastly jaw / Gasping aside, / Naked of hide, / Neither flesh nor fell [*skin*]' similarly fits into this culture of macabre imagery.[35]

The link between text and image is important as many cadaver monuments carry in their epitaphs echoes of the warning given by the Three Dead to the Three Living. In this popular moralising tale, three young nobles out hunting encounter three corpses in varying stages of decay who remind them about the vanity of earthly pleasures that they, too, once enjoyed: after all, the dead are what the living will be before too long. First appearing in French poetry in the late thirteenth century, the story was soon seized upon by artists throughout Europe, and thus predates both the Black Death and the *transi* effigy. The theme can be found in manuscripts and wall-paintings across England from at least the early fourteenth century, yet it is the subject of only one independent Middle-English poem – in contrast to the different versions composed on the Continent – which in its turn is quite late: it was only composed in the later fifteenth century, some two centuries after the first appearance of the tale in France.[36] Nonetheless, the theme was well known: echoing the words of one of the Three Dead, the cadaver monument of Precentor William Sylke (d. 1508) in the north transept of Exeter Cathedral cautions the viewer in Latin, 'Sum quod eris; fuerisque quod es' – I am what you will be, and I once was what you are now.[37]

The cadaver effigy is also often linked to the well-known motto *memento mori* (remember that you must die), which is popularly (if not quite correctly) regarded as summing up the medieval outlook on life.[38] Yet whilst cadaver effigies show us the condition of the corpse after death, it was the late-medieval *danse macabre* that illustrated the moment when Death summons every living individual, thereby bringing the spectre of cadavers confronting the living closer to home than the more generic story of the Three Living and the Three Dead had previously done. There are clear visual and textual connections between both themes and the cadaver effigy, although they are ultimately very different manifestations of the late-medieval interest in death. The earliest recorded appearance of the *danse macabre* in art is the lost mural with accompanying verses on the walls of the cemetery of the Franciscan convent Aux SS Innocents in Paris, which was painted between August 1424 and Easter 1425 at the time of the English occupation of the French capital – and, as it happens, concurrently with the construction of Archbishop Chichele's double-decker monument at Canterbury Cathedral, which was begun in 1424.[39]

Many extant French *danses* in painting and print show the living being forced to dance by skeletal figures of the emaciated or putrefying type, the latter often with the abdomen gaping open and sometimes intestines trailing out of this cavity as if after an 'explosion' of the entrails due to a build-up of methane gas after death; a feature that can also be observed on some cadaver effigies (Fig. 5).[40] The skeletal dancers represent either Death himself or the dead counterparts of the living – an ambiguity that resembles that of cadavers and representations of the deceased on double-decker tombs – and they often carry a mixture of objects related to death and burial, such as darts, scythes, coffins, spades and pickaxes; vermin is not a prominent feature in the French *danse macabre* tradition, although small maggots or worms can be observed in the dark abdominal cavities of some skeletal dancers (Fig. 7). The English poet John Lydgate, who visited Paris not long after the completion of the mural, based his own Middle-English *Dance of Death* poem on this French version.[41]

Unlike the message conveyed by cadaver effigies, the living characters in the *danse macabre* tend to express a strong awareness of their status as well as regret at having to leave

7. The physician and the 'amoreux' in the *danse macabre*, with verminous skeletons, woodcut illustration based on the wall-painting at the cemetery of Aux SS Innocents in Paris, published by Guyot Marchant in 1485.

it all behind, including the trappings of their rank. Thus the cardinal in Lydgate's *Dance of Death* reluctantly recognises that he 'shal neuer here after clothed be / In gris ner hermyn like to my degre', in response to Death's taunt 'yowre grete a-rai al shal be-leue here / yowre hatte of rede yowre vesture of grete coste'; the emperor likewise resigns himself to 'A simple shete there is no more to sayne / To wrappe yn my bodi and visage'.[42] Cadaver monuments illustrate the same inevitable conclusion, but they also take the beholder beyond the moment of death to consider the different fates of the body and soul; the viewer is not so much reminded of the fact that he, too, must die and leave all earthly pleasures behind, but warned to value his soul above all else – especially more than his merely transient body. The message may ultimately be generally the same, but the emphasis is very different.

The depiction of bodily corruption

Cadaver effigies may not emit any smell, but they unmistakably convey the idea of 'wretched stinking carrion', as Sir John Cheyne described his body in his will of 1 November 1413.[43] A mid-fourteenth-century poem stresses how 'Fowl and stinkande is mi roting'.[44] Chillingly apt in this context are Death's final words to the well-fed abbot in Lydgate's poem, 'Who that is fattest [...] / In his graue shal sonnest putrefie', which echoes the warning of the English Dominican friar John Bromyard that those who are plump will only have fattened their bodies to feed the worms better and to make the flames of hell burn brighter.[45]

References to the rapid corruption of the body are found elsewhere in medieval art. An elaborate deathbed scene on fol. 99v of the Hours of Catherine of Cleves, illuminated for the Duchess of Guelders by an unknown Netherlandish artist around 1440 and now in the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York, is followed by a miniature in which two male attendants in the same room wrap up the now cadaverous body in a bedsheet for a shroud: the open window behind them serves as a reminder of the malodorous effects of decomposition.[46] Many miniatures accompanying the Office of the Dead in medieval books of hours illustrate death and burial in similarly explicit ways, with artists indicating the stench of corpses by showing bystanders who pinch their noses in disgust; a motif that can be found in many depictions of the Three Living and the Three Dead or Christ's raising of

Lazarus, for instance. In the late-medieval 'N-town' mystery play of the Raising of Lazarus, Martha twice expresses her concern about the malodorous state of her brother's corpse after three days in the tomb: 'He stynkygh ryght fowle longe tyme or this' and 'The stynke of his careyn myght hurte us, I drede'.[47] The belief that the decomposition of corpses might harm the living is confirmed by the blunt statement in the *Fasciculus morum*, a Latin handbook for preachers written by an English Franciscan friar in the early fourteenth century: 'There is nothing more base or abominable than a corpse. It is not allowed to stay in the house, lest people there should die of its stench'.[48] Yet this is exactly the sort of monument that some medieval patrons chose to be remembered by.

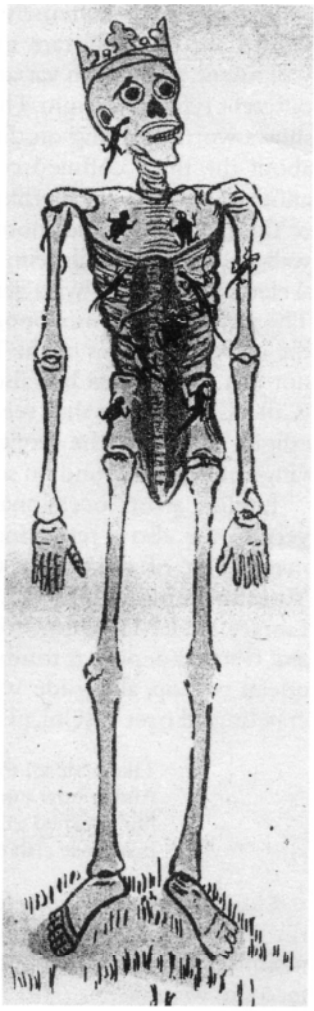
No type of cadaver effigy epitomises the decomposition of the human body more vividly than the corpse riddled with vermin. The sculptor of the effigy of François de la Sarra went to great lengths to emphasise the loathsomeness of the corruptible corpse by covering the face and genitalia with toads whilst worms are shown feasting on other parts of the carcass (Fig. 3b). The association of worms and reptiles with death and physical corruption was a favourite theme in earlier didactic literature and art. The comparison, frequently drawn, with German didactic sculptures of *Frau Welt* (Lady World) and the *Versucher* (Tempter) – figures who appear beautiful when seen from the front until one notices the tell-tale infestation of carnivorous vermin on their backs, including worms and toads – indeed offers a stark illustration of the idea of *vanitas* and the medieval view on the superficial attractions of the body (Fig. 8a–b).[49] Although vermin do carry strong connotations of sin in medieval thought, the use here seems to convey first and foremost the horrors of transience and corruption. These allegorical figures first emerged in the late thirteenth century – also the time when the tale of the Three Living and the Three Dead first appeared in Europe – and continued into the fourteenth century, but this iconography is specifically German and not found elsewhere.

In Britain it seems more usual to find just worms associated with bodily corruption, as in a short Middle-English poem of the thirteenth century:

Wen the turuf is thi tuur,	*When the turf is your tower,*
& thi put is thi bour,	*and your grave is your bower,*
Thi wel & thi wite throte	*your skin and your white throat*
ssulen wormes to note.	*shall benefit only worms.*
Wat helpit the thenne	*What then shall avail you*
al the worilde wnne?	*all the world's joys?*[50]

A similarly blatant illustration of earthly *vanitas* is the miniature of the Three Living and the Three Dead with accompanying Middle-English and Middle-French verses in the Psalter of Robert de Lisle, dated *c.*1310 (British Library, MS Arundel 83, pt. II, fol. 127r): the corpse in the middle is still largely covered by his shroud, but the one immediately facing the living wears only a tattered shroud which can no longer hide the spectacle of worms feasting across his abdomen. Yet it is the shrivelled naked carcass with a gaping chest cavity on the far right who contrasts most tellingly the extent of his body's decay with his former state in life in his verses to the living: 'Ore su si hidous et si nuz. / Ke moy uer ne deigne nuls' (But now I am so hideous and naked that even the worms scorn me).[51]

A few other English examples of this theme also feature corpses infested by worms, such as the wall-paintings at Peakirk in Cambridgeshire and at Ditchingham in Norfolk, the latter unfortunately destroyed but known from drawings; although the first of the Three Dead at Peakirk is also largely lost, the fourteenth-century artist here surrounded them with worms, slugs, beetles, moths, and even a lizard and a small dragon.[52] All that remains of the Three Dead at Wensley in North Yorkshire is their worm-riddled legs with



left and centre **8a-b.** Front and back view of the allegorical figure of *Frau Welt* or Lady World, *c.*1300, on the south portal of Worms Cathedral, Germany.

Photo: Stadtarchiv Worms

right **9.** 'King of Terror', the last of an ensemble of the Three Dead still distinct when recorded and traced in the mid-nineteenth century at Bardwell church, Suffolk.

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vertically in between them text variants of the words spoken by the Three Dead in the De Lisle Psalter.[53] A more gruesome example, now virtually illegible, is the so-called 'King of Terror' wall-painting at Bardwell church in Suffolk, which some have dated to the late fourteenth century (Fig. 9).[54] This figure was the only one of the Three Dead still distinct when recorded and traced in the mid nineteenth century: the skeleton wears a crown and looks almost discomfited as not only worms but also toads and lizards crawl across his torso, arms and face.

Whereas such extremely morbid examples of the Three Dead with vermin other than worms are relatively rare in Britain, this iconography does occur more frequently on the Continent, albeit with variations ranging from worms or serpents to complete infestations of different types of vermin. Thus, a painting in the Abbey of Notre-Dame de Clairvaux at Metz shows worms feasting on the Three Dead in their coffins, just as there are serpents slithering about the three coffined corpses in the famous fresco in the Campo Santo at Pisa, while another example at Überlingen on the Bodensee is described as having red snakes crawl out of the eye sockets and mouth cavities of the Three Dead.[55] Similarly, in a fifteenth-century wall-painting at Crailsheim in Baden-Württemberg the Three Dead are shown as crowned skeletons entwined with serpents; one also has a toad squatting on his chest (Col. pl. 2).[56] The same verminous iconography is found in some medieval Danish wall-paintings, such as the crowned figures of the Three Dead at Skibby and at Tuse, the latter being accompanied not just by serpents but also by large round creatures that probably represent huge beetles (Col. pl. 3).[57] As we shall see, this is very much in line with the varieties of verminous cadaver effigies found on the Continent, where French examples may feature worms but not the range of vermin found on some German effigies or on the slab at Nyköping.

English artists occasionally used verminous imagery in other didactic contexts. Thus vermin are also a recurring feature in the so-called Carthusian Miscellany, an illustrated manuscript of moralising texts that was probably produced at Mount Grace Priory in Yorkshire around 1435–40. Two miniatures are particularly relevant here. The first (British Library, Add. MS 37049, fol. 32v), which precedes the poem *Disputacioun Betwyx the Body and Wormes*, depicts a tomb decorated with heraldry and the effigy of a highborn lady or queen on top, alongside which lies a corpse in an open shroud with worms and reptiles crawling all over it (Col. pl. 4).[58] The accompanying verses match the image:

> Take hede vn to my fygure here abowne
> And se how sumtyme I was fresche & gay.
> Now turned to wormes mete & corrupcoun.
> Bot fowle erth & stynkyng slyme & clay [...]

Comparable are the references to the inevitability of death and bodily corruption in the popular poem *Erthe upon erthe*, dating back in its earliest form to the early fourteenth century, which contains such lines as 'Erth toward erth wormes to feden' (earth to earth to feed the worms).[59]

The same imagery also occurs in medieval drama. In the N-town play of the death of Herod, Death himself appears as a naked corpse, pointing out how 'wurmys knawe me al a-bowte', which suggests that the actor would have worn a suit decorated with worms and perhaps even other vermin.[60] Likewise, God (*Deus*) in the N-town Last Judgement play 42 welcomes the blessed with the words: 'All tho fowle wyrmys from yow falle' (line 44). The starker the image of putrefaction, with vermin hastening that process, the stronger evidently the message of transitoriness for the reader or viewer. However, vermin also carried other connotations that have been discussed in the context of cadaver effigies.

Verminous imagery and its contexts

Reptiles were traditionally associated not just with death and putrefaction, but also with evil. Of course, it was the temptation by the serpent that caused the Fall of Man in Paradise, and reptiles also play an important role in Exodus 7–8, where on God's instruction Aaron first changes his rod into a serpent before the Pharaoh and then uses it to create a plague of frogs in Egypt. In the Middle Ages, the toad was generally believed to be a type of frog, albeit a more sinister variety, and artists often made no distinction between the two.[61] The

medieval Bestiary compared frogs to decadent heretics and their demons, with a reference to Revelation 16:13: 'And I saw from the mouth of the dragon, and from the mouth of the beast, and from the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs'.[62] To understand how medieval viewers could have interpreted verminous imagery on tomb monuments, it is vital to discuss the main contexts in which it was used.

First of all, there was the physiological tradition dating back to Antiquity, with medieval authors basing themselves on the authority of ancient texts such as Pliny the Younger's *Naturalis Historia* for the belief that corpses spontaneously generate reptiles: 'Anguem ex medulla hominis spinae gigni accepimus a multis' (We have it from many authorities that a snake may be born from the spinal marrow of a human being).[63] According to one of the sermons of the Pseudo-Augustine, toads were thought to be born from the brains of human corpses, serpents from the loins, and worms from the intestines, which sums up what we are and what we shall become.[64] Thus, Lazarus in the medieval Towneley mystery play of the Raising of Lazarus paints a vivid picture of what will happen to every human being after death:

> Wormes shall in you brede
> As bees dos in the byke [*honeycomb*][65]

Similarly, a poem in a manuscript from the first half of the fifteenth century (Oxford, MS Bodley 789, fol. 149r) specifically mentions amongst the horrors of bodily corruption: 'In mi riggeboon [*spine*] bredith an addir kene'.[66] In the section on gluttony in the *Fasciculus morum*, the story of a son who was curious to see his dead father's corpse ends with a warning that the residue of sin left in the body after death will engender vermin, *viz.* a toad from the head and throat, a scorpion from the spine, and a weevil from the body and stomach.[67] In other words, this ancient physiological belief would have reinforced the idea of human remains as 'wretched stinking carrion' destined to engender vermin, even if the specific breeding place of each type might vary from text to text. The fact that beetles also like damp and dark conditions would have made them the natural companions to reptiles in macabre contexts.

Secondly, there was the ancient belief that serpents, toads and lizards alike were poisonous.[68] In the hosiers' Exodus play in the medieval York cycle, one of the Egyptians complains of the venom of the 'tadys and frosshis'.[69] The chapter on the *botrax* (a rarer term for *bufo* or toad) in the late-fourteenth-century Middle-English translation by John Trevisa of Bartholomaeus Anglicus' encyclopaedic text *De proprietatibus rerum* of *c.*1230 describes the creature as 'a manere venymous frogge and woneth bothe in water and in lond', with reference to Pliny the Elder, book 18, chap. 32; it has fiery eyes 'yit he hateth the sight of the sonne and secheth derke place and hidles [*hiding place*]', in addition to loving 'stynkynge place', which habits reinforce the idea of the creature's evil nature.[70]

Thirdly, reptiles play an important role in medieval descriptions of the tortures suffered by sinners in Purgatory and in Hell: images of their corpses being gnawed by serpents, lizards and toads abound in the moralising literature of the period and in art. In a Latin sermon for children and young people written in the 1230s, the French bishop Jacques de Vitry told the story of an orphaned daughter who is shown by an angel a vision of her wanton mother in a 'stinking and horrible place of torment' amongst the damned: 'serpents gnawed and tore at all her limbs with the cruelest bites'.[71] Needless to say, the daughter decides to follow the lifestyle of her virtuous father instead. The painter Hieronymus Bosch (d. 1516) frequently included reptiles amongst the punishments of the damned in Hell, *e.g.* as hellish dishes for gluttons or as instruments of sexual torture for those guilty of lust.[72] The association between lust and reptiles was not new: bodily invasion by such monsters was a traditional punishment in depictions of sinners in Hell, as one finds amongst the sculptures on the sculpted Romanesque frieze on the west front of Lincoln Cathedral.[73]

Vermin are a recurring feature in medieval visionary texts. The widely copied and translated Latin prose *Tractatus de Purgatorio Sancti Patricii*, written by the Cistercian monk 'Henry' of Sawtry (Saltrey) in Huntingdonshire around 1180–84, also conjures up a vivid image of hellish torments witnessed by the Irish knight Owein. The early fourteenth-century Middle-English stanzaic version *Owein Miles* in the Auchinleck Manuscript describes the fate of gluttons lying in the second field of torment as follows:

On sum sete todes blake,	*On some sit black toads,*
Euetes, neddren and the snake,	*newts, adders and the snake,*
That frete hem bac and side.	*that eat them on the back and sides.*
This is the pain of glotoni:	*This is the punishment for gluttony:*
For Godes loue, be war therbi! [...]	*for God's love, beware of that! [...]*[74]

Equally frightful is the matching description in a late-fifteenth-century version where Owein also beholds 'many an edder and many a tode', although this time the toads sit on every hair of the decadent sinners' heads: 'Edderys, todys and othyr wormys, / In hyr bodyes wer ther howsys'.[75] The various Middle-English versions of the originally Latin text of the *Tractatus* and their survival in different copies suggest that this type of moralising vision literature with shock-effect imagery was obviously in demand.[76] Two vivid woodcuts in the popular *Kalender of shepherdes* likewise illustrate the fourth and sixth pains in Hell with sluggards being attacked by 'serpens gret & smal' and 'glwotons' forced by devils to eat toads and serpents.[77]

Fourthly, divine retribution could afflict the actual corpses of sinners in their tombs as a warning to the living. The *Fasciculus morum* contains a tale about a usurer who chose to be buried with an armband of coins and further money tied to his body; when a papal legate ordered the body to be dug up, the money had been miraculously transformed into toads gnawing at the corpse and the armband into worms.[78] In a Middle-English moralising story written around 1400 by the Augustinian prior of Lilleshall (Salop), John Mirk, which also occurs in other medieval texts such as the *Fasciculus morum*, a pious son wishes to view the body of his dead father who had pampered himself well during his lifetime:

> Then made he men to vndo the tombe. Then sygh he a passyng grete tode, as blake as peche, wyth een [*eyes*] brennyng as fyre, that had vmbeclypped wyth hyr foure fete hys fadyrs throte, and gnof fast theron. Then, when the sonne segh thys, he sayde: 'O fadyr, moche swete mete and drynke hathe gon downe that throte; and now thou art strangult wyth a foule helle-best!'[79]

The spectacle of a large black toad feasting on his dead father's throat – toads were traditionally believed to have teeth – greatly affects the son, who soon afterwards renounces all luxury to spend the rest of his life in penance amongst beggars in Jerusalem. In a similar vein, another miniature on fol. 87r of the Carthusian Miscellany illustrates the exemplum of a wicked young emperor who repents after being shown the corpse of his dead father (Col. pl. 5). In their dialogue, the son's expressions of disgust alternate with the father's reminder that a similar fate awaits him:

> Ffader, sum tyme what was thou?
> Swylk, son, as I was, art thu nowe.
> A fowle stynke I fele [*feel, smell*] of the.
> Son, wele fowler sone sal cum of the.
> Horybyll bestes restes wit the.
> Thow sal cum and rest wit me.
> Thi fayr flesche falles and fades away.
> Son, so sal thine do that is now so gay.[80]

The text and its accompanying image, which vividly illustrates the contrast between the decorous tomb and its putrefying inhabitant, hover between the idea of the punishment of the corpses of sinners in the tomb and a general warning to the living about the inevitable corruption of the human body.

There are other medieval horror stories relating specifically to toads, usually with a moralising purpose. In a Latin exemplum from a medieval preacher's manual (British Library, Harl. MS 2316, fol. 11v), a Lincolnshire woman secretly locks the host away in a chest with a toad to punish God for her loss at the market.[81] That night, as her husband goes to check the sound of crying emanating from the chest, he finds that the host has turned into a little child terrified of the toad, which is described as a 'bufonem vilissimum'. A priest is fetched who turns the host back to its usual form, but when it is offered to the woman to swallow a 'bufo nigerrimus' (very black toad) jumps into her mouth and kills her, turning her body black, which her husband then orders to be burnt immediately. Another one of Mirk's homilies contains the horror story of the evil emperor Nero, who wanted to give birth to a child and to that purpose was given a little frog to drink which swelled 'yn hys wombe' until his physicians made him another drink 'and so cast vp thys frogge lappyn yn glette and fulthe, and abominabull forto loke on'.[82] Thus, in medieval culture, horror often seems to have taken a reptilian form, and the association with sin is obvious. Some of these didactic stories were later used in local legends to help 'explain' cadaver monuments.

Yet for all the different contexts in which verminous imagery can be found, the link with corruption and decomposition remains paramount. Few texts are as explicit as the fifteenth-century mystery play of Lazarus in the Towneley manuscript, in which the newly risen Lazarus offers himself as a 'mirroure' or book in which people may see what awaits them after death as he himself has experienced it. The inscription on the single cadaver monument to the merchant John Baret (d. 1467) in St Mary's church, Bury St Edmunds, likewise addresses the reader thus: 'Ho that wil sadly beholde me with this his Ie. / May se hys owyn merowr & lerne for to die'.[83] Lazarus' long monologue reminds his listeners that their 'flesh shall frete [*be eaten*] away' (line 131) with creatures that 'gnawe' the lungs, eyes and heart of both high and low:

> A shete shall be youre pall.
> Sich todys shall be youre nowche [*ornament*].
> Todys shall you dere [*harm*],
> [...]
> And ees [*eyes*] outt of youre hede
> Thusgate shall paddokys [*toads*] pyke [*pick*]. (lines 145–47, 159–60)

Lazarus may have returned to life but he conjures up his own experiences in the tomb for the benefit of the living, much as cadaver monuments with moralising epitaphs do for the beholder.

The verminous cadaver effigy in England

Britain may still boast a good number of cadaver monuments and shroud brasses, yet is its long tradition of tomb imagery and worm-riddled corpses matched by the verminous type of effigy?[84] Even tombs without a cadaverous representation may have epitaphs referring to the body as food for worms, but the combination of a moralising text with a vivid display of bodily corruption would have served best to arrest contemporary viewers. Yet whereas Chichele's epitaph does mention 'vermis', his cadaver effigy is of the naked emaciated variety without any visible vermin. Likewise, the Latin inscription on the shroud brass to Joan Leventhorpe (d. 1448) and her husband John at Sawbridgeworth,

above

10b. Detail of the creature at the end of the text scroll issuing from the skeleton's mouth on Ralph Hamsterley's brass.

Photo: Sally Badham

left

10a. Verminous cadaver brass of Ralph Hamsterley (d. 1518) at Oddington, Oxfordshire.

Rubbing reproduced by courtesy of Martin Stuchfield

Hertfordshire, refers explicitly to putrefaction, stink and worms, although the couple are depicted as 'fresh' corpses.[85]

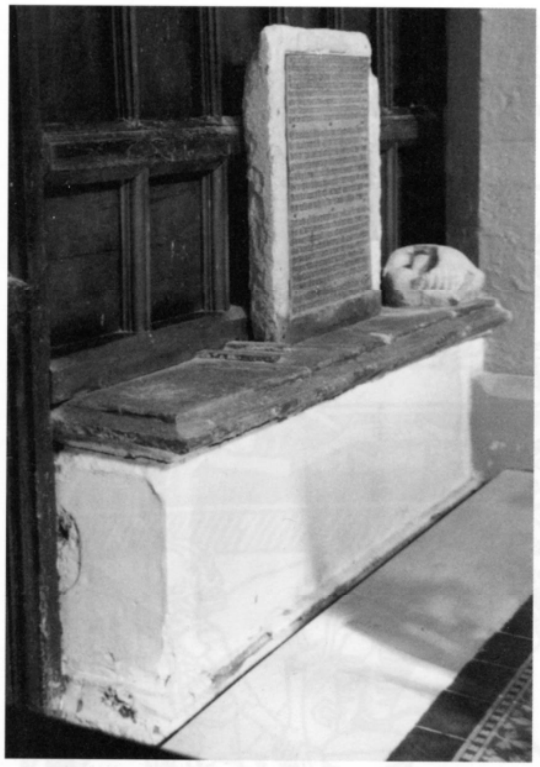
The brass of Ralph Hamsterley (d. 1518) at Oddington (Oxon) is undoubtedly the best-known example of the verminous type of cadaver monument in England with a text to match (Fig. 10a–b). It is a product of the London G school of brass engraving and whereas many brasses of this period were rather standard in design, this exceptional brass must have been made to Hamsterley's own specifications, perhaps even based on a design supplied by him.[86] It is one of four brass memorials known to have been commissioned by Hamsterley in his lifetime, the other three having been placed in three Oxford colleges but since lost, apart from the epitaph of one rediscovered at Queen's College in 1903.[87] Hamsterley had a distinguished university career but he was also rector of Oddington, so his cadaver brass

may have been intended to commemorate his burial there. However, the date on the brass was left incomplete and he was eventually buried elsewhere.[88] The partly opened shroud with knots at both ends reveals worms crawling all over Ralph's skeletal corpse and even through his eye sockets and mouth. The first part of the two-line text scroll issuing from his mouth confirms what the viewer can see with his own eyes: 'Vermib[us] hic donor' (Here I am given to the worms).[89] The creature added as a line filler at the end of the second line (Fig. 10b) perhaps represents another kind of vermin to reinforce the message about bodily corruption.

Despite the pious intention of this memorial, the image itself is unmistakably intended to shock. With its display of slithering worms, it conforms both to the literary tradition of the worm-riddled corpse and to the visual imagery already observed in German and Danish wall-paintings of the Three Dead (Col. pls 2–3), rather than to the more subtle worm infestation of the French tradition (Fig. 7). Woodcuts of the popular *danse macabre* may also have influenced the design of this brass: especially German artists sometimes chose to liven up the depiction of putrefaction by showing the bodies of the dead dancers crawling with worms or serpents – it is actually hard to decide which creatures are intended – that coyly raise their heads from different parts of the bodies, curl themselves around the cadavers' limbs, or slither through jaws and eye-sockets, whilst they often have toads for company. A vivid example is the second woodcut in a printed edition of the *Totentanz* published probably by Heinrich Knoblochtzer in Heidelberg around 1486–88 under the title *Der doten dantz mit figuren clage und antwort schon von allen staten der werlt* (Fig. 11).[90] This preamble to the actual dance shows corpses infested by worms or serpents who are dancing and making music beside a charnel-house, whilst a recumbent cadaver nearby has a toad-like creature crawling across its abdomen, much as one finds on the cadaver effigy at La Sarraz (Fig. 3).

11. Musical and dancing corpses, woodcut illustration from the printed *Totentanz* edition attributed to Heinrich Knoblochtzer, *c.*1486–88

Another possibly verminous effigy is that traditionally identified as commemorating Sir Marmaduke Constable (d. 1520) in St Oswald's church at Flamborough in the East Riding



12a. Tomb with brass epitaph and fragment of a miniature *transi* traditionally identified as commemorating Sir Marmaduke Constable (d. 1520), on the north side of the chancel of St Oswald's church, Flamborough, Yorkshire.

12b. Detail of the miniature *transi* fragment at Flamborough.

Photos: author

of Yorkshire (Fig. 12a–b), which Kathleen Cohen described as having 'a single frog in the chest cavity'.[91] The surviving fragment is currently fixed diagonally on top of the dark 'marble' slab of a tomb chest situated between the easternmost pillars of the north arcade of the chancel; the tomb itself is now divided by the insertion of a Gothic screen serving as a partition wall between the chancel and the vestry. The effigy consists of a torso with the remains of the neck, right shoulder and the inner side of the left upper arm, *c.*31 cm wide and 33 cm long; it is clearly less than life-size and unlikely to have measured more than 140 cm in length originally. As such, it might have looked rather odd on its present tomb chest, the slab of which is *c.*183 cm long; a smaller tomb chest of the same period in the Lady Chapel is *c.*166 cm long, which would seem more in proportion. However, the effigy is traditionally linked with the larger tomb which now features Sir Marmaduke's brass epitaph set upright on the edge of the slab – a position that is clearly not original, and there is evidence that the epitaph has been moved around the chancel over the last four centuries. The antiquary Roger Dodsworth recorded the epitaph on 'a tombe with the picture of dethe theron' on 15 November 1620, but without offering specific details about the state of the figure,[92] and further antiquarian research is needed to discover more about the original position of the epitaph and the effigy.

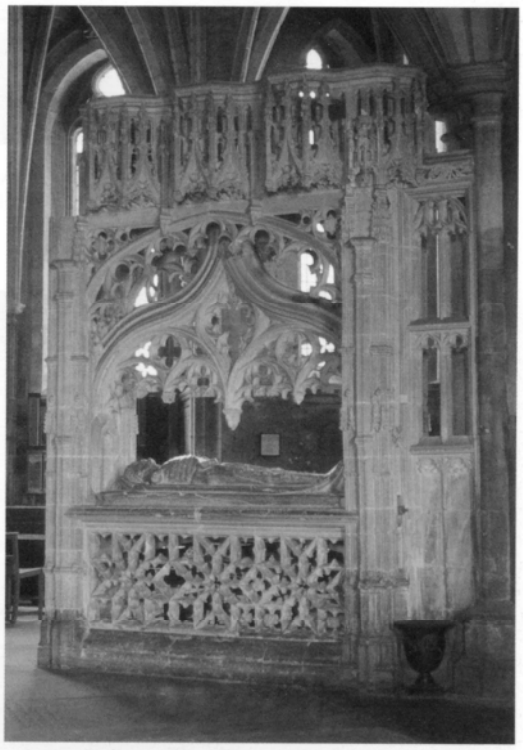
What makes the Flamborough fragment so unusual is the presence of a large heart inside the open rib-cage, with a round but damaged lump underneath it. This curious detail was already mentioned by the somewhat sceptical author of a short report in *The Gentleman's Magazine* of 1753:

> the upper part of a skeleton in stone, the ribs project greatly, and the breast is laid open, in the inner side of which appears what, by tradition, is held to be a toad at the heart (of which he was supposed to die) but it bears little or no resemblance to a toad.[93]

The author's reference is to a local legend that Sir Marmaduke's heart was eaten by a toad which he had swallowed – a story that bears some resemblance to Mirk's exemplum of the evil Roman emperor Nero mentioned earlier.[94] The conspicuous heart and the relatively small size of the effigy might suggest a heart burial, but these were rare at this late date and neither the epitaph nor the size of the tomb bear this out. Carved organs can be clearly seen inside the chest cavity of the cadaver effigy at Vianen (Fig. 2c) but that added realistic touch bears no comparison to the crude and probably symbolic heart of the Flamborough effigy.

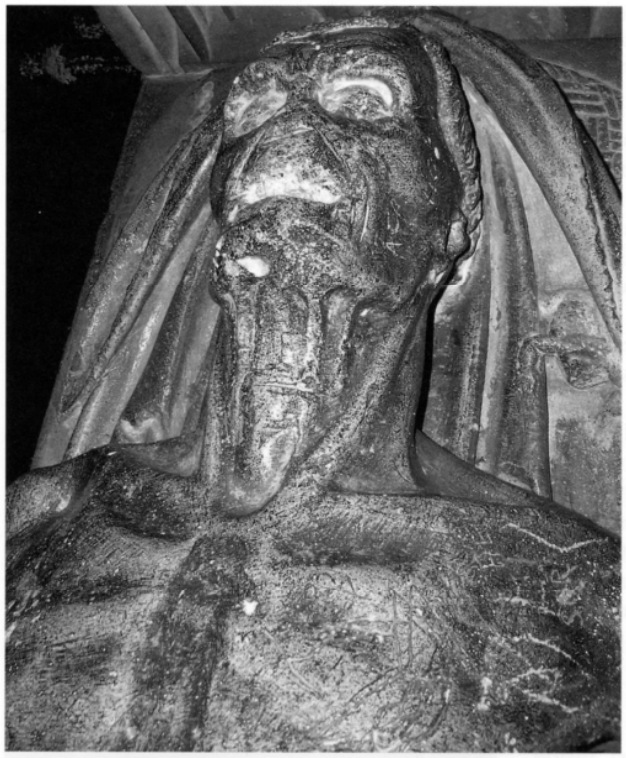
The additional lump below the heart is even harder to explain. Pamela King felt that the 'appearance of the lump is more suggestive of a heart, held in the effigy's hands, which has precedents in brass',[95] but there is really no resemblance to a pair of hands and it is hard to think of another heart cadaver effigy with hands reaching into the bare chest cavity; the possibility of this lump being the remains of a spinal column or any other organ must also be ruled out. Despite the misgivings of the 1753 author, one might give some credence to the local legend, and it is still possible to interpret two worn extensions above the lump as two splayed front feet moving towards the heart. The sides of the lump are original and round, which would suit the shape of a toad, whilst damage to the top and front could have caused the loss of a creature's head. The Flamborough fragment remains puzzling in every respect but there is a distinct possibility that this undersized cadaver effigy did indeed once feature a toad squatting below the figure's heart inside the chest cavity. As we have seen, toads feature regularly in medieval death-related texts and are a prominent feature of the effigy at La Sarraz (Fig. 3) as well as of the 'King of Terror' at Bardwell (Fig. 9). The late date of the Flamborough effigy also leaves open the possibility of continental influence through prints such as the Knoblochtzer *Totentanz* series (Fig. 11).

In any case, the Flamborough fragment would not be the sole English cadaver effigy to feature a toad. Another example that offers a variety of vermin is the cadaver effigy in the ambulatory at Tewkesbury Abbey, Gloucestershire, which is traditionally linked to Abbot Wakeman (1534–40), although this identification has been questioned: the problem is how to date and interpret this monument. It appears to have been designed as a double-decker monument, but there is only a cadaver effigy on the tomb chest (Fig. 13a–c); the ledge behind



13a. Cadaver monument traditionally identified as commemorating Abbot Wakeman, Tewkesbury Abbey.

Photo: Phillip Lindley



13b. Detail of the face of the 'Wakeman' effigy, showing the toad in the folds of the shroud beside the head.
Photo: Sally Badham

13c. Detail of mouse on the stomach of the 'Wakeman' effigy.
Photo: Sally Badham

the decorated trelliswork stone screen below is now empty. It seems highly probable that the cadaver effigy was originally destined for the lower recess and only placed on top of the tomb chest where the effigy *au vif* should have lain, either because the patron abandoned the project before the effigy *au vif* was completed or because this upper effigy was later destroyed by iconoclasts.[96] John Wakeman was the last abbot of Tewkesbury; he became Bishop of Gloucester after surrendering the Abbey to Henry VIII in 1540, and was ultimately buried at Forthampton.[97] There has been a lot of speculation both about the date of the monument and whether the effigy originally formed part of it. Some authors have favoured a fifteenth-century date, which would rule out any link with Wakeman, but most recently it has been argued by Phillip Lindley that the monument constitutes an architecturally coherent plan in the Tudor Perpendicular style that could not be dated much earlier than *c.*1510, although a later date coinciding with Wakeman's abbacy is possible.[98] The identity of the patron thus remains uncertain.

If the genesis of the tomb is still a matter for debate, the vermin on the effigy are no less so. The Tewkesbury effigy is of the emaciated variety and lacks the right arm, but it still features an assortment of vermin, albeit on a very modest scale: a toad close to the left ear (Fig. 13b); a mouse

in the stomach area (Fig. 13c); a worm or serpent on the left knee and another alongside the right lower leg; and finally what is probably a beetle on the left upper arm. Like the serpent and the toad, the mouse had a negative reputation as vermin as well as a long association with evil.[99] An allegorical miniature on life and death painted on vellum by Joris Hoefnagel in 1598, now in the British Museum, shows a naked infant with a skull and hour-glass framed by a border that includes a dead mouse and a dead frog, a snail, a maggot, and a variety of insects – all manifest tokens of death and corruption derived from medieval tradition that regarded vermin as natural components in the process of decomposition. The medieval wall-paintings at Tuse (Col. pl. 3) and Peakirk are similarly swarming with large beetles, so the presence of a beetle on the Tewkesbury effigy is not unique. Even so, the few creatures on this monument are hardly the kind of infestation that hits the beholder in the way that the vermin-riddled brass at Oddington does, and one cannot help but wonder whether the patron or the sculptor had doubts about carrying the image of decomposition through to its extremest form. One might be tempted to compare the curiously selective choice and placement of the vermin on this effigy to the careful distribution of zodiac signs on the figure of astronomical man as illustrated, for example, in woodcuts in the popular *Kalender of shepherdes*, where Cancer is situated on the figure's chest, Scorpio in the genital area, and Pisces is represented by one fish under each foot, but it is hard to discover an obvious connection.

Rejecting a link with the Bestiary, King chose to pursue the link between vermin and evil suggested by earlier writers. She interpreted the five creatures on the Tewkesbury effigy as a 'personal psychomachia' of the seven deadly sins, citing as evidence for this medieval devotional idea such texts as Wycliffe's *Tractatus de Civili Domino*, which describes the sins of the cloister as the basilisk poison of pride, asp-like envy, anger of the toad, sloth of hidden poisons, avarice of spiders, gluttony of serpents, and lechery of the viper.[100] Sadly, neither medieval authors nor artists are very consistent in personifying sins as animals, and King herself was forced to question any direct correlation between Wycliffe's text and the monument at Tewkesbury.[101] King also tried to solve the problem of numbers by pointing out the missing right arm and the defacement of other parts of the effigy, which could have harboured the two creatures lacking to fit her hypothesis. The argument that the screen originally must have featured fourteen lozenges with instruments of the Passion, which in medieval devotional texts were invoked as particular remedies for specific sins, thus providing a link with the vermin on the effigy, is clever but perhaps not wholly convincing. It is difficult to recognise any consistent link between the scattered vermin on the 'Wakeman' cadaver effigy and specific sins being driven out of the body after death, quite apart from the message that such allegory would convey to the medieval beholder. One further argument against King's vermin hypothesis, as put forward by Lindley, is that the vermin would not have been distinguishable anyway in the effigy's intended position behind the openwork screen. Although in some contexts the different types of vermin may well be associated with specific sins, it seems more plausible that the vermin on the examples at Oddington, Flamborough and Tewkesbury were intended to emphasise a state of putrefaction, as supported also by Ecclesiasticus 10:13: 'For, when a man shall die, he shall inherit serpents, and beasts, and worms'. The influence of continental verminous imagery can also not be ruled out, as will become evident in the next section.

Finally, there still remains Bauch's supposedly macabre tomb at Lowthorpe (Fig. 1). Inspection of the monument soon shows that there is nothing at all remotely macabre about this monument: the so-called strangling roots are actually part of a family tree that culminates in two coats of arms at the bottom of the monument between the two figures. Likewise, the 'toads' consuming the carcasses are actually thirteen human heads linked to

this family tree by branches and most likely represent the couple's children; at least one head on either side wears a wimple and one of the male heads on the sinister side sports a beard. As such, this monument belongs to the tradition of 'kinship' monuments in which family members and especially children are represented on tombs, usually as weepers.[102] Perhaps this unusual iconography was inspired by contemporary depictions of the Tree of Jesse, although the overall composition of the recumbent couple also bears some similarity to the curious fourteenth-century Lincolnshire tomb monuments of couples displayed as if in bed together at South Stoke and Careby.[103] It must be assumed that Bauch based his interpretation on photographs rather than on actual study of the monument on location, but it is only by studying the variation of verminous cadaver representations elsewhere in Europe that one can understand the reasons for his mistake.

The verminous cadaver effigy in Europe

Although Cohen's listings of corpses 'with worms' and 'with snakes and other reptiles' are slightly misleading in view of the difficulty in distinguishing between worms and serpents, they help show a clear regional division in iconography.[104] The verminous cadaver effigies to be found in France, alongside the 'fresh' and skeletal *transi* figures, appear to feature only worms or maggots, which compares well with the dead dancers or Death in French illustrations of the *danse macabre* that show only a minimal quantity of worms (Fig. 7). Cohen illustrated the tomb of Canon Etienne Yver (d. 1467) at Notre-Dame in Paris and the life-size cadaver of Guillaume Lefranchois (d. 1456) from Béthune, now in the Museum at Arras; three fifteenth-century examples of maggot-riddled cadavers on an incised slab at Beauvais, on a monument at Cussy-les-Forges, and on the tomb of Robert Touse (d. 1422) formerly at Rouen Cathedral, as recorded in an antiquarian drawing; and the horrifying sixteenth-century standing cadaver statue from the charnel house at Clairvaux Abbey.[105] Listed but not illustrated by Cohen is the two-tier sculpted memorial tablet of Abbot Pierre Dupont (d. 1461) in the church of Saint-Martin at Laon, which shows the abbot kneeling in front of the Madonna above and as a mitred recumbent cadaver below, his face and body riddled with worms (Col. pl. 6a–b).

The same type is also found in the Low Countries, or 'Lowlands' as Cohen lists her examples. Admittedly the verminous type is relatively rare but four worm-infested examples are cited, including the Brederode tomb at Vianen (Fig. 2).[106] However, Cohen's list is far from complete: missing from it are the single cadaver figures on the floor slab to Michaël Jansz. (d. 1523) and his wife Lisbet in the 'Binnenlandvaarder' chapel in the Oude Kerk in Amsterdam (Fig. 14); on a worn and rather crude sixteenth-century slab with an inscription of later date in the St Pancras church at Enkhuizen; and on the 1530 slab of Iost van Menenen in the St Matthiaskerk at Maastricht.[107] Interestingly, the effigy at Maastricht has a toad in its abdominal cavity, which is an unusual feature amongst surviving examples in the Netherlands, although not in German iconography, and all three of these effigies are crawling with worms. The location of the Maastricht example and its late date may help explain its variant type of verminous infestation; an undated baroque black 'marble' floor slab to Jan Schouw close to the north wall of the nave of St Jan Cathedral in 's-Hertogenbosch also features beneath the epitaph a lizard, a serpent and a toad advancing upon a recumbent skeleton.[108]

Cohen's other examples in modern-day Belgium of verminous cadaver tombs with just worms include that at Heverlé to the Duke of Croy (*c.*1570) and a late monument at Vilvorde to Philip Dengelberg (1645), which has worms wriggling through the ribcage and the partially open stomach. Rather different is the tombstone of Joos van Troyes (d. 1521), now housed in the lapidarium in Ghent (Fig. 15), which shows a cadaver with just

14. Worm-infested cadaver figure on the floor slab to Michaël Jansz. (d. 1523) and his wife Lisbet, 'Binnenlandvaarder' chapel, Oude Kerk, Amsterdam.

Photo: author

15. Verminous cadaver tomb slab commemorating Joos van Troyes (d. 1521), now in the lapidarium at St Bavo Abbey, Ghent.

Photo: Didier Jugan

one large worm or serpent slithering through its mouth and a second in the chest cavity.[109] Not mentioned by Cohen, and interesting because of its very similar appearance and style to the Brederode effigy at Vianen, is a cadaver effigy at Boussu-lez-Mons, which may be by the same sculptor; both share the unusual feature of carved organs inside the chest cavity. Known locally as 'l'homme aux moulons', *moulons* being the local dialect for worms, the Boussu cadaver now unfortunately lacks both its original setting and the identity of the person(s) it once commemorated.[110]

It is inevitably the nature of surveys such as Cohen's that further examples continue to emerge, such as an unidentified stone miniature effigy of *c.*1420–40 with maggots swarming across its abdomen in the Musée du Vieux Cimetière at Soignies, or the double cadaver tomb slab of Nicolas del Halle (d. 1555) and his wife Johanna with worms on the stomachs and legs in the church of St Etienne in Braine-l'Alleud, Belgium.[111] Another sumptuously carved, black 'marble' monument dated 1537 from the church of Sainte-Ursule, now in the Musée Curtius in Liège, features an emaciated cadaver with worms

crawling around its legs, which is shown lying on a Renaissance sarcophagus with its head reposing on a book, a clock suspended above its feet as an additional *vanitas* symbol; the identity of the deceased is not known but he may have been a scholar.[112] There are clearly more verminous cadaver monuments to be found in the Low Countries than Cohen was aware of, deserving further attention than can be given here, but by and large they tend to follow the French model of worm infestation, albeit with variations.

In the German-influence sphere, however, the extreme variety of verminous imagery that is found in depictions of *Frau Welt*, the *Versucher* and the Three Dead (Fig. 8, Col. pl. 2) made its way into tomb iconography, to the extent of being described – rightly or wrongly – as the prevalent form amongst German cadaver effigies.[113] There is certainly more variety of vermin here than in the French tradition: toads and lizards mix with serpents on monuments such as those to Johannes Gemeiner (d. 1482) at Straubing; Johannes Permetter (d. 1505) at Ingolstadt; Bernhard Beham (d. 1507) at Halle-in-Tyrol; Peter Niderwirt (d. 1522) at Eggenfelden; and Ludwig Juppe's 1516 double-decker monument to Landgraf Wilhelm II von Hessen (d. 1506) in the Elisabethkirche in Marburg.[114] Not listed by Cohen are a painted epitaph commemorating the royal kitchen-master Michael Raffael (d. 1489) in the Frauenkirche at Nuremberg (Col. pl. 7a–b), which has been attributed to the well-known Nuremberg painter Michael Wolgemut, and the tomb slab of Wolfgang von Schleinitz (d. 1523) in the Afrakirche in Meissen, which is attributed to Christoph Walther the Elder (Fig. 16).[115] Both figures are swarming with serpents and other creatures; the effigy at Meissen has a toad sitting at its right foot, albeit restored.

Interestingly, the sculptor responsible for the cadaver slab in Meissen also appears to have produced the sculpted *Totentanz* relief of 1534–37, formerly on the (destroyed) Georgentor and now in the Dreikönigskirche in Dresden, which likewise features a verminous skeleton at the head of the procession (Fig. 17).[116] It is not difficult to see the similarities between the verminous iconography as found in these German examples, and that of the Hamsterley brass at Oddington or the relatively early incised cadaver slab at Nyköping (Fig. 4). That this verminous imagery spread to Scandinavia – a region not included in Cohen's study – is evident not only in the wall-paintings of the Three Living and the Three Dead at Tuse and Skibby but also in the painted *danse macabre* scheme of *c.*1480 at Nørre Alslev, where at least three of the four skeletal dancers between the living figures have been misinterpreted as devils or demons, presumably because the serpents that slither through their eye-sockets have been misread as devilish horns (Col. pl. 8).[117] However, further research is needed into the occurrence of other cadaver monuments in Denmark and Sweden, and perhaps even Norway, for a better picture of the spread of this iconography. There is also a verminous cadaver slab, with a toad on the chest and a snake curled around the cadaver's skull, on the memorial cenotaph of 1513–16 to the merchant Hans Pawels on the exterior eastern wall of St Mary's chapel on the south side of the choir of St Olaf's church in Tallinn, Estonia, suggesting that the iconography also spread from Germany to the Baltic region, which the Hanseatic connections make highly probable.[118]

Perhaps the earlier allegorical representations of *Frau Welt* and the *Versucher* had an enduring influence, but those images are at least some two centuries earlier and a direct link with the much later cadaver monuments seems doubtful. Cohen does quote a number of German texts that link toads, snakes and frogs with evil and sin, but counterparts for such texts are easy to find elsewhere, just as most of the Latin exempla used by preachers would have been current throughout medieval Europe, including Britain where verminous cadaver effigies are rare. It is more likely that *Frau Welt* and the *Versucher* are early examples of what was to become a common German tradition that used the image of verminous infestation of cadavers for didactic purposes, whether in depictions of the Three Dead, the

right

16. Cadaver effigy commemorating Wolfgang von Schleinitz (d. 1523), situated in the nave of the Afrakirche, Meissen, Germany.

Photo: Landesamt für Denkmalpflege Sachsen

below

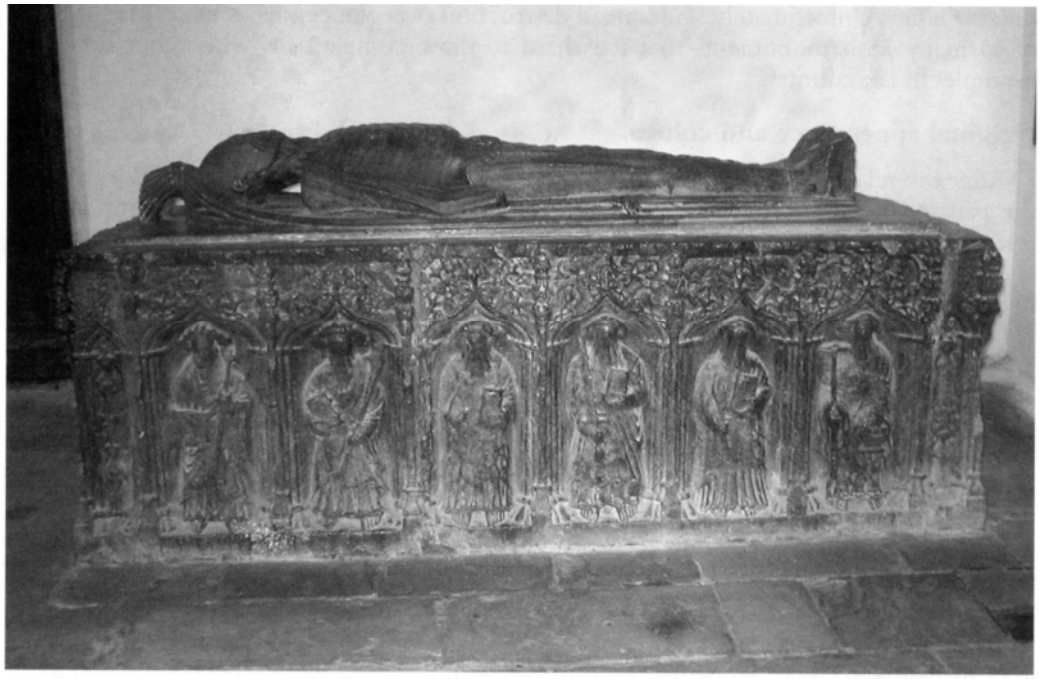
17. Verminous skeletal dancer at the head of the sculpted *Totentanz* by Christoph Walther the Elder, 1534–37, originally on the north side of the destroyed Georgentor and now situated in the Dreikönigskirche, Dresden.

Photo: Landesamt für Denkmalpflege Sachsen

Totentanz, cadaver monuments, or other macabre imagery.[119] Especially later monuments may have been influenced by illustrations in print, for Knoblochtzer's *Totentanz* was one of many printed versions produced at this time, inspired by the success of Guyot Marchant's illustrated *Danse macabre* edition published in Paris in 1485.[120] The latter was soon followed by extended editions that also included a *Danse macabre des femmes*, not to mention pirate versions produced by other printers in Paris and elsewhere. All these would have helped the spread of the *danse* across Europe, with the verminous German iconography almost certainly influencing the more subdued French tradition.[121] However, *danse macabre* prints are too late in date to help explain the imagery on the cadaver slab at Nyköping.

One more country not discussed by Cohen is Ireland, which is relatively rich in verminous cadaver effigies, albeit that double-decker tombs are absent here.[122] Instead, one finds stone tomb chests displaying a skeletal or cadaver effigy on the stone lid, with inscriptions on seven of them ranging chronologically from *c.*1483 to 1635. The Irish examples are iconographically unusual, although King was probably right in suspecting a direct influence from Germany or the Netherlands rather than from England. The two unidentified verminous cadaver effigies at Beaulieu or Bewley (Co. Louth) and Stamullen have been tentatively dated *c.*1450. Only a tomb cover survives at Beaulieu (Col. pl. 9), which local tradition claims to have been dredged out of the river Boyne in the eighteenth century; the skeletal effigy in its open shroud is positively teeming with vermin, ranging from serpents and worms to toads, lizards, and even a small bat-winged serpent.[123] Likewise, at Stamullen there is only a large tomb cover left with an effigy that still shows a distinct invasion of vermin, despite the weathered condition of the slab; the figure also lies on an open shroud.[124] The two cadaver effigies in their shroud on the large double tomb slab at Drogheda, probably early sixteenth century in date and commemorating Sir Edmond Goldyng and his wife Elizabeth Flemyng, similarly show frogs, worms and snakes.[125] The double tomb cover of James Tallon and Joanna Skelton at Castledermot, possibly dating to the early sixteenth century, is not only unusual in showing one cadaver shrouded and one naked, but also in its variety of vermin: apart from the serpents or worms on the body and toads squatting on the partly shrouded face of Joanna's effigy, there is a scaly creature with clawed feet about to bite into her husband's left foot, which Helen Roe interpreted as the Cocodryllus of the medieval Bestiary included here for didactic reasons; she assumed that the vermin on Irish tomb covers was associated with evil and thus had a didactic purpose.[126] As King also felt, the Bestiary connection is not wholly convincing but it is hard to explain the curious appearance of these Irish cadaver monuments.

By comparison, the verminous cadaver effigy on the tomb cover of the monument at Christ Church Cathedral in Waterford is relatively conventional (Fig. 18a–b). Its inscription identifies the monument as that of James Rice (d. *c.*1483–85 or later?) and his wife Katerina Broun.[127] Mayor of the city on at least eight occasions during his life, Rice was apparently a man of great personal piety who was granted permission in 1483 to go on a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. He is said to have stipulated in his will two effigies to commemorate him: one *au vif* and one cadaver showing him as he would appear one year after burial, for which he was purportedly exhumed to serve as a model.[128] His monument with its carved tomb chest is still in good condition but only features a semi-skeletal cadaver effigy in an open shroud with knots at both ends; it has lost its left upper arm and right lower arm and hand.[129] As at Tewkesbury, there is a modest assortment of vermin: a large worm or serpent and a lizard, both defaced, crawling across the rib-cage, and a toad squatting in the figure's abdominal cavity. Especially the latter conforms to the iconography found in Germany and on the monument at Maastricht, so one must consider the possibility of the influence of continental woodcut illustrations on the design of Rice's



18a. 'Verminous' semi-skeletal cadaver effigy of James Rice (d. *c.*1483-85) at Christ Church Cathedral, Waterford, Ireland.

Photo: David Smith, by permission of the Dean and Select Vestry of Christchurch Cathedral, Waterford, Ireland

18b. Detail of vermin on the torso of James Rice's cadaver effigy at Christ Church Cathedral, Waterford, Ireland.

Photo: David Smith, by permission of the Dean and Select Vestry of Christchurch Cathedral, Waterford, Ireland

cadaver effigy. Unfortunately, widespread destruction over the centuries has caused the loss of so many Irish monuments that it is hard to draw comparisons with other surviving examples in the country.

Original appearance and colour

After the relative wealth of verminous cadaver effigies on the Continent and in Ireland, the paucity of English examples is puzzling; King also wondered why the many literary references to the body being food for worms were not matched by more such imagery in art.[130] Of the extant verminous images of the Three Dead in English wall-paintings and miniatures, only the 'King of Terror' from the mural of the Three Living and the Three Dead at Bardwell (Fig. 9) and its counterpart at Peakirk are known to have followed the German iconography; the De Lisle Psalter miniaturist and other English artists instead adhered to the French model of infestation by worms and maggots only.

Of course, the loss of medieval art over the centuries has been enormous, and this applies to tomb monuments and wall-paintings: few traces remain of the once popular Dance of Death in Britain. One such example is the lost brass that Thomas Cooke Esq. requested in his 1513 will for himself and his wife near his chantry chapel in St Lawrence's church at Ludlow, incorporating a third figure 'after the mortal after the daunce of powles' with a text scroll containing the line 'Man behold so as I am now, so shalt thou be'.[131] Cooke referred to the once famous painted *danse macabre* scheme of *c.*1430 commissioned by the London town clerk John Carpenter for Pardon Churchyard at Old St Paul's Cathedral with accompanying verses by Lydgate, which was destroyed already in 1549, as recorded by John Stow.[132]

The scheme in London is likely to have featured an image that Lydgate borrowed from his model in Paris: just before the author – in some versions 'Machabre the Doctoure' – spells out the moral of the *danse* for the reader's benefit, the penultimate stanza offers the words of a dead king eaten by worms, 'Seeth what ye ben & what is yowre nature / Mete vnto wormes not elles yn substaunce / [...] wormes fode is fyne [*end*] of owre lyuynge'.[133] This matches the words of the dead king in Marchant's edition: 'Pensez quest humainne nature, / Ce nest fors que viande a vers [...] Tous estas: sont aux vers donnes' (Remember what is the nature of mankind, / it is nothing but meat for the worms [...] all estates, they are given to the worms). Marchant's woodcut curiously does not show worms but the possibility remains that English artists chose to visualise Lydgate's verses with their clear appeal to the viewer to 'see' the worms that spell the end of all human flesh. There are unfortunately no surviving English *danse macabre* schemes that illustrate this scene.[134] However, the image of a worm-riddled king does occur as the last of two woodcut illustrations in the only complete extant early English printed edition of Lydgate's *Dance of Death* poem published by Richard Tottel in 1554 as an appendix to the poet's *Fall of Princes*, where three men in elegant Tudor costume gaze upon a crowned emaciated figure lying on a tomb with worms or serpents wriggling around the stomach area (Fig. 19). Is Tottel's woodcut merely a literal illustration of Lydgate's verses, or might it be a reflection of other English verminous cadaver effigies since lost? The fact that many more cadaver monuments of the emaciated variety survive would seem to make this a less likely explanation.

One important aspect that is often overlooked, presumably because to modern viewers the bare stone of cadaver effigies is sufficiently death-like, is the fact that these sculptures were almost certainly painted originally to make them look as realistic as possible. Famous Netherlandish painters such as Jean Malouel and Robert Campin were commissioned to paint carved statues in order to make them more life-like, and medieval tomb effigies elsewhere would have undergone similar treatment.[135] Sculptors took great trouble over

19. Three men in Tudor costume looking at a crowned and worm-infested cadaver on a tomb, woodcut illustration in the English printed edition of Lydgate's *Dance of Death* published by Richard Tottel in 1554 as an appendix to *The Fall of Princes*.

the carved appearance of these stone corpses, as is obvious in the smooth finish of Bishop Beckington's effigy at Wells in contrast to the chiselled surface of the shroud underneath that creates an illusion of coarse woven textile (Col. pl. 10). The carved decorations on the mitre on which Bishop Bush's effigy rests its head at Bristol (Col. pl. 1a–b) were also clearly meant to resemble colourful gemstones. A layer of gesso and paint would have completed the final appearance of such effigies.

Although the present colour scheme of Chichele's monument is part of a much later restoration (Col. pl. 11), we know that it was originally painted and that the archbishop's himself made sure that it would be kept in a good state of repair after his death, with repainting being part of such work as necessary.[136] The sculpted *Totentanz* frieze in Dresden is also known to have been repainted several times over the centuries, with the worms probably highlighted in bright or even glittering colours against the originally azurite background.[137] Paint is still visible on Bishop Bush's effigy, especially on the mitre, and Abbot Dupont's wall-memorial at Laon likewise retains some of its original colours (Col. pl. 6a–b). Alabaster is to a degree the exception to the rule as it was admired for its natural translucency and polish: therefore, alabaster statues were usually only touched up with gold and subtle colours. Thus, Alice de la Pole's alabaster cadaver effigy at Ewelme would have been left largely unpainted, except for the mouth and hair: traces of red can still be observed within the gaping mouth.[138]

However, it would have been very unusual, if not anathema to medieval artists and patrons alike, to leave a freestone cadaver effigy bare, especially when it formed part of a

larger monument that certainly was painted. Thus, the emaciated cadaver effigy of Bishop John Carpenter (d. *c.*1476) of Worcester, lying on a shroud with a mutilated pastoral staff alongside it, was originally situated in the south wall of the subterranean chantry chapel of the Holy Cross in the church of All Souls, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol, set in a painted tomb recess with painted drapery featuring his coat of arms and a depiction of his funeral procession.[139] Likewise, the now blank rear wall of the tomb of the precentor and chancellor Thomas Bennett (d. 1554) in the north-east transept of Salisbury Cathedral originally showed a painted representation of Bennett kneeling before a Crucifix, as illustrated in a coloured drawing of *c.*1798 by Thomas Trotter.[140] A bare stone cadaver effigy would have looked strangely out of place in such lavishly painted settings, and this further undermines Orme's suggestion that the heraldic shields above the unidentified cadaver effigy at Exeter Cathedral were deliberately left bare to ensure the patron's anonymity.[141]

What colour would these cadaver effigies have had originally? The *transi* of Roger Manwood (d. 1592) at Hackington, Kent, is painted the colour of bone.[142] However, there is the possibility of colour variation among cadaver effigies. Artists may have opted for a murky colour suggestive of bodily decay to contrast with funeral effigies, which were given natural colours, whereas newly expired bodies are usually depicted with a deathly pallor; this is evident in the illuminated manuscripts commemorating the funeral of Anne of Brittany, Queen of France, in which her corpse can be thus distinguished from her funeral effigy.[143] On the other hand, Death himself is often shown in dark colours or described as 'black', suggesting putrefaction; in the earliest known German *Totentanz* version, which survives in a Latin-German manuscript text copied in 1443–47, the child complains about a 'vir ater' or 'ein swarzer mann'.[144]

Those medieval examples of the *danse macabre* that do survive in Britain feature skeletons of different hues, albeit without any signs of vermin. The four painted panels of *c.*1500 at Hexham Abbey show the pope and the cardinal with two skeletal dancers of lighter tones, whereas the other two are much darker, especially the one paired with the emperor: the matching darker and ligher red-brown backgrounds to these religious and secular figures suggest that they were originally meant to alternate. Similarly, some images of the Three Dead also have dark skins, such as the three figures in the fourteenth-century wall-painting at Longthorpe Tower near Peterborough, although here the dark colours may not be intentional but due to chemical pigment deterioration.[145] However, in the wall-painting at Peakirk, the first of the Three Dead was painted in yellow, brown and black; the second in deep yellow or brown and outlined in heavy red, and the fainter figure of the third is coloured yellow and outlined in grey or faded black.[146] Perhaps the most telling illustration in this respect is a miniature in a French fifteenth-century book of hours (British Library, Harl. MS 2917, fol. 119r), which shows the Three Dead facing a pope, an emperor and a king as their living counterparts: the three corpses are dark brown and full of worms; light brown with some worms; and grey without worms (Col. pl. 12).[147] Similar colour variation can also be observed in the skeletal dancers at Nørre Alslev (Col. pl. 8).

As freestone statues were normally covered in gesso and painted over completely, this leaves the possibility of additional touches in either paint or impasto that have failed to survive, including added vermin in the form of maggots or worms in the stomach area in accordance with French tradition, or perhaps even more extreme types of vermin. Colour could have highlighted such features and might even have helped to distinguish the types of vermin for, according to Bartholomaeus Anglicus, citing the authority of Pliny, there are different colour varieties of toad: 'some beth broune and somme beth redissh, and somme pale and somme yelowe other citrine'.[148] Even if not 'naturalistic' in colour, paint would have made such creatures as those on the Tewkesbury effigy much more noticeable than

their current eroded and bare appearance suggests. Some vermin are known to have been highlighted through colour. Thus it is known that the Brederode monument at Vianen (Fig. 2a–c) was restored and repainted in 1828; when these later layers of paint were stripped during a subsequent restoration in 1877 it was discovered that the statues had originally been painted, with the worms on the limestone cadaver effigy apparently gilded, but the decision was taken to remove all traces of colour completely.[149]

It is an intriguing possibility that some of the now bare cadaver effigies in England may once have sported worms or worse, like the 'King of Terror' at Bardwell, but this remains only a hypothesis. After all, the vermin on most extant verminous effigies on the Continent, in Ireland and England are an integral part of the sculpture instead of a later addition in impasto or paint and, furthermore, Ralph Hamsterley's verminous effigy at Oddington remains unique amongst surviving British monumental brasses. Nonetheless, the present bare stone appearance of surviving cadaver effigies is certainly not what medieval artists intended us to see.

Conclusion

It will have become clear that there were distinct regional conventions in Europe when it came to depicting cadavers, whether in illustrations of the tale of the Three Living and the Three Dead or of the *danse macabre*, or on tomb monuments. Nonetheless, the presence and appearance of cadaver representations in art does not presuppose a penchant for similar imagery in tomb iconography: whereas depictions of the Three Living and the Three Dead and also the Triumph of Death can be found in Italy, the Italians seem to have had little liking for the cadaver effigy.[150]

For whatever reason, the verminous cadaver effigy was probably a far less popular variety in Britain than elsewhere on the Continent, despite the popular theme of the body as food for worms in contemporary literature and in wills of the period. Tomb monuments were subject to many diverse considerations from personal piety to prestige and decorum. Whilst patrons may have wanted to show themselves as devoutly confident of the Resurrection and humbly aware of the unworthiness of their earthly remains, they may have balked at the more extreme visualisation of their bodies' putrefaction.

Perhaps the frequent didactic use that preachers and writers made of vermin imagery may actually have made the verminous cadaver a less attractive option in Britain. After all, an emaciated cadaver effigy as an illustration of one's faith and humility is one thing, but any suggestion that the deceased was a confirmed sinner whose body was consumed by repugnant reptiles as a just punishment and a warning to viewers may have been unpalatable. On the other hand, many of these Latin exempla associating toads and other reptiles with punishments for sin were equally well known in other European countries where the verminous cadaver effigy did attain a certain degree of popularity. Perhaps a strong indigenous tradition of *vanitas*-related vermin imagery, such as the German allegorical figures of *Frau Welt* and the *Versucher*, can help explain why verminous cadaver effigies found acceptance elsewhere.

The cadaver effigy seems to have been introduced to England from the Continent only a few years prior to the *danse macabre* as translated by Lydgate, by which time the tale of the Three Living and the Three Dead had been a popular theme in art for over a century. The cadaver effigy was late in gaining a foothold in England, compared with the Continent: as the earliest datable English cadaver effigy, Archbishop Chichele's cadaver monument at Canterbury Cathedral is at least forty years younger than the oldest surviving continental examples. The more extreme varieties of cadaver imagery seem to have met with even more resistance from British patrons: the earliest exant verminous cadaver effigy – Ralph Hamsterley's brass – was only commissioned nearly a century after Chichele's tomb.

The exceptionally late date of the three known English verminous cadaver effigies may indicate an influence on tomb design from continental prints such as Knoblochtzer's *Totentanz* woodcut series. Although the Heslerton tomb at Lowthorpe was not the macabre monument that Bauch imagined, the cadaver brass at Oddington is so reminiscent of the verminous skeletons in the German *Totentanz* tradition that in this case a link seems probable. After all, research published elsewhere suggests that the *danse macabre* did influence tomb iconography in Britain and on the Continent, with prints playing a likely part in this process.[151]

Ultimately, of course, cadaver monuments have always been an acquired taste, both amongst medieval patrons and modern scholars. Whatever their original intentions, these grim visualisations of death and decay still have the ability to shock, perhaps even more so in a world where death has been largely sanitised.

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NOTES

1 K. Bauch, *Das mittelalterliche Grabbild: figürliche Grabmäler des 11. bis 15. Jahrhunderts in Europa* (Berlin and New York, 1976), p. 253 and fig. 376. Original text: 'Es gibt noch krassere Bilder des Leichnams. Das englische Grabmal eines Ehepaares in *Lowthorpe* (Yorks.) soll von 1389 sein, doch wirkt es älter. Die beiden Figuren sind nebeneinander gelagert, ganz wie die stehend liegenden Gewandfiguren des früheren 14. Jahrhunderts. Allein wachsen aus ihren Körpern Wurzelstränge, die sich zwischen ihnen in der Mitte zu einem stärkeren Stamm vereinen. Ringsum hocken Kröten, die nach ihnen gewandt an den Leibern zu fressen scheinen. Daß also die Leichname ausgesogen und von den Tieren des Erdreiches verzehrt werden, ist hier noch in der strengen Ordnung des monumentalen 14. Jahrhunderts veranschaulicht und rein motivisch: noch erscheinen die Figuren unversehrt und ganz symmetrisch. Kröten und Wurzelfäden sind regelmäßig verteilt.'

2 The monument is described and illustrated with a drawing in the 1972 edition of Pevsner's *Yorkshire: York and the East Riding*, pp. 308–9, with further information on the church and the Heslerton family in C.V. Collier, *Lowthorpe and its collegiate church of St. Martin* (Driffield, 1987, reprinted from *Transactions of the East Riding Antiquarian Society*, 24, pp. 28–42). The monument has previously also been identified as that of Sir Thomas de Heslerton, who amended his father's chantries and founded a seventh in 1364, but a more convincing attribution to Sir John de Heslerton was made in B. and M. Gittos, 'A survey of East Riding sepulchral monuments before 1500', in C. Wilson (ed.), *Medieval art and architecture in the East Riding of Yorkshire*, British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions, 9 (1989), pp. 91–108, at p. 99 and n. 32; this is also followed in the revised 1995 Pevsner edition.

3 V.J.B. Torr, 'The Oddington shroud brass and its lost fellows', *Monumental Brass Society Transactions*, 7:5 (1938), pp. 225–35, at p. 228; G.McN. Rushforth, 'Tewkesbury Abbey: the Wakeman cenotaph and the starved monk', *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, 47 (1925), pp. 150–52.

4 According to K. Verhey, 'Doet altijt wijselic, de doot is afgrijselic: een studie naar het transigraf in Nederland', unpublished MA dissertation (University of Nijmegen, 1989), pp. 43–50, the monument was erected during Reynout's own lifetime, which contradicts the legend of the realistic depiction of his corpse as recovered six weeks after drowning; I am very grateful to Harry Tummers for lending me his copy of this dissertation, which offers a useful overview of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century cadaver tombs in the Netherlands with a catalogue of examples found per province. The monument is also discussed and illustrated in R. Hulsman, *Funeraire cultuur: Alblasserwaard & Vijfheerenlanden* (Soesterberg, 2001), pp. 40–43; the claim in this book that this is the only example of a *transi* in the Netherlands is clearly wrong, however. Another version of the legend identifies the Vianen *transi* as the corpse of Reynout's uncle or

– more accurately – his half-brother François, who drowned in a brook near Eindhoven in 1529. Compare also the stories relating to François de la Sarra's famous effigy in K. Cohen, *Metamorphosis of a death symbol: the transi tomb in the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, California Studies in the History of Art, vol. XV (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1973), p. 3, n. 5.

5 The cadaver effigy has received a great deal of attention in recent years, often within the context of medieval death. See, for example, T.S.R. Boase, *Death in the Middle Ages: mortality, judgment and remembrance* (London, 1972), pp. 96–103; E. Panofsky, *Tomb sculpture: four lectures on its changing aspects from ancient Egypt to Bernini*, ed. H.W. Janson (1964, repr. London, 1992), esp. pp. 63–66 and figs 256–71; M. Norris, *Monumental brasses: the memorials*, 1 (London, 1977), chap. 16; P. Binski, *Medieval death: ritual and representation* (London, 1996), esp. pp. 139–52. The standard monograph is still Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, but see also the articles by P.M. King on cadaver monuments referred to in this paper, as well as her unpublished DPhil thesis 'Contexts of the cadaver tomb in fifteenth-century England' (University of York, 1987). Cadaver monuments are also discussed in C. Platt, *King Death: the Black Death and its aftermath in late-medieval England* (London, 1996), esp. pp. 153–60, 163–64, 191; H. Körner, *Grabmonumente des Mittelalters* (Darmstadt, 1997), pp. 54–59 and 157–67; and more recently in J.C. Smith, *The northern Renaissance*, Art & Ideas (London and New York, 2004), chap. 7, 'Dancing with Death: the art of dying well', esp. pp. 229–32. A recent Dutch overview article is A. de Koomen, 'Lijkschouwingen', *Kunstschrift*, 4 (1997), pp. 28–33. See also in this volume the article by S. Badham and J. Bayliss, 'The Smalpage monument at St Bartholomew the Great, London, re-examined', pp. 81–93, at pp. 86 and 93, n. 25.

6 P.M. King, 'The cadaver tomb in England: novel manifestations of an old idea', *Church Monuments*, 5 (1990), pp. 26–38; B.R. Kemp, *English church monuments* (London, 1980), chap. 7, esp. p. 161. The much later *danse macabre* is also popularly linked to the Black Death.

7 For de Harcigny's tomb, see Bauch, *Das mittelalterliche Grabbild*, p. 255 and fig. 380; Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, pp. 104–5, n. 20, and figs 1–2; and also the exhibition catalogue *Paris 1400: les arts sous Charles VI* (Paris, 2004), cat. 158. Early shroud effigies include a Flemish brass to Wouter Copman (1387) at St Saviour, Bruges, and the very faint indent of a shrouded demi-effigy on the slab commemorating John the Smith (*c.*1370) at Brightwell Baldwin, Oxfordshire, as mentioned in S. Badham, 'Monumental brasses and the Black Death – a reappraisal', *Antiquaries Journal*, 80 (2000), pp. 207–47, at pp. 225–26; see also Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, fig. 53 (with incorrect caption from fig. 52). Interesting in connection with de Harcigny's cadaver effigy is the claim in H. s'Jacob, *Idealism and realism: a study of sepulchral symbolism* (Leiden, 1954), p. 46, that 'a growing interest in human anatomy may have motivated the depiction of bodily decay'. For the effigy at La Sarraz, see Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, pp. 77–78, 94 and figs 31–32; Panofsky, *Tomb sculpture*, p. 64 and figs 257–58. Scholars are still debating when the monument at La Sarraz may have been created but a date nearer 1400 is now favoured.

8 Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, pp. 106–8 and fig. 51; Bauch, *Das mittelalterliche Grabbild*, p. 255 and fig. 382. Bauch interpreted Masaccio's painted skeleton as a representation of the donor, whereas others such as Panofsky, *Tomb sculpture*, p. 66, identify it as Adam; Cohen considered both interpretations possible as part of the intended design.

9 Illustrated in the 'Shrouds and skeletons' section of the Picture Library on the Monumental Brass Society's website at <mbs-brasses.co.uk>: see F.A. Greenhill, *Incised effigial slabs: a study of engraved stone memorials in Latin Christendom, c.1100 to c.1700* (London, 1976), vol. 1, pp. 195, 287; vol. 2, fig. 150b. I am grateful to Gudrun Anselm, curator of the Sörmlands Museum at Nyköping, for additional information about this slab. In Scandinavia the crown was often a sign of virginity, although it also occurs in depictions of the Three Dead in German, Danish and Dutch art, as shown below.

10 Examples of shroud and skeleton brasses can be found in the Picture Library of the MBS website; for shrouded effigies see P. Frosch, 'Mind thee to die: the Beresford monument at Fenny Bentley', *Church Monuments*, 15 (2000), pp. 31–43. Also P.M. King, '"My Image to be made all naked": cadaver tombs and the commemoration of women in fifteenth-century England', *The Ricardian*, 13 (2003), pp. 294–314, at pp. 294–95.

11 Chichele's monument is discussed in Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, esp. pp. 15–16, and fig 13; also R. Marks and P. Williamson (eds), *Gothic: art for England 1400–1547*, exhibition catalogue (London, 2003), pp. 234–36 and fig. 105. E.K. Kantorowicz, *The king's two bodies: a study in medieval political theology* (Princeton, 1957), pp. 433–35 and figs 30–31, compares Chichele's double-decker tomb to his funeral procession in which his coffined corpse was topped by a funeral effigy dressed in full pontificals. For the suggestion that the cadaver effigy in the north aisle of the nave of York Minster commemorates not the treasurer Thomas Haxey (d. 1425) but his mentor, the treasurer John Newton (d. 1414), see P.M. King, 'The treasurer's cadaver in York Minster reconsidered', in C.M. Barron and J. Stratford (eds), *The church and learning in later medieval society: essays in honour of R.B. Dobson*, Proceedings of the 1999 Harlaxton Symposium, Harlaxton Medieval Studies, 11 (Donington, 2002), pp. 196–209. One earlier writer assigned this effigy to the treasurer Robert Claget and dated it impossibly early as 1241, see G.L. Apperson, 'Monumental skeletons', *The Antiquary*, 43 (1907), pp. 216–19, at p. 217.

12 s'Jacob, *Idealism and realism*, p. 48; also S. Lawson, 'Cadaver effigies: the portrait as prediction', *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, 25 (1974), pp. 519–23, at 519; P.M. King, 'The iconography of the "Wakeman cenotaph" in Tewkesbury Abbey', *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, 103 (1985), pp. 141–48, at p. 141, where 'chrysom' is used in an incorrect sense; King, 'Contexts', pp. 19, 38–39. Chichele's epitaph is quoted in full in Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, p. 16; see also P. Lindley, 'The later medieval monuments and chantry chapels', in R.K. Morris and R. Shoesmith (eds), *Tewkesbury Abbey: history, art & architecture* (Logaston, 2003), chap. 13, pp. 161–82, at pp. 176–77.

13 King, 'Contexts', p. 57 and Appendix I, pp. 488–89, blames the paucity of cadaver tombs in Scotland on the more thorough iconoclasm there rather than on a distaste for this type of monument. Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, p. 192, cites only the Welsh example at Llandaff in her list for 'England'.

14 s'Jacob, *Idealism and realism*, p. 54; Körner, *Grabmonumente*, chap. 6. One late-fifteenth-century sandstone cadaver effigy, discovered in 1902 below the wooden floor of the Onze Lieve Vrouwekerk in Breda, has even been mistaken in the past for a depiction of the dead Christ from an Easter sepulchre; see Verheij, *Doet altijt wijselic*, pp. 57–61 and fig. 22.

15 Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, esp. pp. 2, 42 (n. 84), 120–25 and figs 72–77; s'Jacob, *Idealism and realism*, pp. 55–56.

16 King, 'Contexts', p. 98. Another post-medieval example is the 1598 alabaster Shirley family monument at Breedon-on-the-Hill, Leicestershire: see J. Bayliss, 'A Dutch carver: Garrett Hollemans I in England', *Church Monuments*, 8 (1993), pp. 45–56, esp. 47, 49, 52, and fig. 2.

17 J.A.A. Goodall, *God's house at Ewelme: life, devotion and architecture in a fifteenth-century almshouse* (Aldershot, 2001), pp. 179–93; King, '"My Image to be made all naked"', esp. pp. 308–14; Lindley, 'The later medieval monuments', p. 176 and n. 131, 137. However, the question of life-like portrayal on medieval monuments is a difficult one: see Badham and Bayliss, 'The Smalpage monument', p. 85 and n. 16.

18 These commemorate Anne of Brittany (d. 1514) and her husband Louis XII (d. 1515); François I (d. 1547) and his first wife Claude (d. 1524); and Henri II (d. 1559) and his wife Catherine de Médicis (d. 1589). See Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, esp. chap. 6 and figs 80–96; C. Sauvageot (photos) and S. Santos (text), *Saint-Denis, dernière demeure des rois de France* (Éditions Zodiaque, 1999), p. 13 and nos 64–65, 67.

19 Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, fig. 93; Sauvageot and Santos, *Saint-Denis*, no. 67; Kantorowicz, *The king's two bodies*, p. 433.

20 J. Huizinga, *The waning of the Middle Ages: a study of the forms of life, thought and art in France and the Netherlands in the XIVth and XVth centuries* (1919, transl. 1924, repr. London, 1982), p. 136.

21 Greenhill, *Incised effigial slabs*, pp. 288, 312, and pl. 152b; also Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, p. 58 and fig. 17. Compare also the 1194 tomb of Presbyter Bruno at Hildesheim Cathedral, as illustrated and discussed in S. Badham, 'Status and salvation: the design of medieval English brasses and incised slabs', *Transactions of the Monumental Brass Society*, 15, part 5 (1996), pp. 456–59 and fig. 26.

22 R. Woolf, *The English religious lyric in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1968), chap. 3, esp. pp. 93–95.

23 Quoting the Douay version of the Vulgate. The connection between cadaver effigies and the Resurrection is discussed further in Badham, 'Status and salvation', pp. 413–65, but see also King, 'Contexts'.

24 K.B. McFarlane, *Lancastrian kings and Lollard knights* (London, 1972), chap. 6, 'Lollard wills', pp. 207–220, at p. 210.

25 Sir Thomas Latimer's will was published in full in *The Ancestor*, 10 (July 1904), pp. 19–20; the excerpt quoted here can be found on p. 19.

26 McFarlane, *Lancastrian kings*, pp. 211, 215, 217.

27 King, 'The treasurer's cadaver', pp. 202–3 and pl. 41; Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, esp. pp. 17–18, 44–46 and figs 14–15. Fleming was appointed bishop of Lincoln in 1419 and subsequently received the see of York from the pope in 1424, but failing to gain acceptance as archbishop he was retranslated to Lincoln. It was he who ordered the exhumation and burning of John Wycliffe's bones in 1428.

28 McFarlane, *Lancastrian kings*, p. 219.

29 In his will Edward stipulated a stone 'wrought with the figure of Dethe' over his body, and 'an Image of oure figure, which figure we will be of silver and gilte' above his tomb. See Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, pp. 42, n. 82, and 121–22; Kantorowicz, *The king's two bodies*, p. 435; L. Stone, *Sculpture in Britain: the Middle Ages* (Harmondsworth, 1955, 2nd edn 1972), p. 213. For the poem, see Henderson, *The complete poems*, line 79, with in the same stanza the lines '[...] a man is but a sack of stercorry [*dung*]. / And shall return unto wormes meat' (lines 75–76) and the comparison with Absolon, 'Yet for all his beauty wormes eat him also' (line 82), all part of the *ubi sunt* tradition. The Latin refrain runs 'Quia ecce nunc in pulvere dormio' (Job 7:21: Behold, now I shall sleep in the dust). See also C. Brown, *Religious lyrics of the fifteenth century* (Oxford, 1939), no. 159. The attribution to Skelton, just as an earlier one to John Lydgate, is dismissed in Woolf, *The English religious lyric*, p. 325.

30 P.M. King, 'The English cadaver tomb in the late fifteenth century: some indications of a Lancastrian connection', in J.H.M. Taylor (ed.), *Dies illa: death in the Middle Ages*, Proceedings of the 1983 Manchester Colloquium, Vinaver Studies in French, 1 (Liverpool, 1984), pp. 45–57, in which the author argues a Lancastrian predilection for this type of monument while claiming, p. 54, that '[no] die-hard Yorkists favour the design'. Also S. Badham and N. Saul, 'The Catesbys' taste in brasses', in J. Bertram (ed.), *The Catesbys of Ashby St Ledgers and their brasses by members of the Monumental Brass Society and others* (forthcoming). For Margaret's tomb, see P. de Win, '"Danse macabre" around the tomb and bones of Margaret of York', *The Ricardian*, 15 (2005), pp. 53–69, at pp. 54–58; after earlier attacks in 1566 and 1572, the church was finally razed to the ground on 9 April 1580. I am grateful to Philip Lankester for sending me a copy of this article.

31 E. Dhanens, *Hubert and Jan van Eyck* (London, n.d.), pp. 29–31 and fig. 15. Apart from the conventional address to the reader, 'Spieghelt U an my die op my treden / Ick was als ghy' (Compare yourself to me, you who tread on me; I was like you once), the epitaph includes the lines: 'Hubrecht van Eyck was ich ghenant / Nu spyse der wormen, voormaels bekant / In schilderye zeer hooghe gheeert' (Hubert van Eyck I was called, / now food for worms, formerly famous, highly honoured for my painting). It is possible that Hubert was in holy orders. His tombstone may originally have been set in the floor of the chapel of the Vijd family who commissioned the Ghent Altarpiece. The text of the epitaph was recorded by the chronicler Marcus van Vaernewyck in 1568 before the brass tablet disappeared, perhaps in an iconoclastic attack in 1578: the tombstone itself was probably removed and re-used as building material for the north portal of the cathedral in the eighteenth century, and only rediscovered in 1892.

32 N. Orme, 'Whose body?', *Friends of Exeter Cathedral annual report*, 68 (1998), pp. 12–17. Orme is not very specific about the location of this 'single line of gothic letters' or whether it is original, mentioning only that it has been 'reworked and renewed'. Further features are the arms of the cathedral and diocese carved onto the two shields on the

spandrels of the arch, but two further shields on the wall of the recess are now bare, although formerly painted; in 1644 they were recorded as displaying the arms of Bishop Edmund Lacy (d. 1455), which Orme dismisses rather lightly. In his analysis, Orme is inclined to dismiss the bishop's brother Philip Lacy and Bishop Lacy himself as candidates for the monument.

33 See S. Badham, '"A new feire peynted stone": medieval English incised slabs?', *Church Monuments*, 19 (2003), pp. 20–52 for a discussion of the use of paint on monuments and the problems of identification through loss of painted epitaphs and heraldry.

34 J. Kinsley (ed.), *The poems of William Dunbar* (Oxford, 1979), no. 62. Dunbar's poem *Lament for the makaris*, with its telling heading 'Quhen he was sek', was written between 1503 and 1508; despite similarities in subject matter, Dunbar seems to have preferred lyricism to the extremes of morbid imagery used by some of his contemporaries. See also A. Breeze, 'The Dance of Death', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies*, 13 (Summer 1987), pp. 87–96, at pp. 90–91.

35 P. Henderson (ed.), *The complete poems of John Skelton, laureate* (London and Toronto, 1931), lines 11–18.

36 Woolf, *The English religious lyric*, p. 344; as pointed out by Woolf, there were Middle-English *titulus* verses, as above the miniature in the Psalter of Robert de Lisle. The full Middle-English poem (Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Douce 302) was published in E.K. Whiting (ed.), *The poems of John Audelay*, Early English Text Society, o.s. 184 (London, 1931), no. 54. See also C. Williams, 'Mural paintings of the Three Living and the Three Dead in England', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 3rd ser. 7 (1942), pp. 31–40.

37 Orme, 'Whose body?', p. 14. Also Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, p. 67, n. 66.

38 Huizinga, *Waning of the Middle Ages*, p. 124.

39 For a recent overview article on the *danse macabre*, see S. Oosterwijk, 'Of corpses, constables and kings: the *danse macabre* in late medieval and renaissance culture', *JBAA*, 157 (2004), pp. 61–90.

40 The suggestion is sometimes made that these cavities indicate embalming of the corpse, but this has to be discarded: artists were more likely to point to evisceration by showing clear stitches on the belly of the corpse, as can be observed on the marble *transi* effigies of the French royal couple Anne of Brittany and Louis XII at Saint-Denis.

41 See Oosterwijk, 'Of corpses, constables and kings'; for the differences in depicting the child in the *danse macabre* traditions, also S. Oosterwijk, '"Muss ich tanzen und kan nit gan?" Death and the infant in the medieval *danse macabre*', *Word & Image* (2006), forthcoming.

42 F. Warren, *The Dance of Death, edited from MSS. Ellesmere 26/A.13 and B.M. Lansdowne 699, collated with the other extant mss.*, EETS, o.s. 181 (London, 1931), quoting the version in MS Ellesmere 26/A.13, lines 100–1, 93–94 and 85–86, respectively.

43 McFarlane, *Lancastrian kings*, p. 211.

44 C. Brown, *Religious lyrics of the fourteenth century* (Oxford, 1924), no. 53 (BL MS Harley 2316), line 7. Brown, *Religious lyrics of the fifteenth century*, contains a separate section of 'Songs of mortality', although only a few contain macabre imagery; see nos. 149–64, and also the *vanitas* theme in no. 147. See also Woolf, *The English religious lyric*, esp. pp. 310–11.

45 Warren, *The Dance of Death*, lines 239–40; G.R. Owst, *Literature and pulpit in medieval England: a neglected chapter in the history of English letters & of the English people* (Cambridge, 1933), pp. 527–28. Bromyard was a fierce opponent of Wycliffe; his *Summa predicantium* draws heavily on thirteenth-century sources.

46 J. Plummer, *The hours of Catherine of Cleves* (New York, 1966), no. 43.

47 S. Spector (ed.), *The N-town play: Cotton MS Vespasian D.8*, 2 vols, EETS, s.s. 11 and 12 (Oxford, 1991), vol. 1, play 25, lines 393, 396.

48 S. Wenzel (ed. and trans.), *Fasciculus morum: a fourteenth-century preacher's handbook* (University Park (Penn.) and London, 1989), pp. 718–19, part 7, chap. 19, lines 116–18: 'Nichil vilius nec abhomina[bi]lius cadavere mortuo. In domo non permittitur ne eius fetore familia moriatur'. In some exempla, bystanders actually die from the stench emitted by the corpses of sinners; see Wenzel, pp. 352–53, 680–81, 694–95.

49 Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, p. 81 and figs 28–30.

50 C. Brown, *Religious lyrics of the thirteenth century* (Oxford, 1932), no. 30 (Cambridge, Trinity College MS 323). The poem is preceded by a Latin version in the manuscript, which contains a large number of other lyrics on death. See also Woolf, *The English religious lyric*, esp. pp. 82–84, 373. As Woolf points out, medieval lyrics are very hard to date exacly.

51 See L.F. Sandler, *The psalter of Robert de Lisle in the British Library* (London and Oxford, 1983), pp. 42–43; also Oosterwijk, 'Of corpses, constables and kings', pp. 62–64 and fig. 2.

52 E.C. Rouse, 'Wall paintings in the church of St. Pega, Peakirk, Northamptonshire', *Archaeological Journal*, 110 (1953), pp. 135–49, esp. 146–47 and pl. 27A.

53 See the section on the Three Living and the Three Dead and the mural at Wensley on the website by Anne Marshall, <http://www.paintedchurch.org/wens3l3d.htm>; also D. Park, 'Wall painting', in J. Alexander and P. Binski, *Age of chivalry: art in Plantagenet England 1200–1400* (London, 1987), p. 129; M.C. Gill, 'Late medieval wall painting in England: content and context (c.1330–c.1530)', unpublished PhD thesis (University of London, 2002), esp. pp. 395–96, 534, and figs 6.2–6.3; W.F. Storck, 'Aspects of death in English art and poetry', *Burlington Magazine*, 21 (1912), pp. 249–56 and 314–19, at p. 317 and pl. 1D.

54 A.P. Dunlap, 'Paintings on the walls of Bardwell church', *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology, Statistics and Natural History*, 2 (1859), pp. 41–50, at pp. 42–44 with illustration. I am grateful to Anne Marshall for alerting me to this example and for supplying me with the image and further information. See also Williams, 'Mural paintings', p. 38; Storck, 'Aspects of death', p. 314.

55 Williams, 'Mural paintings', p. 32.

56 I am grateful to Uli Wunderlich for alerting me to this example, and to Folker Förtsch of the Stadsarchiv Crailsheim for his kind help. This wall-painting is sometimes incorrectly referred to as a *Totentanz*. See S. Jaser, 'Das Totentanz-Fresko' and H. Gräser, 'Der sogenannte Totentanz der Johanneskirche', in *Unbekanntes und Vergessenes aus der Geschichte der Crailsheimer Johanneskirche: ein Ergänzungsband zu 600 Jahre Johanneskirche Crailsheim* (Kirchberg, 2003), pp. 30–32 and pp. 33–39, resp.

57 The examples at Skibby and Tuse were kindly brought to my attention by Professor Axel Bolvig. See also the websites <www.kalkmalerier.dk> and <ica.princeton.edu/mills/index.php>. It is worth pointing out that the lost figures of the Three Dead at Ditchingham also wore crowns.

58 J. Hogg (ed.), *An illustrated Yorkshire Carthusian religious miscellany (Brit. Library London Additional Ms. 37049)*, Analecta Cartusiana, 3, Illustrations (Salzburg, 1981); also Woolf, *The English religious lyric*, pp. 313–14 and pp. 328–30, which discusses a dream poem of the period, *In the ceson of huge mortalite*, as one of several to present a similar debate between the body in the grave and the worms devouring its sinful flesh. King, 'The iconography of the "Wakeman cenotaph"', p. 144, incorrectly describes this miniature as an illustration of a double-decker cadaver tomb.

59 H.M.R. Murray (ed.), *The Middle English poem, Erthe upon erthe, printed from twenty-four manuscripts*, EETS, o.s. 141 (1911, repr. London, New York and Toronto, 1964), stanza 2, line 14. The poem also features on scrolls surrounding a four-winged angel that can still be observed behind a door as part of the otherwise covered *danse macabre* mural on the west wall of the nave in the Guild Chapel at Stratford. Compare also the theme of death in fifteenth-century lyrics in Woolf, *The English religious lyric*, chap. 9.

60 Spector, *The N-town play*, vol. 1, play 20, line 232, and commentary in vol. 2, pp. 479–80: 'Death's costume is apparently that of a decaying body covered by worms'. Death continues to warn his audience with the words:

> Amongys wormys, as I yow telle,
> Vndyr the erth xul ye dwelle,
> And thei xul etyn both flesch and felle,
> As thei haue don me. (lines 281–84)

61 M.E. Robbins, 'The truculent toad in the Middle Ages', in N.C. Flores (ed.), *Animals in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1996), pp. 25–47, at p. 25; R. Vervoort, 'The pestilent toad: the significance of the toad in the works of Bosch', in J. Koldeweij *et al.* (eds), *Hieronymus Bosch: new insights into his life and work* (Rotterdam, 2001), pp. 145–51, at p. 145 and n. 1.

62 R. Barber, *Bestiary, being an English version of the Bodleian Library, Oxford M.S. Bodley 764* (Woodbridge, 1993), p. 116; see also pp. 199–200 for a long description of the worm in all its different manifestations.

63 Pliny, *Natural history, with an English translation in ten volumes*, ed. H. Rackham (London and Cambridge, Mass., 1940), vol. 3, book 10, chap. 86 (66), pp. 410–13.

64 J. Berlioz, 'Le crapaud, animal diabolique: une exemplaire construction médiévale', in J. Berlioz and M.A. Polo de Beaulieu (eds), *L'animal exemplaire au Moyen Age (Ve–XVe siècles)* (Rennes, 1999), pp. 270–71.

65 M. Stevens and A.C. Cawley (eds), *The Towneley plays*, 2 vols, EETS, s.s. 13 and 14 (Oxford, 1994), play 31, lines 157–58. Further quotations from this play will be from this edition.

66 Woolf, *The English religious lyric*, pp. 317–18, where the poem is quoted in full, including the lines 'My faire fleisch bigynneth forto stynke; / Wormis fynden at me greet prow [*benefit*] / I am hire mete, I am hire drinke'.

67 Wenzel, *Fasciculus morum*, pp. 638–39, part 6, chap. 3, lines 76–78: 'Ad litteram enim dicitur quod de corpore humano post mortem nascuntur tria genera vermium: de capite enim et collo nascitur bufo, de spina dorsi scorpio, et [de] ventre et stomacho gurgullo'.

68 Juvenal already claimed in his *Satires* that wives used the poisonous blood of toads to kill their husbands; see Berlioz, 'Le crapaud', p. 268.

69 R. Beadle (ed.), *The York plays*, York Medieval Texts, s.s. (London, 1982), play 11, lines 271–72: 'For tadys and frosshis ne may not flitte, / Thare venym loses [*destroys*] lesse and more'.

70 M.C. Seymour (gen. ed.) *et al.*, *On the properties of things. John Trevisa's translation of Bartholomaeus Anglicus,* De proprietatibus rerum (Oxford, 1975), vol. 2, pp. 1154–56, book 18, chap. 17.

71 Recounted in J. Shinners (ed.), *Medieval popular religion 1000–1500: a reader*, Readings in Medieval Civilisations and Cultures, 2 (Peterborough (Ontario), 1997), p. 32, sermon 73.

72 Robbins, 'The truculent toad'; Vervoort, 'The pestilent toad'; also Berlioz, 'Le crapaud'.

73 G. Zarnecki, *Romanesque Lincoln: the sculpture of the cathedral* (Lincoln, 1988), pp. 68–69 and figs 90, 92; the latter showing the sculpted figures of sinners on the left side of the Romanesque porch at Moissac Abbey, including a woman guilty of Lust whose breasts are sucked by serpents.

74 R. Easting (ed.), *St Patrick's Purgatory: two versions of* Owayne Miles *and* The vision of William of Stranton *together with a long text of the* Tractatus de Purgatorio Sancti Patricii, EETS, o.s. 298 (Oxford, 1991), Auchinleck version (copy produced in London), stanza 71, lines 1–5. The Latin prose equivalent can be found on p. 131, lines 395–400. Shinners, *Medieval popular religion*, p. 509, offers the following English translation of the relevant excerpt:

> Fiery snakes encircled other people's necks, arms, or entire bodies and, pressing their heads against the chests of the poor wretches, they sank the burning fangs of their mouths into their hearts. One could see also toads of wonderful size and as if made of fire sitting on the chests of some and burying their hideous muzzles there as if trying to pull out their hearts.

75 Easting, *St Patrick's Purgatory*, Yale version (copy produced in the Diss area), lines 341, 354–55.

76 Among other such texts is Adam of Eynsham's *Visio monachi de Eynsham*, which describes a vision of Purgatory and Paradise that Adam's fellow monk (or novice) Edmund had during a two-day trance at Easter 1196. Amongst the 'grete diuersitees of peynes' Adam is said to have been guided by St Nicholas to the first area of punishments in Purgatory to witness there how some poor sinners 'were gnawyn with the venummys teth of wondyrfull wormys'. See R. Easting (ed.), *The revelation of the monk of Eynsham*, EETS, o.s. 318 (Oxford, 2002), pp. xvii, 45, chap. 16, lines 687–88; the corresponding Latin text can be found on p. 44, lines 636–37. Some thirty-three manuscripts of the *Visio* survive and a Middle-English version was printed in London around 1483, which in itself indicates a wider market, while the text was also translated into German prose and into French verse (now lost) during the Middle Ages. The author of the Lollard 'Sermon of dead men' used a similar image to describe the fourth pain in Hell as the worm of the sinners' conscience: see G. Cigman (ed.), *Lollard sermons*, EETS, o.s. 294 (Oxford, 1989), 'Sermon of dead men', pp. 207–40, at p. 232. Loathsome worms, dragons and toads form the third pain for sinners in Hell in the fourteenth-century poem *Cursor mundi*: 'O wormes that sal neuer dei, / Fell dragons and tades bath / that ar apon to lok ful lath'; see R. Morris (ed.), *Cursor mundi (the cursor o the world): a Northumbrian poem of the XIVth century in four versions, two of them Midland*, part 4, EETS, o.s. 57 (London, 1877), quoting version BL Cotton MS Vesp. A iii, lines 23226–27. Another Middle-English poem about St Paul being guided through Hell by the archangel Michael contains similar imagery: see Whiting, *The poems of John Audelay*, no. 16, *e.g.* lines 123, 202.

77 H.O. Sommer (ed.), *Kalender of shepherdes* (London, 1892), facsimile edition in 3 vols, fols e iiiir and e vv. Following an earlier French printed edition by Guyot Marchant in 1491, a corrupt English translation of the *Kalender* was published by Antoine Vérard in Paris in 1503, then reprinted with Vérard's woodcuts but an improved text by Richard Pynson in London in 1506, with later English editions by Wynkyn de Worde and by William Powell in 1556. A Dutch edition was first published in Antwerp in 1510, followed slightly later by a German translation.

78 Wenzel, *Fasciculus morum*, p. 353, part 4, chap. 7, lines 107–19; also Robbins, 'The truculent toad', p. 37.

79 T. Erbe (ed.), *Mirk's festial: a collection of homilies by Johannes Mirkus (John Mirk)*, EETS, e.s. 96 (London, 1905), part 1, p. 85, 'De dominica in quadragesima sermo breuis – narratio'; compare Woolf, *The English religious lyric*, pp. 403–4. For the same story in the *Fasciculus morum*; see Wenzel, pp. 636–39, part 6, chap. 3, lines 63–74.

80 BL Add. MS 37049, fol. 86v, quoted in Woolf, *The English religious lyric*, p. 313.

81 G.G. Coulton, *Life in the Middle Ages*, vol. 1, *Religion, folk-lore and superstition* (1910, 2nd edn, Cambridge, 1928), no. 89, pp. 151–52, from T. Wright (ed.), *A selection of Latin stories from manuscripts of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries: a contribution to the history of fiction during the Middle Ages*, Percy Society, 28 (London, 1842), pp. 133–34. Incidentally, this particular variant of a Corpus Christi miracle is not found in M. Rubin, *Corpus Christi: the eucharist in late medieval culture* (Cambridge, 1991).

82 *Mirk's festial*, part 1, pp. 193–94, 'De morte Neronis'.

83 M. Stevens and A.C. Cawley (eds), *The Towneley plays*, 2 vols, EETS, s.s. 13–14 (Oxford, 1994), vol. 1, play 31, with quotations from this edition. See also Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, esp. pp. 33–38, for the epitaph on the monument to Cardinal Lagrange (d. 1402) at Avignon. For the well-documented tomb of John Baret and his surviving will, see Marks and Williamson, *Gothic*, cat. 331; Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, p. 91; M. Aston, 'Death', in R. Horrox (ed.), *Fifteenth-century attitudes: perceptions of society in late medieval England* (Cambridge, 1994), esp. pp. 224–27. Baret's life, chantry and tomb are also discussed in detail in G. McMurray Gibson, *The theater of devotion: East Anglian drama and society in the late Middle Ages* (1989, repr. Chicago and London, 1994), pp. 72–79.

84 It would probably be incorrect to call the cadaver effigy a popular type of memorial, but shroud brasses in all their different manifestations have been described as numerically quite a large class in England: see Norris, *Monumental brasses: the memorials*, vol. 1, p. 206, and by the same author, 'Later medieval monumental brasses: an urban funerary industry and its representation in death', in S. Bassett (ed.), *Death in towns* (Leicester, 1992), pp. 170–83, 248–51.

85 King, '"My Image to be made all naked"', pp. 297–98 and fig. 2.

86 Torr, 'The Oddington shroud brass'; Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, pp. 67 (n. 66), 78 (n. 102), 91–92 and fig. 37. Further insights into the London G school and mass-production of brasses were kindly supplied by Paul Cockerham.

87 Descriptions of these other three brasses are vague, but at least two of them probably depicted Hamsterley in academic dress rather than as a cadaver; see Torr, 'The Oddington shroud brass', pp. 228–29.

88 M.D. Lobel (ed.), *Victoria County History County of Oxford*, vol. 6 (Oxford, 1959), p. 284, n. 40.

89 Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, p. 91, adopts Torr's translation. The full text reads 'Vermibus hic donor, et hic ostendere conor / Quod sicut hic ponor, ponitur omnis honor', which can be translated as 'Here I am given to the worms, and here I attempt to show / that as I am laid here so all honour is laid low'; this is a variation of the stock verses quoted in J. Bertram, 'Meeting report: First read the label', *Monumental Brass Society Bulletin*, 99 (May 2005), pp. 789–92, at p. 792.

90 See G. Kaiser (ed.), *Der tanzende Tod: mittelalterliche Totentänze* (Frankfurt am Main, 1983), p. 114; M. Lemmer (ed.), *Der Heidelberger Totentanz von 1485* (Frankfurt am Main and Leipzig, 1991), p. 6. There are also toads lurking in the abdomen of Death approaching the burgher, and in the scenes of Death and the maiden, the merchant, all estates, and in the final woodcut, while serpents encircle the skeletal figures summoning such figures as the cardinal, the official, the parson, the abbot, the physician, the emperor, and others. There is a possible reference to the Knoblochtzer woodcut of the dancing skeletons in s'Jacob, *Idealism and realism*, p. 49.

91 Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, p. 78, n. 102; King, 'The iconography of the "The Wakeman cenotaph"', p. 144.

92 I am grateful to Sally Badham for this information published in *Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series*, 34 (1904), p. 182.

93 *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 23 (1753), p. 456, with thanks to Brian and Moira Gittos; this short report also features the text of Sir Marmaduke's epitaph on its brass plate, as quoted by Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, p. 75, n. 97, and in P.M. King, 'Eight English *memento mori* verses from cadaver tombs', *Notes and Queries*, 226 (December 1981), pp. 494–96, at p. 495.
94 J. Hadfield (ed.), *The Shell guide to England* (London, 1970, repr. 1979), p. 740. The 1995 edition of Pevsner's *Yorkshire:York and the East Riding* merely mentions 'part of a stone effigy of a skeleton'.
95 King, 'Contexts', p. 134, and also pp. 471–72.
96 Lindley, 'The later medieval monuments', p. 181.
97 King, 'Contexts', pp. 144–45.
98 Lindley, 'The later medieval monuments', p. 182; compare King, 'The iconography of the "Wakeman cenotaph"', p. 141, claiming 'stylistic features which indicate that it was erected around a hundred years too soon' to be Wakeman's. A similar claim was made earlier in P.M. King, 'The Wakeman cenotaph and other British vermin tombs', *ISSCM Bulletin*, 8 (1983), pp. 172–72.
99 For the iconography of the mouse in art, see E. Kirschbaum (ed.), *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie* (1970, repr. Freiburg, 1994), vol. 3, pp. 234–35; also M. Schapiro, '"Muscipula diaboli": the symbolism of the Merode altarpiece', *Art Bulletin*, 27 (1945), pp. 182–87.
100 King, 'The iconography of the "Wakeman cenotaph"', p. 146 and n. 21 for the original Latin text; King, 'Contexts', p. 477. There is debate whether the creature on the left arm is a beetle or a spider, although the former seems more likely. See also Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, pp. 79–83; H.M. Roe, 'Cadaver effigial monuments in Ireland', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 99 (1969), pp. 1–19, esp. pp. 6–7, 13–14.
101 For example, the toad was often associated with usury and avarice in depictions of the seven deadly sins, as in a woodcut by the German artist Hans Burgkmair (1473–1531) showing the personification of Avarice standing on an enormous toad. I am grateful to Christa Grössinger for this example.
102 A. McGee Morganstern, *Gothic tombs of kinship in France, the Low Countries, and England* (Pennsylvania, 2000).
103 Kemp, *English church monuments*, p. 39 and fig. 19; R. Deacon and P. Lindley, *Image and idol: medieval sculpture* (London, 2001), p. 45 and cat. 9.
104 Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, p. 196, with numbers to be checked against the (incomplete) lists on pp. 189–94.
105 Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, pp. 59–60 and figs 19–20; fig. 23; p. 115 and figs 61–62; pp. 114–15 and fig. 63, respectively; compare also Greenhill, *Incised effigial slabs*, vol. 2, pl. 149b. Other French worm-infested effigies listed on pp. 189–90 are an undated and unidentified *transi* at Evreux Cathedral and another of 1557 at Moulin, as well as monuments to Nicholas Frejot at St Loup church, Troyes; to Morelet du Museau (d. 1514) at Manteaux; and to Bishop Jerome Burgensis (d. 1583) at Châlons-sur-Marne. Cohen's death date of 1446 for Guillaume Lefranchois in her list on p. 190 is one of several inconsistencies in her book.
106 Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, p. 191.
107 P. van Dael, 'Voer voor wormen en padden. Eten en gegeten worden in laatmiddeleeuwse grafkunst en hellevoorstellingen', *Tijdschrift voor Sociale Geschiedenis*, 29:4 (2003), pp. 497–520, at pp. 497–98 and fig. 1. For the examples at Enkhuizen, Amsterdam and Maastricht, see also Verheij, 'Doet altijt wijselic', pp. 30–32, 35–56, 43–50, 62–63 and figs 9, 11, 23. According to Verheij, pp. 31–32, this cadaver slab also inspired a local legend of greedy relatives opening the tomb in their search for hidden riches, only to find a hideous corpse covered in toads, lizards and serpents with a large fiendish toad squatting above the heart – a story that closely resembles the exemplum of the dead usurer in the *Fasciculus morum*.
108 I am grateful to Peter Fairweather for drawing my attention to this late example and to Harry Tummers for further information about it. Records reveal three men of that name in the later eighteenth century, two of whom were respectively the city architect and deacon in 's-Hertogenbosch; however, the mid-seventeenth-century style of the slab suggests either an early model or re-use of an earlier slab.
109 The lapidarium in Ghent also houses a second, badly eroded cadaver slab with maggots crawling around the abdomen, which may well have been discovered since the publication of Cohen's monograph, although her list does not include the monument to Hubert van Eyck in Ghent, either.
110 R. Didier, *Jacques Dubroeucq, sculpteur et maître-artiste de l'empereur (1500/10–1584)* (Brussels and Mons, 2000), pp. 47, 218–19. More photos of this effigy can be found in the on-line photo library at <www.kikirpa.be>, image nos KM15944, M180286–292 and others.
111 I am very grateful to Robert Didier for generously sending me scanned images of this effigy amongst a large file of cadaver tomb monuments in Belgium and elsewhere, including an alabaster double slab with serpents linking the couple, in a private collection, which will require further study.
112 H. Kockerols, *Monuments funéraires en pays mosan*, 4: *Arrondissement de Liège: tombes et épitaphes 1000–1800* (Malonne, 2004), cat. 195, pp. 222–23. A contemporary wall tablet with a sculpted crucifixion scene in the same museum, featuring a rather similar cadaver below but without worms, is illustrated and discussed in cat. 203, p. 229. I am grateful to Hadrien Kockerols for alerting me to these monuments and for additional information.
113 Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, pp. 2, 92–93 and n. 26.
114 Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, figs 39–43, respectively, and for the Marburg monument Körner, *Grabmonumente*, p. 54 and fig. 43. Other examples of the extreme verminous variety listed by Cohen, pp. 191–92, are at Trier, Kufstein, Blaubeuren, Lübeck, Wells, Kloster Lorch, Merano, Marburg, Baden-Baden, Alpirsbach, and two at Lorch-bei-Enns.
115 I am grateful to Uli Wunderlich for the example at Nuremberg and for the information on the monument at Meissen. Apparently, a legend emerged as early as the sixteenth century that the handsome Wolfgang, who was known

locally as the 'schöne Junker von Schleinitz', chose to renounce all signs of vanity by commissioning an effigy that would match the appearance of his corpse after a period in its grave. However, the monument actually seems to have been commissioned by his brother, who was bishop of Meissen.

116 R. Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik des Todes: die mittelalterlichen Totentänze und ihr Nachleben* (Bern and Munich, 1980), p. 152 and figs 19–22; M. Winzeler (ed.), *Dresdner Totentanz: das Relief in der Dreikönigskirche Dresden* (Halle an der Saale, 2001); A. Kiesewetter, 'Der Dresdner Totentanz – Überlegungen zu seiner Herkunft und Idee', in U. Wunderlich (ed.), *L'art macabre*, 7 (2006, forthcoming).

117 H. Utzinger and B. Utzinger, *Itinéraires des danses macabres* (n.p., 1996), pp. 133–34; N.M. Saxtorph, *Danmarks kalkmalerier* (n.p., 1997), p. 159; and also the websites featuring Danish wall-paintings mentioned earlier. Although there are supposed to be three Danish *danse macabre* murals, that at Jungshoved is more likely to illustrate some exemplum about devils preying on women, but the wall-painting of *c.*1450 at Egtved does indeed show a *danse macabre*, even though the presence or absence of vermin in this scheme remains to be ascertained.

118 The chapel was founded by Hans Pawels. His tiered altar-like monument with Passion reliefs above and the cadaver effigy in a recess below is attributed to the Polish master Clemens Pale, with the Westfalian sculptor Hinrik Byldensnyder completing the work. I am grateful to Christa Grössinger for this example and the additional information.

119 Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, p. 85 and fig. 36, discusses and illustrates an ivory statuette of *c.*1530 in the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum in Munich, which depicts a skeletal figure kneeling at the feet of a semi-naked young woman with toads already making their way from the skeleton up the woman's right leg. This figure not only fits into the tradition of Death and the Maiden – in itself a *danse macabre* spin-off, often with erotic overtones – but also suggests a contrast between death and vermin on the one hand and living but transient female beauty on the other. Vanity is clearly implied, which was regarded as a typical female weakness and an aspect of the deadly sin of Pride. As such, the Munich statuette is a continuation of the much earlier image of *Frau Welt*.

120 The *danse macabre* drawings in the manuscript of *c.*1520 by Graf Wilhelm Wernher von Zimmern likewise abound in skeletal dancers accompanied by vermin, including toads, snails and mice: for example, on fol. 90v serpents slither through the skulls and around the limbs of the three skeletons behind a slab upon which lies a skeleton with a toad squatting between its thighs. Other vermin can be found on fols 89v, 91v, 93v, 94v, 95v, 96v, 97v, 98v, 101v, 102v, 104v, 105v, 107v, 114v, 118v (with a toad on the skeleton's skull), 127v and 129v. See Wilhelm Werner von Zimmern, *Totentanz*, ed. C. Kiening, Bibliotheca suevica, 9 (Eggingen, 2004); a facsimile of the Zimmern manuscript is available on http://www.ds.unizh.ch/kiening/vergaenglichkeitsbuch.

121 For example, snails, toads and flies also occur with striking regularity in the borders of the lavishly illuminated early-sixteenth-century *Danse macabre des femmes* manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (BNF ms fr. 995), usually positioned in the centre of the bottom margin or in the upper margin above the actual miniature: see the facsimile edition by A.T. Harrison (ed.), with a chapter by S.L. Hindman, *The* danse macabre *of women: Ms. fr. 995 of the Bibliothèque Nationale* (Kent, Ohio, and London, 1994), *e.g.* the toad-like creatures in the centre of the bottom margins on fols 33v, 38v and 42v. Unfortunately this edition does not discuss or illustrate the male *danse macabre* in this same manuscript.

122 The main study is Roe, 'Cadaver effigial monuments'. A short and less scholarly discussion of Irish cadaver effigies is E. McCullough, 'The Dance of Death', *Journal of the Old Drogheda Society*, 13 (2001), pp. 23–26, which perpetuates the idea of a link with the Black Death. King included Ireland in her Appendix I, 'Cadaver tombs elsewhere in the British Isles', in her DPhil thesis 'Contexts', pp. 491–93.

123 Roe, 'Cadaver effigial monuments', esp. pp. 7–10, 13 and figs 8b, 9–10.

124 Roe, 'Cadaver effigial monuments', esp. pp. 17–18 and figs 8a, 11a.

125 Roe, 'Cadaver effigial monuments', p. 6 and fig. 4, although no mention is made of vermin in the individual description on p. 15.

126 Roe, 'Cadaver effigial monuments', pp. 6–7, 13–14 and fig. 2; King, 'The iconography of the "Wakeman cenotaph"', p. 145.

127 Roe, 'Cadaver effigial monuments', esp. pp. 4, 6, 19 and fig. 1; King, 'Contexts', p. 491. Also E.C. Rae, 'The Rice monument in Waterford Cathedral', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 69C (1970), pp. 1–14, where Rice is claimed to have been mayor again in 1488.

128 For the story of Rice's will, see Apperson, 'Monumental skeletons', p. 218, quoting Lord Walter Fitzgerald in the *Journal of the County Kildare Archæological Society*, 2:6 (1898), p. 379: 'The worms were carefully copied in stone, "as well as a frog, which apparently had flopped on to the body during the exhuming operations".'

129 Although the Rice monument is included in J. Hunt, *Irish medieval figure sculpture 1200–1600: a study of Irish tombs with notes on costume and armour*, 2 vols (Dublin and London, 1974), cat. 255 and figs 271–73, the focus is almost wholly on the tomb chest with its carved figures of apostles and saints; cadaver effigies elsewhere in Ireland are conspicuous by their absence in this study.

130 King, 'The iconography of the "Wakeman cenotaph"', p. 144.

131 H.T. Weyman, 'Chantry chapels in Ludlow Church', *Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological and Natural History Society*, 3rd ser., 4 (1904), pp. 337–70, at pp. 359–60.

132 J. Stow, *A survay of London* (London, 1598), p. 264. See also F. Kloppenborg, 'Danse macabre de Londres: le commanditaire et son cercle d'amis / The London Dance of Death: the patron and his circle of friends', *Actes du 11e Congrès International d'études sur les danses macabres et l'art macabre en général* (Meslay-le-Grenet, 2003), pp. 9–24 ; Warren, *The Dance of Death*, p. xxiv; J.M. Clark, *The Dance of Death in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Glasgow, 1950), p. 11.

133 Warren, *Dance of Death*, stanza 80, lines 633–34 and 640.

134 We may not know if the *danse macabre* wall-painting in the Guild Chapel at Stratford-upon-Avon, which has been hidden behind oak panelling since the 1950s, did feature vermin, but a drawing by Thomas Fisher of another painted scene on the south side of the west wall of the nave uncovered in 1804 shows a shrouded corpse covered with worms and surrounded by bones and skulls. See C. Davidson, *The Guild Chapel wall paintings at Stratford-upon-Avon*, AMS Studies in the Renaissance, 22 (New York, 1988), p. 9 and fig. 13; W. Puddephat, 'The mural paintings of the Dance of Death in the Guild Chapel of Stratford-upon-Avon', *Transactions of the Birmingham Archaeological Society*, 76 (1958), pp. 29–35. The *Totentanz* in the compilation manuscript of the Augsburger humanist Sigismund Gossembrot, dated *c.*1480 (Munich, Bayerische StaatsBibliothek, Clm 3941, fol. 19r), does feature a tomb on which lies cadaver with large worms crawling over it: see Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik des Todes*, pp. 150–51 and fig. 18. It ends on fol. 19v with a standing, snake-riddled cadaver figure with what looks like a toad in its abdominal cavity.

135 For example, see P. Roelofs, 'Johan Maelwael, court painter in Guelders and Burgundy', in R. Dückers and P. Roelofs (eds), *The Limbourg brothers: Nijmegen masters at the French court, 1400–1416* (Nijmegen, 2005), pp. 34–53, at p. 42, for Jean Malouel's work on the polychromy of Claus Sluter's *Well of Moses* at the Champmol in 1402–3. For an overall discussion of medieval sculpture and polychromy, see D. Verret and D. Steyaert (eds), *La couleur et la pierre: polychromie des portails gothiques*, Actes du colloque Amiens 12–14 octobre 2000 (Amiens and Paris, 2003); S. Boldrick, D. Park and P. Williamson (eds), *Wonder: painted sculpture from medieval England* (Leeds, 2002).

136 The heavy polychrome scheme dates from the 1897–99 restoration, but even in the early seventeenth century John Philipot noted that the tomb had been 'lately newly refreshed and revived at the charges of the College of All soules', in accordance with the 1438 foundation deed of All Souls College. See C. Wilson, 'The medieval monuments', in P. Collinson, N. Ramsay and M. Sparks (eds), *A history of Canterbury Cathedral* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 451–510, esp. pp. 478–79 and n. 127.

137 *Dresdner Totentanz*, pp. 18–21.

138 Goodall, *God's house at Ewelme*, pp. 186–87 and caption to fig. 84.

139 I.M. Roper, *The monumental effigies of Gloucestershire and Bristol* (Gloucester, 1931), pp. 173–76; also Gill, 'Late medieval wall painting', esp. pp. 428–31 and figs 6.31–33.

140 S. Brown, *Sumptuous and richly adorn'd: the decoration of Salisbury Cathedral* (London, 1999), esp. pp. 125, 147 (no. 14) pl. 3.

141 N. Orme, 'Whose body?', pp. 12–17.

142 Badham and Bayliss, 'The Smalpage monument', p. 91.

143 H.M. Bloem, 'The processions and decorations at the royal funeral of Anne of Brittany', *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, 54:1 (1992), pp. 131–60, esp. pp. 144–45, although the clear differences in skin tone between the corpse and the effigy in the manuscript under discussion (The Hague, Museum Meermanno-Westreenianum, MS 10C12) are not specifically pointed out. In a fourteenth-century Middle-English song, the Virgin warns her child of his future suffering: 'For than thi bodi is bleyk [*pale, wan*] & blak, sone after sal ben driye [*dry, lifeless*]'; see Brown, *Religious lyrics of the fourteenth century*, no. 65, 'A lullaby to Christ in the cradle' (MS Advocates Lib. 18. 7. 21), line 12.

144 Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik des Todes*, pp. 37–38.

145 A. Baker, 'The interpretation and iconography of the Longthorpe paintings', *Archaeologia*, 96 (1955), pp. 350–57; E.C. Rouse, *Longthorpe Tower, Cambridgeshire* (1987, reprint London 1998).

146 Rouse, 'Wall paintings in the church of St. Pega', p. 146, also describes the toes, feet and finger bones as incised in the plaster.

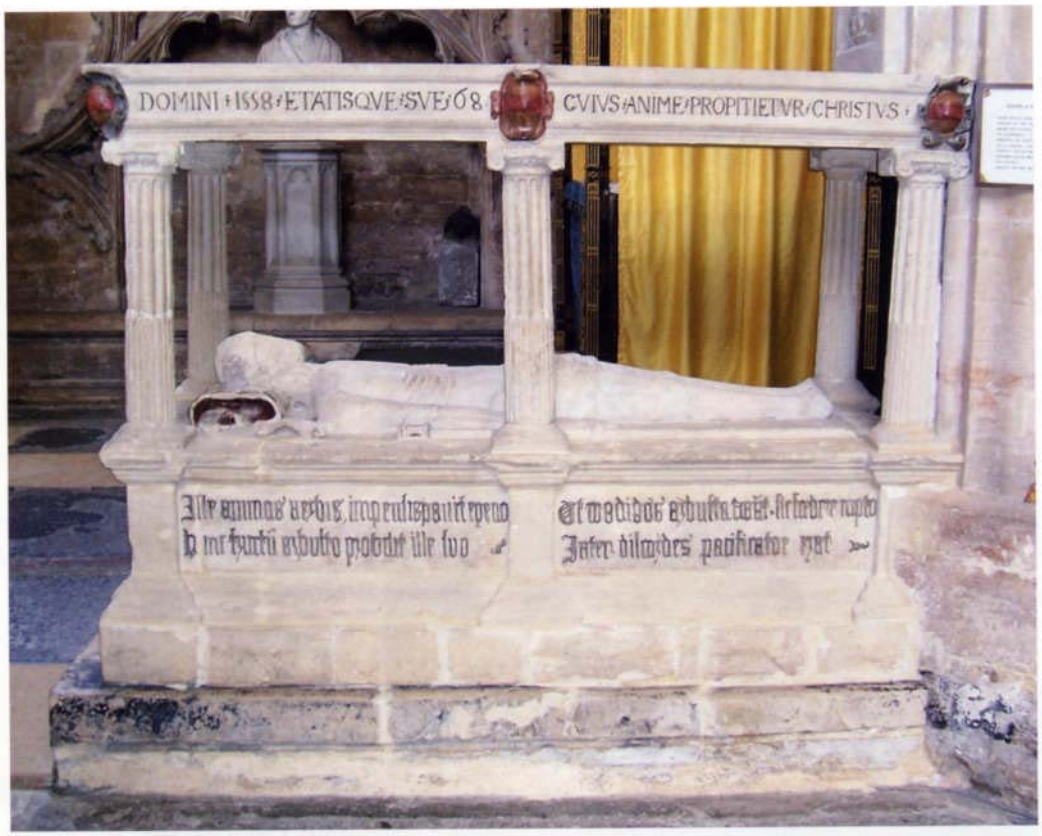
147 S. Oosterwijk, 'Lessons in "Hopping": The Dance of Death and the Chester mystery cycle', *Comparative Drama*, 36:3/4 (2002/3), pp. 249–87, fig. 11.

148 Seymour, *On the properties*, vol. 2, p. 1155.

149 F.D.J. Moorrees, 'De graftombe van Brederode te Vianen aan de Lek', *Eigen Haard* (1885), pp. 480–84, at p. 484; Verheij, 'Doet altijt wijselic', pp. 43–44. I owe the detail of the gilded worms to information provided by Hans and Margreet Kluit.

150 Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik des Todes*, pp. 195–97 and figs 128–29, 131; Utzinger and Utzinger, *Itinéraires*, pp. 134–38, 141–42, 156–57, 224. An exception is the skeletal figure with serpents encircling its arms and torso in the initial D at the opening to the Office of the Dead in a Neapolitan book of hours of *c.*1490, illuminated by Cristoforo Majorana and a colleague for a now unknown patron (Cambridge University Library, MS Add. 4105, fol. 157r): see P. Binski and S. Panayatova (eds), *The Cambridge illuminations: ten centuries of book production in the medieval west* (London and Turnhout, 2005), cat. 103.

151 See the initial findings in S. Oosterwijk, '"The sodeyne vyolence of cruel dethe": Death and *danse macabre* iconography on tomb monuments', *Actes du 11e Congrès de l'association 'Danses macabres d'Europe'* (Meslay-le-Grenet, 2003), pp. 209–22, and also S. Oosterwijk, 'Madonnas, mothers, mites, and the macabre: three examples of medieval mother-and-child tomb iconography', *Church Monuments*, 18 (2003), pp. 10–22.



Col. pl. 1a. Single cadaver monument to Bishop Bush (d. 1558), with the effigy's head resting on a mitre, Bristol Cathedral.
Photo: Ellie Pridgeon

Col. pl. 1b. Detail of Bishop Bush's cadaver effigy and mitre.
Photo: Ellie Pridgeon

left

Col. pl. 2. Verminous crowned skeleton with a toad on its chest, detail of a fifteenth-century wall-painting of the Three Living and the Three Dead in the Johanneskirche, Crailsheim, Baden-Württemberg, Germany.

Photo: Bischoff-Wehmeier/Crailsheim

below

Col. pl. 3. Verminous crowned figures of the Three Dead entwined by serpents or worms and surrounded by beetles, second half of the fifteenth century, detail of a wall-painting at Tuse, Denmark.

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Col. pl. 4. The contrast between monument and corpse in an illustration of the *Disputacioun Betwyx the Body and Wormes* in the so-called Carthusian Miscellany, *c.* 1435–40, probably produced in Mount Grace Priory in Yorkshire (British Library, Add. MS 37049, fol. 32v).

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Col. pl. 5. The wicked young emperor being shown his dead father's corpse by his steward, Carthusian Miscellany, *c.* 1435–40, probably produced in Mount Grace Priory in Yorkshire (British Library, Add. MS 37049, fol. 87r).

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Col. pl. 6a. Sculpted two-tier memorial tablet commemorating Abbot Pierre Dupont (d. 1461), Saint-Martin church, Laon, France.

Photo: Kristiane Lemé-Héburterne

Col. pl. 6b. Detail of the worm-riddled cadaver on Abbot Dupont's memorial tablet at Laon.

Photo: Kristiane Lemé-Héburterne

Col. pl. 7a. Painted epitaph commemorating the royal kitchen master Michael Raffael (d. 1489) in the Frauenkirche at Nuremberg, Germany, attributed to Michael Wolgemut.

Photo: Europäische Totentanz-Vereinigung

Col. pl. 7b. Detail of painted cadaver epitaph in Nuremberg.

Photo: Europäische Totentanz-Vereinigung

above

Col. pl. 8. *Danse macabre* wall-painting with verminous skeletal dancers on the west wall of the church at Nørre Alslev, Denmark, *c.*1480.

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right

Col. pl. 9. Unidentified verminous cadaver effigy, *c.*1450(?), Beaulieu, Ireland.

Photo: Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Ireland

above

Col. pl. 10. Detail of Bishop Beckington's cadaver effigy at Wells Cathedral, showing the differences in finish on the actual corpse and on the shroud.

Photo: Ellie Pridgeon

above

Col. pl. 11. Detail of the cadaver effigy on the double-decker monument to Archbishop Chichele (d. 1443) at Canterbury Cathedral, with late-nineteenth-century polychromy.

Photo: author

left

Col. pl. 12. A pope, an emperor, and a king facing their dead counterparts in a variation on the theme of the Three Living and the Three Dead, miniature in a mid- to late-fifteenth-century book of hours produced in northern France (London, BL MS Harl. 2917, fol. 119r).

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