EXAMINATION OF THE LEMURES AND THE LEMURIA

By

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For my past, present, and future teachers and students, who continue to inspire and to challenge me to dream.
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Ulp.  Ulpian

dig.  Digest

Verg.  Publius Vergilius Maro

A.  Aeneid

Other Abreviations

AJA  American Journal of Archaeology
AJPh  American Journal of Philology
ARW  Archiv für Religionswissenschaft
CGL  Corpus Glossariorum Latinorum
CPh  Classical Philology
CR  Classical Review
CQ  Classical Quarterly
GLOTTA  Glotta: Zeitschrift für die grieschische und lateinische Sprache
JHS  Journal of Hellenic Studies
OLD  Oxford Latin Dictionary
TLL  Thesaurus Lingae Latinae
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EXAMINATION OF THE LEMURES AND THE LEMURIA

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Chair: Hans-Friedrich Mueller
Major Department: Classics

Treatment of the dead is one of the fundamental acts that separate human beings from other creatures. Human beings, at least since the time of the Neanderthals, have put a great deal of effort and energy into the burial of the dead and remembering and honoring them. Humans treat the dead as though the dead were in some way still alive by establishing and adorning cemeteries, offering gifts, saying prayers, and participating in funerals and holidays; while the remainder of the creatures on earth want nothing to do with their dead. This treatment is not socially inscribed but rather something innate stating that human life ought to be cherished, and that death is not the end.

All cultures have different ways of treating the dead, but the most common forms of treatment tend to be funerals/burial rites and holidays. Ancient Rome was no exception. The Romans honored the dead with great monuments in cemeteries and along roads. They held elaborate funeral processions that ended in extravagant burial rites. They also had several festivals for the dead, during which special libations and sacrifices
were offered, and during which people would place gifts on graves. Some festivals had components that were not so much for honoring the dead, but rather for protecting one from them, since there were some dead who would haunt and sometimes kill the living.

The *Lemuria* was a Roman festival, in which the dead were both honored and guarded against, and it occurred on May 9th, 11th, and 13th. The best description of the festival comes from Ovid’s *Fasti*, in which he explains that that Romulus established the *Lemuria* at the request of his dead brother Remus. During this festival, *lemures* (or ghosts) are said to run amuck throughout the land. There has been debate as to whether the *lemures* and their counterpart *larvae* are mischievous, sinister spirits of the dead whose goal is to wreak havoc on the living; or if they are the protective, beneficial spirits of the dead, whose goal is to assist the living. There is also a third group of spirits of the dead, the *manes*; and it is difficult to see whether *manes*, *lemures*, and *larvae* are interchangeable names, or if there are distinct differences among them.

According to the Roman calendar, the days of the *Lemuria* are considered *dies nefasti*, which means that no marriages can take place, businesses and temples are closed, and the government is not in session. The festival ends at midnight on the last night, when the *pater familias* goes through the house performing the ritual necessary to expel any lingering ghosts.

This thesis examined the *Lemuria* in the surrounding contexts of the dead at Rome, such as funeral and burial rites, religious and philosophical views of the afterlife, and necromancy. An attempt was made to distinguish the three types of spirits of the dead. It is hoped that this thesis will add to the continual discussion and further exploration into the sacredness of life and death.
CHAPTER 1
LEMURIA, DEATH, AND THE DEAD

The Lemuria is a Roman festival of the dead held on May 9th, 11th, and 13th. The primary source for the Lemuria is Ovid’s Fasti, which describes a rite handed down by the ancestors to expel ghosts, attempts an historical explanation of the festival by writing a ghost story starring Remus, and ends by mentioning the superstitions that govern these days. Lemures, the ghosts who are exorcised from the household, are only attested as far back as Horace. The Lemuria itself can be dated to somewhere between 84 and 46 B.C.E. (it is recorded in the calendar Fasti Antiates Maiores, the oldest calendar of the Roman Republic that has survived).¹

The calendar works like this. There were three days that one particularly needed to remember: the Kalendae, the Nones, and the Ides.² The Kalends was the first day of the month, the Nones were the fifth day, and the Ides were the thirteenth. During certain months (March, May, July, and October), the Nones occurred on the seventh day while the Ides happened on the fifteenth. On the Kalends, the people assembled at the Curia Calabra on the Capitoline Hill to hear when the Nones would be. They needed to know this because they would have to return on the Nones to hear when the festivals for the month would be celebrated. Finally, there were also the mundinae (days during which

¹ Scullard 47.
² The following information on the calendar comes primarily from Scullard pp. 41-48. See also Boyle & Woodard xxxii-xxxv, Hallam xx-xxii, and Sidgwick 10-12. For an alternative understanding of the mundinae and their relation to the calendar, see Johnson 133-149. For a thorough study of the Roman calendar, see Michels, A. The Calendar of the Roman Republic. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1967.
farmers could sell their produce) which occurred every eighth day and were labeled with the letters A-H. By the first century B.C.E., the *nundinae* and *fasti* became synonymous, though *comitia* and *contiones* could not be held. The Romans tried to ensure that the *nundinae* never fell on the first *Kalends* of any year, or on the *Nones* of any month, lest they be cursed.

In addition to the *nundinae*, there were also the holidays/festivals (*feriae*) and games (*ludi*). The *ludi* originally served as an offering for Jupiter Optimus Maximus from a successful general having returned from his victory. However, over time, more and more games came to be established for various reasons. *Ludi* but not *feriae* could be celebrated before the *Nones* of the month. Thus, this makes the *Lemuria*, a festival for the dead, the first festival the Romans would celebrate in the month of May, which makes sense, since May is arguably one of the months for the ancestors (*maiores*).

*Feriae* were subdivided into *feriae privatae* (holidays observed by individual families) and *feriae publicae* (holidays provided by the State). The *feriae publicae* were further divided into three categories: *stativae*, *conceptivae*, and *imperativae*. *Feriae stativae* were holidays whose date remained fixed on the calendar, like modern Halloween. *Feriae conceptivae* were holidays celebrated annually, but their date was assigned by priests or magistrates, similar to modern Easter. *Feriae imperativae* were *impromptu* holidays given in honor of a victory or during times of crisis. Since the *Lemuria* was always on May 9th, 11th, and 13th, it was considered one of the *ferias stativas*.

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3 The following information on the *feriae* and *ludi* is from Scullard pp. 38-41. For a more detailed discussion on *feriae*, see Michels, pp. 69-83.

4 Scullard reports that the *Ludi Apollinares* (212 B.C.E.), *Ludi Megalenses* (204 B.C.E.), and *Ludi Ceriales* (202 B.C.E.) were used to increase public morale during the wars with Hannibal, p. 40.
Every odd day in the Roman calendar had a label (F, C, N, NP, EN) that proscribed what could or could not be done on that day. Some even-numbered days had this as well, but little was done on these days, since they were considered unlucky. The letter F stood for dies fasti, days on which one could carry on legal business. During the dies comitiales (marked with a C), the Senate or the People could be assembled. During the dies nefasti (N) no legal business could occur, and comitia could not be enacted. Days designated EN, endotercissus, (interrupted days) were days on which the morning and evening fell under the guidelines of the nefasti, while the middle of the day was governed by the rules of the fasti. No one knows for certain what NP marked. In addition, some days were labeled dies religiosi and atri, though they were not marked these terms in the calendars. These days were considered extremely unlucky, and no one should begin anything on them or do anything unnecessary. Some festivals were celebrated on these days, but it seems that legal business was either not performed or was shied away from. During dies atri (the days after the Kalends, Nones, and Ides) not even the State cults could perform ceremonies. The Lemuria, labeled as nefastus and dies religiosi, shared in the superstitions for these appellations. Ovid mentions a couple of these, such as the fact that temples were closed (fana tamen veteres illis clausere diebus, / ut nunc ferali tempore operta vides; Ov. Fast. 5.485-86) and that no one ought to be married then. If a marriage took place, the woman would not live much longer (nec viduae taedis eadem nec virginis apta / tempora: quae nupsit, non diuturna fuit. Ov. Fast. 5.487-88).

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5 For a more thorough discussion of these labels, see Michels, dies fasti and comitales, pp. 36-60, nefasti, pp. 61-83.
The purpose of this thesis is to examine and attempt to ascertain what the Lemuria is. To do so, one must inspect three characteristics that govern the Lemuria. The first is that the Lemuria is a festival to expel ghosts from the home (at least in the private rite – we have no knowledge of the public rite, let alone if there was one). On encountering this fact, one is faced with a dilemma of terminology – there is more than one term for ghost in the Latin language, and Ovid uses at least four (umbra, imago, manes, and lemures). The common assumption among both ancient and modern scholars is that each term denotes a different class, quality, or category of the dead. Confusion ensues because each term can still be used in the same manner despite its possible differentiation. That is, when the pater familias performs the rite, is he exorcising his grandparents, unruly chthonic phantoms, or the spirits of the untimely dead? Thus, I attempted first to discover what the lemures are by examining the terminology and interpretation found in the primary (ancient) and secondary (modern) sources.

Next I examined Ovid’s story of Remus’ apparition and its connection to the Lemuria (Ov. Fast. 5.451-480). Ovid claims that the Lemuria is actually the Remuria, a festival held in honor of Remus; however, no such festival by that name (Remuria) exists. Instead, the Remuria is tied in with the story of Remus’ death and the foundation of Rome as a possible alternate position for Rome’s establishment, a place where Remus was ritualistically sacrificed and buried, and as the headquarters for plebeian interests. Analysis of Ovid’s ghost story (the only author to write a ghost story regarding Remus) helps to determine the types of ghosts dealt with during the festival (thereby possibly better defining the Lemuria).
Finally, I give a brief commentary on the rite itself, which exudes an archaic and superstitious quality. The rite is chthonic in that it occurs at night, deals with the dead, and includes several items associated with chthonic rites (fountain water, a gesture that wards off the evil eye, beans, etc.). Assessment of the rite reveals more about the characteristic of the ghosts of the *Lemuria* and perhaps leads to a better insight into how an ancient Roman dealt with the dead.

The *Lemuria* is a festival regarding the dead, and as such deals with the fundamental mystery of human life – death. Death is the one constant for all mortals in this reality. It has long been the belief, however, (among various tribes, nations, and peoples, both ancient and modern) that death is not the end. There is an existence for us after this one, a different reality, a different place; perhaps better or worse than this one. On account of this, death represents the greatest transition a human will ever experience. At the same time it should be noted that those who are left behind in this realm experience the second greatest transition humans make (that is, continuing to live despite the loss of a loved one). Is there any greater pain, any greater shock to the human psyche than the passing of a loved one? The ancient Greeks and Romans conscious of these transitions took great care by creating methods to handle their grief, and we today still use their models and have added some of our own, such as counseling. It is important to remember that their solutions (although they physically, mentally, and spiritually appear as though they are for the dead) psychologically are for the living. Hence, since this is the only existence a human can have knowledge of, the methods presuppose an afterlife existence similar to this one.
The primary method of dealing with the dead for the ancients was the burial rite. Great effort was made to ensure that the ceremony, rituals, and interment and/or cremation happened accordingly so that the dead person could have an easy journey to the next realm of existence. The slightest mistake could injure or hinder that person’s journey, causing them to remain in this realm (where that person was not supposed still to be). Thus, if burial did not take place, a person was stuck in this dimension (a most uncomfortable and painful situation for that person). The burial, at the same time, is the beginning of the grieving process, and offers the chance for those left behind one last moment to take care of, to honor, and to say good-bye to the deceased. However, the ancients were aware that once the funeral is over, the grief does not end. Thus, there were special days set aside for the dead. On these days, the dead were permitted to return to visit the living, and the living were encouraged to visit the dead. For this reason, these days had the same liminal tone as the time of burial, and, therefore, superstitions regarding them arose, causing great caution to be taken during them as mentioned above. When the dead pass from the other world to this realm, creatures from that world, harmful to humans, could potentially follow behind, or even the dead themselves could possibly injure the living. Hence, there was a general fear of these days, but it was coupled with a solemn time for dealing with grief and reminiscing lost loved ones. Visiting the tombs of the ancestors, moreover, is a way of keeping a connection with them, and this connection was reinforced by the ancients through offering gifts to the

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6 For further discussion regarding ancient and modern perspectives on death and burial, see Davies’ *Death, Burial, and Rebirth in the Religions of Antiquity*, Denning’s *Hauntings: Real-Life Encounters with Troubled Spirits*, Kübler-Ross’ *Death: The Final Stage of Growth*, and Peck’s *Denial of the Soul*.  
7 Such days and festivals would include the (for the Greeks) *Agrìania, Nemesia, Genesia,* and *Anthesteria,* (for the Romans) *Lemuria, Parentalia, Larentalia,* and the *mundus patet.*
dead, such as flowers and food, things which one would normally do if the dead person were alive.

While the *Lemuria* may originally have not been a festival regarding the dead, it had, by Ovid’s time, acquired this perception. Thus, one must remember that we are dealing with ghosts, with the living dead, creatures that have existed in our minds since we have been conscious of ourselves. Ghosts are not limited by culture, time, or society, and serve as a testament that the human race will not give up hope on a life after death. Ghosts and spirits, however, if such beings exist, belong to a realm science has yet to penetrate. Our scientific instruments still measure only according to a *quantitative* analysis, and our reasoning is limited to interpretation of only *tangible* evidence. Thus, we can only examine accurately the beliefs and the views of the Romans and other peoples regarding the dead. Investigating these beliefs can only lead to a better comprehension of them in our own lives. Thus, it remains that a life after this can only be “proven” by *faith* and *revelation*. But if the frustration of the lack of *knowledge* has not put you off, read on. *Una enim quid significet humanum esse porro inveniamus.*
Anyone knows that when trying to name the religion of the Romans they will fail since the Romans ascribed to many forms of various religions and philosophies. The same can be said about their belief regarding the afterlife and the dead. As the Roman Empire spread, it assimilated the beliefs about the dead into its pre-existing understanding. Thus, the Latin terms for ghosts or spirits or souls, like in English, multiply over time and acquire new meaning as the Romans met other cultures. The words for spirit or ghost include *animus, anima, imago, simulacrum, effigies, lemures, manes, larvae*, and *umbra*. Each of these words is used by respective authors to denote ghosts. The focus of this study will be primarily on the *lemures* in an attempt to figure out what type of dead they are. The terms *manes* and *larvae* in particular are associated with the *lemures* to the extent that there is confusion as to what each term means. This is explicitly seen in Ovid’s version of the *Lemuria*, a festival in May to honor the *lemures*, in which the terms *manes, lemures, imago, and umbra* appear as if there is no difference between each term. On account of this, scholars can be at a loss as to the original Roman concept of the dead and how other contact groups, such as Etruscans and the Greeks, changed that concept. Thus, this section is dedicated to seeking an understanding of the *lemures* versus the *manes* and *larvae* by examining the occurrence of the term in literature and scholarship. Modern scholarship will be examined first followed by the various ancient literary references.
Many scholars, both ancient and modern, have commented on the confusion of the terms for the dead. Dumezil writes the disjunction of the *lemures* and *manes* as necessary to fit meter and interprets, the ghosts of the *Lemuria* as stealing the living back to Hades if the rites were not performed.\(^1\) He claims that the term *manes* is ancient, since it is always found in the plural, even when *Dii Manes* become synonymous with the individual soul of a person through the influence of the Greek understanding of *daimones*.\(^2\) Dumezil also says that many believe the term *manes* is derived from the word *manis* meaning “good.” Hence, the *manes* or the *Dii Manes* are the “Good Gods.”\(^3\)

Rose believed that the confusion of *manes* and *lemures* was just a “blunder” on Ovid’s part.\(^4\) He indicates, moreover, that no word which would define a person’s individual soul/spirit exists before the Augustan era since the formula *dis manibus* can only be traced to the time of Augustus.\(^5\) He says further that a ghost for early Italians was an “animated corpse,” citing the fact that *larva* can mean *phantom* and *skeleton*, while *manes* can mean *ghost* or *corpse*.\(^6\)

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\(^1\) Dumezil 367.
\(^2\) Dumezil 365. Examples where *manes* is used as one’s individual ghost include Liv. 3.58.11, Prop. 3.1.1, *quin et facto per Magos sacro evocare Manes et exorare temptavit*. Suet. *Nero* 34, and *ante lectum iacens per omnia piaculorum genera Manes Galbae, a quo deturbare expellique se viderat, propitiare temptasse*. Suet. *Otho* 7. It is interesting to note that Suetonius uses *manes* for the ghost of Nero’s mother and of Galba, but he uses *umbra* for Caligula’s ghost haunting the Lamian gardens.
\(^3\) Dumezil 365.
\(^4\) Latte 99 n. 2.
\(^5\) Rose (1930) claims that it is likely that the early Italian believed he had three indwelling forces: breath, shadow, and blood, p. 129. Cumont also mentions this idea but says that it is an influence of the Egyptian religion on the Alexandrian Pythagoreans. He gives the following key for the terms: soul ψυχ, *anima*; shade σκι, *umbra*, *simulacrum*; body σῶμα, *corpus*, p. 167.
\(^6\) Rose (1930) 133. Moderns classify the tales of revenants (reanimated corpses) as ghost stories. Lawson disagrees with this and says further that the Greeks recognized a difference between revenants and ghosts, p. 412. Haining claims that the original meaning of revenant was that of any being that came back from the dead, p. 207. Both Lawson and Haining are citations in Felton p. 108, who points out that tales of revenants have different characteristics from the stories of “unsubstantial apparitions,” p. 26.
Knight renders manes as “the good people” pointing out that the belief of the dead as an endless throng precedes the beliefs of the dead in Egypt and Sumer. To show this, he offers the example of how, in Pre-Roman times, after the dead were cremated, they were placed in urns that were deposited in “urn-fields” positioned outside the settlement as a defense against enemies. Individuality begins to be allotted to the dead around 1000 B.C.E. indicated by the graves in the Forum. Knight feels that these conditions could have provided for a “soul cult,” though evidence for this is lacking. Knight demonstrates how the process of individualization of the term manes (with the plural being retained) did not completely alter its meaning but added to it quoting Cicero, “to assuage the spirits of the dead conspirators” (coniuratorum manes mortuorum expiare Cic. Pis. 16), Propertius, “O spirit of Callimachus” (Callimachi manes Prop. 3.1.1), and Livy, “the ghost of Verginia” (Verginiae manes Liv. 3.58.11).

Wissowa suggests that the term lemures came from the Lemuria as a poetic possibility for ghosts. From the ancient sources, Fowler felt Nonius and Porphyrio (besides Ovid) were the most authoritative on the lemures, while Apuleius and Martianus Capella were the least trustworthy. He notes that while the Lemuria was marked nefasti, another Roman festival for the dead, the Feralia, which was included within the Parentalia, was labeled fasti. This may indicate that the dead of the Lemuria are specifically of a hostile nature. Fowler also thinks that either Ovid was mistaken or that the final address (manes exite paterni) could be a polite and courteous way to speak to such spirits. From these facts, he interpreted the lemures as a horde of demons, part of a

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7 Knight 108.  
8 Knight 108-09.  
9 Ibid. 110.  
10 Wissowa 1931-33.
primitive culture that predated a civilized Rome, yet nevertheless remained in civilized Rome despite their triviality. Frazer believed that Ovid was correct and that the *lemures* were family dead, while Bömer disagreed, thinking that Ovid was modeling his formula after the Athenian *Anthesteria*. Cumont says that the *lemures* and *manes* were shades of the dead who lived underground in a throng indistinguishable from those that roamed around the tomb. Both groups along with the *larvae* were feared and looked upon as being evil since they “endeavor to tear the living from the earth and draw them to themselves.” Latte thinks that there was a distinction between *lemures* and *manes* and that Ovid is to blame for confusing later scholars through mixing the terms. Wright says that the *lemures* are the terrifying and malicious *larvae* appeased by beans. The *manes*, likewise, were terrifying but immense. Fay offers linguistic information on *manes* stating that its root in Sanskrit *mag*- forms μάκαρες in Greek and *Maghā* in Sanskrit, the Indo-European name of the month equivalent to the Roman *Maius*, also dedicated to the dead. Thaniel says that since *lemures* and *larvae* are sinister spirits

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11 Fowler 106-09.
12 Frazer 424. Bömer supplement I of *ARW* as cited by Dumezil, p. 365. The *Anthesteria* was a Dionysian festival in Athens held on the 11th, 12th, and 13th of the month *Anthesterion* (February) to welcome the spring. On the third day, called *Chytroi*, an offering of *plankarpia*, made of mixed fruits, was offered to Chthonic Hermes. Ghosts, having arrived the night before, were roamed the lands. The festival ended by commanding the ghosts to leave, with the words, “Leave, Keres, Anthesteria is over” (θῦρας Κῆρες, οὐκ ἔτ’ Ἀνθοστήρια). The phrase, like the Ovidian *manes exite paterni*, has also caused much debate among both ancient and modern scholars in that it is not agreed what the *keres* are. Some think they are slaves, while others believe they are ghosts.
13 Cumont 63-64, 72. Both Cumont and Frazer describe the dead for all peoples as “sensitive” beings who must be taken care of lest they become angry and injure the living (Cumont 63, Frazer 425).
14 Latte 100, as quoted by Dumezil 364.
15 Wright 156. Wright quotes only from Nonius Marcellus. Regarding the *manes*, he says that the adjective *immanis* describes them perfectly and that it was hoped that by using the term *manes* their character would not be so horrific.
16 Fay 13-14. The word for ancestor in Sanskrit is *pitāmahā-s*, which Fay identifies as *manes*, p. 12.
during the Augustan age and that they are not found “in higher poetry,” it must have been the case that to write of them was taboo.\textsuperscript{17}

**Ancient Scholarship**

The evidence from the ancients does little to solve the problem and if anything has only confused modern scholars more. *Lemures* do not occur in epitaphs or higher poetry, and the first instance of them is found in Horace (*nocturnos lemures portentaque Thessala rides* Hor. *Ep.* 2.2.209). The Horatian passage does not explain what the *lemures* are, merely calling them *nocturnos*, but it does group them with things that inspire fear such as Thessalian portents.\textsuperscript{18} Strangely enough another satirist, Persius, has a very similar line calling the *lemures* black (*tum nigri lemures ovaque rupto* Pers. 5.185). The context for both authors is stating how one should live free of care. They both list superstitions that obstruct one’s happiness in life, and the belief in the *lemures* is one of those hindrances. This could be interpreted in two ways: either the *lemures* exist, but they cannot harm anyone, or the *lemures* simply do not exist. Thus, the only things one can learn from these authors are that the *lemures* belong to the realm of superstitions, that they were feared, and that they were black.

Being described as *nocturni* and *nigri* is not necessarily saying that the *lemures* were evil. It indicates, rather, that they were associated with chthonic powers. Chthonic powers themselves are not always bad, but they do have the connotation of being connected with impure and frightful things, and, therefore, they are labeled evil.\textsuperscript{19} There

\textsuperscript{17} Thaniel 187. For additional references to *lemures*, *larvae*, *manes*, and *lares*, see Anthon 724, 730; Daremberg 950-53, 1100-01,1571-76; Ernout 342, 351, 383; Latte 99-100; Lempriere 320-21,325, 351; Smith 30; Wissowa 878-79, 806-14; *CGL*. v. 6. 626, 635, 676; *TLL*. v. 7. 977-80, 1137-39, v. 8. 293-99.

\textsuperscript{18} It should be noted that Ovid uses the same adjective to describe the *Lemuria* (*nocturna Lemuria Ov. Fast.* 5.421).

\textsuperscript{19} Regarding black and the dead, Winkler writes, “It is not simply black skin colour which is frightening in ominous circumstances but other visible features – unkempt hair, squalor, a ferocious look,” p. 162.
may be more information acquired from the discussion of color of the dead than realized. In antiquity, there were three primary ways to “paint” the dead: black, white, and transparent. The shadowlike usually appeared in low lighting or dreams, while black and white describe physical ghosts.

Winkler’s article has treated this phenomenon in depth, noting some amazing conclusions. All of the black ghost stories he cited are late, reaching even into the non-canonical gospels such as the *Acts of Peter* and the *Acts of Thomas*. Even the explanation that the dead appear black due to cremation from Statius and Silius Italicus is late. Winkler, however, notes two important observations: a) *lemures* are commonly described as black, and b) there are no Greek texts that contain instances of the Underworld or its residents as white. Such an observation could support Rose’s theory that a ghost for the Romans was an animated corpse. This could further support the notion that the *lemures* are not spirits of the dead but rather merely chthonic spirits. There is evidence of black ghosts, particularly on stage, for the Romans but this is after the effects of Hellenization.

Hence, by looking at just these authors, Horace and Persius, one can only judge the *lemures* as sinister via assimilation. Only their commentators have made the case that they were evil and, moreover, that they were a certain type of evil. Porphyrio, writing on the Horatian passage, claims that the *lemures* roamed at night, had died untimely deaths, and ought to be feared (*umbras vagantes hominum ante diem mortuorum et ideo*

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20 Ghosts, as in there is a specific reference to a person who is dead. Thus, there is no vague term like *umbra* or *manes* used to describe them but rather something like *niger vir*.
21 Sil. 13.447, Stat. Theb. 8.5. Statius marks the beginning of the Silver Age, while Silius is dated to 25-101 C.E.
23 Winkler 164.
Acro in the scholia for the Horatian passage defines them as the terrible shades of those who suffered violent death (*umbras terribiles biothanatorum*). The scholia on Persius only obscures the terminology further claiming that the *lemures* were the *manes*, which the Greeks call guardian spirits, being certain shades that have the gift of prophecy (*Lemures dicuntur dii manes, quos Graeci δαίμονας vocant, velut umbras quasdam divinitatem habentes. Lemuria autem dicuntur dies, quando manes placantur*).

It should be noted that all three commentators have described the *lemures* using either Greek terms or Greek imagery. The class of spirits that died before their time was called ἀνθρώποι, and they often preyed upon the living, jealous of their lost opportunities. The βιαιοθάνατοι, a subcategory of ἀνθρώποι, were soldiers, murder victims, suicides, and executed criminals. Pliny notes that nothing is more pleasant than a timely death (*ex omnibus bonis quae homini tribuit natura nullum melius esse tempestiva morte*, Plin. *Nat*. 28.2.9). Thus, for both the ancient and the modern Greek and Roman, few things are scarier and more frustrating than an untimely death. The ἀνθρώποι, are trapped in this realm clinging and desiring to a life in a world that, despite all their hopes and wishes, they can never possess. Their desperate desire for this and their refusal to accept their fate separates them from the Underworld as well. All they know is fear, anger, and self-pity, and the only way they can channel these emotions is by killing others, that is, by creating more ἀνθρώποι. Johnston explains this well when discussing the ἀνθρώποι, stating:

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24 This is the way Wissowa cites it, although he writes in (=ἀνθρώποι) after mortuorum (1932).
25 Wissowa 1932.
26 Ibid. 1932.
27 See Felton p. 25 and Ogden (2002) p. 146. For an in depth discussion including ancient references, see Rohde’s appendices 6 and 7, pp. 590-95. Johnston notes that throughout most of antiquity, ἀνθρώπος was used to denote either male or female untimely dead, but, later, a specifically feminine form ἀνθρή came into existence and is found especially in magical papyri, pp. 164-65.
It exiles the aōrē not only from the upper world, as all deaths do, but also from the Underworld, leaving her stranded betwixt the two. For, bereft of the only sort of honor that women could normally earn – the honor of having successfully borne and nurtured children – the aōrē is excluded from the society of the dead just as is the warrior who is treacherously slaughtered instead of dying nobly on the battlefield, or the murder victim whose relatives have not avenged him. Like these biaiothanatoi, the aōrē can only wander between the worlds of the living and the dead causing trouble.  

The terribleness of the untimely death is that one does not get to fulfill one’s role in life. For women, this is primarily limited to marriage and bearing children as expressed by Polyxena before she is condemned to such an existence (ἀνυμφος ἀνυμένας ὄν μ’ ἔχρην τοξεῖν. Eur. Hec. 416). Hence, aōroi will often kill newly-born children or a wife in the pangs of childbirth or young girls before their marriage. Sometimes deities or the women themselves will render their untimely death because they have performed something unfit according to their role in society. Often the act is sexual in nature, either rape or consensual. If females were limited to marriage and childbirth, masculine roles included everything else. The first and primary duty a male had was to the State, true for both Greeks and Romans. This would include politics, military service, business, religious rites, and others, and their goals are personal glory and glory for the State. For the male, however, the military was the most common form of life and the

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28 Johnston 175.
29 Archaeological evidence reveals that these females were buried with items, such as spindles and the doll a woman dedicates before marriage, that symbolize the feminine role they could never acquire, Martin-Kilcher p. 70-3. Whether these items were thought to be used in the afterlife or if they are just tokens belonging to the person is unclear. Several amulets have been discovered in these graves, and there is a debate whether they are there to protect the living from the dead. Priscianus may be mentioning these amulets when he tells of how the lack of jasper caused a place to be haunted (regio quaedam generat malos lemures quod pellit munus, iaspim, nocturni manes fugitant quam membra tuentem, Pris. periheg. 691). Martin-Kilcher thinks that it is “highly improbable” that these amulets were employed as protection from the dead, but she offers no argument, p. 73. The idea is not as far-fetched as it sounds. Other cultures bury the dead in ways that the dead cannot escape to harm the living. For example, the African tribe Ovambo cut off the head and limbs of the dead to ensure that there are not too many spirits flitting about in this realm, according to Mascetti, p. 196.
most familiar form of death. Hence, males tended to be more βιαιοθάνατοι, having died on the battlefield. Thus, while females provided the legitimate instruments for civilization to exist, males ensured that civilization existed. Therefore, anything that damaged the chance for such glory to be obtained, anything that damaged the “order” of civilization as the ancients knew it was the most heinous and unimaginable thing. Thus, one can understand the force and power behind the fear of the untimely dead.

Why would the Romans have a festival to celebrate these classes of ghosts? The usual answer is that the ghosts needed to be propitiated lest they do harm to the city or other humans. Roman law, however, interceded on behalf of citizen ghosts as long as they did not get in the way. The foreign dead were not feared, nor were they respected or recognized as legitimate by Roman authority, and, therefore, no Roman citizen had to fear or observe the foreign dead. While Roman law may not have protected against all άνθρωποι, it did protect against executed criminals, murder victims, and soldiers. Soldiers, even if the body was not recovered, were given a proper burial (the burial of a Roman citizen). Criminals who were executed could not be citizens to begin with. Also, anyone who committed suicide was not given burial, and, therefore, like the rest of these, had no authorized permission of the state to haunt! Thus, the dead still fell under the statutes of Roman law and had no voice with which to defend themselves. Hence, it does not seem likely that the Romans would have celebrated a festival for these creatures and, therefore, that the lemures must be another class of being.

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30 Rose (1930) 135.
31 Ibid. (1930) 135.
32 Dig. 3.2.25, as cited by Rose (1930) p. 135.
33 Serv. A. 12.603, as cited by Rose (1930) p. 135.
In *Fasti* 5. 444, Ovid sings the formula, *manes exite paterni*, which has caused uncertainty regarding the classification of ghosts since the festival is for the *lemures*. Ovid’s song is even more confusing in that he states that the dead in general are called *lemures*, whereas this is often how one defines *manes* (*mox etiam lemures animas dixere silentum*: Ov. *Fast.* 5.483). This understanding would extradite Ovid from the *manes/lemures* issue since it implies they are the same. He adds that obsequies are brought to the graves of ancestors at this time (*illam, qua positis iusta feruntur avis*. Ov. *Fast.* 5.480). This would imply that these ghosts lie in peace and return only during the *Lemuria* and the other festivals of the dead and, therefore, cannot be *αὐροὶ* or *βιαιοθάνατοι*, as other authors have suggested. In fact, the only implication from Ovid that these dead could be *αὐροὶ* or *βιαιοθάνατοι* is the fact that he uses Remus, who died an untimely death, as an example.

Another reference to the *lemures* comes from Varro who says that the *lemures* are the same as the *larvae* and that beans are thrown to them during the *Lemuria* (*quibus temporibus in sacris fabam iactant ac dicunt se lemurios domo extra ianuam eicere*. Var. fr. 18 *De Vita Populi Romani*). Paulus also remarks that beans are thrown to the *larvae* during the *Lemuria* (*nam et Lemuralibus (faba) iacitur larvis*). Nonius Marcellus also defines *lemures* by calling them *larvae* (*larvae nocturnae et terrificationes imaginum et bestiarum*). Nonius identifies them as nightly, as Horace does, but he also calls them *imagines*. Cicero, Vergil, and Ovid utilize this term for ghost as well. Its usage should come as no surprise since *imagines* is the term employed for “death masks” at a Roman

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34 Wissowa 1931.
funeral. These masks, likenesses of previous family members, were usually set up in the atrium, but during a funeral, they were displayed alongside a mask for the recently deceased. Often these masks were worn by actors or mimes, some of which were employed to study and impersonate the characteristics of the person whose mask they were wearing.  

Nonius also describes *lemures* as *bestias*, a term found with no other description of *lemures*. Although there are modern ghost stories of animals, there are next to none in the ancient world. Instead, there are stories in which ghosts transform into various animals, particularly dogs and snakes since these two creatures had chthonic associations. The notion of the ghost in these stories, however, is more a description of a demon from Neo-platonic philosophy, such as found in Plotinus. Plotinus, unlike other Neo-platonic philosophers believed in metempsychosis. Plotinus, however, mentions that the souls of those who have committed sins are those that inhabit animals. Thus, animals do not necessarily always have their own souls which may indicate the lack of animal ghosts. Also, the fact that souls can be reborn as animals may imply one reason why ghosts can transform into animals.

The passages from Varro, Paulus, and Nonius correspond to Ovid’s ritual of bean-throwing during the *Lemuria* to exorcise ghosts; however, it causes a new problem since it introduces a different class of spirits that the *lemures* are, that is, *larvae*. Unlike *lemures* and *manes*, the term *larva* includes adjectival, participial, and verbal forms.

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36 See Plb. 6.53-54 for Roman funerals and *imagines*.
37 For dogs, see Philostr. *VA*. 4.10, Luc. *Philops*. 22-24, 30-31. Hecate, goddess of the dead, was often accompanied by dogs. Dover claims that dogs were special to Hecate because they were sacrificed to her citing Sophron fr. 8, p. 102 n. 12. See also Rohde’s discussion on this, pp. 589-90. Furthermore, within the first five lines of the earliest author in Greek literature, Homer, there is already a connection between dogs and the dead (Hom. *Il*. 1.3-4). When Canidia and Sagana raise the souls of the dead, both snakes and dogs are swarming about (Hor. *S*. 1.8). For snakes, see Plu. *Cleom*. 39, Plin. *Nat*. 10.56, and Serv. *A*. 5.95.
(larvalis – resembling an evil spirit, specter-like, deathly; larvatus – possessed by evil spirits, demented; larvare – to possess with evil spirits, bewitch). Larva is the term for the skeleton set up during a Roman banquet (Potantibus ergo nobis et accuratissime lautitias mirantibus larvam argenteam attulit servus sic aptatam, Petr. 34.8). Larva can also mean a ghostly theater mask, though it is not clear when this usage came into being. In addition, larva is used in the singular which contradicts the belief that the Romans believed only in the dead en masse. Plautus uses the term to refer to evil spirits who infect men with mental illness and as a creature, unwanted and unwelcome, that lingers. Winkler notes that larvae are generally described as being white. If Rose’s animated corpse notion is correct, this observation on color could imply that larvae are the spirits of the dead. In Seneca, however, the larvae are separated from the dead as tormentors of souls (almost Furies). Perhaps this is an earlier meaning of larva since there is no record of any ghosts whose role it is to torture the dead, or it could be an attempt at Romanizing the Greek creatures called keres. Thus, there is nothing conclusive about the larvae as yet other than that they are harmful and chthonic. They could be either spirits of the dead, following Rose’s reasoning and Winkler’s color observation, or they could be underworld spirits, not necessarily the dead, who are

38 OLD. s.vv.
39 nil illi larva aut tragicis opus esse cothurnis Hor. S. 1.5.64. It should be noted that an alternate reading for larva in this passage is barba.
41 Winkler 162.
42 eum dedi Larvis et proximo munere inter novos auctoratos feralis vapulare placet. Sen. Apoc. 9.3. The line directly says nothing about the larvae, but it is inferred from the comments on gladiators that they are punishers. There is a derogatory sense in this line as well. Another instance where larva is used insultingly and with a reference to men in contests is in Petronius (similia sicilia interiores et larvas sic istos percolopabant Petr. 44.5). Rouse notes that interiores are “racers who try to hold the inner position of a curving track,” p. 85.
43 Ker is a Greek goddess of death often mixed with the Erinys and the Fates. Keres are the daughters of Nyx in Hesiod (Th. 211-12). Paus. 5.19.6 is responsible for giving the Keres their descriptions of being fanged and taloned. Such a description lends aid to their function as bringers of death.
released at certain times upon the world. They can inflict damage which is why they would need a festival for protection from and for propitiation. They do not fall under the authority of the Roman law and therefore must be dealt with in such a magical manner.

Both Ovid and the scholia of Persius, however, indicate that the *lemures* and *manes* are the same, making no mention of the *larvae*. It is Apuleius who differentiates the three terms, remarking that *lemures* is an archaic term for the dead in general. When such dead watch over and protect their descendants, they are called *lares*. If they lived a life of evil, conversely, they are evil in the afterlife as well and called *larvae*. When one’s fate is uncertain, the term *manes* is used.

Apuleius mentions the *lemures* two other times, once in *The Golden Ass* and once in *The Apology*. In *The Golden Ass*, he describes thieves as dressing up like *lemures* in order to scare any travelers (*et ecce nocte promota latrones expergiti castra commovent instructique varie, partim gladiis armati, partim in lemures reformati concito se gradu proripiant. Apul. Met. 4.22*). Later on, however, when the robbers capture Charite at the crossroads, they do not use the term *lemures* but rather *manes* and *larvae* (*quorsum istam festinanti vestigio lucubratis viam nec noctis intempestae manes larvasque formidatis? Apul. Met. 6.30*). Apuleius has been influenced by a thoroughly hellenized Roman culture, and he himself is called “The Platonist,” being well versed in Greek philosophy. He is consistent in what he writes in

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44 Hunc vetere Latina lingua reperio Lemurem dictitatum. Ex hisce ergo Lemuribus qui posterorum suorum curam sortitus placato et quieto numine domum possidet, Lar dicitur familiaris; qui vero ob adversa vitae merita nullis (bonis) sedibus incerta vagatione ceu quodam exilio punitur, inane terriculamentum bonis hominibus, ceterum malis noxium, id genus plerique Larvas perhibent. Cum vero incertum est, quae cuique eorum sortitio eviderit, utrum Lar sit an Larva, nomine Manem deum nuncupant. Apul. Soc. 15.
Martianus Capella says something somewhat similar, except that he notes that *lemures* are spirits specifically who have remained in their bodies after death only to be changed into *lares*, *larvas*, and *manias* later (*manes . . . cum his (corporibus defunctis) manentes appellati lemures postea et in lares et in larvas ac manias conversi. Mart. Cap. 2.162*).
that his fiction reflects his factual writings on the dead, though his reputation as a novelist makes him untrustworthy.

Thus, with each successive author, a new class of spirits arises, or a different understanding is attached to an older class. If one assumes that originally the dead for the Romans were a general mass, then with the further influence of Greek culture, which could not live without classification, more elaborate explanations arose and reflect influence from the Greeks. Thus, it is easy to see why scholars today are so confused on the subject of classification of the dead since the ancients themselves were confused about it, and they confused it themselves.45

Apuleius’ argument, particularly about the good *lemures* as *lares*, however, may not be far from the mark. There is evidence that the *lares* were seen as spirits of the dead, particularly family dead, and there is a further connection with the dead through their mother, the goddess *Mania*.46 Based on the types of sacrifices given to her, the *Mater Larum* appears to be an earth goddess, making her children, the *lares*, chthonic spirits.47 During the *Compitalia*, images of *Mania* were hung at the crossroad shrines and on the house doors (Macr. 1.7.34-35), and Festus claims that the term was used to scare children into behaving better (Fest. p. 115 L).48 Martianus Capella claims that the *lares* were benevolent spirits and that they hold a natural position in the Arval brotherhood whose rituals’ purpose was to make the fields fertile.49 A sacrifice was offered to *Mania* during

45 For example, Augustine misinterpreted Apuleius’ ghostly distinctions claiming that *lemures* and *larvae* are evil (*Dicit quidem et animas hominum daemonas esse et ex hominibus fieri lares, si boni meriti sunt; lemures, si mali seu larvas; manes autem deos dici, si incertum est bonorum eos seu malorum esse meritorum*. August. *C.D.* 9.11).
46 Powell claims that the word *lares* is derived from the Etruscan word for spirit of the dead and that their role was to protect the household, p. 645.
47 Taylor 300.
48 Taylor 301.
49 Ibid. 301.
the *Lemuria* on May 11th, but Ovid makes no mention of it.\(^{50}\) It seems odd that Ovid would make no mention of *Mania* or her sacrifice during a time when it would be so appropriate to do so. If one examines, however, *Mania*, one may find that Ovid actually does mention her. Ovid called *Mania Lara* and said she mothered the *lares* via Mercury (Ov. *Fast.* 2.583-616).\(^{51}\) *Mania* was honored at the *Larentalia* under the name Acca Larentia, and she was also associated with the Junii family who honored their ancestors during the *Larentalia* instead of the *Parentalia*.\(^{52}\) The connection came through Junius Brutus, who, while consul, deleted the human sacrifices in honor of *Mania* during the *Compitalia*.\(^{53}\) More importantly, perhaps, Acca Larentia, having been associated with *Mania* through the Arval brotherhood, made her the foster mother of Romulus and Remus.\(^{54}\) Thus, Ovid does mention *Mania* during the *Lemuria*, not as a goddess but a dutiful wife who with her husband performs the proper burial ceremonies for their son Remus. As a result of their parentage, Romulus and Remus are sometimes regarded as the *lares*, and since their mother is a goddess of the dead, this makes them chthonic deities as well. Thus, the significance of *Mania* is that she is a goddess of death, the mother of the *lares*, and also the mother (or foster mother) of Romulus and Remus. Since both *lares* and Romulus and Remus are revered by the Romans and on account of the benevolent nature of the *lares*, it is not difficult to see how a belief that the favorable dead became *lares*.

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\(^{50}\) It is possible that the inscription could read that the sacrifice goes to someone other than *Mania*, such as the *manes* themselves as the *TLL* offers ma<niae> (an ma<nibus> ?) (1130). The “ma” is the abbreviation found on the calendar (*Fasti Antiates Maiores*). Seuillard lists the other possibilities but believes it to be *Mania*, p.119.

\(^{51}\) The *lares* were born to *Mania* and Mercury as he led her to Hades.

\(^{52}\) Plu. *Quaest. Rom.* 34; Cic. *Leg.* 2.54 as cited by Taylor, p. 302.

\(^{53}\) Macr. 1.7.35 as cited by Taylor, p. 302.

\(^{54}\) Taylor 302. *Mania* was also construed with *Maia* and the *Bona Dea* as goddesses of the Underworld, see Macr. 1.12.23, 1.12.20-1.
Having examined the terminology of the dead, the following things should be noted. The first is the number of the terms, (if the term is singular like umbra or plural like *lemures*). It has been noted that the plural forms indicate older ideas. This would imply a quasi-evolution for the understanding of the dead from communal to individual to communal (though with a small amount of individuality recognized within the community).\(^5\) This is not surprising since this mirrors the evolution of living humans, that is, humans begin to survive by living in a communal environment. Once a communal environment is established, the characteristic of independence through the understanding that each person has a unique role to play within the community arises among the members. Each member, however, cannot exist without the community, and, thus, a coexistence is established between the community and its individuals.\(^6\) Thus, under this notion, the terms manes and *lemures* seem more archaic than the terms that are singular such as *larva* and *umbra*.

The dead have also been described as nightly, though they are not bound to the night alone. This description implies the color black, which along with white and transparent, are the colors that befit a ghost. Ghosts are also black through the association of ashes after cremation. But even before cremation, they are black because they are dirty from living in a dark place (earth). Their food is not the normal food of the living but the rotten scraps left behind and even dirt itself. Black is also the fitting color for the dead since it is a color that denotes a sinister morality. While not all ghosts are sinister, there was the idea that they brought death and were often used for mischievous

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\(^5\) It should be noted that this evolution is not as linear as it is described here. The process of the creation of an afterlife is on going, even today, as various cultures and religions interact and share their beliefs and ideas. In the West, the common formula has been the general to the more specific and then a combination of both.

\(^6\) Clarke 7a.
purposes. Black, furthermore, is the color of impenetrability and immensity. The dead, as already noted, are a huge group, and, as a rule, cannot be penetrated, or at least are not supposed to be, that is, once one crosses the Great River, one stays. The mixing of the realms of the dead and the living would only bring chaos to the cherished order of the world.

White, on the other hand, is the color of the dead on account of bones. White often has the connotation of goodness and purity, and, hence, it is found as the color of angels and other higher beings. On the other hand, white, as Winkler pointed out, is the color associated with the menacing larvae. The transparent is simple to interpret if one understands or believes that the ghost is a copy of the real person, and such a belief for the Romans might have come from their funereal practice of death masks.

While Rose’s animated corpse idea has merit for an original understanding of the dead, it seems based on flimsy evidence and work better as a general notion of what the dead looked like. As Winkler points out, white cannot be a description of the lemures since they are black. Thus, we can say with assurance that lemures are black chthonic creatures, perhaps the dead, which feed on either humans or beans.
CHAPTER 3
OVID’S REMUS: A GHOST STORY

The following discussion will focus on Ovid’s tale of Remus as a ghost story and how this may or may not contribute to the understanding of the *lemures*. In order to do this, it is necessary to have a grasp of the myth of Remus.¹ While today a historian would be unorthodox to incorporate a ghost story as part of an historical account, in ancient times it was perfectly normal. Thus, it should be noted that no ancient historian ever discusses or mentions Remus’ apparition or any rites dedicated to him. It, therefore, seems that either Ovid made up the story; or the tradition was known, and Ovid wrote it in the form of the ghost story genre. While the ancients did not classify genres as moderns do, there were certain motifs for the ancient ghost story that include the terminology used to describe ghosts, the context of the ghost’s appearance, and the reason for their return.

According to Ovid, the *Lemuria* comes from the fact that Remus, after his death, requested a festival in his honor. Romulus granted the request and established the *Remuria*. Over time the “r” in *Remuria* became an “l” making it the *Lemuria* (*aspera mutata est in lenem tempore longo / littera, quae toto nomine prima fuit*. Ov. *Fast.* 5.481-2). If one attempts to find *Remuria* in other works, one will encounter *Remoria* instead. The *Remoria* was either the Aventine hill itself, or it was the spot where Remus

¹ To date, Wiseman’s study is the most thorough, though his arguments barely mention the festival of the *Lemuria*.  

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wanted the city built where Romulus later buried him. This allowed some scholars to think that Remoria was a nearby settlement the Romans conquered. The Remoria shares in the same derivation as Remus’ name (from remorari). Remus was called so because he possessed tarditas, and, thus, people who had this were called remores according to the OGR. One could further interpret remores as “those delayed” (those who having died are still trapped in this realm). 

The story of the Remuria is a ghost story, and Ovid sets the stage by calling upon Mercury. Mercury is an appropriate choice for the invocation since he is the psychopompos, that is, the one who escorts the dead to the Underworld. He is the correct one to inspire Ovid with the tale since he is familiar with the underworld, visiting it on a regular basis (saepe tibi est Stygii regia visa Iovis. Ov. Fast. 5.448). He also would have escorted Remus at his death to the underworld.

Mercury has other associations with Remus. Augustus had the temple of Quirinus rebuilt and dedicated in 16 B.C.E. after it had been destroyed by lightening during the war between Caesar and Pompey. The pediment sculpture contains a series of doors in the central position above which are birds that fly to the left. On the left is seated

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2 τὸ χωρίον ἐνθα ἐμέλλον ἱδρύειν τὴν πόλιν οὐ τὸ αὐτὸ ἡρεῖτο ἐκάτερος. Ρωμύλου μὲν γὰρ ἦν γνώμῃ τὸ Παλλάντιον οἰκίζειν τὸν τέ άλλον ἕνεκα καὶ τῆς τύχης τοῦ τάπου, ἢ τὸ σωθῆναι τε αὐτοῖς καὶ τραφῆναι παρέσχε Ρώμων δὲ ἐδόκει τὴν καλουμένην νῦν ἀπ’ ἐκείνου Ἐμορίαν οἰκίζειν. D.H. 1.85.6; ἢ δὲ Ἐμούλωρ μὲν οἰνοιστήριον, ἐνθα ἡξίου τὴν ἀποικίαν ἱδρύει τὸ Παλλάντιον, Ρώμων δ’ ὁ προσεχῆς ἐκεῖνον λόφος Ἀυεντίνος καλούμενος, ὡς δὲ τινὲς ἱστοροῦσιν ἢ Ἐμορία: D.H. 1.86.2; ἀποθανόντος δ’ ἐν τῇ μάχῃ Ἐμούλωρ νόησιν οἰκτίσαν ὁ Ἐμούλωρ ἀπὸ τοῦ άδελφου καὶ πολιτικῆς ἀλληλοκτονίας ἐνελάμβανος τὸν μὲν Ἐμούλων ἐν τῇ Ἐμορίας θάπτει, ἐπειδὴ καὶ ζῶν τοῦ χωρίου τῆς κτίσεως περιείχετο D.H. 1.87.3; Festus (Paulus) 345L; ὁ δὲ Ἐμούλωρ ἐν τῇ Ἐμορίας 3άνας τὸν Ἐμούλων ὁμοῦ καὶ τοὺς τροφείς ὅκις εἰς τὴν πόλιν, Plu. Rom. 11.1; OGR 23.1 as cited by Wiseman p. 203 n. 53, 54.

3 Wiseman cites Niebuhr’s Lectures on Roman History, p. 40.

4 Wiseman 102 and 110, and he also cites OGR 21.5.

5 Kretschmer 294, as cited in Wiseman p. 174 n. 81, indicates that the archaic spelling of lemures is remores to which Wiseman adds “(from remores)”; visible ghosts, especially of murder victims, might be thought of as ‘delaying (remorantes) in this world because not yet received into the next (Plautus Mostellaria 498-503).”
Romulus with four deities standing near him, all facing him: a goddess holding a cornucopia, Jupiter, Mars, and Victory. On the right is Remus, but in his line is Mercury, Hercules, Bona Dea (possibly), and Murcia, goddess of slowness and cessation, the only one facing Remus. There is also the possible alternative story in which Mercury is the father of the twins. Within this tradition, Romulus and Remus become the Lares. Since the father of the Lares is Mercury, and their mother is Lara, Mercury and Lara become the parents of Romulus and Remus, giving the twins chthonic qualities.

Remus’ ghost is described as a transparent image of him at death just as many ghosts are. The terms used were umbra and imago. Both terms seem to be interchangeable since they denote a transparent entity. There is also a strong support for an alternate reading in the textual transmission in which Remus calls himself a manes. The alternate reading occurs in line 472, replacing in mea fata with manibus ille. This would then indicate that imago, umbra, manes, and lemures are interchangeable for a transparent spook, and, therefore, imply similarity, if not equality. To further emphasize Remus’ insubstantiality, Ovid describes his voice as speaking in a low whisper (exiguo murmure). More importantly he is a ghost that appears as he did when he died (cruenta). Many ghosts had who died violent deaths were often seen as they appeared when they died, as if the violence surrounding their death was so horrific, so incredible, it could

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6 Wiseman 147-8.
7 Wiseman 128, 139.
8 umbra cruenta Remi visa est assistere lecto, / atque haec exiguo murmure verba loqui,Ov. Fast. 5.457-58; lubrica prensantes effugit umbra manus, Ov. Fast. 5.476.
9 Felton 24. She notes that Pliny used umbra, imago, simulacrum, effigies, and manes (Plin. Nat. 7.27.5-11), while Vergil used simulacrum, umbra, and imago (Verg. A. 2.772-3,793). Lucretius used umbra, manes, and animas when he was discussing the ridiculousness of believing in ghosts (Lucr. 4.37-40, 6.762-66) but used simulacrum and imago to explain what they actually were (Lucr.4.29-53). Cicero used manes when explaining the three parts of equality, one pertaining to men, the other to gods, and the third to the dead (Cic. Top. 90.8). Manes occurs only one other time in Cicero, that being in a letter to Atticus (Cic. Att. 5.13.3).
10 Alton cites the following in the Teubner: || 472 in mea fata ζς: manibus ille Uo ob 422 ||, p. 128.
never be taken away. For example, Sychaeus appeared to Dido revealing his battered body (ora modis attollens pallida miris; crudelis aras trajecta pectora ferro nudavit, Verg. A. 1.354-55) and, later in the Aeneid, a mutilated Hector visits Aeneas in a dream (raptatus bigis, ut quondam, aterque cruento / pulvere, perque pedes trajectus lora tumentis Verg. A. 2.272-73). Dido appeared to Anna with a gory figure (squalenti Dido sanguinulenta coma Ov. Fast. 3.639), and Tlepolemus visited his wife in a dream (umbra illa misere trucidati Tlepolemi sanie cruentam et pallore deformem Apul. Met. 8.8).  

The unifying elements of these stories are that every one of these characters died violent deaths, that the ghosts appeared in dreams, and that ghosts are insubstantial, just like Remus. Because they died violent deaths they are regarded as having died prematurely. How the equation of violent, premature death equals insubstantial shade visiting only in dream came about is not clear. Under this observation, however, one could argue that since Remus falls into this category of ghosts, the festival celebrates this particular category of ghosts. Porphyrio’s commentary on Horace would confirm this notion:

Et putant lemores esse dictos quasi Remulos a Remo, cuius occisi umbras frater Romulus cum placare vellet, Lemuria instituit, id est Parentalia, quae mense Maio per triduum celebrari solent, ante additum anno mensem Februarium. (Por. Hor. Ep. 2.2.209)

And they think that lemures are called Remulos from Remus somewhat, When his brother Romulus wanted to appease his unfortunate shades, he established the Lemuria, that is the Parentalia, which they are accustomed to celebrate in the month of May for three days, before the month of February was added to the year.

A clue to understanding the equation may come from a fragment of Plotinus in which he begins his discussion by quoting the Chaldaean Oracles, “You will not dismiss your Soul

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11 These examples are all taken from Felton.
lest it go forth taking something with it” (Plot. Enn. 1.9).

The understanding seems to be that a) humans have control over their death and b) if one permits himself to die by a violent means (murder, suicide, war) the soul will carry away some form of corporealness (evil) with it. Plato has Socrates say something similar in that souls, impure on account of evil behavior in life, are still attached to corporeal things and, therefore, still remain flitting about in this realm:

Εµβριθές δε γε, ώ φίλε, τούτο οἶεσθαι χρή εἶναι καὶ βαρὺ καὶ γεώδες καὶ ὑρατόν. δ’ δὴ καὶ ἑξούσα ἢ τοιαύτησιν ἑξωρύνεται τε καὶ ἐλκεται πάλιν εἰς τὸν ὑρατόν τόπον, φόβῳ τοῦ ἀειδοῦς τε καὶ Ἄιδου, ὡσπερ λέγεται, περὶ τὰ μνήματα τε καὶ τὸν τάφον κυλινδομένη, περὶ ἀ δὴ καὶ ὀψή ἀττα ψυχῶν σκιοειδὴ φαντάσματα, οἴα παρέξονται αἱ τοιαύται ψυχαὶ εἰδώλα, αἱ μὴ καθαρὰς ἀπολυθεῖσαι, ἀλλὰ τοῦ ὑρατοῦ μετέχουσαι, διὸ καὶ ὀρώνται. (Pl. Phd. 30c-d).

It is necessary, friend, to think that the [corporeal] is heavy, earth-like, and visible. Such a soul as this is burdened and enticed again into the visible realm, by fear of both the incorporeal and of Hades, as they say, lingering around the monuments and tombs, where the insubstantial phantoms of souls have been observed, the sort of images that are souls which were not released in a pure manner, but maintain something of the visible, causing them to be seen.

The problem with both of these understandings is regarding morality. Not every person who dies an untimely death led an evil life. One may argue that souls become impure because they experience an untimely death and then must suffer the fate of the untimely dead, however, Socrates seems to be arguing that evil people suffer the same fate as the untimely dead. Thus, is Plato incorporating a cultural belief into his statements, or is he modifying it to explain his moral philosophy?

12 The translation comes from Mackenna’s edition. According to him, Michael Psellus identified the line from the Chaldean Oracles, p. 71.
13 The interpretation comes from Mackenna, p. 71.
Additional evidence for Remus being an ἀορός comes from the observations of Wiseman, who, in the course of his book, mentions the possibility that Remus was a sacrificial victim for the sake of defending the walls of Rome.\textsuperscript{14} Wiseman argues that the stories preserved by Propertius and Florus contain the original version of the Romulus and Remus myth, a story created in 296 B.C.E. as a way to assuage the guilt of the Romans for performing a human sacrifice in that year.\textsuperscript{15} A human sacrifice in the ancient world was interpreted in two primary ways: a) as a necessary death for the protection and survival of others and b) as a murder. It can be seen in the fact that those who performed the ritual had to be spiritually cleansed, almost punished afterwards. Human sacrifices, moreover, are offered to the gods below (\textit{parentare} in Latin, ἐναγιζεῖν in Greek).\textsuperscript{16} As such, their rites are different from the sacrifices to the gods above. Rohde explains the rites well, saying:

Sacrifice was made to the gods in broad daylight, to Heroes towards evening or at night; and not on raised altars, but on low, and sometimes hollow, sacrificial hearths close to the ground. For them were slain animals of black colour and male sex, and in sacrificing, the heads of the animals were not turned upwards towards heaven as they were when offered to the gods, but were bent down to the ground. The blood of these animals was allowed to run down into the ground or into the sacrificial hearth, that the Heroes might have their “appeasement of blood.” The carcass was completely burnt, for no living man might taste of it.\textsuperscript{17}

In the ancient world, there is one human sacrifice that often comes to mind, Iphigenia. Iphigenia is sacrificed by her father Agamemnon in order to appease Artemis or in accordance with the will of Zeus or both. Most know that some versions hold that

\textsuperscript{14} Wiseman 125.  
\textsuperscript{15} caesio moenis firma Remo (Prop. 3.9.50); \textit{prima certe victima fuit munitionemque urbis novae sanguine suo consecravit} (Flor. 1.1.8) as cited by Wiseman p. 208 n. 116.  
\textsuperscript{16} Hardie 44. While there is no one specifically mentioned, Iphigenia is sacrificed in a chthonic manner. Polyxena is sacrificed to Achilles, and heroes are appeased through chthonic rites.  
\textsuperscript{17} Rohde 116. See also Hardie pp. 44-45.
Iphigenia died or that she was saved by Artemis and then became her priestess. There was another tradition, however, which stated that upon being sacrificed, Artemis changed Iphigenia into the goddess Hecate, the goddess of witches, crossroads, and the patroness of the dead, particularly the untimely dead.\textsuperscript{18} Iphigenia as the prototypical ἐωρος/βιαιοθάνατος became the leader of such beings. If Remus was also sacrificed, that would make him an ἐωρος or βιαιοθάνατος and possibly, a leader similar to Hecate. No such tradition, conversely, is ever established around the figure of Remus as there was with Iphigenia and Hecate. Instead, he is passed over and almost forgotten.

Why does Iphigenia as Hecate become the patroness of the dead, while Remus remains a silent shade? The answer may lie in an argument based upon information from Wiseman.

The Romans looked down upon human sacrifice, but knew there were certain times, particularly in a crisis, when it became necessary, as Livy indicated:

\begin{quote}
Interim ex fatalibus libris sacrificia aliquot extraordinaria facta; inter quae Gallus et Galla, Graecus et Graeca in foro bovario sub terram vivi demissi sunt in locum saxo consaeptum, iam ante hostiis humanis, minime Romano sacro, imbutum. (Liv. 22.57.6)
\end{quote}

From those fatal books several extraordinary sacrifices were performed; among which a Gallic male and female, a Greek male and female were sent alive under the earth in the \textit{forum bovarium} in a place enclosed by a rock, tainted with human enemies by that least Roman of customs.

The Romans did not outlaw human sacrifice until 97 B.C.E. (DCLVII \textit{demum anno urbis Cn. Cornelio Lentulo P. Licinio Crasso cos. senatus consultum factum est ne homo immolaretur}, Plin. \textit{Nat.} 30.3.12). The sacrifice of 296 B.C.E. was to help the Romans achieve victory over an alliance between the Samnites, Etruscans, and Gauls. To justify and offer proof for the success of the sacrifice, the foundation story, which incorporated


\textsuperscript{19} Wiseman 125. The information in the following two paragraphs comes from Wiseman, pp. 124-126.
Remus as a sacrifice for the protection of the city, was created. Due to both the passage of time and the disgust towards the act, the myth was rewritten into the current forms. The moral behind the original myth (safety of the city) is retained in them, but the methodology is different. Although this argument is (rather) conjectural, it does provide an excellent connection between Remus and the *lemures* as defined as βιαιοθάνατοι.\(^{20}\)

The story could also be supported by a line of Ennius who has Remus on Mt. Murcus offer himself to the gods below (*Remus se devovet*) during the augury contest.\(^{21}\) Since the *Remoria* is believed to be the place where Remus was buried and is associated either with the Aventine, then perhaps the *Remoria* was the spot where Remus was believed to be sacrificed. The *Remuria* could then be the festival set up to honor the sacrificed Remus. Over time, the day became associated with all those who were murdered or died untimely deaths (*remores*), and eventually the term *remores* included all the dead. This may even indicate a possible starting point for the *Lemuria* (c.a. 296 B.C.E.).

Remus appears after Faustulus and Acca have laid down to sleep which is a common occurrence in many ghost stories as mentioned above. Sleep was seen as a time when the soul could connect with the spiritual realm.\(^{22}\) Cicero discusses the potency of the soul at death and in sleep in *De Divinatione*, saying the following:

> Cum ergo est somno sevocatus animus a societate et a contagione corporis, tum meminit praeteritorum, praeuentia cernit, futuro praevident; iacet enim corpus dormientis ut mortui, viget autem et vivit animus. Quod multo magis faciet post mortem, cum omnino corpore exscesserit (Cic. *Div.* 1.63).

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\(^{20}\) Wiseman 119.
\(^{21}\) Ibid. 13.
\(^{22}\) Felton 19.
When therefore during sleep the soul is separated from the association and contamination of the body, then it recalls the past, perceives the present, and foretells the future; for though the body lies sleeping as if dead, the soul flourishes nevertheless and lives. It will do after death, when it will have departed entirely from the body.

Felton notes that ghosts who appear in dreams are often the spirits of the recently deceased. The terminology used to describe Remus’ appearance coincides with the terminology used in dreams and with ghosts, including those ghosts who appear to people awake (adsisto, ἐφίστημι). Aristotle discussed briefly why people witness what they experience in dreams in De Somniis. According to him, apparitions often appear during sleep or around sleep because the mind is in a depressed state of consciousness. In such a state, the mind does not have the ability to distinguish between true and false impressions. Residual impressions, impressions which remain in the sense organs, furthermore, can appear causing one to believe one is witnessing an actual person or object. Thus, while asleep, the mind cannot accurately interpret the impressions, causing hallucinations or dreams.

People returned from the dead for several reasons. They return to seek revenge for their death just as Verginia’s ghost would not rest till her murderers were punished (manesque Verginiae, mortuae quam vivae felicioris, per tot domos ad petendas poenas vagati nullo relictuo sonte tandem quieverunt, Liv. 3.58.11). In Euripides’ Hecuba, Achilles’ ghost would not permit the army to leave Troy until Polyxena was sacrificed upon his grave (αἰτεὶ δ’ ἀδελφήν τήν ἐμὴν Πολυξένην / τούμβῳ φίλον

23 Felton 19. The examples noted above from Vergil, Ovid, and Apuleius would support this.
24 Felton 19; cf. assistere in footnote 8. Felton also cites Plin. Nat. 3.5; Lucian. Philops. 25, 30-31; Plg. Mir. 2.
25 Ar. De Som. 461b5-10, 25-30, 462a10-15 as found in his Parva Naturalia.
26 Felton outlines three primary reasons for the dead to return: warning and revenge, comfort and reward, and burial, Felton pp. 8-12. This discussion will focus on the first and the third reasons, and will repeat some of her examples as well as use stories that appear in other parts of her book that fit these categories.
πρόσφαγμα καὶ γέρας λαβεῖν. Eur. Hec. 40-1). Nero’s mother, after he had her killed, haunted him to such an extent that he summoned the magi to have himself exorcised (quin et facto per Magos sacro evocare Manes et exorare temptavit. Suet. Nero 34), just as Galba would not let his assassin, Otho, sleep, keeping him up through the night (ante lectum iacens per omnia piaculorum genera Manes Galbae, a quo deturbari expellique se viderat, propitiare temptasse. Suet. Otho 7). Plutarch tells how Pausanias accidentally killed the maiden Cleonice who haunted him almost until he died (ἡ δ’ εἰς δυσίν ἔλθουσα ταχέως ἔφη παύσεσθαι τῶν κακῶν αὐτόν ἐν Σπάρτῃ γενόμενον, αἰνιττομένη τὴν μέλλουσαν ώς ἐοικεν αὐτῷ τελευτήν. Plu. Cim. 6.6)

The dead return to warn or advise the living. Tlepolemus returns to warn his wife to stay away from Thrasyllus (modo ne in Thrasylli manum sacrilegam convenias, Apul. Met. 8.8). The ghost of a father returns to his daughter to warn her that her stepmother committed the crime (eique totum novercae scelus aperuit, Apul. Met. 9.31). There were also oracles of the dead, places thought to be closer to the underworld and therefore more opportune for contact with the dead. Ogden recognizes three types of such oracles. The first consists of places one goes to have someone conjure the dead. The second consisted of oracles of dead heroes. The third were places that led to the Underworld such as caves or birdless lakes. Like other oracles, messages were often acquired through incubation performed by either the priest or the pilgrim. Ironically, the message from the dead may have been thought to have been more “down to earth” and less open to interpretation in comparison to the other oracles such as Delphi as indicated

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27 Ogden (2001) feels that the Romans received these from the Greeks and names the four major ones: Acheron in Thesprotia, Avernus in Campania, Heraclea Pontica near the Black Sea, and Tainaron on the Mani peninsula, p. 17. Pausanias summoned the spirit of Cleonice at Heraclea in the story above (Plu. Cim. 6.5-6)


One, however, need not travel far to consult the dead since the local necromancer could reanimate a corpse with its spirit or could summon a spirit itself.

The most popular reason for ghosts to return is to request proper burial. Burial and funerary rites were among the most important religious rituals in the ancient world. He who was left unburied or was buried but did not have the necessary funerary rites could not enter or rest in the afterlife. As such, he was stuck in this life as an abnormality, a “glitch in the matrix,” as it were. The earliest Greco-Roman example is in the Iliad where Patroclus asks Achilles to get over his death and bury him since he cannot cross into the afterlife until his funerary rites are carried out (θάπτε μὲ δττι τάχιστα, πῦλας Ἄιδαο περήσω. / τηλέ με εἰργοσαι ψυξοί, εἰδολα καμόντων, / οὐδέ μὲ πω μίσγεσθαι ύπερ ποταμοῦ ἐώσιν, / ἀλλ᾽ αὕτως ἀλάμημα ἀν᾽ εὐρυπυλῆς ὁ Ἄιδος δῶ. Hom. Il.23.71-4). The sibyl explains to Aeneas that souls whose bones rest in the tomb rest in the Underworld, while souls whose bodies are left unburied roam the shores of the Styx for a hundred years until they are finally permitted to cross (Haec omnis, quam cernis, inops inhumataque turba est; / portitor ille Charon; hi, quos vehit unda, sepulti; / nec ripas datur horrendas et rauca fluenta / transportare prius quam sedibus ossa quierunt. Verg. A. 6.325-30). Caligula haunted the Lamian gardens until his sisters buried him (satis constat, prius quam id fieret, hortorum custodies umbris inquietatos; in ea quoque domo, in qua occubuerit, nullam noctem sine aliquot terrore transactam, donec ipsa domus incendio consumpta sit. Suet. Cal. 59). Plautus’

29 Felton 9.
Mostellaria tells of a ghost, Diapontius, who was killed by his host and was buried beneath the house which he now haunts (TR. “ego transmarinus hospes sum Diapontius. / hic habito, haec mihi dedita est habitatio. / nam me Acheruntem recipere Orcus noluit, / quia praemature vita careo . . .” Pl. Mos. 497-500). Pliny’s Athenodorus figures out that a house is haunted because someone’s body was hidden below the house. Once the bones were discovered and properly buried, the haunting ceased (Pl. Nat. 7.27.5-11). Likewise, Arignotus, one of Lucian’s philosophers in the Philopseudes, exorcised a haunted house by having a body that was discovered below it properly buried (Lucian. Philops. 30-31).

The act of burial rites says something about being a living human being and that being’s struggle with death. The German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer captures this well stating:

This special human dimension is the in-built capacity of man to think beyond his own life in the world, to think about death. This is why the burial of the dead is perhaps the fundamental phenomenon of becoming human. Burial does not refer to a rapid hiding of the dead, a swift clearing away of the shocking impression made by one suddenly stuck fast in a leaden and lasting sleep. On the contrary, by a remarkable expenditure of human labor and sacrifice there is sought an abiding with the dead, indeed a holding fast of the dead among the living.30

Thus, since burial is so vital to the human character (perhaps more so for the ancient than the modern?) it should come as no surprise that there is so great a fear about not being buried. This fear is a deep psychological one in that at least in life one could do something to help oneself should one find oneself in a bad situation, but, in death, one had to completely rely on who was left behind to ensure one’s security and happiness. In the Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle mentions the belief that the behavior of one’s

30 Gadamer 75.
descendants could affect the state of happiness of the dead. He argues, however, that it is ludicrous to believe that the behavior of the living affects the dead to such an extent, but, at the same time, it is just as ridiculous to believe that the behavior of the living has no affect on the dead. Thus, Aristotle concludes that the happiness of the dead, like the unconscious living, can be enhanced or hindered by the fortunes of their descendants, but their happiness or unhappiness can never be transformed by the learning of these things. In addition, like the ignorant living, there exists a tradition in literature that the dead are unaware of the present, yet familiar with both past and future. Aristotle also seems to imply that the dead suffer (διαφέρει δὲ τῶν παθῶν ἐκαστον περὶ ζῴντας ἦ τελευτήσαντας συμβαίνειν πολὺ μᾶλλον, Arist. EN 1101a30). He, however, never offers any explanations as to what the sufferings of the dead are since that would be irrelevant to the topic at hand, but, for the living, he later in this section states that death is the greatest fear for the brave man to endure.

The Romans had elaborate funerals that had proper imagery and symbolism for the Roman funereal agenda. The funeral in any culture is supposed to do two things: a) reveal how the person lived a meaningful life and b) reveal how death is not the end (the person lives on either through memories, monuments, religious beliefs, etc.). The

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31 Arist. EN 1100a-1101b. An example of unconscious living would be if someone went on a trip, and while away, there was a death in a family. That someone is ignorant of the death until the voyage back. According to Pritzl, there are several different interpretations on this passage, though most agree that Aristotle himself did not believe this but was using it as an example to discourse on happiness, pp. 101-03.

32 When Odysseus consults Tiresias, he encounters several other shades, among whom is Achilles who asks him how Peleus, Neoptolemus, and the other Myrmidons are (ἐπὶ δὲ μοι Πηλῆος ἄμυμνος, ἐξει πέπονησαι / ἢ ἄτε`, ἤτε τιμήν πολέσειν μετὰ Μυρμιδόνεςσιν, / ἔν πολιτείαν ἢ Εὐλάδα τε Φθίνη τε / οὐνεκά μν κατὰ γῆρας ἤτε χειρᾶς τε πέδας τε. Hom. Od. 11.494-97). Pritzl offers this example from Pindar’s Odes 14, in which Asopichos wants his dead father to know of his victory. The translation, he says, comes from Bowra. Go now, Echo, to the black walls / Of Persephona’s house / And bring the fine news to his father; / See Kleodamos and tell him / How his son / In the famous valleys of Pytho / Has crowned his young hair / With the wings of a glorious triumph, p. 107.
Roman funeral consisting of the display of death masks (*imagines*) and the recitation of the deeds of both the recently deceased and the previously deceased fulfill these characteristics. The Roman funeral, moreover, not only is a celebration of the immortality and the exploits of the individual Roman himself but also of Rome in general. As Polybius further notes, the ritual can only inspire the future generations of Romans to aspire to the same glory (τὸ γὰρ τὰς τῶν ἐπ’ ἀρετὴ δεδοξασμένων ἀνδρῶν εἰκόνας ἰδεῖν ὠμοῦ πάσας οἶνον εἰ ζώσας καὶ πεπνυμένας τίν’ οὐκ ἂν παραστήσαι; τί δ’ ἂν κάλλιον θέαμα τοῦτον φανεῖθ; Plb. 6.53). Hence, anything that would rob one of the opportunity for such glory not only robs individual life but also the life of Rome, its future, and the future of every Roman. 33 Thus, one can see the importance of burial and funereal rites for the upper-class Romans.

Remus has received burial and funereal rites, but, for whatever reason, this time it is not enough. Remus’ request is more in tune with a divinity, although Remus is described as a *shade*, not a god. There is no mention of his deification and nothing suggests he retains immortality or the glory that comes with immortality and deification. 34 When Augustus first was elected to the consulship, he identified himself with both Romulus and Remus, enabling Remus the possibility to acquire a glorious status. 35 Augustus gradually became identified with Quirinus, while his friend, Marcus Agrippa, on the other hand, may have become identified with Remus. Both men’s personal histories resembled the stories regarding Romulus and Remus. In fact, Servius

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34 The information contained in this paragraph comes from Wiseman, pp. 144-150.
35 D. C. 46.2-3, as cited by Wiseman p. 215 n. 89.
claims that the prophecy in the *Aeneid* refers to them as such (*vera tamen hoc habet ratio, Quirinum Augustum esse, Remum vero pro Agrippa positum*, Serv. *A.* 1.292-3). Several poets during this period, like Vergil and Propertius, speak of Remus as symbolic of Rome itself, never mentioning the murder, but going to the extent of claiming that Romulus and Remus ruled together. The fulfillment of the prophecy came crashing to a halt when Agrippa died in 12 B.C.E. At this point, the mention of Remus began to cease, and if he was mentioned, it was never in the blissful manner that occurred in early Augustan propaganda.

Unlike Romulus, Mars does not swoop down and take Remus back to Heaven by the process of apotheosis. Remus even says, “Alas, where is my father Mars?” (*heu ubi Mars pater est?* Ov. *Fast.* 5.465). This is more significant than one may realize. The change of the escort indicates the importance of status, that is, Mercury comes for ordinary people, while the Sun, or in this case Mars, takes heroes to heaven. Thus, by invoking Mercury, Ovid reveals that Remus never acquired any status of glory and is therefore not someone for a Roman to emulate. Rather, a true Roman will take Romulus as his model and hopes someday to be taken to heaven in his own chariot.

Ovid tells us that Romulus consented to Remus’ request out of loyalty (*pietas*) for his brother. Remus recognizes that Romulus never meant him to be killed. The fault rests on Celer. Celer, whose name means “swift,” killed Remus with a spade when Remus jumped over the wall (or a trench in some stories) to prove that it was an unsuitable defense. Depending on the author, either Celer was being too arrogant and hasty or Remus was, and some versions have Romulus himself doing the deed. After

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37 Cumont 164.
Celer killed Remus, he either went to Erturia or was awarded the title tribunus celerum, who acted as the personal guards of the king. The fact that Celer kills Remus with a digging instrument and the fact that the wall was built too low or the trench not dug deep enough in the ground suggests a chthonic quality to Remus’ death. Celer’s name and the fact that Remus was murdered mark Remus as someone who died before his time (an ἄωρος or βιαιοθάνατος). As such, he can be enslaved by a magus and/or has the ability to become a horrific haunting creature to both Celer and other Roman citizens. Remus would surely want to haunt Celer, and based upon other ghost stories, one would expect him to do so. Remus, however, chooses a better, more fitting revenge for his killer by cursing him to suffer the same fate, “Fierce Celer, through wounds may you give up your cruel spirit, and just like me, may you being blood-stricken travel to the realm below (saeve Celer, crudelem animam per volnera reddas, / utque ego, sub terras sanguinulentus eas. Ov. Fast. 5.469-70). In a sense, Remus’ curse is etiological in nature in that celeres, the guardians of the emperor, the essence of Rome, give their lives to ensure the emperor’s safety. In addition, the curse also tells where Remus resided after his death (the underworld).

Why is Remus never given a celestial abode, and why is he never deified? One possible explanation comes from York who argues that Romulus and Remus represent the “divine duality” concept found in the divine twins, a notion which transcends Indo-European cultures. Romulus represents the celestial while Remus represents the terrestrial. He states:

But the connection of Remus with the Aventine in the canonical version of Rome’s founding suggests the Aventine as the physical symbol of the

38 Wiseman 9.
‘other world’ hidden and contained within the manifest Rome of ‘this world.’ In essence, Rome is founded by both Romulus and Remus: the city represents the union or juncture of the visible world with the timeless and invisible otherworld.  

York feels that this fact is significant, not that one twin killed the other, but that one of the twins is associated with the netherworld, a common motif of the divine duality throughout Indo-European cultures.  

A different explanation is that Romulus and Remus are symbolic of the struggles between the patricians and the plebeians. For example, the decision about who should rule Rome reflects such the struggle for representation in government. Each twin climbed one of the seven hills and waited for the birds to determine who should be ruler. Romulus went to the Palatine, “headquarters” of the patricians, while Remus stood on the Aventine, “headquarters” of the plebeians. Romulus saw twelve birds, whereas Remus saw six, and, thus, Romulus claimed the throne (Ov. Fast. 4.807-818). This explanation comes from Wiseman who states that the myth of both Romulus and Remus establishing Rome indicates the existence of a ‘double community’ in which both units share equal status.  

As so often noted, however, history can only be written by the victors, and, thus, Wiseman points out that the myth can hold power only once the plebeians achieved their political victories between 367 and 342 B.C.E. Thus, just as Remus was slow in achieving prominence, so were the plebeians.  

If the lives of Romulus and Remus are symbolic of the lives of the patricians and the plebeians, then it follows that the post mortem existence of Romulus and Remus  

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39 York 241.  
40 York 242. Wiseman devotes an entire chapter as to why Romulus and Remus are not to be characterized as a divine duality like the Dioscuri and Asvins, pp. 18-30.  
41 Wiseman 126.  
42 Wiseman 126.
should reflect the *post mortem* existence of the patricians and plebeians. This can be seen in contrasting Romulus’ *post mortem* apparition with Remus’ *post mortem* apparition. Romulus returns to Proclus informing him that he is now the god Quirinus. The description of Romulus is not a transparent shade but a larger than life human. There is no *cruentum*, no *exiguus murmure* but rather a solid, firm entity dressed in a purple toga (*trabeaque decorus* Ov. Fast. 2.503). His description (*humano major*) is a common description of deities and of certain phantoms. These phantoms are often women who appear during times of crisis. In Latin, they are called *species muliebris* as in Tacitus (*species muliebris ultra modum humanum* Tac. Ann. 11.21), or they are referred to as “larger than normal” such as in Vergil (*nota major imago* Verg. *A*. 2.773), which resembles the Greek γυνὴ τις μείζων ἢ κατὰ ἄνθρωπου φύσιν. Romulus appeared while Proclus was walking on a road, Remus appeared in a dream. Both appeared at night; Remus in the middle of the night, Romulus with the moon shining (Ov. *Fast*. 2.500). Remus merely stands by the bed and does not move until Acca and Faustulus grab for him. There is more movement in Romulus’ account, and the movement is not qualified by such words as *subito motu*, *adesse*, and *evanuit* as with Remus (*fugiens* or *effugit*). Remus curses Celer and requests the celebration of the *Lemuria*. Romulus’ message commands the people not to mourn his death but celebrate his divinity as Quirinus. While Remus identifies himself as an empty shade, Romulus indicates his greatness as a god. Remus’ message is borne to Romulus, while Romulus’ message is taken to the Roman people. The *Lemuria* is established for Remus, while temples, rites, and a hill were dedicated to Romulus. It is quite obvious which story is

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43 Felton 24. Vergil also, in this case, calls Creusa *simulacrum* and *umbra* (Verg. *A*. 2.772)
44 Felton 24, 31.
the one considered by the Romans to be more glorious and more positive. While Remus is Roman, he is not as Roman as Romulus. The irony is that although, these stories are about the dead, they say more about the living especially about the qualities that make up a good Roman. A Roman ought to be larger than life. Other cultures are secondary. A Roman is quick to act because speed implies decisiveness necessary for survival. A Roman acquires glory for Rome and her people. The opposite of these characteristics is the way in which patricians viewed plebeians. Plebeians should not hold as much power as patricians. Plebeians were slow to come to power, and all plebeians want is more power for themselves.

Having examined Ovid’s rendition of Remus’ apparition, there are some important things to mention. The Remoria refers to a place sacred to both Remus and the plebeians. It is possible that this place is regarded as the spot on which Remus was sacrificed for the defense of the city or where he was buried or both. Remus possessed the characteristics of a βιαιοθάνατος, and the only irregularity of his return was that he asked for a festival to be celebrated for him. Based on these observations, one may conclude that the Remuria may well have been a festival to honor Remus and other βιαιοθάνατοι.
It is the purpose of this section to examine the rite during the *Lemuria* to ascertain whether it can reveal anything about the nature of the ghosts that are expelled during it.\(^1\)

The rite performed during the *Lemuria* could be seen as a quasi-exorcism. If an exorcism’s purpose is to repel ghosts, then a necromantic ritual would be its opposite. Yet, often both exorcisms and necromantic ceremonies have similarities. This is so because a necromancer must protect himself from the spirits, and, thus, those same things that protect a necromancer can be used to protect an exorcist and can repel ghosts. Hence, there are certain tools of the trade that enable one to handle, repel, and control the dead.

**The Time**

*nox ubi iam media est somnoque silentia praebet,
et canis et variae conticuistis aves* (5.429-30)

The rite during the *Lemuria* is old according to Ovid and is handed down by the ancestors (*qui partem prisci nunc quoque moris habet* Ov. *Fast. 5.428*), occurring in the dead of night. The middle of the night is the appropriate time for the dead to be active since the rest of creation, as Ovid points out, is asleep, itself in a state of quasi-death. There are other times appropriate for the appearance of the dead. One time is the opposite of *media nocte*, that is, *medio die*. Both Pliny and Tacitus write of ghosts that appear at this time as well as Lucian, Phlegon, and Apuleius.\(^2\) In Greek culture, the

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\(^1\) Ov. *Fast. 5.* 429-444.

Empousa and the heroes (both chthonic entities) rise at this time to acquire the sacrifices due to them. Furthermore, midnight and noon were, and still are, regarded as temporal thresholds during which creatures, such as ghosts, may cross over into opposing or adjacent realms. Another possible time when the dead appear is not so much a time but an aspect of the setting, that is, dim light. For the ancients, this would be lamp light, candle light, moonlight, or the setting sun. This would make sense if one considers the description of ghosts as white, black, and transparent. During full light, the transparent would barely be visible. During complete darkness only the white might possibly be seen. However, in dim light all three are visible. Felton notes that often, whenever a ghost appeared, there was a lamp nearby or the area was dimly lit. The process of putting lamps in graves in Greece increased in the fifth century B.C.E. when cremation increased. A burning lamp reflected an eternal spirit and lit the way to the Underworld. Even when Vestal Virgins were caught disobeying their laws and punished by being buried alive, they were buried with a lighted lamp. Hecate, the goddess of witchcraft and the dead, furthermore, was usually pictured carrying torches. Thus, since it is the middle of the night and Ovid claims that the ghosts are visible during the Lemuria, one must assume that the celebrant, in order to see to perform the ritual, walks about holding a candle or lamp, or has a servant hold it.

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3 Rohde 593.
4 Felton 55. Both Pliny’s Athenodorus and Lucian’s Arignotus read and write by lamplight in haunted houses (Pliny Nat. 7.27.5-11, Lucian. Philops. 30-31).
5 Felton 55.
6 Powell 631.
7 Felton 14.
8 This is not so difficult an image to imagine because of finger lamps. Finger lamps would be small and easy enough to handle while trying to deal with everything else. To see a possible example of such a lamp, see Knopf, p. 162.
Barefoot and Binding

*habent gemini vincula nulla pedes* (5.432)

The concept of binding is prevalent in both ancient and modern magical practices. By binding someone, that person is under your control. There is a tremendous amount of evidence for binding since there have been so many curse tablets found. So many have been discovered because once a spell is cast (often in lead), it must be hidden lest someone attempt to undo it. Also, from the amount found, curse tablets seem to have been a very ordinary part of ancient life. Fritz divided them into the various categories: *defixiones iudicare* (judicial spells), *defixiones amatoriae* (erotic spells), *defixiones agonisticae* (agonistic spells), and *defixiones* against economic competitors. Gager divides up the way in which the spells are pronounced: direct binding (“I bind X!”), prayer formulas (“Restrain X!”), and persuasive analogies (“As this lead is cold and useless, so may X be cold and useless!”). As one may notice, rarely are curse tablets employed to kill another person. The association with the dead, however, along with the few instances where murder actually was sought, made them a sinister force, a taboo for the Romans (hence the expulsion of magicians from Rome several times). On the other hand, being bound is a way to protect someone from outside forces. Thus, by being unbound, one opens oneself to all possibilities of the universe. In all sacred rites nothing can be bound. The *flamen dialis* could have no knots on him and could not even wear a

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9 Fritz 120-1.
10 Gager 13.
11 The story that probably ensured the taboo was not forgotten is the one found in Tacitus’ *Annals* regarding the death of Germanicus. (*saevam vim morbid augebat persuasio veneni a Pisone accepti; et reperiebantur solo ac parietibus erutae humanorum corporum reliquiae, carmina et devotiones et nomen Germanici plumbeis tabulis insculptum, semusti cineres ac tabo obliqui aliasque malefica, quis creditur animas numinibus infernis sacrari. simul missi a Pisone incusabantur ut valitudinis adversa rimantes. Tac. Ann. 69)*.
12 *Serv. A.* 4.518 as cited by Burriss, p. 158.
ring unless it was broken or without a stone. Helenus removed his fillets to receive the full inspiration of Apollo when he went to Apollo’s temple (Verg. A. 3.370). Also, a pregnant woman could not even bind her hair or cross her legs or fingers lest she block the child from birth.

Thus, since the celebrant of the *Lemuria* cannot be bound, he must perform the rite barefoot. Going barefoot is a common practice for any ancient spiritualist, for those who are considered positive such as Apollonius, those considered sinister such as Medea, as well as the normal, average, everyday magician. By going completely unbound, the celebrant enables himself to perceive and handle the spirits of the dead.

**The Averting Gesture**

*signaque dat digitis medio cum police iunctis,*  
*occurrat tacito ne levis umbra sibi* (5.433-34)

The celebrant makes a symbol with his hand to ward off ghosts. Frazer calls this “the fig” from the Italian *la fica* or *mano fica* to avert the evil eye. The *bulla* worn by the Roman child was used to ward off the evil eye. Medea killed Talos with the evil eye (A.R. 4.1635-90).

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13 Gellius 10.15.6 as cited by Burriss, pp. 157-58.  
14 Burriss 157.  
15 For Apollonius and the average magician see Fritz, pp. 114-115. Canidia walked and performed her sinister rites barefoot (*Canidiam, pedibus nudis passoque capillo*, Hor. S. 1.8.24). Before Dido begins her ritual to kill herself, she takes off a sandal and loosens her robe (*unum exuta pedem vincis, in vesta recincta*, Verg. A. 4.518).  
16 Frazer 292. Pliny claims that the statue of an unnamed goddess was set up on the Capitoline as protection against the evil eye (*cur effascinationibus adoratione peculiari occurrimus, alii Graecam Nemesin invocantes, cuius ob id Romae simulacrum in Capitolio est, quamvis Latinum nomen non sit?* Plin. Nat. 28.5.22).  
17 Burriss 153.
Water

cumque manus puras fontana perluit unda (5.435)

Water is one of the ingredients common to Greek, Roman, and Near Eastern religious and necromantic practices. The ironic thing about water is that although it is the source for life, it is chthonic in nature.\(^{18}\) According to Aeschylus, certain liquids were chosen for a necromantic rite since they were calming and propitiating, while Euripides claimed they were used because they could summon the dead.\(^{19}\) The ancients actually recognized two forms of water (rain and earthly water). Rain water would be used in celebrations for celestial deities, while earthly water would be used for chthonic worship.\(^{20}\) The chthonic quality of water affected the Romans in a humorous way as it made the baths become haunted since they were fed by underground water sources. Hence, the water used in the rite for the *Lemuria* comes from a spring (*fontana*).

Water is also the substance for purification. Purity implies a sense of order, a sense that something exists as it ought to exist.\(^{21}\) Hence, that which is impure is deformed. All sorts of things can render someone or something impure, such as dirt, blood, or corpses. Because humans value purity to such an extent, it is necessary to guard it, cherish it, and attempt to transform anything impure into something pure. While it is man’s desire that all be always pure, this does not happen. Pure people and pure objects, however, become impure, sometimes purposefully sometimes accidentally, and thus, certain rituals and ceremonies have been created to nullify the impurity and restore

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\(^{21}\) The following discussion on purification is a brief summary from Redfield p. 161. See also Rohde’s appendix 5, pp. 588-90.
order. There was a major purity issue with corpses in ancient times. Burial sites were labeled *religiosa*, that is, they were to be avoided except during the proper times, such as the *Parentalia*.\(^{22}\) The *flamen dialis* was not permitted near graves or corpses.\(^{23}\) The Pontifex Maximus avoided houses that had cypress trees outside since this signified that a member of the house had died.\(^{24}\) Old women applied spit using their middle finger on the forehead and lips of children on their day of purification (*dies lustricus*).\(^{25}\) Similarly, after a Roman funeral, the attendees were sprinkled with water.\(^{26}\) Any magician intending to cast a spell would have to purify himself with water either through a sprinkling or a bath. For example, Mithrobarzanes requires Menippus to bathe for 28 days in the Euphrates and then once in the Tigris before he begins his journey to the Underworld (Lucian. *Nec*. 7). Thus, it is not surprising that the *pater familias* washes his hands during the rite particularly when he is about to handle an impure substance (black beans). Nor is it surprising that he must wash his hands again near the end of the rite, right before the vocal exorcism.

**Beans, Redemption, and the Number Nine**

*sed dum iacit, ‘haec ego mitto, his’ inquit ‘redimo meque meosque fabis.’* (5.437-38)

Then he takes up the black beans and with his face averted, never looking back, he hurls them saying nine times, “These I cast! With these beans I redeem me and mine.” Ovid claims that the shade is thought to collect the beans and to follow the celebrant

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\(^{23}\) Gellius 10.15, as cited by Burriss, p. 157.

\(^{24}\) Serv. *A*. 3.64, as cited by Burriss, p. 157.

\(^{25}\) Burriss 152.

\(^{26}\) Fest. 2, as cited by Burriss, p. 156.
without being seen. The common items used to assuage the dead are milk, water, honey, wine, and blood. These items can be found in any of the other chthonic rites, yet water is the only one of them found during the Lemuria. Ovid includes wine but also adds a few others such as bread and salt that appease the dead during the Parentalia (tegula porrectis satis est velata coronis / et sparsae fruges parcaque mica salis, / inque mero mollita Ceres violaeque solutae: Ov. Fast. 2.537-39). Vergil adds lilies which is in line with the twice a year ritual in which Romans laid flowers on the graves, such as roses during the Rosalia (Manibus date lilia plenis / purpureos spargam flores, Verg. A. 6.883-84). Yet, suddenly, here in May, beans are the gifts ghosts want. Why? Many know that a taboo on beans, particularly black beans, existed, but no one knows for certain as to why.

Cicero claims that the Pythagoreans did not eat beans because of the gastric problems they cause the body. A soul must have a sound body in order to function properly (Cic. Div. 1.62). The Flamen Dialis was not permitted to touch any beans. Beans are also mentioned during the Parentalia. The beans, however, are not given to ghosts. Instead, an old woman in performing the rites for Tacita chews seven beans while roasting a fish (Ov. Fast. 2.576-78). Here again, there is nothing in the ritual, itself one of protection, that would indicate why she must chew the beans or how the beans affect the ritual. In addition, the Romans threw beans into graves so that the dead would not bother them.

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27 Varro and Paulus both mention the beans during the Lemuria. Varro: quibus temporibus in sacrís fabam iactant ac dicunt se lemurios domo extra ianuam eicere. Paulus: nam et Lemuralibus (faba) iactur larvis.  
29 Frazer 424. Wright offers the following explanation: “So κύμιος derives from κυέσσαι, to be pregnant, and the meaning given by Pollux, ‘the swelling of the breasts with milk,’ traces back to its original sense. κύμιος, bean, is properly ‘the thing big with life’; and anyone who has watched the rapid and mysterious pushing forth of the young bean from the parent womb will understand why the bean was a symbol of sexual fertility . . .” pp. 154-55. A few lines later, Wright states that it should be obvious from the above observation why a ghost would want a bean. If he had only incorporated the obvious!  
30 Frazer 424.
To redeem something means to buy it back from whomever it was sold. It would seem that the celebrant was bargaining with the ghosts, and therefore, one must ask how the ghost came to own the *pater* and his family every year and why the *pater* must buy himself and the family back. Hallam merely states that the celebrant must redeem himself from “the power of the ghosts.”  

Frazer says that the ghost would have carried away the family members if they did not receive the beans. What is more likely, particularly if these are family dead, is that the beans are an offering for protection for the rest of the year until the next *Lemuria*, or they are to free the household from the powers of the previous year.

The fact that the celebrant cannot look at the shade seems odd. One must assume that if he did, he would perish. This assumption, however, is not in sync with the appearance of other ghosts. In fact, there is no record of anyone dying because one saw a ghost. If someone dies in the presence of a ghost, it is due to an injury inflicted upon them by the ghost. Thus, either the assumption is wrong, or there is a special reason why seeing the dead at this time is deadly.

Along similar lines is the notion that ghosts do not like to be seen. Philinnion fled when her parents saw her. One must turn oneself around after offering a meal to a vengeful ghost according to Selinus. Jason could not turn around to confront Hecates as she rose from the pit. Statius, in a humorous fashion, has Tiresias, the blind prophet, “look at” Laius’ ghost. Ogden places the ghosts of the *Lemuria* in this category, but I

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31 Hallam 295.  
32 Frazer 424.  
34 Ogden (2001) cites this as the *lex sacra*, p. 172.  
believe he is wrong in doing so.\textsuperscript{37} There is no evidence that \textit{lemures} do not wish to be seen or that they will disappear once seen. If looking at them could make them go away, there would be no purpose in having beans, bronze, or any other part of the ritual. One, moreover, should notice that the act of looking back (\textit{respicit}) after the final command signifies the completion of the ritual. The celebrant has no fear because he knows that the rites have been performed properly (\textit{respicit et pure sacra peracta putat}. Ov. \textit{Fast}. 5.444). This is actually not as typical an ending as it may seem. Often such rites end with the celebrant or magician walking backwards to his next destination.\textsuperscript{38} Mennipus, after his last bath, had to walk home backwards (\textit{ἐπανάγει εἰς τὴν σίκταν, ὡς εἰχον, ἀναποδίζοντα}, Lucian. \textit{Nec}. 7).

Three is the perfect number for almost all ancient civilizations. Odd numbers in particular to the Romans were seen as being more potent (\textit{cur inpares numeros ad omnia vehementiores credimus, idque in febribus dierum observatione intellegitur}? Plin. \textit{Nat}. 28.5.23). Many prayers and incantations are recited in sets of threes. The \textit{Lemuria} itself is a three day festival. Lease lists pages upon pages of instances of the number three, such as trinities of deities, a triple offering of honey, milk, and wine for the dead, and sacrifices three days after a funeral.\textsuperscript{39} Trowbridge notes the following examples of foretelling death with the number three: three trees falling, a dying woman calling one’s name out three times, a vision three days before the event itself.\textsuperscript{40} During the \textit{Lemuria}, the celebrant commands the ghosts nine times to leave. The power of nine is that it is

\textsuperscript{37} Ogden (2001) 172-73 n. 31.
\textsuperscript{38} Fritz explains, saying, “Walking backward could be the sign the magician has definitely left the human norm . . .” p. 115. He cites the following examples from the Greek magical papyrus of Paris in his footnote: \textit{PGM IV}, 26-51; 2442-95; XXXVI, 264-74, p. 271.
\textsuperscript{39} Lease, E. “The Number Three, Mysterious, Mystic, Magic.” \textit{CP} 14 (1919) 56-73.
\textsuperscript{40} Trowbridge 85. She cites the following from the \textit{Scriptores Historiae Augustae}: Alex. 60.4, Maxim. 31.1, Pert. 14.1.
thrice three, that is, it is the perfect number perfected. By repeating the command nine
times, one can rest even more assured than if one had said it three or six times, that the
desired wish will come true.41

**Temesean Bronze**

*rursus aquam tangit, Temesaeaque concrepat aera* (5.441)

The celebrant washes again, clangs Temesean bronze, and commands the spirits
to depart from the house repeating the words “*manes exite paterni*” nine times. What is
significant about Temesean bronze, let alone bronze itself, and what are the bronze
instruments being clanged? Temesa is a town in southern Italy known for its copper
mines. It has no supernatural significance except for a ghost/werewolf story which takes
place there.42 Bronze was preferred for ceremonial purposes on account of its pristine
nature. Bronze first became prevalent in Egyptian and Mesopotamian civilization during
the third millennium B.C.E. and slowly worked its way into the West around the
beginning of the second millennium B.C.E.43 Etruscans only used bronze plowshares,
and, later, the Romans harnessed a white cow and a white ox to a bronze ploughshare
when they established a colony or city. The Sabine priests of the Etruscans could only
use a bronze razor, and, likewise, the *Flamen Dialis* had his hair and nails cut with
bronze.44 It would have been the only metal around when *Lemuria*’s rites began, if what
Ovid tells us is factual. Also, since the beings that one is exorcising are themselves old, it
follows that they would have to be dealt with by archaic means. Bronze may also have

41 Lease agrees, but states that this idea was late and found primarily in magic, p. 73.  
42 According to Pausanias in the *Description of Greece*, a daemon haunted this town. The townspeople
offered a virgin to him every year until Euthymus, a famous boxer, happened to visit Temesa and fall in
love with the intended virgin. He wrestled with the daemon, won, and married the girl. The daemon
jumped into the sea never to be seen again (Paus. 6.6).  
43 Derry & Williams 7,14.  
44 Burriss 159-160.
been preferred due to its composition, since certain stones had particular powers. Pliny claims that there were four types of bronze made from different alloys: white, silver, gold, and liverish.\(^{45}\)

In addition, there was a taboo on iron. Burriss argues Frazer’s belief that the conservative nature of religion with its fear of new things provided the taboo on iron. It is more likely, however, that iron had a late start (c.a. 1200 B.C.E. in the West) because the only iron used originally came from meteorites and because iron was so difficult to handle.\(^{46}\) Iron began to be employed first for decoration, and then became used for weapons and finally tools.\(^{47}\) The Arval Brothers were forbidden to engrave with iron and would have to perform a *piaculum* if they had to do such an engraving. A *piaculum* also had to be performed when the iron was extracted from its source.\(^{48}\)

The instruments that are beaten seem to be swords. Swords generally, despite their tangibility, were still believed to be able to ward off the dead. Both Odysseus and Aeneas protect themselves using a sword when surrounded by ghosts. There is a debate as to whether their swords are bronze or iron. What is most likely is that bronze was the original metal used during the time in which the stories of Odysseus and Aeneas are set, but as time went on and iron became easier to handle, it became used more often, gradually loosing its taboo. As it began to be used more often, authors would not distinguish nor feel the need to distinguish the bronze from the iron, unless there was a

\(^{45}\) *Eius tria genera: candidum argento nitore quam proxime accedens, in quo illa mixture praevaluit; alterum, in quo auri fulva natura; tertium, in quo aequalis omnium temperies fuit. Praeter haec est cuius ratio non potest reddi, quamquam hominis manu est; at fortuna temperature in simulacris signisque illud suo colore pretiosum ad iocineris imaginem vergens, quod ideo hepatizon appellant, procul a Corinthio, longe tamen ante Aegineticum atque Deliacum, quae diu optimuere principatum.* Plin. Nat. 34.3.8.

\(^{46}\) Derry & Williams 121.

\(^{47}\) Ibid. 121.

\(^{48}\) Burriss 159.
unique reason to do so, such as to emphasize the archaic quality of something. Thus, Odysseus, Aeneas, and the celebrant of the Lemuria all wield bronze swords.

The Right Thing to Say

cum dixit novies ‘manes exite paterni’  (5.443)

Numbers again play a role here in that the command consists of three words, and it is said nine times. The command has a parallel, as already stated above with the Greek Anthesteria. Nevertheless, there is no evidence that the Lemuria is a Romanized Anthesteria for several reasons. First, the Anthesteria is a Dionysian festival to welcome the spring. Each individual day of the festival had a name which coincided with certain rituals that went on that day. Any elements of the dead do not appear (possibly) until the evening of the second day. There is no evidence that any particular god was attached to the Lemuria or that any individual rituals of this sort happened during the Lemuria. Second, it is uncertain whether Kares (or Keres) are ghosts or Karian slaves, stemming from the debate as to whether the word is spelled with an alpha or an eta. Also, if they are ghosts, the Greeks merely try to defend themselves, by the smearing of pitch on the doors and the chewing of buckthorn. Furthermore, there is no concept of

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49 The first day was called the Pithoigia during which wine was drunk out of jars called pithoi and libations were poured to Dionysus. The second day is called the Choes which consisted of a public drinking contest in which one drank a jug of unmixed wine in silence. Buckthorn was chewed and pitch was smeared on the doors as defenses against ghosts. It is unclear, however, whether this was done during this day or the falling day. The third day was called Chytroi during which an offering of plankarpia, a mixture of fruits, to Chthonic Hermes. Honey cakes were thrown into a cleft in the earth in the temple of Ge Olympia. A third offering, eudeysnos, was made to Erigone, an girl who died an untimely death. In addition to these offerings during this day, temples and businesses closed. The festival ended with the dismissal command, though there is no indication what time of day this took place nor is there any specification as to who said the words.

50 According to Hamilton, the term Anthesteria is not found in the sources until the second century B.C.E. Beforehand, each day is referred to individually, p. 5. This may indicate that the days were celebrated individually at first only to be grouped collectively later as the official festival for the month Anthesterion.

51 Farnell p. 221 does not see how it was possible for Karians to be in Attica, while Pickard-Cambridge does not believe that the festival was for the expulsion of ghosts, p. 14. Parke, however, does not think that it makes sense to expel slaves from the household, p. 117.
redemption with a substance like beans in the *Anthesteria* as there is in the *Lemuria*.

Third, the *Anthesteria* is a festival that lasts three subsequent days, *Anthesterion* 11th, 12th, and 13th, the equivalent to February. If a culture assimilates a festival or a holiday, it stays in the same season and on or close to the same days. Hence, if the Romans were trying to assimilate the *Anthesteria*, it would be more logical to argue that the *Parentalia* is the *Anthesteria*, not the *Lemuria*.

While it is true that there is a dismissal command at the end of the *Anthesteria* that corresponds to the *Lemuria*’s, through similar reasoning, one may inquire if such a thing occurs elsewhere. One such place to look is curse tablets and binding spells. Upon examining the curse tablets in Luck’s and Gager’s books, one will find that the most common way to end the spell is to command the daemons to “go now quickly.” From the spells in Gager’s book, the spells that end in this way most often are spells used in the circus.\(^{52}\) While the command itself is similar, it is not repeated any number of times. If any portion of the spell is repeated, it is the invocation of the gods or the daemons.\(^{53}\) Hence, the dismissal of the *Lemuria* seems unique to itself.

The rite of the *Lemuria* can be described as archaic, chthonic, and magical. It is archaic in that bronze is the metal of choice. Whether the festival itself actually was archaic makes little difference. The fact that the Romans of Ovid’s era believed that the

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\(^{52}\) “Let him perish and fall, just as you lie (here) prematurely dead. Now, now, quickly, quickly, because they drive them off, the Typhonic Daimones!” (Gager 64-65). “I invoke you... so that they may not reach victory tomorrow in the circus. Now, now, quickly, quickly,” p. 67. “Let him not come from behind and pass but instead let him collapse, let him be bound, let him be broken up, and let him drag behind by your power. Both in the early races and in the later ones. Now, now! Quickly, quickly!” p. 74. From a picture of one of the curse tablets, one can make out: ΗΔΗΗΔΗ / TAXYTA, p. 66.

\(^{53}\) “Proserpina Salvia, I give over to you the head of Plotius. / Proserpina Salvia, I give over to you the forehead of Plotius. / Proserpina Salvia, I give over to you the eyebrows of Plotius. / Proserpina Salvia, I give over to you the eyelids of Plotius. / Proserpina Salvia, I give over to you the pupils of Plotius. / Proserpina Salvia, I give over to you the nostrils, ears, nose, tongue and teeth of Plotius...” (Gager 241-42).
rite was archaic on account of the bronze is the important fact. The rite is chthonic in that it is performed at night, fountain water is used, and the dead are commanded. There is nothing to indicate that a particular group of the dead was controlled. One might be inclined to argue that since the dead were controlled, then the class of dead must be βιαιοθάνατοι since only they could be controlled. However, one must remember that all the dead were released at various times throughout the year such as during the opening of the mundus to roam the lands for a few days. The rite is magical on account of the celebrant’s dress, gesture, the beans, and the repetition of terms. It is important, however, to remember that water and bronze also fit the category of magical ingredients and that many of these items can be of a religious nature. Thus, the necessary qualities for handling the dead (archaic, chthonic, and magical) all exist in the rite of the Lemuria, and, maybe even more importantly, it must be contended that the examination of the rite alone can only yield a conclusion that it is unknown what type of dead (if they are the dead) roam about during the Lemuria.
CHAPTER 5
EVOLUTION OF THE LEMURES

Lemures are older than Ovid realizes, evident from the ritual used to expel them, and they most likely predate the founding of Rome and, therefore, the mythology of Romulus and Remus. It does not seem that they were originally the dead but rather chthonic spirits along with the larvae. Manes must have been the original and appropriate term for the dead in general as indicated by its use in literature and especially on tombstones. The primary reason for this judgment is that the lemures are pacified by beans, not by the normal offerings for the dead, and, moreover, the use of beans indicates a notion of redemption not inherent in dealing with the dead in any other festivals or necromantic rites. While the dead can and do threaten during such festivals and rites, “normal” means (water, prayers, etc.) satisfy them. As Rome became established and encountered the Greeks and other cultures, the lemures acquired the additional definition of daemons. Since daemons could be the dead, the lemures likewise came to be known as the dead, specifically the untimely dead. By this time the distinction between lemures and larvae had been forgotten and each became a synonym for the other, as seen in the definitions given by various ancient commentators. Also, since the lemures were now identified with the dead, manes, imago, and the other words for ghost could be applied to them. At the same time as or shortly after the lemures acquired these characteristics, the patricians and the plebeians began to struggle over power and control. The lemures then

1 Compare Ovid’s version of the Parentalia, where once the Parentalia was neglected, and the dead burned the city (Ov. Fast. 2.547-556).
had the story of Remus grafted into their mythology such as it may have been. The false etymology of Lemuria from Remuria came with the assimilation. Since the original story had Remus as a human sacrifice and, therefore, dying an untimely death, the lemures were further emphasized as daemons of the untimely dead. But, because of the tragic and divisive associations of Remus’ story, the lemures may rarely have been mentioned and in later times, consequentially, virtually forgotten.

They were not completely forgotten, however, since some of their characteristics remained in various European cultural notions of the vampire. If the lemures still exist, they can be found in the dark places of psyche. They are perhaps the sins we fear to confess, the fears we fear to face, the skeletons in our closets. It will take more than beans to bargain for ourselves with such beings and more than bronze to battle them, but the one fact that has never changed about the lemures after all this time is that if we do not exorcise them from our lives, the cost will be our souls.
Hinc ubi protulerit formosa ter Hesperos ora,  
ter dederint Phoebo sidera victa locum,  
ritus erit veteris, nocturna Lemuria, sacri:  
inferias tacitis manibus illa dabunt.  
annus erat brevior, nec adhuc pia februa norant,  
nec tu dux mensum, Iane biformis, eras:  
iam tamen extincto cineri sua dona ferebant,  
compositique nepos busta piabat avi.  
mensis erat Maius, maiorum nomine dictus,  
qui partem prisci nunc quoque moris habet.  
nox ubi iam media est somnoque silentia praebet,  
et canis et variae conticuistis aves,  
ille memor veteris ritus timidusque deorum  
surgit (habent gemini vincula nulla pedes),  
signaque dat digitis medio cum pollice iunctis,  
occurrat tacito ne levis umbra sibi.  
cumque manus puras fontana perluit unda,  
vertitur et nigras accipit ante fabas,  
aversusque iacit; sed dum iacit, 'haec ego mitto,  
'his' inquit 'redimo meque meosque fabis.'  
hoc novies dicit nec respicit: umbra putatur  
colligere et nullo terga vidente sequi.  
rursus aquam tangit, Temesaeaque concrepat aera,  
et rogat ut tectis exeat umbra suis.  
cum dixit novies 'manes exite paterni'  
respicit, et pure sacra peracta putat.  
dicta sit unde dies, quae nominis extet origo  
me fugit: ex aliquo est invenienda deo.  
Pliade nate, mone, virga venerande potenti:  
saepe tibi est Stygii regia visa Iovis.  
venit adoratus Caducifer. accipe causam  
nominis: ex ipso est cognita causa deo.  
Romulus ut tumulo fraternas condidit umbras,  
et male veloci iusta soluta Remo,  
Faustulus infelix et passis Acca capillis
spargebant lacrimis ossa perusta suis;  
inde domum redeunt sub primera crepuscula maesti,  
utque erat, in duro procubuere toro.  
umbra cruenta Remi visa est adsistere lecto,  
atque haec exiguus murmure verba loqui:  
'enchego dimidium vestri parsque altera voti,  
cernite sim qualis, qui modo qualis eram!'  
qui modo, si volucre habuissem regna iubentes,  
in populo potui maximus esse meo,  
nunc sum elapsa rogi flammis et inanis imago:  
haec est ex illo forma relicta Remo.  
heu ubi Mars pater est? si vos modo vera locuti,  
uberaque expositis ille ferina dedit.  
quam lupa servavit, manus hunc temeraria civis  
perdidit. o quanto mitior illa fuit!  
saeve Celer, crudefem animam per volnera reddas,  
ut ego ego, sub terras sanguinulentus eas.  
noluit hoc frater, pietas aequalis in illo est:  
quod potuit, lacrimas in mea fata dedit.  
hunc vos per lacrimas, per vestra alimenta rogaste  
ut celebrem nostro signet honore diem.'  
mandantem amplexcti cupiunt et bracchia tendunt:  
lubrica prensantes effugit umbra manus.  
ut secum fugiens somnos abduxit imago,  
ad regem voces fratris uterque ferunt.  
Romulus obsequitur, lucemque Remuria dicit  
illam, qua positis iusta feruntur avis.  
aspera mutata est in lenem tempore longo  
littera, quae toto nomine prima fuit;  
mox etiam lemures animas dixere silentum:  
hic sensus verbi, vis ea vocis erat.  
fana tamen veteres illis clausere diebus,  
ut nunc ferali tempore operta vides;  
nec viduae taedis eadem nec virginis apta  
tempora: quae nupsit, non diuturna fuit.  
hac quoque de causa, si te proverbia tangunt,  
mense malas Maio nubere volgus ait.  
sed tamen haec tria sunt sub eodem tempore festa  
inter se nulla continuata die.

Horace Epodes 2.2.208-09

Somnia, terrores magicos, miracula, sagas,  
octurnos lemures portentaque Thessala rides?
Porphyrio on Horace

Umbras vagantes hominum ante diem mortuorum et ideo metuendas; et putant lemures esse dictos quasi remulos a Remo, cuius occisi umbras frater Romulus cum placare vellet, Lemuria instituit, id est Parentalia.

Persius Satires 5.185-88

tum nigri lemures ouoque pericula rupto, 185
tum grandes galli et cum sistro lusca sacerdos
incussere deos inflantis corpora, si non
praedictum ter mane caput gustaueris ali.

Scholia on Persius

Lemures deos manes dicit, quos Graeci daemonas vocant quasi umbras quondam habentes divinitatem; Lemuria autem dicuntur dies, quando manes placantur.

Apuleius De Deo Socratis 15

Est et secundo significatus species daemonum animus humanus emeritis stipendiis vitae corpore suo abiurans. Hunc vetere Latina lingua reperio Lemurem dictatum. Ex hisce ergo Lemuribus qui posterorum suorum curam sortitus placato et quieto numine domum possidet, Lar dicitur familiaris; qui vero ob adversa vitae merita nullis (bonis) sedibus incerta vagatione ceu quodam exilio punitur, inane terriculamentum bonis hominibus, ceterum malis noxium, id genusplerique Larvas perhibent. Cum vero incertum est, quae cuique eorum sortitio evenerit, utrum Lar sit an Larva, nomine Manem deum nuncupant: scilicet et honoris gratia dei vocabulum additum est; quippe tantum eos deos appellant, qui ex eodem numero iuste ac prudenter curriculo vitae gubernato pro numine postea ab hominibus praediti fanis et caerimoniiis vulgo advertuntur, ut in Boeotia Amphiaraus, in Africa Mopsus, in Aegypto Osiris, alius alibi gentium, Aesculapius ubique.

Apuleius Apology 64

At tibi, Aemiliane, pro isto mendacio duit deus iste superum et inferum commenator utrorumque deorum malam gratiam semperque obuias species mortuorum, quidquid umbrarum est usquam, quidquid lemurum, quidquid manium, quidquid larvarum.
Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 4.22.5

et ecce nocte promota latrones expurgiti castra commovent instructique varie, partim gladiis armati, partim in lemures reformati concito se gradu proripiiunt.

Augustine *City of God* 9.11

Dicit quidem et animas hominum daemones esse et ex hominibus fieri lares, si boni meriti sunt; lemures, si mali, seu laruas; manes autem deos dici, si incertum est bonorum eos seu malorum esse meritorum. In qua opinione quantam uoraginem aperiant sectandis perditis moribus, quis non uideat, si uel paululum atendentat? Quando quidem quamlibet nequam homines fuerint, uel laruas se fieri dum opinantur, uel dum manes deos, tanto peiores fiunt, quanto sunt nocendi cupiores, ut etiam quibusdam sacrificiis tamquam diuinis honoribus post mortem se inuitari opinentur, ut noceant. Laruas quippe dicit esse noxios daemones ex hominibus factos. Sed hinc alia quaestio est. Inde autem perhibet appellari Graece beatos. eudaimonas, quod boni sint animi, hoc est boni daemones, animos quoque hominum daemones esse confirmans.

Martianus Capella 2.162

manes . . . cum his (corporibus defunctis) manentes appellati lemures postea et in lares et in larvas ac manias converse.

Varro frg. Non. p. 135.16

in sacris fabam iactant noctu ac dicunt se lemures domo extra ianuam eicere.

Nonius on *lemures*

Larvae nocturnae et terrificationes imaginum et bestiarum.

Paulus p. 87M

Nam et Lemuralibus (faba) iacitur larvis.

Priscianus 691

regio quaedam generat malos lemures quod pellit munus, iaspim, nocturni manes fugitant quam membra tuentem,
APPENDIX B
PASSAGES ON REMUS AND THE REMURIA

Propertius 3.9.50

ciaesio moenis firma Remo

Florus 1.1.7-8


Dionysius of Halicarnassus 1.85.6

to χωρίον ἔνθα ἐμελλον ἰδρύσειν τὴν πόλιν οὐ τὸ αὐτὸ ἦρεῖτο ἐκάτερος.
’Ρωμύλου μὲν γὰρ ἦν γνώμη τὸ Παλλάντιον οἰκίζειν τῶν τε ἄλλων ἐνεκα καὶ τῆς τύχης τοῦ τόπου, ἢ τὸ σωθήναι τα αὐτοῖς καὶ τραφήναι παρέσχε ’Ῥώμῳ δὲ ἐδόκει τὴν καλουμένην υὐν ἀπ’ ἐκείνου ’Ῥεμορίαν οἰκίζειν.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus 1.86.2

ἡν δὲ ’Ρωμύλῳ μὲν οἰονιστήριον, ἔνθα ἥξιον τὴν ἀποικίαν ἰδρύσαι, τὸ Παλλάντιον, ’Ῥώμῳ δ’ ὁ προσεχὴς ἐκείνῳ λόφος Ἀυετίνος καλουμένος, ὡς δὲ τινες ἱστοροῦσιν ἢ Ἐμορία.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus 1.87.3

ἀποθανότος δ’ ἐν τῇ μάχῃ ’Ῥώμου νίκην οἰκτίσην ὁ ’Ῥωμύλος ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ καὶ πολιτικῆς ἀλληλοκτονίας ἀνελόμενος τὸν μὲν ’Ῥώμον ἐν τῇ Ἐμορία θάπτει, ἐπειδὴ καὶ ζῶν τοῦ χωρίου τῆς κτίσεως περιείχετο

Plutarch Romulus 11.1

Ὁ δὲ ’Ρωμύλος ἐν τῇ Ἐμορίᾳ θάπας τὸν ’Ῥώμον ὁμοῦ καὶ τοὺς τροφεῖς ὃκιζε τὴν πόλιν

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The author was born to Jerry and Carol Lux and grew up in Union, Kentucky. He has a younger brother, Jason, who is one of the best baseball players ever to live (next to his father). The author attended Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio where he received an Honors Bachelors of Arts degree in Classics and Philosophy. His personal legend is to assist others in discovering their own personal legends, and he feels that he can best do this by teaching classics at the secondary level. He also desires to write fictional tales that inspire people to further their understanding of love and that encourage people to explore the sacredness of life and death.