

Abstract

The topic of vampires and vampirism raises a deep interest among literary authors, readers, the media, and the general public. This topic is also very important from the historical and archaeological point of view, such as when anti-vampiric measures used to be taken on dead bodies in the past. Lately, this topic has become a phenomenon in the interpretation of atypical funeral rites. This thesis deals with some archaeological cases that are interpreted as vampiric funerals. It is extremely important to make a taphonomic analysis, get high quality pictures, and photographic documentation of the particular situation for a non-standard and correct interpretation of the funeral. The knowledge of taphonomy, archeotanatologie and forensic anthropology allow for an explanation of some of the reported anti-vampiric measures in many of these cases. However, it is often difficult or even impossible to trace the detailed documentation of the published vampiric burials. Natural decay and geological processes play an important role in the interpretation of these causes, as well. Non-standard funerals can exist but, as this thesis concludes, it would be a mistake to immediately identify any atypical findings as a vampire without further examination and taphonomic analysis. It is important to revise old archaeological research and update it with the latest advancements in science.