Death, Dying & Disposal 10

Nijmegen, 9 - 12 September 2011

Book of Abstracts

Radboud University Nijmegen

CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

Leif Arffmann (Denmark)
Cremation and interment in theological and ecclesiastical theory and practice

A study permission between October and December 2010 made it possible to do studies on San Michele, Venice and in Rome. In our paper, we address the following five topics: (1) Classical theology concerning funeral forms as it is presented by the Church fathers, Tertullian, Minucius Felix, Lactantius and Augustine; (2) Aspects of the theological development in the 20th century, especially in the Roman Catholic Church and the Northern European Protestant Churches; (3) Funeral rites in the Roman Catholic Church (considering the new rites in the Catholic Church as presented by the Italian Episcopal Conference in 2009), and the Evangelical Lutheran Churches, and the relation to cremation and interment; (4) Funeral rites and modern funeral customs; and (5) Modern cemeteries and the diversity in "funeral trends."

William Arfman (Centre for Thanatology, the Netherlands)
Rituals of collective commemoration and the role of individuals, communities and institutions

Attempting to challenge the idea of an ongoing "Disenchantment of the West", various scholars of religion have come forth with interesting distinctions between e.g. communal and individual religion or between institutional and non-institutional religion. Running as a red thread through these distinctions is the idea that it is not religion that is in decline but only a certain traditional form of religion which does not fit in with the individualism of our modern Western world. But is this really true? Is there really no place in modern society for religious communities and institutions?

   This paper will try to answer that question by looking at the recent development of a wide range of rituals for the collective commemoration of the dead in the Netherlands. Ranging from open days at cemeteries on mother's day, to yearly concerts at crematoria or a new 'secularised' form of All Souls' Day popularised by Dutch artists, these events often show a communal dimension, and in many of them institutions such as local municipalities, insurance companies or an artist collective are involved. By paying attention to the varying roles of individuals, communities and institutions in the development of these emerging traditions, an attempt will be made to form a more nuanced image not only of the relationships between these concepts in the Netherlands, but also for modern Western society in general.

Arnar Árnason (University of Aberdeen, UK)
Suicide and sacrifice: On the limits of the political and the regeneration of the world

In the wake of the financial crisis of 2008, suicide has re-emerged as a topic of concern and interest, not least in Europe. In some countries considered, a problem of epidemic proportions amongst young people in particular, suicide is, in the literature, linked to a lack of employment and education opportunities, a growing generation gap and social isolation. Focusing on ethnographic material from Iceland I draw on scholarship in the anthropology of death to scrutinise the distinction between suicide and sacrifice. The purpose of this investigation is to examine the extent and the limit of the command the state, in particular in its neo-liberal formation, has over life and the body. Thus the question will be raised whether death, sometimes in the form of suicide, can be regarded as an act of resistance, as a denial of the legitimacy of the state and its inherent violence, a sacrifice for the regeneration of the world.

Tara Bailey (UK)
Going to a funeral in contemporary Britain: What does it mean to be a mourner?

Existing research on contemporary British funerals takes for granted that the deceased's family is the proper focus of attention both for funeral professionals and for social research into the significance, meaning and value of the funeral.

This paper challenges that assumption by investigating the perspectives of the wider group of mourners who attend funerals in contemporary Britain. Increased secularisation, combined with changes in funerary practices and conflicting norms about the proper expression of grief, mean that British mourners face considerable uncertainty about their role in contemporary funerals, contrasting with clearer ritual and social roles in other parts of Europe and the world. This paper asks who goes to funerals (and who does not) and why, what these mourners do at funerals and why, and how such mourners experience the funeral. These questions are addressed using data generated in collaboration with the Mass-Observation Project, a qualitative writing project with approximately 500 participants across the UK.

Luigi Bartolomei (University of Bologna, Italy)
The paradox of funeral houses: personalized burial rituals in a universal architectural context

Urbanization and Secularization contribute to evolve a new relationship toward death and dying. Whereas in the countryside "burial chambers" are still in use inside the houses, the city ostracises death and dead to special buildings: farewell rooms and funeral houses. Inside these new spaces one can have the possibility of a funeral "tailored" on the dead, according to the psychological personality he expressed during his life. These spaces are therefore places for a personalization of death, whereas the space itself cannot be personalized in the same way.

The actual use of symbols inside these new lay spaces for funerals stress the inevitability both of a ritual dimension (even inside a secular contest), and of the inescapable necessity to understand and signify it by means of symbols. The meaningless of traditional religious rituals and symbols, leads to reconsider the symbolic value of natural elements, or the archetypal meaning of the primitive and most entrenched forms at the basis of the common root of our psyche (Jung). In this way the paradox already enlightened in architecture, is emphasized by the use of symbols: whereas lay contemporary rituals would aim to express the singular qualities of the dead, the insertion of an artistic setting built up with archetypal symbols, as we will show in many cases in the European context, insert the particular celebration in a really wider and more ancient system of symbolical participation than the one, precise and limited of a single religious believe.

Tania Becker (Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany)
Social mother welfare theory: Death and dying in a Chinese hospice

The Songtang Hospice in the Chaoyang district of Beijing is the oldest and most famous hospice in China. Based on the principles of the International Hospice Movement, which emphasises the needs of the terminally ill, the Songtang has evolved over the last 20 years into a unique joint of an established hospice, retirement home, nursing home, orphanage and hospital. The facility affects many areas of holistic care with regard to terminal illnesses, and serves as a guide for hospice care and welfare work in China. The particular end-of-life care provided by the Songtang hospice follows the specially developed Social Mother Welfare Theory - investigations of over ten thousand patients has produced the idea of there being a correlation between the beginning and final phases of human life, providing the hospice in Beijing with a specific approach for improving the quality of life for the terminally ill.

The presentation shows which problems dominate the monitoring of the terminally ill at the Songtang hospice in Beijing, and presents the concept of welfare at the end of life as an essential part of China's future social order.

John Belshaw (Langara College, Vancouver, Canada), Diane Purvey (Thompson Rivers University, Kamloops, Canada)
Deathscapes in the West: Road warriors and teen angels

British Columbia's history of resettlement makes it distinct from the rest of Canada. One consequence has been a diversity of practices associated with death rituals and sites of mourning. Traditions drawn from Aboriginal, Asian, European, rural, urban, religious, and secular experiences are discerned, and so too are practices associated with teenage independence.

In this presentation we explore unusual features of the BC deathscape, highlighting spatial and cultural elements. Our focus is two-fold: we examine novel sites of mourning such as the roadside death memorial (RDM) and locker shrine, and we probe high school students' awareness and use of these memorial spaces. Surveys and interviews with mid-teen students and school-based personnel suggest that students are directly involved in the creation and valuing of these new-style deathscapes. This has changed grieving practices in the schools. RDMs and locker shrines are negotiated spaces located well away from designated sites of disposal and remembrance but are emerging as legitimate threads in the fabric of community life. The efflorescence of deathscapes that are personalized, idiosyncratic, and imaginative stand in sharp contrast to staid memorial spaces like cemeteries and cenotaphs; the public – and youth in particular – is reclaiming death, recolonizing ritual, and tagging the memory maps of their communities.

Meridith Burles, Lorraine Holtslander (University of Saskatchewan, Canada)
Exploring uncertainty and the perceived inevitability of death in women's experiences of ovarian cancer

Ovarian cancer is often characterized as the 'silent killer', and thus it is no surprise that women affected by this illness commonly experience fears of dying. As a result, affected women face a situation in which death is perceived to be an inevitable outcome, no matter what stage the cancer is diagnosed at. In this presentation, we explore the experiences of women affected by ovarian cancer with respect to the uncertainty introduced by this illness and the seeming inevitability of death. This presentation emerges from a qualitative study performed with women affected by ovarian cancer in Saskatchewan, Canada.

Drawing on data generated through in-depth face-to-face interviews and follow-up email interviews, our analysis reveals that participants possessed a strong desire to continue living following their diagnosis; however, these women were also plagued by anxiety and concerns regarding dying, and found it difficult to carry on with their former roles as mothers, wives, and/or employees, among others. Consequently, participants often struggled to find a balance in their everyday lives given the uncertainty and anticipation of death they experienced. Nonetheless, some participants identified strategies for coping with the uncertainty stemming from illness, thereby minimizing the impact that the possibility of dying had on their everyday lives.

The findings that we discuss illuminate how women affected by ovarian cancer negotiate illness-related uncertainty in everyday life and how their experiences are made sense of with respect to socio-cultural expectations for biomedicine, the life course, and dying in the 21st century.

Wim Cappers (the Netherlands)
A place to mourn. The secularization of funeral landscapes in the Netherlands, 1791-1919

When someone dies, the relatives need time to mourn. The length of time changes with the personal needs and the cultural codes. Furthermore, the bereaved need a place where they can mourn. The places where people remember the deceased also change over time.

In this paper I concentrate on places where people mourned. I propose that the geography of mourning places started to secularize in the Netherlands during the long nineteenth century. I investigate the places where people mourned within the wider context of a cultural landscape. Where did people mourn? How did they express their grief in this specific space? What conceptions of the hereafter did they have? In which way did the mourning places secularize?

I will illustrate my thesis on the secularization of mourning places with three examples. The background of the mourners is Protestant. Over time, bonds with the Protestant denomination released. In the first two cases the mourners belonged to the middle class. In the later case the mourner belonged to the working class.

The sources I use are correspondence and diaries. Most of the diaries were explicitly written to express grief. Some of them were published. Furthermore, I use memorials, newspapers and photos as sources. In the end, I list the cultural landscapes where people mourned. I make an inventory of the differences and point out to which degree the place of mourning was secularized.

Nico Carpentier, Joachim Cohen, Luc Deliens, Judith Rietjens, Leen Van Brussel, Paul Van Landeghem
Panel
Public views on end-of-life care

This panel takes into consideration the increasing importance of end-of-life care in a society where death is becoming highly medicalized and is thus often the result of particular end-of-life care decisions. This medicalization of death is not only a result of rising life expectancies and the rise of degenerative dying processes, it is also closely related to the fact that - like other major life events - death is becoming subject to a wish for control (Seale, 2000).

In contemporary societies, the medicalization of death has given rise to fierce discussions about the permissibility of human intervention in dying. These discussions mainly deal with the conditions under which human intervention should be allowed, but are also structured by dominant ideas about what is means to die well. In order to capture the core of the discussions about human intervention in dying, this panel examines the visions and views on end-of-life care that exist and circulate within our society. More specifically, the panel focuses on two important places where discussions about end-of-life care are conducted and where visions on end-of-life care circulate; the population and the mass media. These two places are highly intertwined and cannot be isolated from one another. Both are indeed part of a complex societal reality. To elaborate the latter further, it can be argued that the population partly shapes its views on end-of-life care through mass media representations and that mass media representations partly reflect the populations' views on end-of-life care.

Nico Carpentier, Leen Van Brussel (Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium)
A discourse-theoretical perspective on death and dying

This paper sets out a theoretical framework to capture the construction of the 'good death' in late modern societies. This theoretical framework is built on social constructivist ontology which does not regard death as merely a biological reality, but which approaches death as a construction created through human interaction (Lupton, 2000: 50). More specifically, this paper offers a discourse-theoretical perspective on death and dying. The discourse-theoretical perspective used in this paper is built on the discourse theory of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (1985). For Laclau and Mouffe, discourses are not stable entities, but are engaged in struggle, attempting to attain a hegemonic position.

The construction of the 'good death' offers a good illustration of the discursive construction of meaning through to process of articulation, which involves linking up discursive elements around a number of privileged signifiers, called nodal points. In this paper, it is argued that dominant late modern discourses on the good death are mainly organized around a series of nodal points, including 'control', 'autonomy', 'awareness' and 'dignity'. While these nodal points partly stabilize the meaning of a 'good death', they also remain subject to a discursive struggle for meaning. We argue that two social movements in Belgium, the hospice movement on the one hand and the requested death or right to die movement on the other, are – with their own specific articulation of the nodal points mentioned above - at the forefront of the ongoing struggle to signify the good death.

Glenys Caswell
A funeral fit for its purpose?

Consumer legislation in Britain requires that goods purchased should be fit for their purpose and that services should be carried out with reasonable skill. Funerals are often purchased, both in terms of goods such as coffins and flowers, and also with regard to services such as a funeral director to make arrangements or an officiant to conduct the service or ceremony. In order to decide whether a funeral is fit for its purpose, one needs to know what that purpose is. The literature suggests a wide variety of purposes, including the rebuilding of social structures damaged by death; allowing the public expression of grief; comforting the bereaved and committing the deceased to the future.

Scottish funeral officiants I interviewed also suggested a variety of purposes for a funeral, including committing the deceased to God; comforting the bereaved; celebrating the life of, and saying goodbye to, the deceased. They also highlighted the difficulty of conducting a service that could answer the needs of the varied mourners present. A Scottish widow said that although the funeral she arranged for her husband was carried out within the context of the faith they had both shared, she was left feeling unsatisfied by it.

This paper explores the issue of purpose in funerals, drawing on the literature and data from a study of Scottish funeral practices, focusing particularly on the difficulties inherent in understanding, and trying to meet, the expectations of mourners.

Erdem Ceylan (Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, Istanbul, Turkey)
The poetics of shadows: metaphysics in Aldo Rossi's cemetery architecture

The shadow, that softens the certainty of vision of which existence depends upon vital light, belongs to an intimate place that is reached by reflection but not by vision, hints at something beyond the physical stimulating imagination, and relates with the ignorance in death via its mystery and ambiguity. But on the other side, just as life is defined by death, so too the existence of light is only possible by the existence of shadows, and the shadow is what gives form, i.e. life to an illuminated object. When the shadow, which gives privelege to arcaic senses like hearing and touching, postponing the vision that requires a distance, takes a spatial characteristic, it makes possible the appearence of the relations between luminousness and darkness, the physical and the metaphysical, reflection and sensation. These contradictions and/or contrasts are very important for conceiving the wholeness of being or existence, and their spiritual causes and purposes. The sense of vision leaves its priveleged position for other forms of sensation, perception and conception in cemeteries where physical death meets metaphysical existence. This paper's aim is to reveal the metaphysics hidden in the rationality of the Italian architect *Aldo Rossi*'s *San Cataldo Cemetery* in Modena in the context of the historical continuum established by *metaphysical tendencies* in poetry [*Metaphysical Poetry*, first half of 17. century, England] and painting [*Pittura Metafisica*, first half of 20. century, Italy] via the concept of *shadow*.

Hong Chen (Open University, Milton Keynes, UK)
"Is this a good day to die?"- Death at the juncture of medicine, culture, and market economy

In an inpatient palliative care ward in a city hospital in Southern China, home to some fifty older people with life-limiting conditions, the death of fellow patients was not unfamiliar, but five deaths in one day was unprecedented, chaotic, and sensational. "Is this a good day to die?" a patient asked.

Drawing on my observational data, this paper will explore the implications of the hurried management of this special occurrence of multiple deaths through medical, custodial, cultural and economic practices performed by various "actors" in end-of-life care.

I argue that the ward in which these deaths occurred resembled an economic-marketplace where products of medical and personal care and funeral (cultural) practices were traded between families, health professionals, nursing workers and a funeral company stationed in the ward and then consumed by dying and deceased people. On the one hand, artifacts (clothing, decoration, token belongings) applied to the corpse, funeral rituals performed in the ward, and traditional beliefs about death and dying served to fulfill "filial piety", build post-mortem bonds, grieve and cope with death and dying. Yet, on the other, death being so highly visible, served to desensitize people's responses to what was happening, raising questions about the emotional and spiritual consequences of patients' frequent witnessing or sensing of their fellow patients' deaths before their own.

This scenario begs a further question: "Is this a good place to die?"

Sarah Coombs (University of Essex, UK)
Children's ideas about death and dying

For my doctoral research I have spent time talking with children and young people aged between 10 and 18 years about their ideas, feelings, beliefs and knowledge related to death and dying and how this features within their everyday lives. Adult assumptions, as suggested by Kastenbaum (2007) have often implied that children do not, cannot and should not think about death. Death has been labeled a 'sensitive topic' within research generally and children constructed as both innocent and in need of protection.

This research challenges these ideas by exploring with children their personal perspectives and individual narratives about death and dying. The research sits within the 'new sociology of childhood' paradigm that sees the child as an active social agent, an expert in their own social worlds, and having rights both to participation and having their voices heard. Evidence was drawn from material objects that children brought to the discussions about the end of life. These included a myriad of objects from books, films and photographs to a USB cable, a bunch of keys and a ceramic blue dolphin. Analysis suggested that children can, do and perhaps more problematically should talk about death. Their lives are often saturated with images of death but there are very obvious differences between personal deaths and those mentioned in the wider public sphere. I explore death and dying as it features within the children's everyday lives from personal accounts to imagined deaths, and from the influences of online technology to individual reflections on mortality.

David Lillington (Wild Gift)
The revival of the script in performance art and its use to address death

Recent performance art shows an awareness which, far from being 'death-denying' suggests an extreme urgency to confront death. This paper addresses the return of the written script in performance art about death. Scripted dialogue, monologue and use of a narrator allow sensitivity, flexibility and complexity in analysing social and psychological aspects of death.

We focus on two artists in particular, Fabienne Audéoud (France) and Tai Shani (UK), who deal in different ways with death and religious issues, and who are concerned with the self in the face of death – one's own and that of others.

'It is the artists that do society's dreaming,' said Meret Oppenheim. What is the place, if any, of such art in a contemporary literature and in a contemporary spirituality of death? Audéoud uses among other devices the 'performance lecture' as an art form, which enables her to examine conflicting issues. Her work shows the influence of the sermon tradition, without pretending to resolve the issues. Shani, who says, 'all my work is about death', uses numbers of actors who can at the same time and on the same stage represent a person at different times or in different modes of life, including the afterlife. This allows her, through intersecting monologues and highly theatrical dreamlike presentations to make an almost literal portrayal of 'life becoming transparent against the background of death.' What script is appropriate for a contemporary 'good death,' or for the living's relationship with the dead? And does this art address these questions?

Andreia Jorge Silva da Costa (Escola Superior de Saúde de Portalegre, Portugal)
Death procedures in Portugal

The situation of death concerns a variety of feelings for those who were near the person who died and have to face the loss of the person who was dear to them and whose absence will affect the continuity of their lives. Death as an important step in our life is still associated with a diversity of procedures that people have to manage around this event. In our research, we focus on the procedures involved in the death process, in particular the laws regulating all the practices.

As a specific part of our study we aim to further examine the procedures involved in the transportation of dead bodies between countries, in particular when death occurred in a country other than the somebody's home country, or just when is the last wish of the person who died, leaving it to living to fulfill this desire. From this analysis we understand the complexity of the procedures in Portugal, but also in other countries, especially because there is no global agreement about these procedures. It depends on each country, whether the habits and culture of people are respected.

This study is part of a major investigation about death in Guinea, Bangladesh, Brazil, China and Cape Verde.

Renato Cymbalista (University of São Paulo, Brazil)
Desires for martyrdom among the Jesuits of the 16th and 17th centuries in the indipetae letters

More than 20 thousand *indipetae* letters exist in the Roman Archives of the Society of Jesus. The *indipetae* were letters written by Jesuits to the Generals of the Society, asking for permission to go to overseas missions from late 16th to mid 18th centuries. Possibly the strongest among the reasons pointed by the Jesuits in theirs demands is the desire for martyrdom. This paper results from a survey conducted in 699 letters written by Portuguese and Spanish Jesuits between 1583 and 1673 in the Roman Archives of the Society, and analyses the different forms found by the Jesuits to communicate to theirs superiors of theirs desires to be martyred in the overseas missions.

As the Jesuits had to be allowed to go on mission, and this was not very easy, they had to be persuasive. Dreams, visions, calls from other Jesuits martyrs, fear of dying a peaceful death in Europe, raptures related to the hearing of narratives of the recent martyrdoms which occurred in India or Japan, inspiration from engravings and paintings were some of the ways they found to communicate that the wishes were real, and not vanity or temptation. In some cases, extreme instruments such as the writing or signing with blood were used. The study of the *indipetae* letters gives us a very interesting opportunity of approaching the Jesuit and missionary mentality of Early Modern Europe, and understanding how so many young men would rather die in overseas than to live at home.

Douglas Davies, Hannah Rumble (University of Durham, UK)
Film – 'Earth to Earth: natural burial and the Church of England'

In 2010, we commissioned a visual anthropologist, Sarah Thomas, to make a thirty minute documentary film that followed on from Hannah Rumble's doctoral research on British natural burial, which used Barton Glebe Woodland burial ground as an ethnographic case study. The film, entitled 'Earth to Earth: Natural burial and the Church of England', is a gently thought-provoking exploration of the range of values invested in British natural burial. The film focuses on Barton Glebe, a consecrated Church of England-affiliated natural burial ground near Cambridge run by the Arbory Trust - the first Christian woodland burial charity in the UK.

The film explores the tensions between different concepts of natural burial held by users and staff and addresses the appeal and concept of natural burial from the perspectives of the bereaved, those who have pre-registered at this particular site, the site's managers, and an Anglican priest and gravedigger who both use the natural burial ground as part of their day-to-day services.

The film highlights some of the themes discussed in Hannah Rumble's thesis, in particular, the many instances of tension, and contradiction in this latest innovation in bodily disposal. For example, the contradictions between the 'official' view of the natural burial ground's staff and those who encounter the natural burial ground in their bereavement.

Johannes van Delden (University Medical Center, Utrecht, the Netherlands), Agnes van der Heide, Natasja Raijmakers, Judith Rietjens (Erasmus MC, Rotterdam, the Netherlands)
Euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide in Dutch newspapers

Euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide are heavily debated in the media. To describe characteristics of reports about euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide in Dutch newspapers, we used the database lexisnexis, and searched for articles about euthanasia or physician-assisted suicide, published in 7 national Dutch newspapers in the period Jan 2009 – April 2010. We developed a scoring and abstraction form; two researchers (JR and NR) independently scored each retrieved article for: in- or exclusion; main topic; description/definition of the topic; patient population and country; arguments described for or against euthanasia or physician-assisted suicide; references to the Dutch Euthanasia act; and general position with respect to euthanasia or physician-assisted suicide. Furthermore, general characteristics of the article were retrieved (number of words, newspaper, date). Analyses are ongoing at the moment, and will be finished in the beginning of 2011.

George Dickinson (College of Charleston, USA)
Diversity in death: Body disposition and memorialization

The place and method of final disposition of dead human remains is important to many individuals. Traditionally, earth burials have been the most common means of disposition in the United States. Cremation, however, is growing rapidly in popularity, perhaps suggesting that the whole body for the resurrection is losing significance. With cremation, the place of final disposition of the body loses some of its significance.

This paper will explore the numerous options available today in the United States to dispose of dead human remains and to memorialize the dead. Data analysis will be from media sources and the Internet. Among recent "trends" in body disposition are numerous cremation options, varied casket choices, theme funerals, environmentally-correct disposition, and cemetery options. Other recent occurrences related to death include roadside memorials, automobile memorializations, and the changes brought on by the Internet.

Some of the questions addressed for this evolving diversity in death include: (1) What sense can we make of today's personalized death trends? (2) Is the trend occurring toward individualization? (3) What are the social and cultural changes contributing to these dying and death shifts? (4) What impact does sheer cost have on today's involvement with dying, death and bereavement? (5) Why is final body disposition being deinstitutionalized, if indeed it is? (6) Is death today being resurrected, following a period called the dying of death?

Irene Edzes (the Netherlands)

Landschap als Nalatenschap, een ontwerpverkenning naar nieuwe natuur & buitengraven in Nederland

In het buitenland heeft het fenomeen natuurbegraafplaats een enorme vlucht genomen. Ze schieten in landen als Engeland en Canada als paddenstoelen uit de grond. In Nederland blijft het aanbod achter bij de vraag, terwijl de integratie van landschap en begraafplaats veelbelovend is. Reden voor Bureau Vollmer & Partners om met financiële steun van het Stimuleringsfonds voor Architectuur een ontwerpend onderzoek te starten naar de kansen en mogelijkheden die de natuurbegraafplaats en het Nederlandse Landschap elkaar te bieden hebben. Dit heeft geleid tot het concept "buitengraf". Het studieresultaat wordt op 23 juni aanstaande gepresenteerd.

Met negen voorbeelduitwerkingen voor kenmerkende Nederlandse landschapstypen worden de mogelijkheden onderzocht die het buitengraf kan bieden aan landschapsherstel, natuurontwikkeling en het verbeteren van de toegankelijkheid. Karakteristieke landschappen als het essenlandschap en de Limburgse graften komen voorbij, maar ook minder voor de hand liggende voorbeelden zoals het drassige veenlandschap, een voormalig militair terrein, een droogmakerij en een fort van de Hollandse Waterlinie.

Vanuit het oogpunt van de ruimtelijke ordening kunnen buitengraven een interessante bijdrage leveren aan diverse landschappelijke ontwikkelingen. Als schakel in landschappelijke verbindingszones en in het behoud en herstel van karakteristieke landschappelijke elementen. De ontworpen buitengraven voorzien in een groeiende maatschappelijke behoefte. De grijze golf doet deze behoefte niet alleen toenemen in kwantitatieve zin. Het buitengraf voorziet in een individueler en unieker vormgegeven afscheid. Ze biedt bovendien een onderhoudsvriendelijk alternatief voor het graf op de traditionele begraafplaats.

Multiculturele wensen rond begraven in Nederland sluiten veelal prima aan bij de uitgangspunten van het begraven in de natuur. Het principe van eeuwigdurend grafrecht dat met het buitengraf verbonden is, komt tegemoet aan de vraag van verschillende groeperingen in ons land die op dit moment weinig alternatieven zien voor een begrafenis in het vaderland.

Het buitengraf betrekt mens en natuur nader op elkaar en geeft daarmee het landschap maatschappelijk meer inhoud en betekenis. Het Landschap als Nalatenschap overstijgt daarmee de betekenis als herdenkingsplek voor nabestaanden. Ze draagt bij aan de landschapsbeleving voor toekomstige generaties Nederlanders.

Kathryn Edwards (Durhum University, UK)

'Ancestralisation' as the next step in modern funeral rituals?

Responses to bereavement in the modern world have long been governed by a Freudian approach that calls for 'getting over' attachment to the lost one and terminating connections to him/her, with successful disengagement ideally being demonstrated by reattachment to an alternative love-object. More recent work on 'continuing bonds' recognises that a person has presence and vitality and scope for relationship when absent, including in that quality of absence we term 'dead'. The tough demands of the Freudian model are still prevalent, however: even the widely-read Joan Didion (*A Year of Magical Thinking*, 2005), for example, is apparently unaware of the vigour with which continuing bonds theory has been accepted in many quarters, and appears bemused at her attachment to a cheap alarm clock that was a gift from her now-dead husband.

This paper proposes that the functionality of modern funeral and bereavement work might be enhanced by building on the 'continuing bonds' practices that are visible in the ancestor-veneration of parts of the indigenous world. This is not ancestor 'worship', as misunderstood by the idol-averse anthropology of the Protestant West, but the recognition of the active and beneficial role that the dead can play if allowed psychic space within the community of the living. The

'ancestralisation' ritual of the Dagara tribe of West Africa is elaborated, along with a discussion of the potential for its translation into Western/modern tool for the bereaved, whether in the context of an equivalent spiritual practice or as a secular commemoration.

Ivan Emke (Memorial University, Corner Brook, USA)
The body as absent centrepiece: representations of the deceased in North American funeral services periodicals

The Funeral Services profession is understandably cautious in how they discuss, in public, the nature of their work with the dead. Their silence relates to issues of confidentiality and ethics, to an attempt to dissipate the stigma of working with the dead, and to a suspicion of those who show an excessively morbid curiosity. However, how is this relationship with the dead portrayed in discussions <u>outside</u> of the direct public gaze and <u>within</u> industry publications? This paper analyzes how the dead are represented and constructed in Funeral Industry periodicals. It considers the language used (the rhetoric of death), how the dead are to be treated (the ethics of the dead), the nature of the dead body (as a subject, a case or simply the "remains" of a subject) and the standards of interaction between the funeral professional and the body.

In order to advance these questions, the paper reports on a content analysis of five North American Funeral Industry periodicals (*Canadian Funeral Director, Canadian Funeral News, American Funeral Director, The Director* and *The Dodge Magazine*). While visual representations of the dead are generally absent in industry publications, the dead are still the central object in funerary ritual in North America. The paper concludes with discussions of how the representation of the dead is related to the assertions of professionalism within funeral services, and to their necessity to deflect any potential stigma of their chosen occupation.

Ingrid Fernandez (Stanford University, USA)
Lively cadavers: An ontology of necromasses

Death is the ever-present side of life, one constantly at work in mundane phenomena such as the regeneration of skin cells and the transformation by bodies of nourishment into excreta. These are events we experience on a daily basis as part of our movement to the stage of life we denote as social death. Instead of an enemy or an aberration of life, we should view the corpse as that which constitutes another level of the evolution of a particular species, a phase marked by bio-transformation and the loss of fidelity to imposed categories that circumscribe the human.

In invoking the term "necromass," I desire to re-define the concept of the corpse in Western culture through the application of approaches to biological organization particular to the natural sciences that can provide a path to re-describe the relation of self to corpse. As a result, I focus on physical manifestation of vitality present in the corpse undergoing decomposition as evidence of its continued existence as part of the larger ecosystem.

Necromasses transcend ontological categories separating the living form the dead as well as subjects from objects and thus, decenters the role of the human in relation to other forms and, to a certain extent, species of "life." Life here does not necessarily denote the type of self-consciousness required in traditional epistemology but rather vitality and movement continuously incarnating, dissolving, re-shaping and recreating the collective ecosystems in which we are embedded.

Ingrid Fernandez, Haerin Shin (Stanford University, USA)
Panel
An overture (as in proposal) for the living dead: Technology, science and the reconfiguration of "Life"

This panel addresses a timely and yet highly controversial topic. Advances in fields such as thing studies, eco-criticism and cognitive science are opening up new channels of observation redefining the barriers between the living and the dead and the precise definition of these terms, which Western philosophy has taken for granted as part of an epistemological model sharply separating the life of the mind and that of matter.

It is time to probe for a more complex explanation on how we exist in the world along with other elements and forces, including non-human agents and hybrids. In seeking models of self-reference that more accurately describe our diverse modern experiences, we propose a cyclical version of existence with various feedback loops along the way, in which the living and the dead come together in novel manifestations of material and biological organization. *Simply stated, it is our contention that the living are ghostly and the dead are lively—a viable interpretation of an increasingly liquid world in which forms constantly evade concrete and fixed categorization*. Our response seeks to integrate the presence of death in the fabric of life and life in the fabric of death not as a condition that is unnatural or pathological, but rather as configurations that can lead the way to a more complex and richer view of what it means to be an entity in the world.

Eleanor Flynn
Illuminations of death rituals in late Medieval Books of Hours were educative, consoling and normalising

European Medieval Christians expected death and both the dying and the bereaved were vigorously concerned with the fate of souls after death. The Church's death and burial rituals were designed to ensure that the souls of believers were saved. This paper suggests that the detailed depiction of these rituals in late Medieval Books of Hours assisted the reader to behave in an approved manner while praying for the dead as well as considering the salvation of her own soul, and also helped her to cope with death.

Books of Hours almost uniformly contained the Office of the Dead, a set of readings, psalms and prayers recited over the body between death and burial, and daily in monasteries and churches for the souls of the dead. These texts and prayers, the same in Books of Hours and the Church's liturgical documents, are illustrated in Books of Hours with idealised deaths and burials where both the person dying and those witnessing demonstrate calm reverential behaviour. The depiction of the release of souls from purgatory, due to the prayers and charitable actions of the bereaved, is also an important consoling feature of these illuminations.

This presentation will illustrate and discuss the known range of death related rituals used as illuminations for the Hours of the Dead in late medieval European Books of Hours, both those specifically liturgical as well as more domestic rituals, and discuss their consoling effect on the viewer due to their representation of the prevailing religious and secular beliefs.

Nicki Fouché (University of Cape Town, South-Africa)
"We don't handle death well."
ICU-nurses' experiences of death and dying: The University of Cape Town's perspective

Dying in an ICU (Intensive Care Unit) is neither simple nor natural (Chapple, 1999). A patient's death in ICU may be one that is complex, unsightly and frequently unpredictable. Such scenarios leave virtually no control of how one wishes to die since technological advancements in the ICU arena have allowed for aggressive medical management at the end of life leading patients 'to fear how they die rather than death itself' (Tilden, 1999, p. 162). Intensive care nurses find this chaotic death experience unpleasant and extremely stressful despite ongoing exposures to death.

Assumptions may be made that confrontation with death and dying has limited ICU nurses' involvement with dying patients and this has impacted in the end of life care of the critically ill. New and innovative teaching and learning strategies need to be sought to address death and dying especially with regards to ICU students' ontological confrontation with death. Such a strategy utilised in the Division of Nursing and Midwifery at the University of Cape Town is through drawing and personal reflection.

This paper based on my Doctoral study, seeks to establish the need for, and importance of, a deliberate attending to the preparation of ICU nursing students by the inclusion of thanatology into the curriculum, based not only on the need to improve professional nursing care for people dying in ICUs, but also the need for the care of the ICU nurse student him or herself.

o Chapple, H. S. (1999). Changing the game in the intensive care unit: Letting nature take its course. *Critical Care Nurse, 19*(3), 25-34.
o Tilden, V. P. (1999). Ethics perspectives on end-of-life care. *Nursing Outlook, 47*(4), 162-167.

Helen Frisby (University of the West of England, Bristol, UK)
British folk funerary custom, before and after the Great War

As David Cannadine and many other historians have noted, the Great War of 1914-18 undeniably accelerated the modernisation of British culture and society in widespread, often profound ways. And while that conflict remained in living memory it would have seemed churlish to challenge this historical shibboleth, lest one appear to devalue the very real and terrible sacrifices made by so many individuals. However more recent years have witnessed the stirrings of revisionism; for instance, Pat Jalland has identified the Second World War as the real shifting point in British attitudes to death.

This paper supports and develops Jalland's argument by highlighting the remarkable durability of many (often very old) popular funerary rituals and superstitions, beyond the Great War and well into the 1930s. I will do so by tracing a selection of popular funerary customs and beliefs from the 1840s, when W.J. Thoms first coined the term 'folklore', up to the eve of the Second World War. Woven through this account will be a brief history of 'folklore' itself, concluding with an assessment of what this material can – and cannot – contribute to the social history of death, dying and disposal.

Yu Fukuda (Kwansei Gakuin University, Japan)
Reflecting the dead, ordering the past: Post-disaster ritual in Nagasaki

In previous studies of contemporary rituals, the changes in rituals over a long period of time have mostly been ignored. This presentation aims at illuminating new characteristics of contemporary rituals concerned with disaster, using an historical overview of the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Memorial Ceremony, that has continued for more than a half century.

Through a diachronic case study of the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Memorial Ceremony, rituals performed in the ceremony show new characteristics of public ritual, which distinguish themselves from folk or political rituals. Looking closely at photographs and historical materials, symbolic actions and narratives in the ceremony show that public rituals after disasters have gradually shifted their direction from the dead to the living. This is in clear contrast to folk rituals, whose central object is appeasing or comforting the dead, and also to political rituals that aim to commend the dead and the tragic past within the framework of an interpretation of the political reality. In addition, along with the economic, religious, and political changes, national broadcasting of the ceremony is also an important factor in changing the direction of rites. Beside these situation-limited factors, orientation toward the desirable future and to the symbolical periphery can be noted as characteristics of rituals after a disaster.

In conclusion, the social phenomenon of Post-Disaster Rituals can be presented as a subject of social research that shows the dynamics of how social meaning of life and death are created, maintained and reformed.

Margaret Gibson (Griffith University, Nathan, Australia)
Digital mourning and the archive: new and changing artefacts of mourning and memorialisation

Social networking culture and sites have radically transformed the methods of communication and connection between individuals and their family, friends, acquaintances, and colleagues. Over the last 5 to 10 years social networking sites have become forums for remembering and mourning the dead. And it is not uncommon for the bereaved to receive emails, texts and messages on Facebook, twitter, Flickr, Myspace etc. How we choose to initiate communication about a death or about grief emotion is now open to many possibilities that includes or excludes digital media forms.

In examining the technological mediation of death, grief and mourning, this paper will consider new forms of *object culture* in mourning and memorialization via digital media. New cultural artifacts, practices and rituals of mourning have emerged in the digital age such as the e-sympathy card substituting for the physical object of the sympathy card sent in the post. Both of these are artifacts communicating condolence and connection, however, one is a physical, tangible object and the other virtual. Both also raise different questions about the nature how we connect to others and express our emotion through our bodies and technologies. The physical object of a card is also handwritten while the virtual message or card has no individualized trace of embodied specificity – although handwriting and the intimacy it conveys are also replicated in digital culture. These kinds of comparisons and the questions that arise from such artifact change, substitution or replication in new media will be examined in this paper

Clare Gittings (National Portrait Gallery, London / University of Bath, UK)
Framed: portraits of the dead within portraits of the living

This paper will look at a number of British portraits from the sixteenth century to the present where the sitter has deliberately chosen to include a framed or sculpted image of someone who no longer is alive. These images show the deceased as they were in life, with no suggestion that it is anything other than an artwork being depicted. This type of representation still regularly confronts us in the media where a bereaved person is shown holding a photograph of their deceased relative.

The paper will question in what circumstances a sitter chooses to feature a portrait of someone deceased – can any trends be observed or any changes over time discerned? Examples will include Hans Eworth's redoubtable Lady Dacre battling to restore the family fortunes after her husband's execution by Henry VIII, and an extraordinary set of photographs of Queen Victoria on her oldest son's wedding day grouping members of her family around a marble bust of the deceased Prince Albert. The portraits will also be interrogated in the context of the theories of Silverman, Klass and Walter about continuing bonds and the creation of memory, looking at how the sitter's relationship with the deceased has become so central to their identity as to warrant this form of depiction.

This research is still in its early stages and I would warmly welcome comments and suggestions on this topic from other conference participants.

Gevher Gökçe Acar (Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, Istanbul, Turkey)
From Central Asia to Istanbul, from Shamanism to Islam; the changing and constant face of death

The cultural heritage and local habits of the geography the society lives in play an effective role in the formation of cemetery traditions as well as religious rules. The architectural tradition formed due to climatic conditions and materials also adds to these local impacts in the formation of the cemetery architecture besides the cultural needs of that particular geography. Practice and behaviours that contradict the essence and rules of the religion existing in the heterodoxy in monotheist religions are the most significant evidences of this.

The analysis of burial traditions and attitudes of Turks towards death varying from Central Asia where they entered the stage of history, to Istanbul of the 18th century when the Ottomans start to culturally interact with the Western World sets a striking example in this context. Several habits that influenced the burial practice of the Turks from Central Asia to Anatolia and particularly to Istanbul, present the evidence of preservation of the shamanic beliefs in different historical eras even in a community that is a vigorous representative of Islam. Similarly, the mausoleums carry the traces of the tent tradition of early nomad cultures despite the radical changes in beliefs and the emergence of different climate conditions and building materials.

In this study, this thesis shall be studied comparatively in the context of nomad culture–stationary social order and Shamanism – Islam over the examples of practice, belief and mausoleums selected from the various geographies Turks settled.

Hilary Grainger (University of the Arts, London,UK)
'Pride and Prejudice': Mortonhall Crematorium and the architectural expression of cremation in Edinburgh

The history of Mortonhall Crematorium is long and complex. Although the design was first published in the *Architects' Journal* in May 1962, the crematorium did not open until 1967. However, a study of the development of cremation in Scotland, and in Glasgow and Edinburgh in particular, reveals the design of Mortonhall to have been something of an unexpected coup.

This, the only council operated crematorium in the city, was designed by Sir Basil Spence (1907-76) in conjunction with the City Architect, Alexander Steele and emerges as one of the finest designs in the UK. The choice of architect was highly significant since Spence was an architect of international standing. At Coventry Cathedral in 1962, he had 'succeeded in satisfying the expectations of traditionally minded Anglicans while designing a building which was conspicuously modern in style'. As the architectural historian Kidder-Smith observed, 'the new Coventry cathedral has done much to revitalize the hitherto almost totally reactionary architecture of the Church of England than was ever dreamed possible'. At Mortonhall Spence could be said to have achieved the same for the Church of Scotland, by providing a design with international credentials, notably its reference to Gunnar Asplund's Woodland's Crematorium in Stockholm, from 1935-40. The 'calmly Expressionist' design, redolent of European Modernism challenged the norm, achieving its purpose through the creation of a series of carefully conceived and beautifully lit spaces.

This paper explores the role of the architect in determining the architectural language that would determine the architectural expression of cremation in Edinburgh.

Sylvia Grider (Texax A&M University, College Station, USA)
Exploring the relationships among roadside memorials, spontaneous shrines, and official memorials

The mourning and memorialization of the dead are almost universal among humans, although the forms vary widely from culture to culture and time period to time period. Memorialization does not exist in isolation; it is embedded within the overall culture and reflects culture-specific attributes. Nevertheless, there are also significant similarities in the expression of memorialization from culture to culture.

Tombstones and decorations in cemeteries are perhaps the most widespread form of memorialization in contemporary Western society, but in the past few decades vernacular memorialization at the site of death, especially violent and tragic death, has become almost worldwide. Public response to vernacular memorialization is more complex than attitudes toward cemeteries; this public response ranges from veneration to anger and disgust and the sites of vernacular memorialization can become sites of widespread protest.

One distinguishing characteristic of memorials–ranging from cemeteries to small roadside memorials to sprawling spontaneous shrines to monumental official memorials–is their dependence on a distinct repertoire of the material culture of mourning, especially flowers, but increasingly including popular and mass produced items such as teddy bears. The various types and categories of memorials, both vernacular and official, are also related to one another in both form and function. One expression of this relationship occurs when there is a progression from the vernacular marking of a tragic death site to the establishment of a permanent memorial, which replaces the vernacular memorial.

Anna Haverinen (University of Turku, Finland)
Memoria Virtualis – digitalization of mourning rituals in online environments

In my PhD thesis, I study the digitalization of death and mourning rituals in virtual environments, such as online games, websites and social media. Death rituals in Western society have changed during the 20th century, which seem to have led to new forms of socialization behaviours at the time of death. As a result, concepts such as family, value, time and space have appeared to become flexible in virtual contexts.

The usage of virtual communication technologies have led to mourning and honoring the memory of the deceased in virtual environments. For example, the first virtual cemeteries and virtual memorial sites were created in 1995. On these websites anyone can create a virtual memorial for anybody to honor the memory of the deceased and to cope with bereavement. My results indicate that the virtual nature of a memorial site has a similar meaning as an actual memorial, e.g. gravesite. Virtual mourning is also common in online-games such as World of Warcraft and Second Life. Players of these games create memorials and commemorations for people who have died in real life, in order that the players could have a place to reminisce inside the game as well.

In my thesis I ask what forms of mourning rituals are being created in virtual environments, why these rituals exist and what kind of systems of meanings are being constructed around this phenomena?

Meike Heessels (Radboud University Nijmegen, the Netherlands)
Bringing home the dead. Ritualizing cremation in the Netherlands

The transcendent aspects of contemporary funerals in the Netherlands are often overlooked, because of a mainly Christian definition of what qualifies as religious. Indeed, the identity of the deceased has gained a primary place in current death rituals, while Christian beliefs have diminished as a result of secularization. Looking more closely at practices of ash disposal, I found that they refer to more than matter of fact biography. Current personalized practices such as creating online memorials or shooting ashes into space can have transcendent aspects.

By asking whether people regard themselves as religious, a researcher might achieve nothing. What people express by means of material objects and bodily language is just as important as verbalized language in order to detect notions about the dead and an afterlife. From the way people deal with ashes and ash objects follows that, despite declaring that they are not religious, people relate to ashes as they related to the living person in question by means of touching, talking to and assembling certain objects around the ashes or its place of disposal. Ashes are not merely objects to them but rather liminal, animate things-beings. The objects do not represent the dead; rather they are the person, yet in another shape. The intimate interactions with human ashes suggest a belief in a prolonged existence after death. In this presentation I analyze current images of an afterlife among non-religiously affiliated people in the Netherlands.

Agnes van der Heide, Natasja Raijmakers, Judith Rietjens (Erasmus MC, Rotterdam, the Netherlands), Johannes van Delden, Pauline Kouwenhoven, Ghislaine van Thiel (University Medical Center Utrecht, the Netherlands), Cristiano Vezzoni (University of Trento, Italy / University Medical Center Groningen, the Netherlands)
Experiences with and attitudes towards advance care planning in the Dutch population and its determinants

Advance Care Planning (ACP) is a process enabling people to express wishes about their future health care in consultation with their physicians and relatives. We studied the characteristics of people being involved in some form of ACP. We conducted a cross-sectional survey among a representative panel of the Dutch population, age 18-95 (n=1960, response rate 78%), using an online questionnaire. We assessed aspects of ACP. Through multivariate logistic regression analyses, we calculated associations between ACP and people's experiences, attitudes, knowledge and personal characteristics.

Of the respondents, 70% had ever thought about end-of-life decision-making, 41% had ever discussed it with relatives and 4% with their physician, and 7% had documented their wishes in an advance directive. Factors associated with these aspects of advance planning were: being older than 55 yrs of age, being female, having a fair health status, having a relative who had requested euthanasia, acceptance of euthanasia, having little trust in physicians following patients' wishes at the end of life, having a preference for making health decisions themselves, and being having (some) knowledge about the term palliative care and the Euthanasia Act.

The majority of the Dutch public reflects about their ideas of end-of-life decision-making. Discussions about these ideas with physicians and recording advance directives are rare, however. People differ in the extent to which they are involved in ACP by their characteristics, attitudes, experiences and knowledge. Hence, ACP seems not to suit everyone and should be approached broader than only through advance directives.

Chris Hermans, Theo van der Zee (Radboud University Nijmegen, the Netherlands)
Children's ideas about life after death.
An empirical study in the influence of cultural transmission and cognitive architecture

A continuing problem in the field of the study of religion is the question why people hold the beliefs that they do. Our research project wants to contribute to this general problem by studying the ideas of children about life after death. The project tackles critique on previous research in this field by Bering (2002), Bering & Bjorklund (2004) and Harris & Giménez (2005. We have developed a research design which controls cultural transmission in two ways: first by taking into account the religious socialization of the children, and second the cultural priming of religious ideas (in our project by texts).

Our general research question is: *Which ideas about body and mind of human beings and animals do 11year old Children have, while controlling for their religious socialization and religious priming?* The research sample consists of 80 children of 11-12 year old in the Netherlands with different religious backgrounds, namely Catholic, Protestant, Islamic and non-religious. The research results will be discussed in two ways. What has this research project contributed to the theory building of previous research on the ideas of children about life after death? And, what does this research contribute to the general problem about the influence of cultural transmission and the cognitive architecture?

Martin Hoondert (the Netherlands)
A new requiem. Musical repertoire and funeral rituals in the Netherlands

Due to cultural developments, funeral rituals have become highly personalized. This becomes evident from, among others, the choice of music which more and more reflects the musical taste of the deceased and the relatives, and less and less the 'standard' repertory such as a Gregorian Requiem Mass or specific funeral hymns in vernacular. In this lecture I will deal with the musical form of funeral rituals, within and outside the context of churches, and show the musical diversity by means of several cases.

Maggie Jackson (Teesside University, Middlesbrough, UK)
Getting Death Studies into the classroom

I have been concerned with the notion of teaching about death and dying as an 'ordinary' part of the educational experience for some time (Jackson and Colwell 2001) and have explored ways in which death can become part of the normal teaching within schools, and in the professional training of those who work in schools, with social workers, nurses and so on. Although there are those who are receptive to the ideas put forward, the anxieties and concerns about talking about death remain a significant barrier to including the subject within many curricula.

Recent events (the publication of the End of Life strategy) have allowed us to re-address this by considering the subject under the heading of 'Compassionate communities' which falls under the umbrella of Public Health and, although it is often focussed on health matters, in a broad sense, we have been able to use this as a way of involving schools in talking about death.

A small number of primary schools (5-11 years) have been recruited to pilot teaching sessions around the notion of "Compassionate Communities" which includes talk about the place of death and dying in the local community. This is an initial discussion of how we have begun this work and what has been possible so far. I will discuss briefly the implementation of this programme, the barriers to participation and future initiatives.
o Jackson, M. and Colwell, J. (2001) *The Teacher's Handbook of Death.* JKP: London.
o Department of Health (2008) *End of Life Care Strategy: Promoting high quality care for all adults at the end of life*. London: DH.

Emilie Jaworski (Sorbonne University, Paris, France / ULB, Brussels, Belgium)
Polish society yoday: Between Catholic identity and composite identities

The aim of this presentation is to stress the distortions between social ideals developed in the past in a context of occupation or dictatorship, and those that are developing since Polish society turned to liberal democracy in 1990. This reflection is based on an anthropological analyze of commemorative rituals, considered in this case as expressions of an idealized, societal image.

The concept of 'romantic myth of Polish Nation' (Michel, 1996) leads to a better comprehension of those rituals' social issues by pointing out that the Polish national ideal is indissociable from Catholicity. Indeed, the use of Catholic categories in the development of national identity resulted from a double process consisting of federating the society around the Church in absence of a State on the one hand, and consisting of involving Polish Nation's destiny into a religious dimension – and even a cosmological one – on the other hand. An anthropological analysis of those commemorative rituals reveals that the feeling of belonging to the Polish Nation is based on a kind of kinship system – that combines biological and fictive kinships, as well as secular and sacred dimensions – which supports a holist and timeless conception of the Nation (Jaworski, 2008).

The use of this 'romantic myth of Polish Nation' – in which Catholicism takes a prominent part –

in social and political fields causes many problems at the present time. In particular: how do the Poles reconfigure their relation to catholic institutions and their religious feeling in this context of deep social transformation?

o Michel P., M. Frybes (1996) : *Après le communisme. Mythes et légendes de la Pologne contemporaine.* Paris, Bayard.

o Jaworski E. (2008) : *Regard sur la Pologne. Changements sociaux observés à partir des pratiques funéraires.* Thèse de doctorat en anthropologie sociale, Université Paris-Descartes-Sorbonne, sous la direction de Sophie Goedefroit.

Peter Jupp (University of Durham, UK)
Mortonhall Cemetery and Crematorium: the search for burial space in south Edinburgh, 1945-1967

In 1945, the City of Edinburgh took up its responsibilities for post-War reconstruction. Allocating sufficient space for needs of housing, schools, agriculture, transport and burials proved increasingly complex. The Victorian solution had been to supplement the old parish churchyards by a reliance on private cemeteries but only three more private cemeteries had been opened between 1898 and 1928. Warriston Crematorium was opened in 1929 and by 1939 was the place of committal for one-sixth of the City's deaths. Leith Crematorium opened in 1939. However, both these buildings were in the north of the City. By the end of the Second World War, whilst the death rate was declining, the boundaries of the City were expanding again to the south; the need for burial space in this area of the City became pressing as the inter-war process of suburbanisation was about to recommence.

From 1945 the City Council sought for solutions to their problem, focussing on extending the churchyards of the old Colinton and Liberton parishes. The eventual result was Mortonhall Cemetery (opened 1960) and Crematorium (opened 1967). The former was Edinburgh's first in initiative in providing a new cemetery; the latter has proved so successful that the City has not yet needed a successor. The paper traces the successive difficulties and decisions in the project which took twenty-two years to complete.

Khadija Kadrouch (University of Leiden, the Netherlands)
Islamic burials on Dutch public cemeteries. Between law and practice

Our paper focuses on the Islamic parcels on Dutch cemeteries. Attention will be paid to some of the most important issues with regard to Islamic burials such as the question of clearing out graves, the use of a coffin but also to the variation in the establishment of Islamic parcels. These issues will be dealt with from a multidisciplinary approach; islamological, legal and anthropological. With regard to the islamological part, attention will be paid both to classical fiqh and more recent scholarly opinions on clearing out graves, the use of a coffin and the establishment of Islamic parcels on public cemeteries. As for the legal part, correspondence has taken place with all Dutch municipalities with regard to the subject of Islamic burying at the public (municipal) cemeteries. Furthermore, all the local acts of the Dutch municipalities have been compared to one another and to the national legal law with regard to burial rulings. Finally, the current burial practice of Muslims in a situation of migration will be dealt with. One of the most common practices that will be discussed is the repatriation of the corpses to the countries of origin. This contribution is part of a by NWO financed multidisciplinary PhD-research on Islamic Burials in the Netherlands and Belgium. The research aims at providing insight in the current legal possibilities for Muslims to be buried in the Netherlands and Belgium according to the Islamic burial rules. But also to gain insight in the perceptions of Muslim scholars and desires of Muslims with regard to Islamic burying.

Antje Kahl, Tina Weber (Technical University Berlin, Germany)
Autopsies: Taboo or not-taboo

The authors of this paper will scrutinize a common thesis which claims that there is a suppression of dealing with death on a personal level, and a ubiquity of death on a rather abstract media level in modern society. The thesis will be applied to autopsy because the contemporary ambivalence of taboo and removal of taboo toward death is reflected by current social interest in autopsies.

Depending on the form of autopsy (forensic, anatomic, clinical), Western societies produce a massive proliferation of autopsy depictions in TV shows, while at the same time the realization (execution) of clinical autopsies dramatically decreases. Thus there is a large audience interested in seeing forensic autopsies on television, while strong disapproval of clinical autopsies has taken place in hospitals. Referring to the abstract media level and the personal consternation in hospital cases where relatives have to decide whether they want their deceased loved-one to be examined in pathology, it would stand to reason that this personal situation leads to a denial of death and therefore decreasing autopsy rates. However, quite the opposite is true. Results of a German survey (2010) show that a majority of people responded positively towards clinical autopsies. The authors assume that the decline of the clinical autopsy rate is first and foremost based on a dysfunction within the medical system. They conclude that an increasing popularization of scientific practices, such as the representation of autopsies, finds its way into audio-visual media, while (clinical) autopsies forfeit practical relevance in the medical system.

Ilona Kamppainen (University of Helsinki, Finland)
Finnish funeral customs in oral history materials

The interest in changing funeral culture is manifest in certain Finnish oral history materials and memoirs. In my paper I will take a closer look on how the changing ideas and practices on funerals are presented in these archive materials. How do people describe funerals in different times? What are the reasons – implicit and explicit – they give for changes in traditions? Has the upcoming consumer society affected death rituals? Have privatisation and individualisation given new ideas on 'good death'? Are social differences mentioned in oral history materials, as well as regional ones?

My aim is to show how funeral traditions have changed from traditional to modern times, the time span being from 1860's to the present and most materials covering the first half of the 20th century. Even more interesting is, however, the different ways people have chosen to tell about them. Are new ways of death described as better or worse – more 'civilised' or inadequate? Do people miss older traditions or do they welcome the new ones?

In Finland late industrialisation, urbanisation and also hospitalisation of death have caused the culture of death to develop certain national features. In my research project the reasons – causes and effects – for this are the underlying matrix to which I mirror my perceptions on the changing Finnish funerals.

Kirsi Kanerva (University of Turku, Finland)
The death and the dead and their mental and bodily influences on the living in medieval Iceland

My paper discusses the mental and bodily influences of death of a close person on the living in medieval Iceland. The deceased ones sometimes appeared to the living as restless dead, causing them much harm. These creatures were not spirit-like ghosts, like those men usually "met" on the Continent in the Middle Ages but, they appeared in their concrete, recognizable bodies. I will study these "ghosts" as symbols, not as supernatural beings.

It seems that the restless dead people were not grieved after their deaths, as they were usually people with difficult personalities and malevolent intentions during their lifetimes. Other deceased people with more sociable personalities usually remained calm in their graves. Normally, no specific signs of grief were depicted in sagas. In fact, crying, moaning and other concrete signs of sorrow are very rarely, if not at all represented in medieval Icelandic sagas. Only some sudden and accidental deaths sometimes engendered expressions of grief in sagas.

In my paper I study the effects that the death and the dead caused on the living, with a particular focus on the emotions connected to death and their relationship with illness and health of the individual. My research questions are: What was considered as an *appropriate* way to react to the death of one's close ones and to the memories about the dead in medieval Iceland? In the case of *improper* reactions towards death and memories, what were the consequences if defined in relation to mental and bodily health or illness?

Elaine Kasket (London Metropolitan University, UK)
Continuing bonds in the Age of social networking

As we become increasingly 'telepresent' in the digital world, and as Internet sites such as Facebook and other networking media become ever more integrated into our daily lives, there is burgeoning interest in and awareness of the traces we leave behind in this virtual community after our deaths. In the early days of Facebook, the world's most popular social networking site, the explosion of its popularity would have been difficult to predict; nor was it at the forefront of the founders' minds that eventually a significant percentage of Facebook profiles would essentially become gravemarkers of the dead, scattered amongst the profiles of the living.

Ongoing interaction by the living with deceased persons' Facebook profiles seems to be an increasingly commonplace occurrence. A 'continuing bonds' model of bereavement is clearly manifest in systematic study of the relationships and communications maintained with deceased persons by young-adult Facebook users, and the researcher presents data illustrating this, situates communication with the dead on Facebook within the theoretical framework of the continuing-bonds model of bereavement, and makes a case for the adaptive nature of this ongoing connection and dialogue. The researcher also argues that technologically-mediated continuing bonds with the dead are a logical and inevitable feature of life in the modern era, and that an understanding of the role, psychology, and significance of social networking sites in both life and death is crucial for bereavement counsellors and allied professionals in the 21st century.

Mirjam Klaassens, Peter Groote (University of Groningen, the Netherlands)
The preferred design of a natural burial ground in the North of the Netherlands

Natural burial grounds represent an alternative to traditional cemeteries. It is a contemporary burial innovation from Britain and a relatively unknown phenomenon in the Netherlands, as there are only four in existence. Research in Britain has shown that as the number of natural burial grounds has increased, different interpretations of these burial grounds have emerged. The concept of natural burial grounds is fluid in its interpretation with no single model for its design and management (Clayden and Dixon, 2007). In order to reduce tensions and conflict between the users of natural burial grounds as well as with the management (see Klaassens and Groote, 2011), it is important to develop a clearly defined concept and masterplan. This is why this paper examines the preferred design of natural burial grounds by people in the North of the Netherlands and their expected use of these burial grounds. This data is obtained by a survey conducted, in cooperation with a funeral

director, in the three Northern provinces: Friesland, Groningen and Drenthe (N=430).

The use of individual background characteristics of the respondents provided information about who (e.g. age, sex, and education) is interested in burial at natural burial grounds. Also, the influence of the respondents' background characteristics on the preferred design and use of these burial grounds is analyzed. Finally, the preferences in design are compared with the actual implementation of the concept at Dutch natural burial ground Bergerbos that opened in 2003, and the most common interpretation of natural burial grounds in the UK.

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Carol Komaromy (Open University, UK), Kate Woodthorpe (University of Bath, UK),
From the ward to the mortuary: moving the patient identity

Patient-centered care has come to dominate the rhetoric of modern healthcare in the UK. However, the identity of the 'patient' typically ceases at the point of biological death.

This paper draws on data from a small-scale project examining the professional role and responsibilities of the modern anatomical pathology technologist (APT, more traditionally referred to as mortuary technicians), to argue that patient identity is quite literally alive and kicking in the UK hospital mortuary environment. Our study findings suggest that the deliberate practice of referring to deceased people as patients not only helped 'join up' the work of the mortuary with the rest of the hospital, but also enabled mortuary team to lobby for their inclusion in strategic patient care decisions with their clinical staff peers.

Despite such attempts to be recognized as part of a multi-disciplinary team and key members of bereavement support, we argue that the data revealed evidence of deeply rooted stigma attached to the work of APTs. To explain such deeply entrenched notions of death as contaminating and taboo – we draw on the literature in this area and argue that any change in practice would be met with resistance. Sociologists have argued for a more nuanced appreciation of the taboo nature of death. In the setting of the hospital mortuary we ask if the quest to change attitudes is doomed to failure.

Carol Komaromy (Open University, UK)
The changing role of the mortuary staff in end of life care.
Make sure you say hello to him and goodnight to him every day.

The role of the hospital Anatomical Pathology Technologist (APT) has evolved into one that is multi-faceted and complex, requiring a wide-ranging set of skills. For example, they have to be technically skilled when assisting with post mortems and effective and sensitive communicators when talking to family members. The above quote is taken from an interview with an APT in a leading teaching hospital in London and is part of a small British Academy funded exploration into this 'dirty' work (Komaromy and Woodthorpe, 2010). This paper focuses on what part the APT plays in bereavement care following the death of a baby. When parents entrust their dead babies to the mortuary, it is the APTs who provide continuing care.

However, despite this key role and their significant contribution to the care of people after death, the data showed that by association with the 'dirty' object of the dead body mortuary staff were

stigmatised by what they do. For this paper, I draw on the literature on 'dirt' and 'dirty work' to consider what is really happening here (see Douglas, 1996; Lawton, 1998 and Lawler 1991). The paper ends by asking what is so 'dirty' about this work and how its contribution to end-of-life care might be better acknowledged.

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Joanna Krawczyk-Coltekin (University of Utrecht, the Netherlands)
Angels in Medieval death images

This paper offers a closer look at the Medieval attitudes and believes concerning death and dying, based on their artistic expressions. Although culture of Medieval death has been a frequent subject of scholarly literature, there is a significant gap in our understanding of it. The most well-known images of Medieval death are those of the macabre category (such as the *Danse Macabre* or the *Three Living and Three Dead*). But this is only part of a highly diverse ensemble. I argue that, in matters of death, the imagination of the devout person was not so much occupied with these images of fear, as with hopeful representations showing the soul in the company of angels. Once we are attentive to this category, the prevalence of the angels' visual portrayal becomes apparent: they are shown on the church portals, in books of hours (usually in the Mass for the Dead), in both cheap prints and expensive panel paintings. We can trace them in the prayers to guardian angels and in the descriptions of otherworld journeys. The motif was so embedded in the Medieval mind, that even the image of Christ – who, due to his divine nature did not need the angel of ascension – is sometimes also accompanied by one.

A motif so popular and so well distributed through varied artistic material can be used as a tool for assessing Medieval mentalities.

Udi Lebel (Sapir College / Ariel University Center, Israel)
Mourning at the margins: National ranking of bereavement –
psychological cultural and political effects

With the founding of the Jewish nation-state, a republican hierarchy began taking shape. It positioned soldiers' mothers and, more particularly, fallen soldiers' mothers, at the head of Israel's citizenship pyramid. Mothers of fallen soldiers became 'symbolic types', who were awarded 'an entry ticket' into public discourse as opinion-leaders and -shapers. Contrastingly, 'other' bereavement experiences - civilian, unmilitary – did not provide the mothers of terror-attack victims, soldiers who committed suicide or were killed in civilian settings, with a legitimate 'voice' in the public space.

This paper examines the phenomenon and addresses its persistence in the third millennium, after the post-national and demilitarization processes that Israel has undergone. The research highlights the general public's perception of bereaved mothers' entitlement to public prominence and cultural weight. In addition, it compares the perceived legitimacy of mothers who experienced military bereavement with that of their counterparts who experienced civilian bereavement, to make their experiences publicly known and to promote social and political goals through their bereavement experience. It may explain why mothers whose offspring died in civilian settings feel shame over the circumstances of their grief, and refrain from organizing in social or protest movements, as do

the mothers of military fallen. In other words, it is a 'chicken or the egg' case: mothers of civilian dead internalize cultural expectations which prevent them from shattering the vicious circle. They remain with their grief in the private arena. The phenomenon has implications for the hierarchy of motherhood and for citizenship in general in the Israeli space.

Kate Lillie (RCN, UK)
Looking for death in arthritis care

Arthritis is the most common cause of disability in the UK. As it society ages the prevalence of arthritis is increasing, with approximately one in five women over the age of sixty developing osteoarthritis. Although rheumatoid arthritis is rarer, people with the disease usually die around ten years earlier than would otherwise be anticipated, primarily from co-morbidities directly associated with disease progression (including cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis and infection). It is also known that older people with arthritis are significantly more likely to experience pain in the last two years of life (60% versus 28%: $P<0.001$: Smith at al 2010).

This presentation arose from personal reflection on my involvement in a project that looked at the educational needs of nurses and allied health professionals working with people with arthritis. It reflects on the sequestration of death and dying in arthritis care. It will highlight the absence of guidelines available to support people with arthritis at the end of life and the difficulties of raising the issue in focus groups for people with osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis. It will draw attention to case studies of good end of life care found through a review of the literature.

Giddens (1991) asserts that death is routinely hidden from view: this paper draws attention to the way that this remains the case in arthritis care despite the End of Life Care Strategy (DH 2008) for England which aims to promote high quality care for all adults.

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Vanessa Lockyer-Stevens (Heart of England NHS Foundation Trust, UK)
Dead keen to go home

Until recently, most bereavement policies have not made explicit statements regarding flexible strategies to enable families to take their dead child home. The Paediatric Intensive Care Society addressed this issue in 2002 in their publication of *Standards in Bereavement Care*, encouraging its practice more widely. Incremental change is occurring albeit slow in its development with charity and hospital websites for example, providing information about dead children can be taken home (GOSH 2008, Child Bereavement Trust 2008).

Nurses are encouraged to do 'things that help' families continue the bonds of care after a child's death. Peters and Lewin (1994), discuss for example, the merits of spending more time holding the deceased child in order to help 'grasp the reality of the tragedy and assists in the healing process by lessening the time for denial'. Viewing and care of the child's body at home, provides time which families consider as severely lacking. These aspects of care help parents begin the 'painful construction of developing a different relationship with the deceased child'. Wijngaards-De Meij's (2008) study is a further confirmation that practice needs to change. Their findings point to the fact that parents, whose child dies from illness, were twice as likely to present the body at home for

viewing, and suffered less grief. Ability to say farewell correlated with less symptomology and morbidity.

Extending opportunities to share these intensely important moments other than in hospital settings not well documented and is therefore, worthy of further debate.

Vanessa Lockyer-Stevens (Heart of England NHS Foundation Trust, UK)
Detached and distant - Dealing with the dead in paediatric intensive care

Nurses are pivotal in shaping the memories of the bereaved. Breaking bad news to families in ways that reduce survivor morbidity requires significant skill. Despite this knowledge Wells (1996) states that even the most 'highly skilled critical care nurses feel uncomfortable and ineffective when faced with the death of a child'. Hazinski (1999) claims that some paediatric intensive care nurses (PICU) demonstrate 'ambivalent feelings towards families of sick children' which may be assigned to their own subjective feelings about the child and family. White (1995) concurs indicating that nurses' who distance themselves from difficult situations may be in 'accord with professional objectivity but make for a cold and unsupportive relationship'. Regrettably, this may account for some reports from bereaved families that they 'consider the information or counselling they receive to be inadequate or even harmful' (Campbell & Glasper 1995).

Brown and Sefansky (1995) identify stress as a causative factor influencing nurses' *detached* behaviour in PICU. They indicate that staff, stressed by their surroundings finds it 'difficult to *connect* with those around them, and can easily fall into a pattern of protective withdrawal'. This paper explores the emotional labour involved in dealing with grief reactions following child death in paediatric intensive care.

Hilda Maclean (University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia)
In unseemly haste

The funeral of a serving colonial governor was an occasion of great pomp and defined ritual. However, when Governor Samuel Wensley Blackall's death occurred on the 2nd of January 1871, in Brisbane, Australia, the temperature was 34°C in the shade. Combined with the New Year's holidays, and the late Governor's insistence that he be buried in Brisbane instead of being repatriated to his native Ireland for burial, the obsequies were arranged in time for burial the following day, albeit *in unseemly haste.*

The paper will show how Victorian Era mortuary practices, regardless of class and religion, had to be adapted in the tropical climate of colonial Queensland. The impact of the rapid disposal of the dead on bereaved accustomed to mourning rituals in the presence of the corpse is examined. While some practices, such as the ability to view the corpse in a domestic setting could not occur for environmental reasons, other cultural practices like the wearing of mourning costume were maintained in spite of climatic conditions. Even in distant colonial outposts, funerary fashions were assiduously followed, although the occasional concession to the climate gradually developed into a distinct Australian informality. It was not until the advent of refrigeration in the funeral industry in the 1930s, that the funeral practices imported from Great Britain could resume, unaffected by climatic conditions.

Lazzarotti Marco (National Taiwan University, Taiwan)
Modern life and traditional death. A discussion on tradition and modernization of death rites in Taiwan

Traditionally in Taiwan, death is not considered as the terminal moment of a person's life, but, throughout a specific ritual of passage, it is a way to get a different status, the status of ancestor. Ancestors still live with their descendants, they influence descendants' life in order to satisfy their needs, and on the other hand they need to be worshipped by their descendants. The rich rituals performed during funerals, the ancestors' worship, the tomb sweeping day could be considered as a demonstration of the relationships between those that are already dead and those that are still alive.

Nowadays, the constant and rapid modernization/westernization of the Taiwanese society gets in contrast with these traditional concepts linked with death. Ancestors being related to a family, one can wonder which ancestor should be venerated by those that are divorced. How can those that work all day take care of their ancestors' tablets as prescribed by the tradition? How it is possible to combine the popular belief that one of the souls will follow the body inside the grave, with the new law made by Taipei City government that, due the lack of space, prescribes the cremation of the corpse? What is the answer of society and of the traditional cultural system to these questions?

I will argue that these problems are not felt and resolved as social problems, but uniquely as personal problems that need personal solutions. In this way, modern society can still preserve its old cultural environment.

Anne Markussen (University of Aarhus, Denmark)
Cremation and the paradox of the funeral model of the Nordic welfarestates - the death of secularization?

Even though the theory of secularization has been severely criticized, many scholars maintain it to be still applicable to Europe (Berger, 1999). As such, Denmark and Sweden are seen as paradigmatic examples of a European exceptionalism (Sidenvall, 2010). Zuckerman (2008) has confirmed this picture by making a case of the non-religious understanding of death in these countries. However, he ignores the fact that the Nordic funeral model is religious, and not municipal or liberal, as in other less secularized western countries (Walter, 2005). This paradox of the Nordic funeral model is encapsulated in the case of cremation. On the one hand, Denmark and Sweden are among the countries where people to the highest degree choose cremation, which can be seen as a secularized funeral practice. On the other hand, most of the crematories are owned and run by the church.

Using the case of cremation, this paper discusses the theory of a European exceptionalism of secularization. The paradox of the Nordic funeral model is not least surprising when the comprehensiveness of the Nordic welfare state model is taken into consideration. On this basis, one would expect that the state stepped in, as it has done in almost all other areas. How different funeral systems have fitted in with different welfare systems will be discussed on the basis of Lipset and Rokkan's (1967) analysis of the history of different state-church relations, where they mention funerals as one of the conflict areas that shaped the modern states of Europe.

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Ruth McManus (University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand)
Watching death on the net

There has been a startling shift in the ways that real deaths are represented. Once the preserve of war correspondents or pornography, watching real people die is now commonplace. But this does not mean the demise of censorship or end of moral standards. On the contrary, it signals that watching real death is still taboo. Yet everyday access to globally wired digital technologies have changed what deaths we see and the meanings we attribute to them. This paper examines how global communication technologies have changed the taboo death so that it is can now be good and appropriate to watch real people die. This paper is from the soon to be published book "Death in a Global Age".

Yves Menheere (National Taiwan University, Taiwan)
Revisiting the underworld: dealing with the dead in modern Taiwan

In this paper, I discuss different ways of dealing with the dead in modern Taiwan. Taiwan has a large range of rituals related to the death and their world. The central role of such rituals in very popular local movies (like *Seven days in Heaven* in 2010 or *Comes the black dog* in 2004) indicates that some of these customs are widely known to the Taiwanese public.

There is however a considerable variation inside Taiwan. Why do some dead (those who died in a fire, in a car accident or by hanging) in the small town of Lugang have to be exorcized in rituals that are found nowhere else in Taiwan? Why are rituals in which the living visit the underworld successful in the capital city of Taipei, whereas outside of it rituals in which the dead possess specialized spirit mediums seem to be more common?

After introducing these several forms of dealing with the dead in Taiwan, I proceed to discuss the relation between "religion" and mortuary rituals. Although these rituals clearly have something "religious", previous anthropological work on Taiwan (which in the past often attempted to offer models of a supposed "Chinese religion") cannot account for the internal variation. I argue that the local context and the individual performative aspects for the participants are as important for an understanding of these rituals, whether in Taiwan or elsewhere.

Shane Minkin (Swarthmore College, USA)
Dissecting death: Post mortems, governance and belonging in Alexandria, Egypt, 1882-1914

This paper asks how the management of death enabled the British in Alexandria to negotiate their role as both local residents and foreign colonizers in the years after the 1882 British occupation of Egypt. I demonstrate that regulations surrounding death helped to delineate boundaries of governance and belonging. B postmortem reports performed on British subjects in Alexandria, my paper argues that the autopsy process simultaneously included the British community under Egyptian governmental control while excluding it as a separate, foreign entity. Additionally, it shows that the bureaucracy of death remained under the jurisdiction of Egyptian governance through World War I, both before and after the 1882 occupation.

Although the British officially constituted the colonial ruling community, British court records show that British subjects included a mostly poor Maltese population as well as Britons from all social classes. The British community performed its own autopsies and issued its own death certificates. While the British consular surgeon reported to the consulate, he also reported to the

Egyptian government. The British community thus followed Egyptian regulations while managing their dead in specifically communal space.

This process was not self-evident. A British doctor performing autopsies on British corpses was a guarantee of communal protection for living British subjects. At the same time, the postmortems were at the request of and under the regulation of the Egyptian government, ensuring that the population at large, whether foreign or local, fell under the Egyptian state's monitoring, processing, and documenting of all of its dead.

André Mulder, Angela Stoof (the Netherlands)
Ritual coaches and communication of traditions in a new perspective.

In the Netherlands, *ritual coach* is an emerging profession. Some theologians, psychologists and social workers have set up their own companies which specialise in coaching clients at significant life moments. Especially at burials and cremations they provide new rituals which express meanings about life and death. These ritual coaches do not represent a religious tradition but themselves and the rituals are built on the context and situation of the bereaved. Pastors and priest speak the language of the Christian tradition, which they link hermeneutically with the language of the life stories of mourners. They use shared sources of meaning to connote loss and hope. How do ritual coaches, who are not bound to any tradition, construct a meaningful ritual? Which source of meaning do they use and how do they intuit the meaning system of the bereaved? How do they negotiate religious and non-religious meanings from multiple traditions, time-honoured or recently emerging? In a qualitative research project we explored these questions.

We discovered that ritual coaches adopt different roles, such as specialist, moderator, witness or priest(ess). There appeared to be a low awareness by the respondents of the difficulties they are confronted with when it comes to the hermeneutics of life events outside the realm of the church. Working from the heart, they claim to produce a ritual that fits. That may be true, but questions inevitably arise as to what standards apply in such rituals, particularly since such standards may not have been adopted from a single tradition.

Samantha Murphy (Open University, Milton Keynes, USA)
Identity work and stillbirth: parenting the absent child

Symbolic-interactionist considerations of identity have often focused on the work that social actors do in order to create and sustain particular identities (Goffman, 1959). In particular, identity can be seen as relational: we understand ourselves and our roles through our relationships with others. Identity work on behalf of the dead has been documented by previous researchers as the memories of those who have died become subject to management and contestation by those who have survived them. While this may not necessarily be easy, for the relatives and friends of those who die as children or adults, there is an identity with which to work: there are residual traces of a life lived. For the parent of a stillborn child the claim to identity for their son or daughter is more precarious.

Drawing on qualitative interviews with the parents of 22 stillborn children and analysed using grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1998), this paper explores the identity work performed by the parents who were concerned to create a meaningful and lasting identity for their expected child. Thus, the paper supports a relational approach to identity, arguing that parental attempts to sustain the social identity of their stillborn child are at the same time concerned with sustaining their own parental identity, a feature especially important for those parents whose first child died.

Mary Murray, Natasha Tassell (Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand)
Near death experiences in Aotearoa ('Land of the long white cloud')

This paper outlines research we are conducting about Near death experiences (NDEs) in Aotearoa New Zealand Over the last few decades interest in the NDE has grown amongst researchers and the general public. In the last few years multi-disciplinary studies have been conducted in the USA, the Netherlands, UK and Australia, investigating the characteristics, causation, and explanations for NDEs. Our research is the first large scale study of the NDE in the 'Land of the Long White Cloud'.

As well as investigating the characteristics of the NDE amongst members of the Aotearoa New Zealand population, the study will contribute to the growing research and literature about NDEs from a uniquely Aotearoa New Zealand perspective. We are investigating the psychological consequences and possible antecedents of NDEs together with the sociological dimensions and implications of NDEs. Few studies have combined these approaches, and we hope that our research will enhance understanding of the significance and implications of NDEs for experiencers.

The study deploys qualitative and quantitative methods and data analysis. Data is being collected using both questionnaires and interviews. Interviews are being transcribed and analysed qualitatively, and questionnaires are being inputted into SPSS and analysed qualitatively.

Mary Murray (Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand)
Anthropocentricism and speciesm in death studies

This paper raises questions about anthropocentricism and speciesm in death studies. Over the last few decades death, dying and disposal have become increasingly recognized as important areas of intellectual and scholarly inquiry in the humanities and social sciences. This has been reflected in important conferences, research, journals and publications contributing to contemporary understandings of dying and death amongst the *human* members of the planet.

Highlighting anthropocentricism and speciesm in contemporary death studies, this paper draws attention to dying death, and disposal amongst the *'non'* human members of the planet. I will argue that humanism, anthropocentricism, and speciesm in contemporary death studies has veiled and occluded death, dying, grief, loss and suffering in *'non'* human populations, and has, ironically perhaps, largely ignored the impact of the death of 'other' species on humans.

Olga Nesporova (Research Institute for Labour and Social Affairs, Prague, Czech Republic)
The rhetoric of the secular funeral in an historical perspective (a Czech Republic case study)

Modernisation and other social changes have led to the establishment and subsequent expansion of secular rites of passage, including funeral rites. The author analyses this development in the case of one Central European country - the Czech Republic - from its beginnings up to the present day. She stresses that the rhetoric of secular funeral rites has been strongly influenced by contemporary ideologies which enables her to identify a distinction between three types of secular funeral ceremonies according to time period.

The first was practised from the end of the 19th century to the end of World War II and was linked with the ideas of the Freethinkers and closely connected with the growth of the cremation movement. The second type of secular ceremony became widespread during the communist regime (1948-1989) the rhetoric of which was deliberately very strongly influenced by the materialistic and atheistic worldviews. Secular funeral rites remained the most popular form of last rites even after the fall of the communist regime; however, a further change in rhetoric took place at this time in that funerals were de-ideologized, which led to the reduction of the rhetoric element of funeral

ceremonies to the very minimum. The negative perception of the majority of previous practices and the general lack of personalised forms of funeral ceremony often leads today to no ceremony being held at all. The author emphasises both the differences between and the mutual dependencies pertaining to the three different forms of contemporary Czech secular funeral ceremony.

Tara Nipe (University of Melbourne, Australia)
Why talk to the dead? Ideologies and death work practices of nurses and doctors – a narrative approach

Unique in their place at the junctions of health and illness, recovery and decline, newest technology and long tradition, health care practitioners deal frequently with professionally caring for the dying and recently dead. Common, though not universal, the practice by health care professionals of talking to their dead patients is present only obliquely in health care literature, and not present in the related disciplines of health sociology, medical anthropology and thanatology. This research gap fails to reflect the significance and meaning the act of speaking to the body of the patient has for many nurses and doctors for whom it forms part of their death work practice

This paper is based on research in progress that combines written narratives and narrative-driven interviews with nurses and doctors who speak to their dead patients while conducting post-mortem care. The resulting data is being analysed through a combined approach of thematic and narrative methodologies. In it I discuss common and emerging themes, and highlight individual narratives that shed light on how this aspect of care allows practitioners to continue patient care, diffuse the emotional labour of death work, and express spiritual beliefs.

Albertina Nugteren (University of Tilburg, the Netherlands)
Lighting the pyre, kindling the fire: An investigation into various contemporary ways to start Hindu cremation

In ancient Sanskrit texts like the *Garuda Purāna* we find elaborate ritual instructions on *antyesthi*, the last rites. Those instructions have found their way into priestly manuals on life-cycle rituals (*samskāras*). It is clear that Hindu cremation is considered to be more than disposal of the body: it is intended to release the soul.

Traditionally, and ideally, it is the eldest son who sets fire to the body with twigs of *kusha* grass or sacred wood. At a gas-fuelled crematorium, sacred wood and *ghee* (clarified butter) are placed inside the coffin. A small fire is lit in the coffin by adding burning pieces of coal on the chest of the body or by lighting a small fire in the mouth of the deceased (*mukhāgni*). In Diaspora communities all over the world we find various adaptations, negotiations, and even court cases, in attempts to satisfy culture-specific requirements and individual requests.

In this paper I focus on the varying ways in which the crucial gesture of lighting the fire has become the object of discussion.

Stephanie O'Donohoe (The University of Edinburgh, UK), Darach Turley (Dublin City University, Ireland)
Last labour of love: consumption as a means of continuing bonds for the dying

Many bereavement scholars have challenged the dominant Freudian view of mourning by arguing that continuing bonds with the deceased are potentially healthy and functional – that there are positive ways of living *with* the dead, rather than without them (Klass et al 1996). These scholars see continuing bonds as forged and maintained by survivors embedded in particular societies and

cultures, expressing and enacting connections through a wide range of material artefacts (Hawkins 1993; Hallam and Hockey 2001).

The continuing bonds paradigm is also evident in popular culture, but in at least some instances, representations of continuing bonds focus on the agency and resourcefulness of those who are *dying* rather than those who are *bereaved*. Some novels, films, and even commercials portray bereaved people as comforted by consumer goods gifted "beyond the grave" as expressions of undying love. While these are fictional examples, various memoirs of illness and dying suggest that those facing terminal illness may expend some of their final, limited energy forging and facilitating continuing bonds, not least through consumer goods.

This paper uses textual analysis of books such as Justine Picardie's *Before I Say Goodbye* to explore the material practices involved in forging continuing bonds by those who are dying, the rationale they provide for doing so, and the contribution of such practices to their sense-making and emotional well-being. This analysis questions whether representing continuing bonds as the responsibility or achievement of those who are dying may empower them or add to the psychic burden of terminal illness.

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Kenneth Okpomo, Moses Samuel Johnson
Finding new ways of disposing remains: challenges of conflict and accident-prone areas

In many cultures of the world, death or dying is regarded as an inevitable end to personal human existence and the beginning of preternatural existence where the deceased after then lives on in the realm of the spiritual/ancestral realms. In Christianity and Islam, death is a transition: transition to the great beyond. However, dying and death subjects the living to ethical moral responsibilities towards the disposal of the remains.

In many developed countries of today, the (average) life expectancy is around 47 years. This is due largely to conflict and war, disease epidemic, poverty and poverty-related ill-cycles, hunger and starvation, lack of proper and adequate healthcare facilities, dirge of healthcare practitioners, natural disasters, accidents and mishaps, among others.

.Global insecurity – caused by the rise of Islamic fundamentalists groups and suicide bombings, the rise of dictatorial regimes building WMDs and nuclear war heads, popular people's revolt in the Middle East/North Africa (MENA), etc, is causing death on a wanton scale. Often, as we have seen in the genocides in Rwanda (1994), the former Yugoslavia republic (during the ethnic cleansing reign of Slobodan Milosevic), post–Saddam Hussein Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Israeli-Lebanon/Hamas war etc, mass graves were used in disposing the corpses of the thousands (mainly of them innocent civilians caught in the web of fighting) of people killed.

This paper will explore new and acceptable ways of disposing corpses in conflict and accident-prone areas in Africa and elsewhere, taking into cognizance the various cultural and religious specifications of the racially and ethnically different peoples.

Ton Overtoom (the Netherlands)
The ritual guide, a new phenomenon

A ritual guide in this time of secularization can be a priest without a church, or a family coach. When a loved one has passed away, people want to organize a personal goodbye. The problem is that there is only little time to prepare for a ceremony. In this situation, people can ask a ritual guide for support. He or she (most of them women) takes care of the content and form of the personal farewell with symbols and rituals. In Holland there are many ritual guides; some have followed a particular education, some have not.

The personal symbol is the most important part of the ritual. We know that the deceased is gone, but we can hardly live with the idea, we are left with a void. The deceased meant something to the people that are left behind, and he or she will continue to mean something to them in the future. How does one attain a personal symbol in this situation? A personal symbol stands for the relationship between the relatives and the deceased, in which the qualities and traits of the deceased come to the fore. The personal symbol is the red thread in the ceremony. It is in this act of attributing new meaning that there is a future for the deceased to remain 'alive' for the ones who are left behind. The ritual guide is the master of the ceremony. But, is the ritual guide the answer in this time of secularization?

Chang-Won Park (Durham University, U.K., and Sogang University, South Korea)
Four Characteristics in Korean Cremation

This paper examines distinctive characteristics in the cremation culture of contemporary South Korea by focusing on the following four issues: globalization, secularization, natural funeral and geomancy.

South Korea has witnessed a dramatic increase in cremation over the last fifteen years: 20.5 percent in 1994 becoming 65 percent in 2009 in terms of the nationwide rate. This is an unprecedented level of growth in the history of modern cremation, and cremation continues to increase in this country. The dramatic transition from burial to cremation, within this short space of time, has resulted in the emergence of various distinctive social and cultural phenomena in relation to death practice. This paper examines the distinctive phenomena of Korean cremation in the light of the four issues of globalization, secularization, natural funeral and the practice of geomancy.

Brian Parsons (University of Bath, UK)
A dying business? Mortality and funeral directing in West London

An assessment of the number of deaths occurring in parts of west London over the last fifteen years indicates a sharp decline. Conversely, a survey reveals an expansion of funeral directing firms in the same area. Although past client loyalty remains a key source of work, factors such as funeral costs, advertising and level of service have required reappraisal as competition intensifies between firms. Based on interviews with funeral directors, this paper explores possible explanations for this complex trading situation.

Piero Pasini (Italy)
Relics of the nation: Mourning the martyrs in Venice during the Italian Resurgence (June 1867)

This paper examines the emergence and meaning of public funerals and 'official mourning' during the Italian Resurgence (Risorgimento italiano 1796 – 1870), with particular attention to the public rituals of the Bandiera Brothers (died in 1844) and the Belfiore martyrs (died in 1852), both commemorated in June 1867, in Venice.

I highlight the central role of relics in constructing a historical memory aimed at the political objective to create a new national consciousness. I argue that public funerals and mourning became the primary occasions and fertile ground for an ideological investment by major institutions and various political factions that had been and continue to be the major players during and after the unification of Italy.

The Patriots' relics, their translation across the country, and the public funerals allow for a sacralisation process that, borrowing from Catholic liturgy, were particularly successful in a country firmly anchored to its religious customs and strongly characterised by deep devotional attitude. In reference to recent studies in anthropology and history, I explore the complex interweaving of instinctive behaviours and rational attitudes about death with the construction of ideology on the place of death and in funerary rituals. In the constructions of nationalism I explore the articulation of emotions and ideology.

Public funerals become a common emotional field in which the mourning pain becomes a factor that unifies participants in order of the construction of a national identity.

Janneke Peelen (the Netherlands)
When birth and death entwine. Rituals of pregnancy loss in the Netherlands

This paper discusses how parents of babies, who die before or shortly after birth, use rituals to signify parental experiences of loss. Rituals are understood as symbolic actions and performances that aim at the signification, confirmation and transformation of reality. This encompasses more formalized rituals such as funerals and annual commemorative events, but also symbolic everyday behaviour. It will be shown that rituals are deployed to discuss, transform and express certain views on pregnancy loss.

Moreover, it will be shown that rituals are powerful in framing and visualizing human existence beyond its biological limits: to provide the dead baby with a continued social existence in the daily lives of the bereaved parents. As pregnancy loss rituals are increasingly performed on a public stage, this paper explicitly deals with the interaction of parents' personal interpretations of pregnancy loss and the interpretations of their social environment.

Rita Peyroteo Stjerna (Uppsala University, Sweden)
Bonded by Death: some thoughts on early cemetery concepts

The research on mortuary practices is central on the resolution of multiple questions related with the prehistoric landscape and identity – full of meanings, memories and new conceptions on Life and Death. The advantage of Archaeology on the research of past mortuary practices is the material nature of Death. The deceased itself is a material entity. Archaeology observes the human behavior through long periods of time and in vast geographic areas. Archaeology brings temporal depth on the great variety of the human agency and an exceptional perspective on what makes us humans.

«Death in the Mesolithic» is a research project on the mortuary practices of the last hunter-gatherers from south Atlantic Europe. During the sixth millennium BC, we observe a change on the attitudes towards death. For the first time, human cadavers are disposed in a systematic manner. Most of these burials are in artificial mounds – known as shell middens – formed by a variety of

shells, animal bones and a wide mixture of debris. These funerary complexes are cemeteries by definition and some of the oldest known in Europe.

This new form of embracing death, with the organization of cemeteries, is a key question on the prehistoric research – a fundamental reflection on the human conceptions behind the invention of death.

Stacey Pitsillides (University of London, UK)
Death, dying, disposal and the digital

Death is a part of life and life has become digital. Our increasing digitality means that we will increasingly be forced to come 'face to screen' with all aspects of death online. In contemporary society the body has been extended and (re)mediated through a web of technological systems. So what happens when this connection breaks and the data is left stranded without a 'physical body' to create a hierarchy of presence?

Dying implies the physical shutting down of various systems and networks, human or otherwise. This paper seeks to consider the process and impact of this shutting down on the digital world and the ripple affect that the removal or transformation of 'data memories' creates across the various digital networks. By considering how personal legacy may transcend us, this paper questions the future and potential mortality of the data lives we are currently producing?

Disposal is a necessary consideration in the physical world where space is finite, but how does the role of disposal change in the digital world? Considering the rate at which we produce data, it is easy to see the escalating scale of the problem of inheriting this data mass. We must begin to reflect on how our traces will be stored and remembered, even after all those who care for us are no longer networked into it. Is there a potential for *transformation* to supersede *disposal* within the digital? Is there a possibility to alter from living profile to memorial to potential legacy, monument or museum?

Thomas Quartier (Radboud University Nijmegen, the Netherlands)
Crossing the border of death. Ritualized religiosity in death, dying and disposal

In modern Dutch society, we see a growing attentiveness when it comes to death dying and disposal. First, people try to comfort the dying in a way that is more personal than in former times. Besides medical care, spiritual care is given, also outside churches. Second, the funeral is personalized in its ritual form. Personal elements are dominant, not universal patterns of symbols. Third, the remembrance of the dead is bound to places, objects and practices that offer personal relationships with the deceased.

In this paper, all three processes will be illustrated by using qualitative and quantitative empirical data from field research in the Netherlands. They will be interpreted as new channels of religiosity. This new religiosity has a personalized character: the addressee of religious practices is the deceased person. Next, religiosity is expressed in practices, rather than in doctrine. In the paper special attention will be given to symbols. The perspective shown will hopefully help to broaden the view on rituals around death, dying and disposal, as there is a need for ritualization among many bereaved. Further, it will hopefully broaden the view on contemporary religiosity inside and outside institutionalized religion, not only in the Netherlands. The attempt to cross the border of death is common to all the phenomena which are described, and it can be helpful when searching for meaning in the face of death.

Gordon Raeburn (UK)
The Free Church of Scotland and the rise of the cemeteries

On the 18th of May, 1843, under the guidance of Thomas Chalmers, the Free Church of Scotland officially broke from the established Church of Scotland. While both being Presbyterian churches, it would soon become clear that these two entities differed on several subjects, one of which was burial. It is this that will be looked at in this paper.

Cemeteries had been suggested as eminently suitable burial locations at the Scottish Reformation in 1560, as they were outside of town and city walls, and were designed for no other purpose than the burial of the dead. They were, however, slow to be adopted. In many cases the Church of Scotland, both lay members and ministers, continued to be buried in pre-Reformation fashions, whether that entailed being buried within the church buildings themselves, or merely within the churchyard.

With the establishment of the Free Church of Scotland the popularity of cemeteries as burial locations was to grow. In fact, the majority of the founding members of the Free Church of Scotland chose to be buried in the recently opened Grange Cemetery in Edinburgh, and this site continued to be popular with members of the Free Church.

Of course, as a newly established church, the Free Church of Scotland was initially lacking in property, which may have been more of an influence in this matter than any doctrinal issues. This paper will address this subject and attempt to resolve the matter.

Mette Raunkiaer (Denmark)
Life and death of elderly, sick people with ethnic minority backgrounds on nursing homes and in own homes in Denmark

This paper focuses on sick and elderly people with ethnic minority backgrounds and their relatives' assumptions, wishes and needs surrounding death. There is relatively little knowledge in Denmark regarding how elderly from ethnic minorities who live in nursing homes/in own home, or their relatives, experience daily life as death approaches. This group is in many ways invisible, both with respect to the general debate about the elderly and with regard to people with minority backgrounds who live in Denmark. It is a widely differentiated and varied group with many different backgrounds and stories.

However, one common denominator when immigrants and refugees talk about their lives as elderly in Denmark is the experience of loneliness and social isolation. This group is also a socially vulnerable minority within other minorities – partly due to their lack of language skills, poor knowledge of society, poor health and minimal social networks. It isn't difficult to imagine that this group, with their different cultural backgrounds and an increased vulnerability, could have special expectations, wishes and needs in connection with death either at a nursing home or in their own home. This paper focuses on the results of a recently completed interview study of 14 elderly people living in nursing homes or in their own homes in Denmark and 8 of their relatives. None of the elderly participants were originally from Scandinavia or Northern Europe.

Ellen van Reuler (University of Manchester, UK)
The relationship between palliative care and euthanasia. A comparison of the developments in England and the Netherlands during the post war era

The relationship between the emergence of specialist palliative care provision for people nearing the end of their lives and the availability of euthanasia is a contested one. The Netherlands attracted international attention by accepting euthanasia since the 1970s. During the same period, the number of hospices rose quickly in England. Although historical work on the development of palliative care services as well as euthanasia movements is available, the mutual influences of these developments have not yet been studied historically.

Several commentators have argued that the availability of euthanasia in the Netherlands has resulted in a lack of an impetus to establish specialist palliative care services. Based on a comparative history of the developments in England and the Netherlands, I will show that the histories of palliative care and euthanasia get intertwined at several points. The comparison of the two cases shows that it is overly simplistic to state that the Dutch were not interested in palliative care because of their acceptance of euthanasia. Other influences, such as the structure of the health care system and the emergence of other provisions for end of life care, contributed to the comparatively late establishment of hospices in the Netherlands. Additionally, during the second half of the 1990s we can identify an opposite relationship between palliative care and euthanasia than the one often asserted, because the government started to stimulate the development of palliative care, because the legal codification of euthanasia was expected in the nearby future.

Marcel Reyes-Cortez
My grandmother is not a corpse: The forgotten dead of a Megalopolis

The cemetery space could be argued or understood to be a social, political, socio-culturally dynamic and sociomythic space, yet when the dead die alone, without identity, then a cemetery takes on a darker and sinister twist. My paper explores how a cemetery in a megalopolis such as Mexico City turns into a waste dump for the carcass of the human body. In this context, if a person in Mexico City is unknown and its body unclaimed by its family or friends, the dead ends striped of its role as a social person, dehumanised and treated as waste, a corpse or a pile of bones, striped of its human dignity. There are instances more common than not were the dignity and humanity of the dead has been excluded from the overall complexity of current Mexican funerary practices. This paper will look particularly at the forgotten dead that find their final resting place in common unmarked graves, such as the ones located in Panteón Civil de Dolores, Mexico D.F.

This paper addresses why people persist in maintaining a relationship with their dead, exploring the social and cultural tools that are used to extend the dead's biographical narratives such as secular and religious commemorative objects and the photographic portrait. 'Not letting go' is of fundamental value for my research participants as striping the dead from their humanity could place us in danger of excluding ourselves from becoming dynamic members of the human community when we die.

Pamela Roberts, Talina Villao and Tracy Carlsen (California State University, Long Beach, USA)
"Instead of doin' it to my body, I did it to my car": Marking death in Southern California

As described by Walter and others, emerging forms of postdeath ritual often involve public displays of personal bereavement. One such display has been appearing on automobiles in an area long know for its car culture; increasingly, southern Californians are affixing memorial stickers (e.g. "In Loving Memory of _____") to their rear windows. Our DDD9 presentation, based on 400 car memorial sightings, described memorial characteristics; the present paper shifts our focus to the people who have them, examining their motivations for creating memorials and the ways in which they use them. Findings are compared to the literature on other emerging forms of postdeath ritual.

Despite their public nature, in-depth interviews with car memorial owners suggest that most create and display their memorials for themselves, as markers of a transformative experience and personal reminders of the dead. Few give any thought to the passersby who will view them; several likened their car memorials to memorial tattoos, a reminder for the bereaved that might be seen by others, but was not made for them. As in the glimpse of a memorial tattoo, each time the bereaved see their deceased loved one's name in their rear view mirror, they are reconnected with their loss and affection for the dead; most intend to recreate their memorials when they get new cars to maintain links with their loved one. Car memorials also increase a sense of camaraderie with other drivers who have experienced loss and serve as memento mori for all who travel southern California roadways.

Gabriel Roman (University of Medicine and Pharmacy 'Gr. T. Popa', Iasi, Romania)
Pecularities of attitudes towards death in a 'traditional' Roma community in the 3rd millenium: Kalderash of Zanea, county of Iasi

Along time, Gypsies represented one of the communities less accepted by history. Despite the fact they have always been traveling communities, Gypsies preserved their own customs and traditions, while absorbing different aspects of the host cultures they settled among. Although this study investigates the Gypsies of Zanea, a village located near the City of Iaşi, its primary purpose is to find out unknown aspects of the Gypsies` attitudes towards death, with respect to their specific life styles, religious status, traditions and beliefs.

This study is an empirical work based on on-the-spot observation, participation and interview. The Gypsy attitude towards death is founded on a dualistic conception, the opposition between pure and impure, being an Indian heritage. Fear of death is justified by the inability to observe the rules of purity. Participation in a large number of the community members is a guarantee of protection against evil, so the death of a person involves the entire group.

Funeral rites, labeled as mere superstition, have consistency, relevance and meaning if they are treated in terms of the magical thinking that created them. There is a strong valorization of traditional practices, especially of their symbolic value. Unlike modern environments where it is considered indecent to publicly display grief and sorrow, we have to admit the Roma community`s superiority in managing death, founded on the manner in which a Gypsy understands his death as a natural order of life, but also the advantage of a strong community network of solidarity built during his life.

Marius Rotar (1 Decembrie 1918 University of Alba Iulia, Romania)
'Satan's Oven': Romanian Orthodox Church and the issues of cremation

One of the most relevant specificities of the actual Romanian death system is the weak development of cremation: there is only one functional crematorium in Romania, a country with 22 millions inhabitants, where about 1000 cremations are carried out per year. This issue is still actual in spite of the fact that Romania was a pioneer of cremation in South-Eastern Europe during the interwar period, and the first orthodox country where a crematorium was opened in 1928 (the soviet case is totally different by comparison).

The present study attempts to bring into the light the complex relation between the issues of cremation and the Romanian Orthodox Church during the last two centuries, starting from the first orthodox reaction upon the issue from the second half of the 19th century. The main Romanians' confession, orthodoxy, strongly rejects cremation by two decisions of the Romanian Orthodox Church adopted in 1928 and 1933, which are still in force.

Under these conditions and taking into account the historical evolution of cremation in Romania, the main question of the present study is the following one: could the unchangeable opinion of the Romanian Orthodox Church on cremation be the only explanation of the situation of this phenomenon in Romania nowadays?

Mical Russo
Death and photography in America

Since its inception in 1839, photography has been considered as the most recognizable format of human classification of American's society, a form that has cultural and ideological implications. Photography in this context represents a cardinal site of cultural conflict, of contests over interpretations and identity, as well as over the social power of images.

The use of photographs of people who died during the 9/11 terrorist attack, reflects the continued need to memorialize our loved ones. This research acknowledges the absence of post-mortem photography in this century, as well as the value of the use of post-mortem photos for grieving the loss of loved ones as a historical and cultural grieving ritual. This research points to the need for further research in order to understand why photography has not become an acceptable practice of healing and comfort in contemporary U.S. culture. "Death and photography seem to have a basic relationship; but it is illusionary, for the camera does not depict death, it only shows how someone else saw it" (Goldman in Burns). Death in contemporary American culture is often distorted, hidden or kept private among families, social institutions and the media. Public displays of grieving are frowned upon and looked at as a sign of weakness.

I plan to explore both narrative and visual approaches to this problem, investigating in each case how the frame defines itself.

Terri Sabatos (United States Military Academy, Westpoint, USA)
Visions in black and white: The widow and the bride in Victorian visual culture

In 1863 Albert Edward, Prince of Wales married Alexandra of Denmark. The pictures of their wedding are in many ways typical of the Victorian era: the bride is in white (a fashion made popular by her mother-in-law Queen Victoria at her own wedding in 1840), her new husband stands proudly by her side, her attendants fan around her. However, many of the images are more unusual to our 21st century eyes. Several of the photographs feature not the bride but Queen Victoria, dressed in mourning black gazing soulfully at a bust of her deceased husband Prince Albert; while the Prince and Princess of Wales, in their wedding garb, stand noticeably on the periphery.

While the obviously mourning Queen Victoria might seem a grim symbol in an image that intends to celebrate a happy event, the inclusion of a widow in a bridal image is not unusual in the 19th century. In fact the linkage of the bride with the widow and/or the bride with death was a fairly common trope in Victorian culture and has roots in Classical Antiquity. Do brides and widows merely represent a juxtaposition of opposites, a reminder that amidst life there is death? Or are there more complex issues to uncover? This paper will explore this motif by locating its antecedents in earlier time periods and by discussing what it may reveal about the role of Victorian women and ritual in the domestic sphere, and the ways in which both the bride and the widow inhabit spaces of liminality.

Nicole Sachmerda-Schulz (University of Leipzig, Germany)
The increase of anonymous and natural burials in Germany:
Indicator for secularization or new religiousness?

The proportion of anonymous communal graves in Germany is strongly increasing – despite all the critique by the churches and in the media. While the anonymous communal grave was an exception at the beginning of the 20th century, which was sanctioned by church law, nowadays, more than half of all funerals are held anonymously in some German regions. This development is widely criticized by the churches, certain organizations for traditional burials and by the media. They assume a loss of cultural heritage and human dignity, because it breaks with the common individual inscriptions on tombs, making the deceased anonymous. Among the anonymous communal grave, natural burials arise. However, in contrast to anonymous communal burial, the natural burial is considered positively and gets romanticized.

The questions arise: how has this change happened? Which religious or non-religious beliefs and worldviews motivate the decision to opt for an anonymous or natural grave? This paper analyzes the contemporary development and meaning of anonymous burial, taking into consideration secularization theories (e.g. Casanova 1998) and theories about modern spirituality (e.g. Knoblauch 2009). On the one hand, the anonymous grave could be seen as an indicator for secularization, being a rational decision, negating the traditional Christian forms of sepulture. On the other hand, especially the anonymous natural burials can be motivated by new religiousness like natural religions or pantheism. This will be examined using data conducted in 88 municipalities in 2010, and interviews with people who prearranged an anonymous burial for themselves.

Clara Saraiva (Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal)
The Carnival of death: perceptions of death in Europe and the Americas.
The invisibility of death amongst African and Brazilian migrants in Portugal

In spite of the interest in Portugal's recent status as an immigration country, some important issues dealing with the immigrants´ states of suffering and death, have hardly been dealt with. In a Western society where death has become a major taboo, this estrangement towards life´s last rite of passage moves on to the realm of myth and prejudices, and the invisibility of death becomes a true reality. Yet, for immigrants themselves, it is a reality that often conditions the relation with their home country.

   This paper will deal with the multiple levels that death touches upon, from the symbolic to the more practical ones. Death is one realm in which a transnational approach is mandatory. It entails an intense circulation of material goods, but also of highly symbolic significant universes which circulate along with the goods and the people: the corpse, but also the spirits and the relations with the other world that people brought along into the Diaspora situation. This paper aims at deconstructing prejudiced notions of what happens with the immigrants´ dead bodies, including symbolic representations as well as practical issues, such as legal processes involved to send the bodies home, using as case studies the examples of immigrants from Guinea-Bissau and Brazil in contemporary Portugal. Based on ethnographic data, it will deal with the work done by immigrants' associations, as well as with other intervenients in the process: hospitals, funerary agencies, diplomatic and border authorities and religious institutions.

Cyril Schafer (University of Otago, New Zealand)
Corpses, conflict and insignificance? A critical analysis of contemporary post-mortem practices

The personalization of post-mortem practices has been presented as one of the significant mortuary shifts associated with secularization in contemporary, western society. While some authors have lamented a loss of meaningful, communal ritual (Wouters 2002; Hunter 2007; Crouch 2004), others have evaluated this shift as a positive development reflecting the realities of changing demographic profiles. This paper critically examines personalization by exploring three groups integrally linked to post-mortem processes: funeral directors, secular celebrants and the bereaved. Drawing on ethnographic research, this discussion reveals that personalization is a complex and – at times - contested term that frequently obscures the processes, meanings and difficulties encountered in organizing post-mortem practices in contemporary society.

Christine Schlott (Leipzig, Germany)
Funerals as performances

In Leipzig, today almost 80 percent of all funeral rituals are performed without representatives from a religious community. Professional undertakers have become the ritual specialists who organise a final farewell for the family of the deceased. The undertaker is paid to do all the necessary work accompanying the death. The undertaker acts like a director at a play; they book the chapel or ceremonial room at the cemetery, inform the minister or book a memorial speaker, organise musicians or recorded music. He or she decorates the chapel for the ceremony with cloths, flowers and candles. The coffin or urn is displayed along with flowers and candles in front of the audience just as on a stage. In addition, a photograph of the deceased is often placed next to the coffin or urn

to give the impression of the deceased as the main actor and the central figure of the performance. In this way the performance is addressed to both the bereaved and the deceased person. Alongside the deceased person, the minister or memorial speaker is also a main actor. She/he recounts to the audience special stories from the deceased's life, allowing them to remember together the time they had with the deceased.

It can be seen, that funeral services reflect the life style of both the deceased and his/her family; this is especially poignant for young people. To illustrate, the deceased's favourite music is played, films or slide shows are shown to remember special occasions in their life. In addition pictures painted by the deceased are displayed, their friends act out parts of their life and the fruits of the deceased's person's hobby are displayed. These acts are performed in order to make this final farewell as personal as possible.

Haerin Shin (Stanford University, USA)
From ghost in the machine to mechanical ghosts: the dialectics of spectrality in contemporary American fiction in the Age of Technologically Enhanced Reenchantment

With the advent of modernity, the technological revolutions its time has brought forth, ghosts have been sterilized under psychoanalytic scrutiny or subject to historicization, exorcized from both our actual lives and literary representation. This can be seen as alienation in multiple layers; the attributes that are conventionally associated with "ghostly" figures (disembodiment, fragmentation. and incomprehensibility) were seen as undesirable qualities to be rectified or banished. Ghosts *were* no longer in the sense that such unnatural, unreal and incomprehensible beings could not co-inhabit the same plain of reality us rational and substantive human beings occupied, under the harsh light of reason.

The irony is that technological advancement in human civilization, the force that had initially driven all ghosts out of our conceptual and physical acknowledgement, has in fact brought them back into being. The rise of digital and computerized media has rendered our very own selves "spectral"; in a world infested with distorted, disembodied and fragmented projections that defy conventional notions of cognitive existence on fixed coordinates of time and space, beings – human and other material beings alike – are ghostly. And, ghosts, in that sense, are real.

Robert James Smith (Southern Cross University, Australia)
When the personal becomes public: grief and memorialisation

Much of the 20th century marked a change in the Western world's response to death: the increasing medicalisation of death and dying, an increasing 'distancing' from disposal practices, and an increasing restraint in conventional memorialisation—all of which worked to separate the end-of-life experience away from the lives of those who continued on. Yet this seeming/seemly veil, drawn over the procedures surrounding the end of life, came to be rent by the response to the rare occasions of violent death, whether to a family member, or (more often) to a public figure or occasion for which one felt much sympathy.

These issues are examined from the perspective of folk practice, grounded upon the features of traditional mourning, and then considering contemporary family and local responses to motor vehicle deaths and to shark attack death. The issues are then put in the broader context of major events of public grief, including the death of Princess Diana, the 9/11 attacks in New York, and to wars. This approach reveals individuals in crisis confronting the nature of the relationship between themselves and community—extending to the very compact that one has with authority. Suggestions are given on the ways to best support such individuals in this crisis.

Margaret Souza
The embodied experience of living with chronic illness and preparing for dying

Accounts of dying often take the perspective of clinicians or the surviving relatives as they refer back to the individual who has died and their participation in the process. Books have been written by persons who were dying (Bauby 1998, O'Kelly 2007, Schwartz 2008, Pausch and Zaslow 2008). These books usually follow the theme of the scholarly literature revealing an acceptance of impending death and reconciliation to the dying process. Other voices of the dying are seldom heard as they deal with the multiple issues that are present when a terminal illness occurs.

This paper will explore the voices of persons with chronic or life threatening illness. It is based on opened ended interviews following participant observation research I have done in acute and long term care facilities in the New York City area. Interviews have been completed at different time intervals to capture the changing attitudes that persons have as their health stabilizes or continues to deteriorate. It follows on questions from my prior research the opened up issues of the dying person's perspective.

Issues that limit their ability to voice their perspective to family members and/or medical professionals are revealed. They discuss their experience with the health care system. They focus on issues of decision making as their health care status changes. They also discuss the issues that they have utmost concern about when facing their deaths. These and other issues will be the focus on this presentation.

Irene Stengs (Meertens Instituut, Amsterdam, the Netherlands)
Sacred waste: Matter and meaning in mourning

The images of the immense piles of flowers and attributes left at royal sites in tribute to Princess Diana in August 1997 are maybe the best visualizations of what 'sacred waste' might entail: ritual remains that cannot be disposed of as just garbage, but neither can be left to decay. In this case, the problem was solved by having the fresh flowers selected for homes for the elderly, while the remainder of the 10.000 to 15.000 tons of flowers was composted to be used in royal parks. The more durable attributes went to the Spencer family (Greenhalgh 1999: 42, 48).

Numerous rituals produce rather straightforward waste (such as the disposable paper plates, hats and garlands of birthday parties). Yet, in other rituals more risky waste is produced, for instance in religious rituals: rituals that charge objects with religious or spiritual power. For secular rituals, we may especially think of rituals related to death, mourning and commemoration. Dealing both with 'the unknown' and 'the beyond', death and religion are ambiguous domains, and so are the ritual experts and objects involved. Building on the work of Gozewijn van Beek and Webb Kean on the significance of materiality in the production of meaning, it is my objective to investigate the ambiguous power that remains in the, what I would like to call, 'sacred waste' produced in commemorative ritual (in the Netherlands) and the specific demands it imposes on its treatment.

Kathryn Stewart Hegedus, Thomas Long, Lynn Allchin (The University of Connecticut, USA)
My disposal cocoon, as shared through the voices of college students

Providing intellectually engaging courses in a global world is an inviting and demanding task for every university curriculum. A school of nursing's undergraduate general education course, *End of Life: A Multicultural, Interdisciplinary Experience*, was designed to address this challenge. The course is planned as "An examination of experiences at the end of life to enhance student awareness of related issues through societal, personal, multicultural, and interdisciplinary lenses" and is open to nursing and non-nursing students. The primary focus of this paper is on students' written responses to the topic "Thoughts on My Own Death".

Our presentation will include examples of some of the families' rituals, including poetry and songs that have been used throughout generations in their families as well as their own wishes for changes in these customs. The later include creative expressions for a columbarium on the college campus and creating a space in their homes if they were to have a terminal illness which embodies their heartfelt longings as part of saying goodbye. Also discussed are their rationales for the choice of roadside memorials, the composition of their obituary and eulogy and music from their favorite bands. These death ways reflect the rapidly changing funerary landscape in the United States as voiced by college students.

Andrea Szkil (University of Sussex, UK)
"Work is work": Forensic specialists' experiences
in post-conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina

In light of recent natural disasters, pandemics, wars, and terrorist attacks, the treatment of human remains following mass death has received a great deal of attention by the media, non-governmental organisations, governmental agencies, and scholars. However, the experiences of the individuals who recover, examine, identify, and repatriate or dispose of the remains of the deceased following such events has been subject to limited discussion. The majority of analyses of 'body handlers'' experiences have been conducted by psychologists and/or psychiatrists and centre on the psychological impact of this type of work on the individual or their coping mechanisms. Although important, these studies frequently fail to fully examine the experiences of 'body handlers' in mass death settings.

The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to provide additional insights into this topic within the European context. Based on anthropological fieldwork conducted in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), it explores the experiences of forensic specialists at the International Commission on Missing Persons (ICMP) and their work to recover, analyse, identify, and return to family members the remains of those individuals who went 'missing' during the 1992-1995 war in BiH. This paper addresses forensic specialists' responses to these remains, highlighting their navigation of the deceased body as an 'object' of scientific interest and a former living person. In doing so, it brings together debates regarding the ambiguous body and the body as material culture, as well as the evolution and utilisation of 'feeling rules', emotion work, and scientific objectivism.

Akiko Takenaka (University of Kentucky, USA)
Service to your nation doest not end when you die: Mobilizing war death in modern Japan

Death in war can serve as a powerful political tool. In my paper, I will examine how war death was mobilized to inspire more war death during the Asia-Pacific War (1931-45). It was done so to motivate young men to fight recklessly at war, and for the home front population to encourage the men to do so. In this war, small boxes made of unvarnished wood and wrapped in white cloth were a familiar sight on the Japanese homeland. It was assumed that these boxes, which were ultimately given to the bereaved families, contained ashes of their loved ones. In many cases, they did. But as the war intensified, so did the difficulty of battlefield cremation, and, ashes came to be replaced by other objects.

Consistent throughout was the pretense of returning the ashes to the family, and the carefully orchestrated spectacle that involved this. The visibility of the ashes signaled another kind of homecoming for the dead: their spiritual return to Yasukuni Shrine, a military shrine where spirits of the war dead were memorialized as gods. In this scenario, war death became the ultimate way of life for men. These two rituals for body and spirit together functioned as a new and powerful tool, because they mobilized the home front population *during* the conflict, and produce more soldiers that were willing to follow in the steps of those that returned as ashes and spirits. As such, a soldier could continue to serve his nation even after his death.

Golie Talaie
Post-morten photography now

This paper is the result of a research on the position of post-mortem photography in the contemporary society of the Netherlands. Through a more general view of history of this phenomenon in the Western society, it focuses on the current underlying motivations for the practice, the attitudes towards it, and thereby its place in the Netherlands today. My main question is: what is the position of post-mortem photography in the contemporary society and what are the motivations for and attitudes toward the practice?

My approach toward the practice of post-mortem photography is primarily a social one, as post-mortem photographs have to be studied within the social context in which they are taken, used and kept. At the other hand, the medium specific characteristics of photography can explain the privileges of this medium, compared to its predecessors (posthumous paintings) and its successors (the funeral films). Thereby one can think of photography's indexicality and its relation to both aspects of truth and death, which make post-mortem photographs a significantly important aid in the grieving process and death's acceptance.

Other questions, which I will try to answer in this paper, are the following: (1) Is post-mortem photography making a comeback in the current society or has it never been gone? (2) Why is it becoming visible again? (3) Can one speak of an innovation or continuation regarding the practice of post-mortem photography/imagery today? (4) What is the role of the new media in this?

Michaela Thönnes, Nina Jakoby (University of Zürich, Switzerland)
Where do people die in Europe? On the question of dying in institutions

There is a great discrepancy in society between the number of people that prefer to die within their home and the number of cases where this wish actually becomes reality. The most frequent place of dying in Western societies is not the home but an institution, such as a hospital or nursing home. There is general agreement that the process of dying and the people involved therein have shifted from the personal privacy of the home to the professional enclaves of hospitals and nursing homes in the past sixty years. The terms institutionalization or hospitalization stand for a process of banishing death and dying from everyday life. The hospital as a place of dying has been the target of much controversy. But what is the actual distribution of places of dying? Can we identify social patterns of dying related to the various places of dying?

Our presentation provides a theoretical and empirical overview of place of dying as a social phenomenon. Contemporary discourse on the institutionalization of dying is subjected to critical scrutiny in light of the state of the art of research. The investigation is based on European studies that provide data on the frequency of people dying in hospitals, retirement or nursing homes, hospices, or at home. In addition, other factors determining places of dying, such as medical, structural, socio-demographic, and individual factors, will be summarized. Such an analysis raises interesting questions concerning the influence of social inequality on dying.

Adela Toplean (Romania)
Personal encounter with death as sacred experience beyond religion

I intend to discuss a rather delicate sociological aspect in connection with death and religious studies: the fact that, in late modernity, the experience of death might have started to be perceived as getting closer to the dispersed sacred, while growing apart from consistent forms of religion. An affirmation as such has many theoretical implications that would inherently lead to questioning methodologies and approach angles in the contemporary death studies field.

I am interested in finding relevant empirical data and theoretical support for providing an answer to the question whether it is possible to consider the personal encounter with death (of one's own or of a Significant Other) as being a sacred experience beyond precise dogmatic (and even religious) contents/contexts. I suggest that the thought of death *could* determine a direct experience of the sacred in a most natural way. Although the thought of any other existential problem could also become a sacred opportunity, the thought/the awareness of death, regardless of the cultural context that shapes it, could be the awareness of something that is necessarily unknown and not experienced beforehand. Recognizing a sacred experience has to do with recognizing its non-belonging to what we usually see and feel in the everyday world. And here, I think, lies an inherent connection between death and the sacred which I humbly take as a theoretical challenge. If properly justified and explained, a certain kind of "sociology of the sacred" should perhaps be relevant when studying death in late modernity.

Helena Toth (Ludwig-Maximillians-Universitaet, München, Germany)
Shades of grey: Secular burial rites in East Germany

State sponsored funerals and reburials serve as stages where political and national identities are forged. Through case studies from East Germany this paper argues that since private burials, though less spectacular than large, representative ones, lie at a sensitive intersection between the private and the public spheres and they too can be studied as places where political and national identities are shaped.

From the first half of the 1950s the East German state considered introducing socialist rites of passage. There was to be a socialist alternative to baptism, confirmation and the Christian funeral ceremony. Although the enormous potential of rituals to shape public opinion and to forge a "socialist personality" was acknowledged, the plans remained on paper for a decade.

In the meantime, however, a popular demand for new, "modern" burial rites, which distanced themselves equally from the church and the recent national-socialist past, emerged. Overcoming bureaucratic confusion in matters relating to death, an official program for the education of secular funerary orators was introduced in the 1960s. Funerary orators played a central role in promoting and carrying out the new type of funeral. Yet funerals could be "modern" in the socialist sense in many different, at times conflicting, ways.

The paper explores the multifarious forms of secularism and argues that its many shades of grey can be understood as a testimony to the complex interaction between the socialist state and its citizens in East Germany.

John Troyer (University of Bath, UK)
Future death technology: The dead human body as biomass

Since the mid-19th century, the first world, western corpse has been inextricably linked with industrial age human technology. Contemporary concerns about the ecologically sustainable dead body focus on transforming the funeral into a natural or green process. Indeed, as people become more and more interested in the environmental impacts of their daily lives, many individuals are asking: How ecologically sustainable is death? What are the environmental impacts associated with handling the dead body? More importantly, why are some final disposition methods considered green and others natural?

What the 21st century concept of natural burial really suggests is a 19th century pre-industrial age model that often misses the following point: Human disposition of the dead body, by whatever means, is a humanly invented practice. Humans digging graves to bury corpses is no less a humanly invented postmortem technology than alkaline hydrolysis.

This paper critiques and analyzes the environmental issues that surround current post-mortem options, from burial to cremation to tissue digestion. It is also a case study on new research exploring how heat-capture technology currently used at the Haycombe Cemetery and Crematorium in Bath (and across the UK) reduces both mercury emissions and offers a potentially viable energy source for the local community.

The broader philosophical and theoretical argument for this current project is that the dead human body is organic matter, which, barring human intervention will always decompose. It is a form-of-life (paraphrasing philosopher Giorgio Agamben) that comes into being only after death: biomass.

Leen Van Brussel, Nico Carpentier (Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium)
Discourses on end-of-life care in the North-Belgian newspaper coverage

Offering a wide variety of discourses on death, dying and end-of-life care, the media can be regarded as one of society's key discursive machineries. Media are not just passively reflecting social phenomena, but they produce, reproduce and transform social phenomena and provide the materials to make sense of the world. Starting from this social constructivist interplay between mass media and society, this paper analyses the representations of end-of-life care in the North-Belgian newspaper coverage and aims at answering the following research questions: Which discourses on end-of-life care are brought into circulation by three main North-Belgian newspapers: De Standaard, De Morgen and Het Laatste Nieuws? How do these newspapers represent the vision of the population on end-of-life care?

The paper analyses three moments in time. Two moments were determined on the basis of individualized cases and one moment was chosen ad randomly out of the last five years. Using discourse-theoretical analysis (Carpentier & De Cleen, 2007), our results show a strong and explicit autonomy-discourse in the case-coverage. Here, a dying process under autonomous control which is experienced in a state of full awareness is constructed as 'good' and 'dignified'. Moreover, in the case-coverage, the complexity of end-of-life decision-making is often reduced to a palliative care vs. euthanasia dichotomy. In the non-case coverage, an autonomy-discourse is far more toned and implicit. Furthermore, the non-case coverage leaves more space for the complexity of end-of-life care as different and conflicting voices and visions are articulated by a multitude of actors, amongst which the population.

Paul van der Velde (Radboud University Nijmegen, the Netherlands)
Buddhist death

If one considers the practices of modern Buddhism as they are done in the west, one would not think that in fact Buddhism originally developed out of the fear of death. Nowadays the main practice in the west consists of meditation, mindfulness and stressreduction. This is quite a difference with what one may encounter in Asia, where monks may meditate on the transitoriness of life. For this purpose they may even visit anatomical abductions of corpses. Moreover monks play a crucial part in the care for the dying, even after their death. Monks may serve to transfer karmic merits to a deceased person. The Buddha image is many cases erected in order to commemorate a deceased human or to transfer karmic merit to this person in the next life. Therefore for many Buddhists in Asia a Buddha image is indirectly connected to death. In the west Buddhist care for the dying often
consists of visualizations of death and Buddhist care for the dying is above all based on Tibetan practices. In this presentation the differences between ideas, meditations and rituals concerning death in Buddhist Asia and in the west are the main focus.

Paul Van Landeghem, Joachim Cohen & Luc Deliens (End-of-Life Care Research group)
The acceptance of euthanasia by the general public in 39 European countries

This paper describes to what extent euthanasia is accepted by the general public throughout Europe. Data from a preliminary release of the fourth wave (2008) of the European Value Survey (EVS) were analyzed, including 39 of the 46 participating countries (N=56,210). Acceptance of euthanasia, described as "terminating the life of the incurable sick", was measured on a rating scale ranging from 1 ("Never justified") to 10 ("Always justified"). A mean acceptance score (M) and

standard deviation (SD) were calculated for each country. The highest mean scores were found in Denmark (M = 7.9, SD = 0.7), Belgium (M = 6.8, SD = 2.6), France (M = 6.7, SD = 2.8), the Netherlands (M = 6.6, SD = 2.8) and Luxembourg (M = 6.3, SD = 3.2). Low scores were predominantly situated in Southeast Europe, with the lowest in Kosovo (M = 1.5, SD =1.7), Cyprus (M = 1.9, SD = 2.0) and Malta (M = 2.4, SD = 2.6). Compared with the results from the previous EVS wave (2000), in Western Europe acceptance has generally increased (e.g. 27% increase in Spain) or remained stable (e.g. the Netherlands). In most Eastern European countries, however, acceptance has decreased (e.g. 29% decrease in Ukraine).

In conclusion, euthanasia remains a heavily debated practice throughout Europe. High acceptance is found in only a small cluster of Western-European countries including the three countries that have legalized euthanasia (i.e. the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg), Denmark, France, Finland and Spain. In these latter countries an increasing societal pressure to legalize euthanasia may be expected.

Helen Vaughan (University of Bath, UK)
'The Man with the Scythe' – Variations in the personification of death in Victorian visual culture.

In English Victorian visual culture the personification of death appears with intriguing variations. Death is portrayed as a country workman, an androgynous angel, an ethereal cloaked skeleton, a beautiful bride, an old woman, and a boy.

This paper will explore where and when these variations occur and what they might reveal about Victorian anxieties about death and dying. Examining the type of media (i.e. painting, illustration, sculpture) and context of display (art gallery/institution, popular press, places of burial/commemoration) is of particular importance in understanding these variations as certain depictions are found in particular media and not others. For example, paintings exhibited at the Royal Academy often depict death in human form, not skeletal. This personification of death is not threatening or scary, but comforting and reassuring. Some illustrations found in the popular press, however, depict death differently. For example, Punch published a cartoon (1845) with the caption 'The Poor Man's Friend' where death, a skeleton in a cloak, stands over the deathbed of a poverty stricken, dying man. The skeleton is clearly not comforting or reassuring. Do Victorian artists depict death differently depending upon whose death it is? Is middle and upper class death viewed differently from working and lower class death? This paper will argue that Victorian visual culture reveals Victorians' anxiety about the nature of death.

Claudia Venhorst (Radboud University Nijmegen, the Netherlands)
Islamic death rituals in a small town context in the Netherlands.
Ritual transfer, imagination and ritual creativity

This paper focuses on the practice of Islamic death rituals (the ritual purification of the deceased in particular) in a small town context in the Netherlands. In this context, Muslims of various backgrounds and origins are depending on each other in the performance of their death rites. It shows that Islamic rituals that often tend to be presented in a quite univocal and static way, are, where the actual ritual practice is concerned, far more diverse and flexible. Revision of death rites is often inevitable. To gain an understanding of this ritual creativity, the notion of 'ritual transfer' is very important. This study sets out to describe and interpret the translation process of death rituals from one context to another.

The migrant's 'imagination' plays a role in shaping rituals in a new context. This imagination is expressed in a dynamic body of narratives that circulates within the Muslim communities. These

narratives incorporate the religious, cultural and ethnic backgrounds, personal biographies and migration experiences of the participants and they very much influence the perception they have of both contexts. The stories tend to idealize the original context and problematize the actual context and the study shows how this actually impacts the ritual practice of death rituals. The paper is based on current research in the Dutch Town of Venlo and drawn on qualitative research data from interviews and (participant) observations.

Tony Walter (University of Bath, UK)
Grief and culture

In 2010, I published my article "Grief and Culture: a check list", in *Bereavement Care, 29*(2), 5-9, outlining six sets of questions that help identify the assumptions about grief held within any culture, including one's own. The questions include the obligations mourners feel, who should be mourned, what should be done with the dead, what should be done with emotions, the inclusion or exclusion of mourners from society, and the role of religion.

I developed this check list for training sessions with bereavement workers, clergy, etc, to help them identify their own personal and cultural assumptions about grief, and there is evidence that it does indeed help them do this. In the article, I claimed that asking such questions can also assist bereavement workers with client groups, both within a culture and across cultures; I claimed this is more helpful than the 'fact sheets' about grief in various religions and ethnicities that are currently available to care workers. Another claim is that these questions could be useful for researchers investigating cultural variations in grief. But are these claims true? This is the question this paper asks.

Christina Welch (University of Winchester, UK)
Death and desire; image of mortality and the erotic woman

Sex and death reflect the oppositions of immanence and transcendence, the earthy and the spiritual, the here-and-now and the ever-after. Culturally fascinating, the marriage of sex and death in Europe has a long history. In this inter-disciplinary paper the use of European erotic death imagery in two time periods will be analysed and contrasted. Firstly, sixteenth century Germanic Reformist art which highlighted the folly, futility and transience of earthly vanities in the wake of the Protestant Reformation will be explored. The second set of images explored is contemporary erotic calendar art from Poland and Italy produced to advertise coffins.

Paul Messaris has suggested that visual images "make a persuasive communication due to iconiticy; the emotional response to the visual image presented", and this paper argues that in the case of these two genres of mortality visuals, the iconicity potently reflects the socio-cultural and religious times in which they were produced. It will suggest that in an era less familiar with the realities of death, the Death and the Maiden genre has moved away from the concept of Memento Mori (remember you will die) and graphic images of transiskeletons, to images where death is only intimated, and rather than women and the fleshy desire they signify being conquered by mortality, we seek to conquer it.

Kerry Welch (University of Nottingham, Lincoln, UK)
Exploring the attitudes of patients and their significant others towards the use of an Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment (ADRT) at the end-of-life.

There is an assumption in society that death can be avoided, postponed and resisted (Clark, 2002), and where death is a medical failure rather than an important aspect of life. The increasing medicalization of death and the consequences that has for the dying is an area which has been greatly discussed. Illich (2003) in his publication the Medical Nemesis discusses that by renouncing autonomy to medicine in the pursuit of cheating death can only serve to damage the health of that person and result in a bad death.

To have a good death would seem to be synonymous with having awareness of death (Sandman, 2005). So are ADRT's the answer, or at least some way towards an answer? Perkins (2007) comments that advance directives/decisions symbolize a degree of commitment towards acknowledging patients as partners in care planning and as empowered individuals. This is an important factor when considering end-of-life care, as physicians will often misperceive their patients' preferences (Schneiderman, Kaplan and Rosenberg et al, 1997). As physicians will often involve relatives/significant others in these important discussions at the end-of-life, do those significant others contribute to the misperception of the patients preferences?

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Kate Woodthorpe (University of Bath, UK)
The price of death: why we need to start paying attention to how much death costs

This paper sets out three key reasons for focusing time and energy on examining the role of the State in the immediate period after death. Told from a UK perspective, specifically England and Wales, the paper considers the current and future provision of Social Fund Funeral Payments, Public Health Funerals, and burial/cremation. Framed by the estimation that in England and Wales there is approximately one year left before the mortality rate begins to rise from its current all time low of 491,348 deaths (in 2009), the origin of the concerns outlined in this paper is that the number of deaths per year is predicted to rise by 17% by 2030, amounting to 100,000 more people per year.

When the impact of this increase begins to bite, policy needs to be in place so that the services provided by the State have a solid and sustainable basis, informed by evidence regarding the most efficient way as to their terms. Structured around these key reasons, the paper further draws on findings from a project with Axa Sunlife Direct on the cost of dying to act as a call to arms, to put death on the social policy map.

Theo van der Zee, Chris Hermans (Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands)
Maturational dualism of primary school children's afterlife beliefs.
An empirical study into the influence of age and intelligence

From a cognitive perspective on religion, it is hypothesized that people have a natural inclination to think about the afterlife in dualistic terms (Bering, 2006). People are inclined to attribute another fate to bodily processes than to mental processes after death. Our research aims to trace empirical evidence for this hypothesis, and factors that influence the inclination to think dualistically.

Research has provided evidence that cognitive abilities influence children's conceptions on death (Koocher, 1973; Orbach et al., 1985; Landsdown & Benjamin, 1985). Based on these findings, it can be expected that these abilities influence children's ideas about the afterlife. Do children with more cognitive abilities hold other beliefs about the afterlife than children with limited abilities? It is also suggested that children develop their death conceptions by maturation: children of 11 years of age have a more clear defined and steady conception of death (Splika, Hood, Hunsberger & Gorsuch, 2003; Bering & Bjorklund, 2004). Do older children hold another pattern of thinking about the afterlife than younger ones?

Our general research question is: do cognitive abilities and age influence children's pattern of thinking about the afterlife? The research sample consists of 82 Dutch children of 7-8 years of age, and 81 children of 11-12 years of age. These children have been interviewed after being presented with two narratives; one about an elderly grandmother, another about an elderly grandfather (Harris & Gimenez, 2005). The results are discussed with a view to theory formation on afterlife beliefs and the developmental aspect in particular.

Joanna Wojtkowiak
"Who wants to live forever?" The postself and notions of immortality in contemporary Dutch society

This paper focuses on contemporary notions of immortality in the Netherlands. The subject of this study is the concept of the postself in the context of death rituals. The changing perspectives towards an after death existence are investigated in the light of socio-cultural developments, such as processes of individualization and secularization. The Netherlands is a secularized society in terms of church membership and church participation. However, the study of attitudes and actions around death shows the nuances of contemporary religiosity, which are not necessarily defined by church membership only. In this paper I discuss results from quantitative and qualitative data on death attitudes and the postself. The focus on the identity of the deceased reveals how people conceptualize immortality when they are not convinced believers of collective notions of an afterlife.

Jolene Zigarovich (Claremont Graduate University, USA)
Eighteenth-Century Heart and Urn Burial in Britain

In my paper, I plan to uncover the 18th century British practice of preserving the heart and the use of viscera jars, accepted funeral rituals, especially among the wealthy. Heart burial reflects not only a common ancient burial rite, but also a traditional sentiment of mourning. Ariès remarks that "the part most sought after, the noblest part, was the heart, the secret of life and emotion" (387). The practice of burying the heart apart from the corpse was common from the 12th to the 18th century, particularly in relation to funerals of kings and warriors (Puckle, 1926, Bradford 1937). Indeed, in the Middle Ages many followed the growing custom of burying the heart at a favorite church or shrine, or even requested heart burial in the Holy Land (Finucane).

My paper will also uncover the popularity of urn burial, and look at both actual and ornamental examples. This will include a discussion of 18th century surgical textbooks that describe viscera preservation, such as Robert White's *Practical Surgery* (1796). I will also uncover notorious examples that demonstrate the social acceptance of viscera burial and its emotional role in burial practices.

The aim of my paper is to argue that the practice of heart casket and urn burials demonstrate the increasing preoccupation with mortality and the corpse, and the intense anxiety about bodily dissolution and disruption after death. The history of organ preservation in Britain ultimately contributes to the understanding of a culture's attitudes towards death, the body, and mourning.

o Bertram S. Puckle's *Funeral Customs: Their Origin and Development* (London: T. Werner Laurie, 1926) and Charles Bradford's *Heart Burial* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1937) for detailed histories of heart burial.

o R.C. Finucane's "Sacred Corpse, Profane Carrion: Social Ideals and Death Rituals in the Later Middle Ages" for a discussion of early attempts to embalm in the Middle Ages

Tanya Zivkovic (University of Adelaide, Australia)
Death, transmigration and the rising corpse in Tibetan Buddhism

For Tibetan Buddhists the experience of death can be influenced by religious practice. Not assuming that the lifecourse of a person is limited to a singular body or lifespan, the Buddhist believes in the cyclic promulgation of life. In this larger life history the lifecourse of the individual can abide in various times and places in new bodies. In this paper I chronicle aspects of a spiritual exemplar's lifestory that continues beyond a singular body or lifetime, traversing his life, death and purported transmigration into the body of another person. Based on fieldwork conducted over 18 months in Darjeeling between 2004-2006, I explore this movement in-between bodies as an intersubjective process where the self can be permeated by otherness and by other individuals.

KEYNOTE LECTURES

Margaret Stroebe (University of Utrecht, the Netherlands)
Bereavement: health consequences, ways of coping and efficacy of intervention

Johannes van der Ven (Radboud University Nijmegen, the Netherlands)
On the brink of death.
Mercy killing from religion, morality and human rights in cross-cultural perspective

Reiner Sörries (University of Kassel, Germany)
Humans: their mourning, their needs, their conceptions - Dynamic changes in the present German sepulcral culture