

ΕΘΝΟΛΟΓΙΑ ON LINE

ETHNOLOGHIA ON LINE

ΤΟΜΟΣ 13 - VOLUME 13

2023



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΕΤΑΙΡΕΙΑ ΕΘΝΟΛΟΓΙΑΣ

GREEK SOCIETY FOR ETHNOLOGY

2023

The final farewell on-site and on-line. Anthropological perspective on death, new technologies and change: experiences from Upper Merabello, Eastern Crete

Maria G. Kokolaki 

Abstract

This article is about death, mortuary rituals and aspects of change, within physical/offline-onsite and virtual/online environments and blending onsite and online observation and participation. I examine how virtual/online and offline/actual onsite practices intersect in modern death related perceptions and procedures such as mourning and memorialisation. I will use as a case study the area of Upper Merabello in Eastern Crete, where especially during the last decade, social media and the internet are increasingly used, however customary ritual practices hold a prominent position in the local context. Death related practices, although influenced by the economic crisis and the recent Covid-19 pandemic, they still retain a vital centrality in the individual and social life. Utilising the notion of powerful knowledge for explaining how change is enacted as well as the concepts of “polymedia” and “PolySocial reality”, I attempt to picture the dynamic process of transformation and to propose a way of approaching and accounting for changes or adaptations that occur over time, especially as related to the impact of new technologies.

Key words: death, digital media, cultural change, powerful knowledge, PolySocial Reality, polymedia



Το τελευταίο αντίο δια ζώσης και στο διαδίκτυο. Ανθρωπολογικές οπτικές για τον θάνατο, τις νέες τεχνολογίες και τη μεταβολή: εμπειρίες από το Επάνω Μεραμπέλλο Κρήτης.

Μαρία Γ. Κοκολάκη

Περίληψη

Αυτό το άρθρο αφορά τον θάνατο, τις νεκρικές τελετουργίες και τη διαδικασία της μεταβολής σε φυσικά/μη διαδικτυακά και δυναμικά/διαδικτυακά περιβάλλοντα, συνδυάζοντας μικτή –δια ζώσης και διαδικτυακή– παρατήρηση και συμμετοχή. Εξετάζω πώς οι διαδικτυακές/εικονικές και οι μη διαδικτυακές/πραγματικές επιτόπιες πρακτικές διασταυρώνονται στις σύγχρονες αντιλήψεις και διαδικασίες που σχετίζονται με το θάνατο, όπως το πένθος και η μνημόνευση. Θα χρησιμοποιήσω ως μελέτη περίπτωσης την περιοχή του Επάνω Μεραμπέλλου στην Ανατολική Κρήτη, όπου ειδικά την τελευταία δεκαετία, τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης και το διαδίκτυο χρησιμοποιούνται όλο και περισσότερο, ωστόσο οι εθμικές τελετουργικές πρακτικές κατέχουν εξέχουσα θέση στο τοπικό πλαίσιο. Οι πρακτικές που σχετίζονται με τον θάνατο, αν και επηρεάζονται από την οικονομική κρίση και την πρόσφατη πανδημία Covid-19, εξακολουθούν να διατηρούν μια ζωτική κεντρική θέση στην ατομική και κοινωνική ζωή. Αξιοποιώντας την έννοια της «ισχυρής γνώσης» (*powerful knowledge*) για την ερμηνεία του τρόπου με τον οποίο υλοποιείται η αλλαγή καθώς και τις έννοιες *polymedia* (πολλαπλο-μεσικότητα) και *PolySocial reality* (πολυ-κοινωνική πραγματικότητα), επιχειρώ να απεικονίσω τη δυναμική διαδικασία του μετασχηματισμού και να προτείνω έναν τρόπο προσέγγισης και καταγραφής των αλλαγών ή προσαρμογών που συμβαίνουν με την πάροδο του χρόνου, ειδικά σε σχέση με την επίδραση των νέων τεχνολογιών.

Λέξεις κλειδιά: θάνατος, ψηφιακά μέσα, πολιτισμική αλλαγή, *powerful knowledge*, *PolySocial Reality* (πολυκοινωνική πραγματικότητα), *polymedia* (πολλαπλο-μεσικότητα)

Introduction

Mortality, a shared fate for us all which affects us in multiple ways, results in a profound emotional crisis with further repercussions on our social lives, as we often confront this menace in our immediate environment. The loss of a relative or a friend for example affects the individual's emotional world and social connections, resulting further to modifications to family dynamics and interpersonal communication. At the social level, the death of the individual bears implications for the group: the loss of a member of the group is likely to affect the entire social structure, as it questions “the meaningfulness and reality of the social frameworks in which they participate shattering their ontological security” (Mellor, 1993: 13).

In respect to the above, societies, in their effort to respond to implications stemming from human mortality, adopt various mechanisms and strategies. Respectively, the adopted mechanisms aim to reduce the individual's anxiety and to facilitate the mending of the social framework (cf. Lessa & Vogt, 1965; Van Gennep, 1960). In this sense, mortuary rituals are extremely important in the social life-course and, as such, they are considered “a true cultural universal” in denoting people's resistance to death and their wish to prolong the departure and the farewell (Robben, 2004: 9).

Nevertheless, in the western world modern attitudes and strategies for dealing with death are largely changed as defined by scientific and technological advancements and existential dilemmas. Modernity is believed to be characterised by the “sequestration of experience” separating social life and individual lifespan from experiences of finitude and mortality and existential issues (Giddens, 1991). Since the turn of the 21st century, extensive networking through social media and the forming of a new digital universe are increasingly shaping our individual and socio-cultural selves and experiences, also having implications for how death is envisaged, and emotions are expressed. Death and the digital sphere become increasingly interconnected, mainly in offering novel and interactive ways for mourning and commemorating.

In this article, I will examine how online/virtual and offline/physical practices intersect in modern death related perceptions and practices such as mourning and the memorialisation of the dead. I will use as a case study the area of Upper Merabello in Eastern Crete, where especially during the last decade, social media and the internet are increasingly used in mourning and memorialisation, however customary ritual practices hold a prominent position in the local context. It is, moreover, relevant that, death related practices and rituals, although influenced by the economic crisis and the recent Covid-19 pandemic, still retain a vital centrality in the individual and social life.

Accordingly, I will present perceptions about death and mortuary rituals and aspects of change during 20th and early 21st centuries, including the technological impact, as a part of an in-depth ethnographic recording in combination with online observation and utilising manuscripts of primary folk material from the Folk Collection of the University of Athens. The discussion that follows does not cover

the totality of beliefs and mortuary rituals of the area, rather I concentrate on some particular aspects that shed light on my present arguments.

1. Literature review

1.1. Death and dying, transition and memory.

Death is universally and diachronically envisaged as the antipode of life, a definite ending, the ultimate and inescapable destiny for all living forms. Death and death rituals have long been a subject of anthropologists for small-scale and traditional societies, where death is experienced as a matter of public/private importance. Malinowski characterised it as “the supreme and final crisis of life” (1948: 29), that “breaks the normal course of life and shake moral foundations of society” (ibid: 34). However, death and dying are not uniformly experienced, perceived and defined across cultures and this variation extends also to the beliefs about what happens after death and the implications for the individual and social life (Gire, 2014).

Moreover, death is related to the issue of social creation and interpretation of time. People’s experience of time consists of a triple sense (Leach, 1961): a) repetition, with small durations and time-intervals, b) change, aging, entropy and irreversibility and c) the pace at which time passes which is contingent. So, people see time as repetition or as irreversible change cyclic or linear, or even as an oscillation between opposite statuses (a pendulum) or a “discontinuity of repeated contrasts” (ibid.: 133-134). Accordingly, social creation of time is related to the creation of successive time-intervals by rituals that mark transitions bearing change of status as a main message which is expressed-communicated in a variety of ways.

Time, as sacred and profane, in its juxtaposing forms, is also related to the issue of fertility and periodic regeneration, in human life and nature, in terms of a cosmogony: “the mythic moment of passage from chaos to cosmos” (Connerton, 1989: 65). Fertility and regeneration as related with transition rites have considerable prominence in funeral practices (Bloch & Parry, 1982; Connerton, 1989).

It is relevant also that being in transition (marginality) implies ambiguity and social timelessness, which is perceived as a dangerous status. So, rituals are employed to manipulate this, imposing discontinuities, seeking to restore order by dissolving and challenging it (cf. Rappaport, 1974, 1979) sometimes imposing on the individual various prescriptions and prohibitions, such as seclusion, food prohibitions and change in the dress code or even in the name and so on (Leach, 1961, 1976). For Douglas (2001) this is related to power, where order stands for form, explicit, social structure while disorder represents non-form, implicit, esoteric, non-structure. In this sense, apart from the transitional period, even the ritual itself is dangerous to the person involved (ibid: 97).

Hertz (1960) observes two phases in the mortuary rituals –those of disaggregation and reinstallation– with the final ceremony reinstating and reaffirming order in society. According to Leach (1961: 134) the change of status in rituals follows a sequence of four phases: initial normal state from where the person is being transferred to the sacred (through rite of sacralisation-separation), marginality/being in a sacred

condition of “suspended animation”, desecralisation/aggregation to a new role to the profane world and normal secular life (interval in between). Van Gennep’s thesis (1960) is that all rituals of transition involve a threefold structure: separation, transition and incorporation.

Accordingly, following mainly van Gennep’s analysis, in the mortuary rituals the first stage of separation involves the departing of the dying individual from its previous social status during which people involved try to ensure the smooth ‘departing’ of the dying person in numerous ways. During the second stage of transition, the individual is excluded from the social order and expects to be incorporated in another reality. Displaying of the corpse and proper lamenting are part of this. Dying is “a slow process of transition” (Danforth, 1982: 37) or a phase “between and betwixt” (Turner, 1967). So, the transition phase prevails in funerary rites and includes a reversal of normal activities. The third stage of incorporation involves integration into a new social state (such as meals shared after funerals). In this phase, although the status of the dead is ensured, the status of the living must also be safeguarded. Thus, the stage of aggregation involves a gradual integration of the socially secluded abnormal beings and having ambiguous social identity (close relatives of the dead) to a new social status (widow, orphans etc.). Relatedly, for Bloch and Parry (1982: 4) the ritual treatment of the corpse is determined by collective conscience and the social context and burial “involves the reassertion of society manifested by the end of mourning and by the belief that the soul has been incorporated into the society of the dead, in the same way as the society is resettled by the funerary rituals”.

At the same time, collective and symbolic ritual action aims to respond to the inevitable change, to soothe individual and collective emotions of grief, fear and insecurity and to re-establish order and security in the world of the living (cf. Hertz, 1960). That is for example why rituals for the purification of the soul and its liberation from the burden of sin as well as for its transition and the definite entrance to the other world are carefully executed. These acts of course veil the fear for the dead, common in many cultures, whose return should at all costs be avoided in order not to harm the living.

In this respect, death rather than viewed through a pessimistic prism as a reduction of the individual to nothingness, is usually conceived as a metamorphosis which covers the social and individual identity: change in substance and way of communication between the living and the dead, a transition to another dimension, a passage to another world. Relatedly, Hertz indicated that death “is not a mere destruction but a transition” (1960: 48). This relates to the fact that most cultures provide both a material and a non-material aspect of life of which the latter survives material death and some beliefs regarding the existence of this spiritual form.

So, death implying the transition or transfer of the soul to another order, involves change of substance, status and place, and is usually referred to as a “travel” in the western world. Although the concept of change, transition and reallocation is found in other rites as well which involve a shift from one phase of life to another such as in marriages, death is mostly symbolically linked to the idea of traveling.

Furthermore, as Leach (1976: 77) also maintains, ceremonies have the “double function of proclaiming the change of status and of magically bringing it about.” In other words, a ritual does not only communicate ideas or knowledge but “is doing something as well” (Rappaport, 1974: 9; 1979: 177). Ritual as communicative event is highly standardised, having as important element the act of symbolising (Leach, 1976). Moreover, ritual action in the sense of the informative and enactive practice externalises social structure by making obvious the accepted/hidden relations between people and groups. It provides a link between the profane and the sacred, the normal and the ab-normal, the ordinary and the extraordinary.

In this sense, rituals are not limited in their specific and fixed spacetime: they are rather “porous” and meaningful within the community life, permeating and influencing non-ritual behaviour as well (cf. Connerton, 1989). This porosity is mainly maintained through memory, a crucial element in death related practices. Memory, a core issue in the modern world, is an esoteric process highly selective and relativistic, functioning in two distinct and opposing directions: it either preserves or erases items of the past, building self or collective identity. At the social level, the relativity of memory depends on the cultural choices of each society. The acceptance of a present social order presupposes common knowledge and remembrance of a common past. In as much as social experience (and experience in general) depends on the past –in fact common knowledge of a common past– the way in which people perceive the present largely depends on memory.

Considering further the relation of rituals to time, this not only implies but also expresses, marks, claims, and creates bonds with the past (cf. Connerton, 1989). Connerton suggests that the past is embodied through memory, by means of two distinct types of social practice: incorporating and inscribing (1989: 72). In the first the message is being transferred through body activity and the message transmission is contemporaneous, while the second is related to the retaining and reproducing of the information even after the end of transmission via technical means of storing information. In relation to the above, he further proposes three types of memory claims: ‘personal memory’, which conveys one’s life history, ‘cognitive memory’, which recounts all types of past experiences and knowledge out-of-context of the actor, and ‘habit-memory’ describing the ability of the actor to reproduce a certain performance. Ritual actions, especially commemorative ceremonies, fall in this last category and preserve the past by “depictive representation.” Expressiveness, formality, repetitiveness, demarcation in time and place, non-verbal practices, performativity make those actions loci for ritualising memory. Moreover, rituals have the power of creating “prospective memory” (Sutton, 2001: 21), in a dual sense: either with the scope to create memory in personal and social settings as an event to be remembered, reminded and anticipated in the future or as incorporated in a series of similar events at the advent of tradition as “re-enactments of the past” in the present (Connerton, 1989: 72).

In this respect, tombs, and various offers to the dead, can be considered as further manifestations of man’s will to be remembered and memorialised and are related to the issue of re-structuring and

representing of the past. In this sense, also, war memorials may be viewed as expressions and representations of collective identity, symbolising:

the story and sacrosanct character of the primary community: they invoke its religion, they say what happened to its men, they re-integrate the non-returning soldiers into the memory of the community, they comprehend the larger world, and they state, without dispute, the primal loyalty of the living to the dead. (Davies, 1993: 126)

In any case, even in the concepts of reincarnation, of revival, of the eternal life after death, the mortuary rites and rituals which as means are supposed to ascertain the regeneration and the continuity of life after death, there remains the vague feeling of a discontinuity and uncertainty. This uncertainty around death is apparent in beliefs which come in contrast with central themes in a society (e.g. the ambivalent attitude of grief and fear, the belief in ghosts in Europe): “This inconsistency stems in part from the way in which death is transformed into regeneration by acting out a victory over the finality and uncontrollability of death” (Bloch & Parry, 1982: 18). Relatedly, in the Orthodox “Funeral Service” the following expression is used: “Weep, and with tears lament when with understanding I think on death, and see how in the graves there sleeps the beauty which once for us was fashioned in the image of God, but now is shapeless, ignoble, and bare of all the graces.”¹ It would be probably a fair generalisation to say that people given the option would choose to postpone death and remain a while longer among the living when the final moment of departure arrives. However, death is a certainty and while fiction and myth may sometimes permit an alternative, life itself never does (Lessa & Vogt, 1965).

In Castells’ (2010) words:

Time in society and life is measured by death. Death is and has been the central theme of cultures throughout history, either revered as God’s will or defied as the ultimate human challenge. It has been exorcised in the rites destined to calm the living, accepted with the resignation of the serene, tamed in the carnivals of the simple, fought with the desperation of the romantics, but never denied. (Castells, 2010: 483).

1.2. Modern perceptions about death and dying: sequestration and medicalisation

Western way of life, the effort to acquire knowledge, the evolution of science, medicine, political ideas and cosmologies, moral or religious systems can be seen as attempts to control the individual’s life and destiny and further to exorcise and, if possible, erase death. Modern technological advancement and progress in medical science prolonged life expectancy ratios, creating anticipations for a greater control over people’s futures and brought about changes not only in people’s lifestyle but also to the individual and social life-cycle (cf. Castells, 2010).

The dominant trend in our societies, as an expression of our technological ambition, and in line with our celebration of the ephemeral, is to erase death from life, or to make it meaningless by its repeated representation in the media, always as the other’s death, so that our own is met with the surprise of the unexpected. By separating death from life, and by creating the technological system to make this belief last long enough, we construct eternity

¹ “Ακολουθία Νεκρώσιμος ήτοι Τοις Κεκοιμημένοις” -Funeral Service. See for English translation: <https://www.goarch.org/-/funeral-service> Ακολουθία νεκρώσιμος ήτοι τοις κεκοιμημένοις.

in our life span. Thus, eternal we become except for that brief moment when embraced by the light. (Castells, 2010: 484)

For modern societies there has been an extended argument on the privatisation, subjectification, sequestration of death from public space (Ariès, 1974, 1981; Glaser & Strauss, 1965; Giddens 1991; Mellor, 1993; Mellor & Shilling, 1993; Metcalf & Huntington, 1991) and even an extensive medicalisation (Conrad, 1992) related to an augmented tendency to treat nonmedical situations as medical problems to be solved by professionals and institutions (Andersson, 2017). Mellor and Shilling (1993) find that change in attitudes towards death comes in the advent of high modernity, with the conceptualisation and identification of the body and the self, the intense desacralisation of social life, the privatisation and subjectivisation of experience:

These changes have themselves been affected by a gradual privatisation of the organisation of death (or a decrease in the public space afforded to death); a shrinkage in the scope of the sacred in terms of the experience of death and a fundamental shift in the corporeal boundaries, symbolic and actual, associated with the dead and the living. (Mellor & Shilling, 1993: 414)

Processes become “sequestered from public space” (Mellor, 1993: 12) as they are relocated from community’s public space in institutions such as hospitals, so, although illness and death are not seemingly tabooed, they are once more hidden and secluded from the public eye becoming an issue only for professionals, doctors and experts: “hospitals can be seen as the institutional expression of the modern desire to sequester corporeal evidence of sickness and death away from the public gaze” (Mellor & Shilling, 1993: 418). Funerary practices have become more privatised for including a circle of family members and friends and being executed by care of professional funeral offices (ibid). Death typically occurs in impersonal settings such as hospitals or nursing homes “distanced from the mainstream of social life”, put aside and hidden (Giddens, 2009: 320). Coping with death and bereavement has become also more privatised and personalised, in a way that deviates from the formality of ritualistic coping (ecclesiastic rituals or rites of passage): for example, flowers or candles at the scene of a road accident or small road churches for memorialising road accident victims.

Many developed societies have hidden death and dying behind the scenes of social life but some now appear to be undergoing an informalization of mourning as people seek new, less rigid, more individualized public rituals and personalized ways of dealing with death and dying. (Giddens, 2009: 323)

However, against this thesis for the privatisation and sequestration of death from the public to the private sphere stands the view for the continuation of death’s presence in the public sphere (Walter et al., 1995). Even this “rationalisation” and “bureaucratisation” of death mainly through medicalisation such as public policies for health care or public hygiene, imply the presence of death in the public sphere and the gradual absence from the private experience (ibid). Nonetheless, the most obvious and common appearance of death in modern life is through the news media and in fiction where the unusual and strange is stressed (Walter et al., 1995; Andersson, 2017).

Moreover, trend towards a “de-sequestration” (Walter et al., 2012; Andersson, 2017) or “un-sequestration” (Andersson, 2017) of death in modern societies is related to the extensive use of new technologies and digital networking where presence of death is not mediated and fictitious (as in the news or cinema) but realistic, personalised, authentic and unmediated:

[...] common and mundane dying has begun to take place in the public space of the Internet. Among the blogs about food, fashion, home decoration, travel, and other joyful aspects of life, blogs about severe disease and dying appeared [...] Illness and death become inevitable parts of life. [...] In blogs, the stories are told by the ill and eventually dying themselves. Death is thereby desequestered, brought back to the lives of ordinary people. (Andersson, 2017: 2-3)

This was particularly observed with the recent pandemic of Covid-19, which reminded us of our vulnerability, perishability and finitude and made us wonder about the inescapability of our final limit. At the same time, fear for illness, contagion and dying took over everyday discourse and death related practices were affected and diversified because of the safety measures and related hygiene protocols. Moreover, the prolonged period of lockdowns channeled and intensified people’s digital networking, as face to face social interactions were largely interrupted. This of course was extended to death related practices, as, although other rituals such as weddings and christenings were put on hold, funerals and funerary rituals (usually in the small circle within the immediate family of the deceased) had to be performed.

1.3. Internet and death: Thanatechnology, Polymedia and PolySocial Reality

Since the 1990’s the diffusion of the internet and digital networking has been rapidly growing all over the world: at the end of 1995, there were worldwide about 16 million users while in early 2001 there were over 400 million (Castells, 2001: 3). Internet was initially accepted with euphoria and appreciated as a novel form of proximity, interaction and community, while later, as its use was gradually increasing, it was critically and negatively perceived as a dystopia, an alienating dark force that would break down family and community ties and cause social isolation, depression and even violence.

Nonetheless, this ambivalence cannot denounce its pervasiveness as a parallel and complementary universe of social interaction (cf. Castells, 2001: 119; Roberts, 2004a: 57-58). This allowed for reshaping user’s experiences, expectations and relationships (Hine, 2015) as well as sense of time, space and processes, exemplified in Castells’ real virtuality, timeless time and space of flows. Castells names this new pervasive communication environment the “Internet Galaxy” and the new social form that is being shaped the “network society”:

The Internet Galaxy is a new communication environment. Because communication is the essence of human activity, all domains of social life are being modified by the pervasive uses of the Internet [...] A new social form, the network society, is being constituted around the planet, albeit in a diversity of shapes, and with considerable differences in its consequences for people's lives, depending on history, culture, and institutions. As with previous instances of structural change, this transformation offers as many opportunities as it raises challenges. (Castells, 2001: 275)

Internet use according to Hine (2015) has become so intensely embedded in everyday life that it has grown to be a part of our identity, making it often difficult to discern between virtual and physical bodies/identities. She characteristically states that going online is often experienced as “an extension of other embodied ways of being and acting in the world,” assuming that there is a rising “continuity between one’s online and offline experiences and identities” (ibid: 41). Moreover, time, space and processes and their interconnection are being transformed, by power of pervasiveness and allowing for “an increasing disassociation between spatial proximity and the performance of everyday life’s function” (Castells, 2010: 424).

The worldwide web has fast evolved: from the so-called Web 1.0 which was more static and passive, it advanced to the Web 2.0 more active and creative environments, for participatory, connective, interactive, and content generating and sharing experience (such as podcasting, discussion forums, social media or blogging).

The term Web 2.0 is used to describe the focus on enabling collaboration and the sharing of information online that is the feature of the second generation of the worldwide-web. Its orientation around users generating online content and analysing their own and others’ engagement with it. (Silver & Bulloch, 2017: 477)

Web 2.0 could be understood as a superordinate term which comprises a wide range of technologies and applications such as blogs, Wikis, social media and social network sites. We may mention Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and MySpace among most popular social network sites. Boyd and Ellison (2007: 211) define social network sites (used interchangeably with the term social networking sites, which though puts emphasis on the relationship initiation) as: “web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.” Boyd (2010: 39), further, claims that social network sites belong to “networked publics,” that is communities structured by new technologies: they are understood as both the space and the imagined collective formed by “the intersection of people, technology, and practice.”

According to Applin and Fischer (2011b), as people use and develop pervasive technologies, their online “non-place” (drawing on Augé’s conceptualisation of non-places) behaviour is mixed with their real life “place” behaviour. So, cultures and behaviours increasingly permeate web applications as people “carve out spaces for their cultures within software frameworks” changing the “cultural world map” (ibid: 288).

As the Internet is providing people with new capabilities and opens up spaces of interaction and exchange of knowledge and experience remotely, in a synchronous or asynchronous connection, at the same time is facilitating the emergence of new behaviours cross-culturally. This trespassing of borders of space, time and experience is at the core of a new “multi-threaded” communication or of a “Poly-Social” reality (Applin et al., 2012). PolySocial reality (PoSR) is a term proposed by Applin and Fischer

(2011, 2012a, 2012b) as an appropriate framework for representing and covering the totality of all possible interactions and data exchange/creation in the social web worldwide whether synchronous or asynchronous, within groups, larger formations or among individuals. So, this covers the multiple networks of people, analog or digital (or real-world vs virtual experience) encounter spaces, for maintaining, experiencing and building sociality, either connected or not, in the same or various locations, “co-located or mediated by technology” (Applin et al., 2012).

As Applin and Fischer further maintain:

We have suggested PolySocial Reality (PoSR) as a term for the conceptual model of the global interaction context within which people experience the social mobile web and other forms of communication [...] PoSR is based upon the core concept that dynamic relational structures emerge from the aggregate of multiplexed asynchronous or synchronous data creations of all individuals within the domain of networked, non-networked, and/or local experiences [...] PoSR describes the network transaction space that humans are inhabiting themselves and with others in order to maintain their relationships and engage in new activities with collective dependencies via the social mobile web. Thus, multiple-channeled network interactions lead to complex relationships with others. (Applin & Fischer, 2012b)

In this respect, Facebook would provide an “elementary” type of PoSR, as the way Facebook is built to connect people at multiple levels, by sharing with each other some or all components of their personal homepages, being able to comment and discuss with their Facebook “friends” and secondarily with the circle of their friends’ friends (Applin & Fischer, 2011b).

Moreover, the term “Polymedia” was introduced by Madianou and Miller (2011) to respond to the changing field of digital media communication and the development of a new communicative environment and a new form of connectivity via a multiplicity of channels. Instead of looking at the historical/vertical dimension of the new media and change over time, including the “remediation” theory of how the previous technology influences the next, the polymedia concept focuses on the co-existence and simultaneous use of a variety of media and the horizontal dimension. Furthermore, based on structuralistic principles, they recognise the relational status between the media and their substitutability for achieving effective communication:

Polymedia is a form of structuralism in which the understanding we have of anyone medium becomes less its properties or affordances and more its alternative status as against the other media that could equally be employed for that message. Media are thereby increasingly to be defined as relational within the structure of polymedia. (Madianou & Miller, 2011:137)

By recognising the importance of the human factor in the media use with the presupposing that a plethora of new technologies are not only largely available but also affordable and easy to use, they propose a “re-socialising” of the new media. This means that the responsibility of choice depends on the involvement of individuals, when the criteria of availability, affordability, substitutability and augmenting media literacy/technical knowledge are met.

[...] each medium makes sense only within a wider environment within which it finds its niche and is defined relationally. This environment includes the relationships between the various media as analysed through the various affordances which emerge through the media's functionalities and the conditions of their consumption. Navigating this integrated environment that is polymedia is not a free-floating process but rather is dependent on cultural genres of sociality and emotional registers and struggles over power. (Madianou & Miller, 2011: 139)

Utilising 'polymedia' as an umbrella term, Herbig, Herrmann and Tyma (2015) proceeded to the concept of 'polymediation,' recognising the relation between technology (i.e. tools and materials), the communication process and mediated communication sites such as Facebook: "the 'poly' in polymediation not only signifies the many different forms that media take, but the many different interactions we can have with them" (Herbig et al., 2015: xx).

In the new media environment, the characteristic ease with which users (experts and non-experts) can upload a great range of material (text, picture, video, sound) and the reinforcement of multimodality made Web 2.0 environments very popular (Walter et al., 2012). In this framework, growth and spread of digital networking influencing more and more people's lives as individual and social entities, also touched the way people handle loss and bereavement, memory and commemoration. In 1997, the term "thanatechnology" was launched by Carla Sofka denoting the conjunction of death with technology, to signify "technological mechanisms [...] that can be used to gain information about topics in thanatology" (Sofka, 1997: 553). Since then, the fast development of new technologies brought about extensive use of new media in death related discourse and practices and instigated changes in grieving and commemorating.

Using technology for memorialisation, of course, is not something new. Photography or print obituaries for instance were used in the past, so the modern turn to digital media forms could be represented as a further stage while using technology for mediating death:

Media have been long used in a range of ritualised ways to commemorate and memorialise the dead: obituaries are printed and circulated in newspapers; cards, pamphlets, and booklets are circulated around the time of the funeral ritual; and recently audio and video recordings have become important commemorative products. It appears that Ariès is correct: 'death loves to be represented' [...]. (Arnold et al, 2018: 17)

The recent advancements with ubiquitous computing, the Internet of Things, artificial intelligence and social robotics as well as immersive environments such as virtual worlds and augmented reality, are expected to further affect those practices:

In the long term, other means of keeping the memory of the deceased alive will become available as the living strive to keep the memories of those they've lost alive, perhaps in the form of digital immortality [...] or three-dimensional, life-like avatars of the deceased, complete with a downloaded consciousness. (Veale, 2004)

So, this brings about a new discourse which is formed and contested by the intersection of people's beliefs, mortuary and funerary rituals, commemoration practices and the online practices, discourse and activities (Arnold et al., 2018).

Research interest in online/digital death began in the late 1990's and as Walter et al. (2012: 276) suggest, research focuses on western contexts mainly: "The literature relates primarily to advanced industrial societies." Moreover, there is the additional parameter of people of old age being reluctant to go online or hesitating to disclose private information in their online interaction (ibid).

Sofka (1997) focused on various categories of online sites and their function as resources for social support and commemoration, for exploring "thanatechnology." Later, in the mid 2000's, along with the rise and strengthening of social networking sites, the interest turned to the role of social networks in digital memorialising. Online grieving is a related issue. Roberts (2004, 2006) and Roberts and Vidal (2000) analysed internet or cyber cemeteries. In particular, Roberts and Vidal (2000) researched and analysed memorials in cyber cemeteries, while Roberts (2004a, 2004b, 2012) explored web memorialisation for examining three aspects of bereavement: continuing bonds with the dead, strengthening bonds among the living, and creating cyber-communities of the bereaved. De Vries and Rutherford (2004) also explored the memorialisation in web cemeteries as emerging post-death rituals, combining traditional elements and individual expression. Veale (2004) was interested in why and how memorialisation practice goes online and how online memorials enable the bereaved to maintain bonds with the deceased and coping with grief:

Online memorialisation is a highly flexible, adaptive practice, enabling everyday people to keep pace with their subtle changes in thought and feeling toward the deceased, and sometimes with that of their extended friends and families. Thus memorials are being created everyday, while existing ones are removed, remodelled, or enhanced. (Veale, 2004)

Foot et al. (2005) focused on web-based memorialising after major tragic events such as the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, finding that although there is an interconnection and similarities between online and offline forms of memorialisation, online forms become widely diversified. Giaxoglou (2019) discusses "spectacular death sharing online" that is reactions to deaths attracting public attention in the media. By focusing on the linguistic and narrative elements, addresses the implications of the "tellability" of death extending to the digital sphere on the augmentation of its visibility. Falconer et al. (2011) researched online expressions of grief from a psychological point of view in New Zealand. Hutchings (2012) discussed online practices related to mourning and memorialising, such as online memorials, social network sites and online communities, noting the change in the experience of dying, grieving and remembering brought by the new media, especially in networking platforms such as Facebook, for allowing users to get more involved and continue to be connected with the deceased (instead of positing the deceased on another virtual place/cemetery, that although accessible is separate – as a physical cemetery).

As young people, born digital (digital natives), intensely use social networking, research attention was also directed towards adolescents and mourning. Williams and Merten (2009) examined adolescent grieving online, discussing the forms it took and how networking facilitated coping with loss and grief,

suggesting that the prominent theme in adolescent online bereavement was an “ongoing attachment” with the deceased, prolonging communication and relationship.

In those explorations, new forms of memorialisation were identified and described. Moreover, the “funeral industry” was also influenced by the augmented use of internet and, specifically, of social networks (ibid), as funeral companies tend more and more to use digital media to build their profile online and augment their image in the market (Arnold et al., 2018: 3). An interesting general observation is that online memorials are used by people to open up to other mourners with similar experiences or to communicate with the deceased (Arnold et al., 2018). Accordingly, it is brought to attention that the new online intimacy created on social network sites continues after death, as the bereaved express feeling of loss and grief on those (Arnold et al., 2018: 5).

A recurrent and important thematic in online memorials and grieving practices as shown in the related research is replicating intimacy, maintaining ties and communicating with the deceased (cf. Arnold et al., 2018). Moss (2004: 77) affirms that “the bonds between the living and the dead continue into the indefinite future, and that the dead as well as the living play an active part in that bond.” Continuing bonds in this sense might prove more liberating and comforting than death’s denial (Moss, 2004). As Brubaker and Hayes (2011) show, “post-mortem social networking practices including sharing memories, posting updates, and maintaining connections with the deceased” not only shape post-mortem practices but also people’s experience of death. Similarly, Williams and Merten (2009) have recognised among other common themes in post-mortem practices of the young, talking to the deceased or updating with current events or reminiscing as mechanisms of coping with loss and trying to maintain ties with the dead.

According to Irwin (2018: 328), although the use of “thanatechnology” for preserving this kind of bonds is fairly recent, it is an already established trend “firmly entrenched as cultural practice in the second decade of the 21st century.” Irwin (2018) analysed how the theme of continuing bonds is facilitated and promoted by the growing use of social networks online, especially Facebook, allowing for the indefinite and without limitation continuation of the relation between the dead and the living without the physical constraints of traditional space, practice and community, providing the potential for achieving “virtual immortality.” Walter (2015) examined four social contexts for mourning (family/community, private, public for high profile figures and online/pervasive) for attesting for similarities between online and community mourning. As Arnold et al. (2018: 4) notice in this way the “dead maintain a presence in the lives of the living”, while the links and boundaries between the two worlds seem to be blurred: biological death vs social death, sacred vs profane, institutionalized vs individualised response to death (ibid: 5). However, research on the networking and use of internet of people near the end of their lives (young or elderly) is not yet developed enough in comparison to the web memorialisation (Walter et al., 2012).

technological achievements and the development of infrastructure in the 20th century, a considerable change occurred in the economic sphere of the area, mainly an increased interest in higher education, tourism, the public sector and small enterprises. Occupations involved with agriculture and stock breeding are diminishing and often these are now considered only subsidiary to the household income (cf. Kokolaki, 2011, 2018, 2021).



Map 2: Lassithi Regional Unit after 2011. Upper Merabello is within the blue circle.

(Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pe_lasithiou_2011.png#/media/Αρχείο:Pe_lasithiou_2011.png)

In the local discourse “culture” and “tradition” (although not perceived identical by local communities, as the first rather refers to the present, while the latter implies the relation with the past) are regarded as essential assets of the local idiom. As life-long experiences, they presuppose common knowledge shared between members of the community and transmitted through generations in multiple ways so they imply continuity (cf. Kokolaki, 2011). On the other hand, modernisation and change imply discontinuity, and the local people deal with them in a variety of ways, ranging from fear, uncertainty and hesitation to appreciation and acceptance. Of course, change is something people must live with, inevitably, because of the modern way of life, nevertheless especially the older ones are often hesitant in embracing innovation, related to technology: from simply using debit cards to using microwave ovens and mobile phones. In the above context, I will describe aspects of change related to the use of digital media, focusing on death rituals and expression of grief and explore adaptive strategies of people within the framework of dynamics of culture change.

In order to trace change and its course throughout the 20th century, I tried to draw a comparison between the situation in the past and the present, aiming to show that there has been an observable change over the last two decades, mainly in the frame of the general changes that have occurred in Greece regarding local administrative structures and geospatial divisions, the economic sector, political relations, infrastructure and the mass media. Important recent landmarks were the economic crisis and the Covid pandemic.

Methodologically, I used onsite research, participant observation, interviewing and ethnographic description as well as online observation in the sites of the funerary offices of the broader area and their Facebook pages and those of the Bishopric, in local media sites (newspapers and information sites) and the Facebook accounts of individuals and local groups. This hybrid methodology and examining the use of new media technologies in a particular place could contribute to a better understanding of the variation in conceptions, possibilities, and use of the Internet around the world as well as to an assessment of the process of change and of the place itself (cf. Miller & Slater, 2000; Madianou & Miller, 2011; Miller, 2012). As Miller further states:

Nobody lives just online, so to understand their involvement with digital technologies we continue to focus on the wider context of their non-digital lives. Since these are general ethnographies of populations, the emphasis will also be on those forms of digital culture that have become more ubiquitous, such as social media and smartphones. (Miller, 2018: 6).

This mingling of on-ground/onsite and web-based research, blending online and offline observation and participating except from providing multilayered material, also offered a chance to study –in the sense also of a multi-sited ethnography– on-ground, offline, on-site, face-to-face sociality as intermingling with the online, “networked,” technologically mediated forms of interaction, especially in a region where social in-person interactions are frequent as there are many occasions for public gatherings of religious, ritual or secular character⁴ throughout the year. Moreover, meeting places such as the squares, the marketplace or the coffeehouses and even the church facilitate in-person interaction and sociality, so the impact of social media seems to be limited (cf. Hine, 2015, 2017; Miller, 2018; Nicolescu, 2016).

Furthermore, I mean to show how the introduction of new technologies –by the function of online communities– gets embedded in, correspond to, and/or complement practices and attitudes of the grounded local community providing a multilevel and transformational experience. By examining the context in which digital media operate and the particularities of their use in the local settings, we may enlighten the process of change and cultural differentiation. In Miller’s words:

Digital anthropology therefore has to contend with the way culture itself has grown in scale and form, including new dreams and new nightmares about who we are becoming, and who or what should be regarded as modern or traditional. For the anthropologist, the digital is always approached in context. (Miller, 2018: 3)

The digital media are progressively penetrating our daily experience and, in many ways, they shape our lives and complement our realities, they also infuse our contact with death in the way we think, we feel and commemorate. In this, I will examine private versus public dimensions, material aspects and immaterial symbolisms as well as the temporal dimension and agentic social relations

⁴ Such instances are the local feasts (*πανηγύρια*), the weddings, festivals and so on.

considering Ficher's "powerful knowledge" (2006, 2008), the concepts of of "PolySocial Reality/PoSr" by Applin and Fischer (2011) and of "polymedia" by Madianou and Miller (2011, 2013).

2.2. Death as a voyage: Mortuary rituals and farewell in-person interactions

Starting with the existing ethnography on rituals in Greece, birth, christening, wedding and death are considered as the main turning points or markers of social life (Loukatos, 1977: 205), accompanied by certain "ceremonial patterns" namely *rites of passage*, for confronting and defining danger stemming from the transition from one life stage to another (Van Gennep, 1960).

Mortuary rituals are performed in a procedure which in its general structure is very similar all over Greece (cf. Meraklis, 1984): the ritual initiation of the dying person through the communion, last confession and forgiveness, the ritual treatment-ornamenting of the corpse, the ritual display and lament of the deceased during the vigil, the procession, the burial and the regular or contingent offerings in honour of the deceased.

In this respect, the death rituals in Upper Merabello consist of ceremonial tasks carefully executed which must be kept ensuring the secure and final transition of the dead to the other world and to reestablish the unity of the community. The whole procedure gives the impression of a drama/performance,⁵ in not only reflecting the assignment of three actors to the death rituals (corpse, soul and mourners) or physical movement and speech acts, but also in communicating, arousing and sharing emotions, interaction and embodiment.

Moreover, people of the region maintain a framework of beliefs and practices that aims at manipulating the multiple changes occurring in both the life of the individuals and the social sphere as an outcome of death. In this way, a smooth and complete transition of the dead from one status (living human being) to the other (dead ancestor) is ensured, while at the same time the implications for the individual integration and social structure are minimised. Death rituals determine individual and community life since they are characterised by recurrence in the sense of an anniversary or of a religious feast. Thus, not only they create and reproduce memory (cf. Connerton, 1989; Sutton, 2001), but they also strengthen bonds within family and society and ensure the collective well-being and stability (Hertz, 1960; Malinowski, 1948).

So, in Upper Merabello death related rituals consume a great part of the local social time, both in the sense of repetition and continuity (Kokolaki, 2011). They are conducted on several occasions throughout the year –mainly linked to the annual religious calendar– so that the dead are not forgotten but recurrently remembered and forgiven. This is related to both a cyclical perception of social time which characterises the rural world and the linear perception of continuity.

Death is so central that the cemetery constitutes a vital public space of the town and villages, as people's "last residence." Hirschon (1983) finds that the cemetery is an expansion of the inhabited space

⁵ See Hertz (1960), Danforth (1982) and Psychoghiou (2008).

and social interactions as well, constituting thus “a public arena in social as well as in spatial terms,” (ibid: 120), while Meraklis (1984: 39) listed cemeteries along with the squares and the marketplace as important spaces for Greek traditional life. Bennett (1994) also observed that death rituals are the most widely attended compared to the life-cycle rituals, being publicly announced and open to all community. Similarly, Piña-Cabral (1980) noticed that death cults assume great importance in northwestern peasant culture of Portugal, since the life/death opposition is evaluated as the “most important symbolic unit” and “can be observed in practically every field of action and thought” (ibid: 1).

Considering physical change in the life-span of the individual, time is experienced in a linear form as progressing, being divided into segments-phases, where one passes from one socially recognised status to another, from nothingness to existence, from childhood to adulthood, from single to couple, from couple to family, from healthy to ill, from living human being to dead ancestor (Leach, 1976: 34; Danforth, 1982: 35). This symbolic movement across boundaries is experienced in death and the related rituals. In the above framework and within Greek-Orthodox tradition, death is euphemistically denoted as a transfer (*μετάσταση*= *relocation, departure*)⁶ to another place –“in a place of light, in a place of green pasture, in a place of refreshment, from where pain, sorrow, and sighing have fled away”⁷– or as falling asleep within a change of living status (*κοίμηση* or *ύπνος*), both in the formal ecclesiastic texts and in the ritual practices, performed in private and in public within communities.

In this context, people in Upper Merabello perceive dying as a process of relocation, of transition, as a transfer of the soul to another place/time (the “other world” or the “underworld”) which involves a gradual change of status usually metaphorically referred to as voyage, passage, departure or even farewell.

Words used in the area for denoting dying such as ‘μισεμός’, ‘απομισεμός’ and ‘απομисέματα’ signify departing and imply farewell. In particular, the expression “είναι του μισεμάτου”⁸ meaning “one is in for leaving” is figuratively used for denoting that “one’s death is close.” The concept of transition is also indicated by people’s wish to the mourning family for a “smooth passage” (“καλά περάματα”) of the deceased. Moreover, the instant of dying is called “ύστερος τράτος”⁹ (=final limit/course).

In relation to the above, it is imagined that the soul after leaving the body is free (“έχει ελευθερία”) for a short period of forty days, so it wanders in its familiar and often frequented places.¹⁰ It is characteristic that beside the bed where the person died kinswomen put a glass filled with water (which is refilled each day), a burning oil-lantern called ‘βιόλα’ and some flowers, which must stay there for the intermediate transitional forty-day period. Local people believe that –after the instance of corporeal death and during the initial liminal period– the soul, having not yet settled, comes in the room and drinks

⁶ Funeral Service (“Ακολουθία Νεκρώσιμος ήτοι Τοῖς Κεκοιμημένοις”).

⁷ Op.cit. “έν τόπω φωτεινῷ, έν τόπω χλοερῷ, έν τόπω ἀναμύξεως, ένθα ἀπέδρα ὀδύνη, λύπη καί στεναγμός”. For the English translation see: <https://www.goarch.org/-/funeral-service>

⁸ Pitykakis (1983: 627) records the following couplet: “Ἦρθε καιρός του χωρισμού, καιρός του μισεμάτου/ και τρέχει απ’ το κορμάκι μου ο ιδρώς του θανάτου” (=the time of separation came, time for departure/ and the sweat of death flows in my body).

⁹ Τράτος (from the Italian word *tratto*) means distance/limit in space or in time (cf. Pitykakis, 1983: 1099).

¹⁰ See also Danforth (1982) & Lioudaki (1939).

from that glass¹¹. A female informant with mixed feelings of fear and respect described her experience: “You can see that each morning a finger of water is missing, and people say that the deceased drinks it.” In a manuscript from the broader area (3267: 54) it is mentioned that that a lemon leave must be put in the glass water to facilitate the soul’s orientation during this initial navigation phase “because the soul can spot the green”.

The transitional and borderline stage of forty days that follows death of an individual endangers both the deceased/soul and the living members of the society, especially the next-of-kin of the deceased. In the above context, we could also hold that the forty-day period of seclusion and fasting imposed on the next-of-kin of the deceased aims to minimise the danger for the community and ensure the purification of the family before re-entering the community world. At the end of this period the next-of-kin must receive the Holy Communion for being purified and re-entering the social body. Additionally, it seems that this is believed to help the soul to find its way, to be forgiven and be accepted in Paradise.

At the end of this period the soul is judged and evaluated (cf. Danforth, 1982: 46) according to its deeds: as an informant told me “η ψυχή κατατάσσεται κατά τα έργα τζή” (=the soul is ranked according to one’s deeds). Relatedly, the word ‘μιστό’ (=wage) is used to denote one’s good deeds in this life for being recompensed in the afterlife. According to Lioudaki (1939), the fortieth day and the year are irreversible (αμετάστητα), as then the soul’s final placement is decided. Lioudaki (1939: 426) further interrelates the offering of *kolliva* in the third, ninth, fortieth day and the year with the belief to a gradual judgement, as the soul visits God those four times carrying *kolliva* as a gift (πεσκέσι). In the local religious practice and the formal ecclesiastic rhetoric, wishing and praying for the soul, as well as offering food (called for this reason *συχωρεσά*=forgiveness)¹² or money and doing good deeds in one’s memory are perceived as additional strategies in aiding forgiveness of the soul in heavenly judgement (cf. Danforth, 1982: 47). Within those perceptions and practices, we may also include the use of euphemisms (ibid) for both dying such as ‘σχωρέθηκε’ (=one was forgiven) and for the dead such as ‘σχωρεμένος’ (=forgiven) or ‘μακαρίτης’ (=blessed/serene). Accordingly, some of the wishes to the bereaved family are: «God forgive him/her”, “God forgive his/her soul,” “God rest him/her” or “God rest his/her soul” and “May he/she have a smooth passage”. Support to the grieving family, honouring the dead and paying condolences is given throughout the mortuary ceremonial circle.

Depicting death as travel or departing and transition is ever-present in mortuary ritual instances of the area, even in ritually preparing the dying person (especially if of old age) to accept the inevitable and move forward, whenever of course this is possible. This phase of ritual preparation of the moribund has

¹¹ Lioudaki (1939) mentions that the in this way the soul “cools off.” An oil lantern must also be lit on the grave for forty days.

¹² In the area, the word *συχωρεσά* was also used for the freshly baked bread which was offered to the poor people who accidentally passed by and wished for the soul of the ancestors of the donor (cf. Kokolaki, 2011; 2013).

the character of both a separation and an initiation. In part, it is performed by the priest who is responsible for the last confession, last communion and forgiveness.

Women present at the last moments of the dying person should open the window to let “the orders of the angels (*τα τάγματα*) flow freely in and out of the room.” A female informant visualising this dramatic scene of separation as a threshold in time and space, where the visible intermingles with the invisible and, while individual time shrinks, time grows to eternity,¹³ said: “All the dead ancestors are gathered in a row according to their age, with the children first. They come and go, and they take the soul of the one who is about to die, and they accompany one to the other world.” The actual presence of the “dead souls” around the corpse is according to my informants verified by the presence of small moths which in the local dialect are called ‘souls’ (*ψυχές*) that gather around the light, since the door of the house must be left open.

At that point, according to local beliefs, a kind of initial judgment/evaluation takes place, so everything one has offered is brought back to one (“your soul gets them in recompense”/“*τα βρίσκει η ψυχή σου*”), even material offerings (mainly food and clothing) to the poor, which though are of no use when dying. One female informant narrated that her grandfather who was a rich landowner had visions of various saints entering the room and bringing back the offers he had made to them, while another informant present in such an instant remembered that one neighbour of hers when dying seemed as if apologising for her deeds:

As all over Greece, the first care is the communion and last confession of the dying person. Then follows the careful preparation of the corpse: closing of eyes, closing the mouth, fixing the posture of the body, the undressing and cleaning of the body with wine, the wrapping in a shroud and dressing up in their best clothes, the ornamenting with flowers, the display of the corpse in a ceremonial way, the laments, the staying overnight beside the dead, the procession, the ceremony, the last kiss to the corpse, the ritual un-solving of hands of the body, the laying in the tomb, the throwing of earth inside the coffin and the offerings for the forgiveness of the dead.

Apart from the above, there is also a cycle of ritual obligations for the bereaved family, performed during the first year and then annually. This ritual first year cycle includes the commemorations that happen at three (*τρίμερα*) and nine days (*νιάμερα*), at forty days (*σαράντα*) being the most important, at three (*τρίμηνα*), six (*εξάμηνα*) and nine months (*νιάμηνα*) and then at the year (*τα χρόνια*). After this first-year cycle is met, the obligations are reduced to the annual commemorations, called “reunions” (*συναπαντήματα*)¹⁴ as well as to other ritual occasions during the year related to the religious calendar, as we will further see. Commemorations have as a core element the preparation and distribution of *κόλλυβα-kolliva* (boiled, sugared wheat) and of small, sweet breads (*αρτουλάκια*).

¹³ Analogous is the wish to the dead in the Funeral Service “may your memory be eternal” (*Αιώνια σου ή μνήμη*).

¹⁴ The word is used in plural.

The commemoration of the fortieth day is most important since the soul through this is given peace and the chance to be classified (*κατατάσσεται*) in the other world. As such, it is enacted in church (never after the 40th day) and at the grave on the 40th day. After this transitional and liminal period of forty dangerous days for the soul and members of society, the soul finally enters the other world of the dead or the ancestors, the underworld as people imagine, while the living can return to their daily routine.



Pict. 1. Offering of kolliva on Psychosavvata. Picture by M. Sotirhos, posted on his Fb page.

On several other occasions, during the annual religious calendar, there are ritual food offerings to the souls: women of the broader area distribute sweets, when the cemetery's church celebrates. On the Saturdays of the Souls (*Ψυχοσάββατα*)¹⁵ *kolliva* are offered for the sake of the dead who supposedly await it and feel distressed otherwise: “*Each dead waits for his/her gift and feels bad if people don't prepare kolliva for one on the Souls days*” (“*κάθε αποθαμένος ανημένει το πεσκέσι ντου κι έχει μεγάλο βάρος ανή δε ντου ψήσουνε κόλλυβα τα Σάββατα τω ψυχώ*”).¹⁶ Those offerings are related to the belief that in several occasions throughout the year –such as Carnival– the dead return to the world of the living. Accordingly, on the last Sunday of Carnival women leave the leftovers of the feast on the table, because, as they say, during the night the souls come and eat.



Pict. 2. Commemorating on the graves, on the Monday of the Souls.

¹⁵ See also Danforth (1982: 56).

¹⁶ Manuscript 1075: 67.

There is also the important feast for the Dead, on Easter Monday, which is called in the area “Monday of the Souls” (cf. Kokolaki 2011). People must accept the offering and say: “God forgive them” (“Θιός σχωρές τσι”) or “In their memory/rest” (“Στη μακαρία ντως”). Denying the offering is not an option, as it is interpreted as an insult to the dead ancestor and the family, which upsets the soul for refusing him/her the final rest (ibid). Moreover, during those instances a brief memorialisation by the priest takes place, for the resting of the soul of the deceased of the family which are written on a piece of paper (*ψυχοχάρτι*).



Pict. 3. Views of the cemetery of Neapolis on Monday of the Souls.

The family of the deceased wears black clothes at least for one year. Most men who lose their wives wear a black ribbon in their right sleeve at least for a year, while most women who lose their husband, especially the old, continue to wear black for the rest of their lives. Men grow beard and hair for showing mourning, while women neglect their hair and avoid social contacts. In a sense they are isolated for a period of time. This isolation is imposed either by their own feelings of mourning and bitterness or by social demands, as the family is stigmatised by death and is considered a source of pollution.

In relation to the perception of death as a dangerous and polluting force, I have noted that people returning from the graveyards wash their hands carefully, as to be cleaned by the touch of death. Spyridakis (1975) relates this practice as belonging to the purification rituals¹⁷. The fear for the dead underlying those practices is attributed to the belief that, whilst the spirit of the deceased continues to exist after death, its nature changes: it becomes malevolent and jealous. A middle-aged woman warned me that I should not be freshly bathed or perfumed when going to the cemetery, because the spirits would harm me out of jealousy (“οι πεθαμένοι γραντίζουν”). Moreover, people avoid going near the cemeteries at night, as they believe that ghosts may attack them.

¹⁷ Similar were the cathartic measures taken in ancient Greece for reducing the body’s polluting effect. While the body remained unburied (=prothesis, laying out of the body) a bowl with water was brought from outside the house. (Garland, 1985) Visitors should purify themselves when entering or leaving the house. After the funeral the relatives should take a bath.

Performing with precision prescribed mortuary rituals is perceived as a means of ensuring against the discontent of the deceased.¹⁸ Otherwise, there is still the belief that the soul cannot find peace, so the dead rises and becomes revenant (‘κακαθροπιζει’).¹⁹ Similarly, Danforth (1982: 126) accounts for the people of Potamia: “In the past it was said that if the relatives of the deceased failed to fulfill their social obligations by performing the necessary rites, the deceased would not be fully incorporated into the world of the dead and might return to the world of the living.”

These beliefs reflect respect mixed with fear for the dead whose return should at all costs be avoided in order not to harm the others. This imposes various other practices that aim at eliminating the danger for both the individual and society. I was told, for example, that in the past the locals used to put a waxen seal in the form of a cross on the deceased’s mouth, while Spyridakis mentions (1975) that also ears and nose of the dead are sealed, to prevent the soul from entering again the body and returning in the house.

2.3. Aspects of change since the 1980’s and the digital turn: a discussion

In Upper Merabello, a radical change has been the operation of local funerary offices, that started their course in the 1980’s and were based in Neapolis. Nowadays, there are two funerary offices there. As a local funeral director pointed out, when their office started, they utilised widely the knowledge of local women who used to prepare the dead body and perform the mortuary rituals aiding the grieving families. Those female layer-outs as my informants remember existed at least since the seventies decade and were called by the family to take care of the corpse (“ταχτοποιούσανε τον νεκρό”). An expression used was “to swaddle” (φασκιώνω) with the shroud, which was also used for the women in childbed and for the newborn.

The shroud in the past was called *lazari* (λαζάρι) and was usually a white cloth woven by the women of the house being part of their trousseau in which they made three holes by tearing it with their hands or by burning them with a candle (cf. Lioudaki 1939). They would fix it around the corpse with pieces torn from the same fabric. In some case, as a male informant told me, it was a shroud brought from the “Holy Grounds” (Jerusalem). As I was also told, the dead in some villages was then dressed in his/her best clothes and shoes (as happens nowadays), however the fabrics would be light and organic to facilitate decomposition. The fabrics must also have light colours so that they won’t transfer their paint on the bones, as in the past the colour of the bones in the exhumation was an indication of the soul’s purity and placement to Paradise or not: if the bones are clean and with light colour the soul has reached Paradise (Lioudaki 1939)²⁰.

¹⁸ See Opler (1936), Hertz 1960 and others. See also Koumariou (2008).

¹⁹ ‘κακαθροπιζω’ in the local dialect means become ghost and, accordingly, ‘κακαθροπισμένος’= the ghost, evil spirit.

²⁰ Cleanliness of the bones as related to the purity of the soul is a belief that survives until today, however to a lesser extent. Related is the belief that, after dying, one would become a ghost if one had sinned or been cursed by a priest or by one’s parents.

If the deceased is young and unmarried, apart from dressing them in nuptial gown/costume (as a bride or groom), the offerings up to now also nuptial: sugared almonds, since there is the belief –which is often emphatically stressed in the ritual laments– that the dead is married to a personified figure which obtains either the male persona of Charon/Hades or the female of Earth/Black Earth (Danforth, 1982: 82; Psychogiou, 2008: 48). Moreover, we may hold that this abnormal image and practice of mingling of the wedding symbols in the funerary ceremony restores in people’s collective imaginary the abruptly and abnormally disrupted social order. As Bennett (1994: 124) indicated, in this way “everyone arrives at burial having passed through the same stages of the life cycle.”

Before the Second World War the coffin was built on the spot after measuring the dead (*του παίρνανε τα μέτρα*). It was usually a very simple wooden rectangular board following the exact size of the deceased. Sometimes it was even simply a part of the door which after the funeral was put back in its place, while the corpse was put in the grave with ropes. This type of coffin was put in a construction which looked like a bed, wooden or metallic and had four handles each on the long side of the bed, in order to carry the corpse to the church and then to the grave. This construction was called *καδελέττο* and belonged to the church.



Pict. 4. Photos of a *καδελέττο* from Lassithi (photo taken by Mr M. Sotirhos and reprinted with his permission- also uploaded to his Fb account).

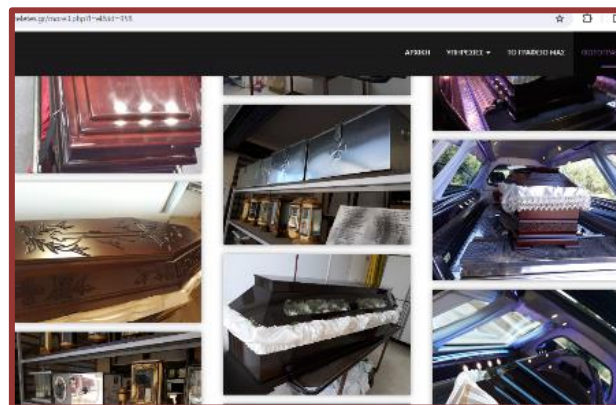
Nowadays, the coffins are provided by the local funerary offices. They are manufactured so their size is standardised. This, as also stressed in a discussion with a funeral director, is problematic for the funerals that take place in old graves as they are smaller than the new ones. In Neapolis, for example, in the old part of the cemetery, which is built on the higher northern part above the church, the graves are small, and the modern coffins do not fit. So, usually the dead is buried on the cover of the coffin. In the new part of the cemetery, people may buy land and build wider graves using also more luxurious materials such as marble (instead of the stones from local sources used in the past). The funerary offices may also undertake the design and the construction of the graves.



Pict. 5. The old part of the cemetery of Neapolis, near the old cemetery church dedicated to the Metamorphosis.

In relation to the discussion on changes, we must notice that in the area under discussion, nowadays death happens mostly at hospitals and nursing houses, instead of people's homes, especially if there is some illness involved. As Arnold et al observe (2018: 24), "the way death is variously experienced, managed, and marked is mediated by medical institutions such as hospices, and commercial institutions such as funeral homes, as well as by families, communities, and religion."

By care of the Bishopric a nursing home has been functioning in the area since the 70's, originally in Sellinari Monastery. In the 1990s it was transferred to the Lassithi Plateau, mainly for conforming to the European standards. From 2017 a new nursery home operates in the village Latsida, nearby Neapolis. There is also a small provincial hospital based in Neapolis which started its operation in 1944 (after the end of Second World War). During the pandemic it was turned into Covid unit. The operation of the aforementioned units makes part of a change related to the medicalisation of death. Medicalisation also culminated recently because of the pandemic, since people were hospitalised in isolation, with no contact with their families and often died in hospitals all alone. However, even in hospital, there was an effort to offer (whenever possible) comfort and the last communion to the moribund.



Pict. 6. Photos from the website of a funerary office related with the services they provide.

Moreover, the notion of public hygiene and the related legislation imposed the introduction of funerary offices and facilitated their disperse²¹. Funerary offices have worked their way through public acceptance, being involved in the process from the moment of death, taking care of almost everything (e.g., care, dressing and ornamentation of the corpse, coffin, vigil, flowers, church decoration with flowers, procession, *kolliva* offerings, public announcements) and supporting the bereaved family.

However, as a local undertaker remembered, the change did not happen uniformly in the area covered by their funeral office: for example, in the Lassithi plateau, for almost a decade after 1988, the dead was already taken care when the caretakers arrived. The corpse was already ritually cleaned with red wine, the mouth was sealed with a cross from wax and people would prepare the special pillow (called *αναβόλι*) for the dead filled with lemon flowers and leaves. My informants commented that those leaves were chosen for their strong smell, for covering the smell of the corpse, especially if it was summer. Some people would even on top use lavender or perfume.

The corpse, after the ritual preparation, was usually transferred to the house of the family for the ritual vigil. The ritual display, lament and vigil of the dead was indispensable until recently and were open to all people of the village, so that the deceased could be properly displayed and greeted. In fact, upon death, the church bell tolls in a mourning tone to publicly announce it²². During this phase, the coffin with the corpse was placed in the main room of the house on two chairs in such a way that the head of the corpse lies in the west facing east while the feet in the east. Around the coffin, candles were lit and incense was burning.

Close relatives and friends stayed at the side of the dead (*ξενυχτούνε τον νεκρό*) for honouring and lamenting him/her. People would come to the house to pay their final respect to the dead and their condolences to the family. They would bring flowers, candles and incense that must be lit in the room for the forgiveness of the deceased's soul. They would kiss the icon, then the dead and sit. During the wake at the side of the dead, women sat around the ornamented corpse, emitting smell of lemon leaves and flowers, and mourn (*τον-ε-κλαίνε*), while men sit separately, in different rooms, if it was possible. During the night the corpse was kept covered and the door should stay open.

People there used to narrate many stories about their own experiences from death instances, especially death premonitions. Elderly people usually had a lot to tell, either about their life stories or as advice to the younger. Very often skills or episodes from the deceased's life were remembered. In these gatherings sentiments were mixed. Some informants said making a simile to marriage "there is no marriage without tears and no funeral without laughter".

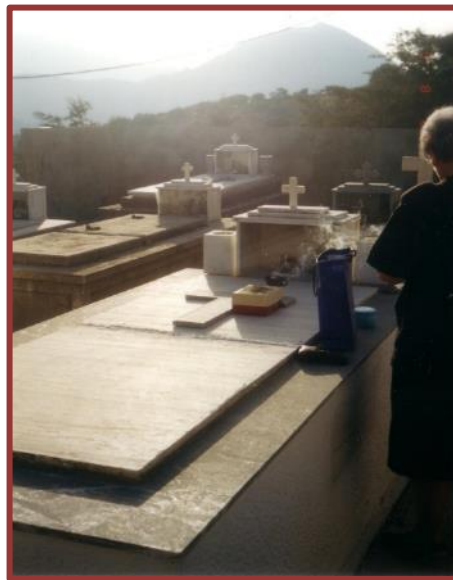
In some cases, depending on the will of the family or the condition of the dead, this stage could be avoided, especially during the last two decades. As a local funeral director noticed, the pandemic facilitated

²¹ Although there were legislative regulations for public hygiene, the function of funerary offices and the cemeteries, those were updated and clarified after 1978 (for the cemeteries) and 1983 (for the funerary offices).

²² The bell tosses also when the dead leaves the house and is ceremonially (in a procession) guided to the church.

this fading course of the vigil, as following strict rules and seclusion, the ritual gathering at the house of the dead could not be practiced.

Moreover, the number of people that could be present in the memorial service or commemoration ceremony was diminished significantly during the pandemic by law enforcing. In case of death due to Covid, there still are additional precautionary measures: strict protective means for the treatment of the corpse, sealing in special bags, sealing of the coffin, prohibition of public attending, allowing in the funeral the presence of immediate family members. So, during the last five years there are almost no vigils practiced. Instead, people pay a short visit to the house of the bereaved family to offer their condolences. Vigils, as the same undertaker mentioned, happen only in the case of a young person's death. In some other cases, upon request of the family, the coffin may stay briefly at the house only on the day of the funeral, for the people to pay their respects to the dead and condolences to the grieving family.



Pict. 7. Taking care of the family grave on the feast of Metamorphosis in Neapolis cemetery.

It is also worth mentioning that, in the area under consideration, mortuary rituals are performed by people that belong to clear-cut social categories, especially by women (c.f. Danforth, 1982; Dubisch, 1983; Hirschon, 1983), who act as mediators between the world of the dead and the world of the living: “mediating in an area between margins—where the realm of the deceased impinges on that of earthly existence” (Hirschon, 1983: 124). Women of the household held (and still retain) a mediating role as relating to multiple aspects (however informal ones) of mortuary practices for the family members: mourning, food offering, keeping prohibitions, commemorating, visiting the cemetery, taking care of the graves. As such they still are the principal actors in mortuary rituals ensuring the separation of the two inverse worlds, but they also acting as intermediates for the communication of the living world with the world of the souls.

However, in case of inability of executing those practices they may send some other woman to take care of the graves. Hirschon holds that “since it is almost solely women who are involved in the informal practices of death and commemoration, they are mediating in an area between margins—where the realm of the deceased impinges on that of earthly existence” (1983: 124). Women are rather involved as important (but informal) agents in performances that belong rather in the sphere of folk-popular ritual and religion, as contrasted to the official-ecclesiastic-male centred ones (cf. Dubisch, 1991, 1995). In this way, active participation of women in those rituals could be seen as a structuring of a female universe and counter-discourse against the male dominated world (Kokolaki, 2018).

The announcements of the funerals or the memorials are made in the newspapers and/or with print posters which are put in a public space: in Neapolis for example they are put outside the house of the dead, on electricity poles of the neighbourhood and on the special announcement board at the central square of the town. A condolences book may also be kept for people participating at the funeral to write down their sympathies and for the bereaved family to be able to thank them later, especially if the family of the deceased lives elsewhere. A funeral director remembered:

“At first printing announcement was sparse and was done in A4 paper, black and white, having a decorative leave on it by the local printing houses. Then it was printed by us, but the ink would fade or smudge. Nowadays, with the laser printers, the pictures and text are high quality. The paper also is made water-resistant.”

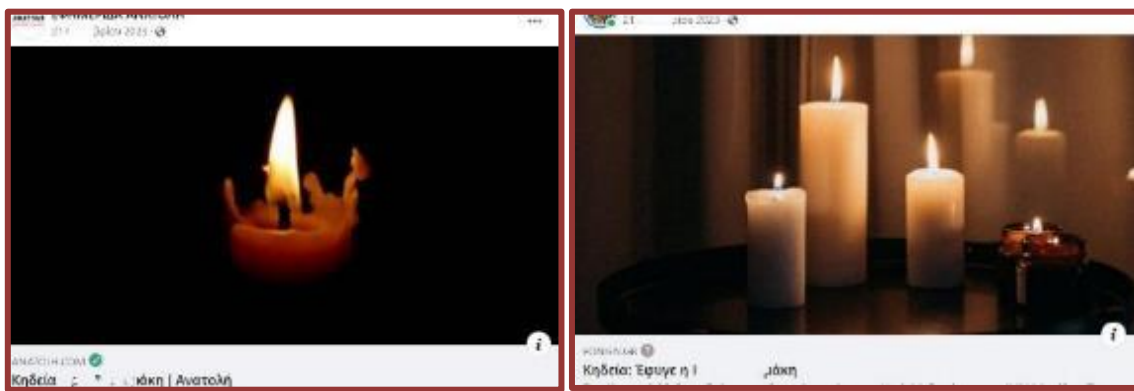


Pict. 8. Print Announcement of funeral.

Digital means, websites and especially Facebook, have been used by local funerary offices during the last decade. This is valid also for other socio-cultural or religious entities in the area (e.g. the local museum, authorities, local media and the church). Their web-presence was strengthened in the pandemic. The funerary offices’ online activity significantly increased in Facebook: on the owners’ personal accounts or the office’s page (and not on their website, if existent) announcements of deaths or memorial services are posted, with a photo of the deceased provided by the family. Fb announcement is now broadly asked by the grieving families, according to the owner of a funerary office. Moreover, deaths, funerals and memorials are also publicised in the local press (print and digital).



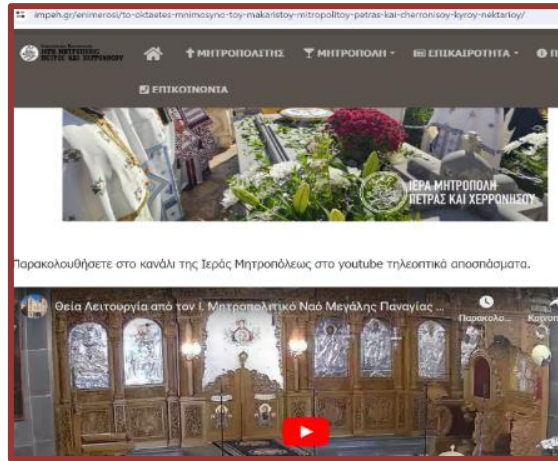
Pict. 9. Announcements of memorials uploaded on Facebook (funerary director's page)



Pict. 10: Reposts on a local Fb group of funeral and death announcements from the local digital press (anatolh.com & fonien.gr)

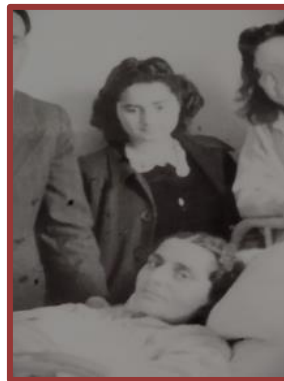
On their Facebook account, the funerary offices' owners may also upload pictures from the ceremonies, the church, the cars, the ornamentation, the cemetery. The pictures rarely show the coffin and the congregation. They focus on the ornamentation of the church, flowers and the offerings to the dead (*kolliva* in trays or sackets and small, sweet breads). Photographs from commemorative ceremonies are uploaded as well, focusing on the table and the decoration of the church. This may be translated on one hand as making known and publicising the work of the office as a local business and on the other as a public tribute to the deceased and/or additional public display of lavishness and power by the families.

It is relevant that photographs and videos from the funeral procession and memorial services of significant people of the community such as of the Bishops and of priests are publicised not only on Facebook page but also on the website of the Bishopric (impeh.gr) or on its YouTube channel which operates since 2011 (<https://www.youtube.com/@MitropoliPetras>).



Pict. 11. From the Bishopric's website (impeth.gr): the annual commemoration of the late Bishop Nektarios and the link to the youtube channel of the Bishopric for the ceremony

However, photographing the ceremony (either funeral procession or memorial service) in the sense of keeping record in the family archive is not the case. It is not the pictures that you would want for your family album, as for example for weddings or christenings. Nevertheless, there were such instances when people were photographed with critically ill or moribund relatives and friends. Because photographs were rare at the beginning of 20th century, people were reluctant to be photographed. I've been told by an old informant the story of the death of her little niece, that she believed it was related to being photographed as an angel for a postcard by a photographer, as she was beautiful with blond curly hair and blue eyes, "indeed like a little angel so she did become an angel." So, photographs from those instances were and are scarce, in most of cases taken by local photographers (pict. 12).



Pict. 12. Family photo archive: at the side of a dying person (at the hospital, 1947).

Change in the case of Upper Merabello is mostly exhibited in material aspects. One such change concerns food offerings, like the preparation and offering of *kolliva*, the core-foodstuff present in all commemorations with its ingredients being linked to regeneration and fertility. Whilst *kolliva* were in the past prepared at home and women made great efforts in preparing them, showing off their skill in decorating them, nowadays *kolliva* are prepared at local confectioneries or by care of the local funerary offices. This happens mainly in Neapolis and less often in the rural periphery for many reasons: either

because of the quantity needed and exhibition of lavishness or because of the lack of time of the women of the house, as nowadays women work outside the household. Moreover, as related to the above, the old practice of putting a decorated big tray with ‘*kolliva*’ on a table in front of the sanctuary in the church to be sanctified and commemorated has been in most cases substituted by preparing sachets or plastic bowls with *kolliva* that are put in a basket near the photograph of the dead on a table with candles burning and sometimes extravagantly decorated with flowers. This practice was mentioned in the context of innovation by my informants, as very helpful and handy.



Pict. 13. Photograph from a funeral posted in the Fb page of the Funerary Office.

As my informants remembered, mainly before the Second World War, the relatives of the deceased would carry to the church a basin with bread and cheese or – if it was fasting period– bread and olives for offering them to the congregation after the funeral, to wish for the salvation and wellbeing of the deceased’s soul. Women would stand at the door of the cemetery giving away bread and cheese to people along with wine or *raki* and receive wishes for the deceased “to his/her rest/serenity.” This was called ‘*μακαργιά*’, term which was used to denote either the commemoration itself or the glass of wine offered in the graveyard after the funeral (Pitykakis, 1983: 583) or wishing during the consolation meal, according to my informants. Another instance of using this word is when offering something to the poor. This probably happens, since people usually make donations saying: “for the rest of my deceased” (“για τη μακαρία των αποθαμένων μου”). These wishes for forgiveness (*συχωρεσά*), blissfulness and serenity (*μακαρία*) of the soul of the deceased are pronounced by people participating at the funeral and receiving food offerings.



Pict. 14. Placing kolliva in bowls for a memorial (2007).



Pict. 15. Kalitsounia and bowls with koliva (left) put in sackets (right) for a memorial (2007).

Immediately after the funeral, the family of the deceased offered (and still does) coffee or cognac to the people at some café. This practice begun probably in the late 1970's and substituted the practice of the offerings at the door of the cemetery. During the café receptions after the funeral or the memorials a great variety of edibles is offered, both sweet and salty. This was the case of a memorial that took place in Neapolis, where apart from the usual biscuits and dried fruits and nuts, '*kalitsounia*' (Easter sweets) were offered. An old female informant told me that this is what they do now. This extravagance in offering is allowed, as long as they do not deviate from ecclesiastic rules (e.g. fasting). Moreover, the forty-days fast of the family of the dead is not obligatorily kept and sometimes is kept only for the week before receiving the Holy Communion, at the end of the forty days period. This is, of course, an indication that, although perceptions have not changed, the ritual enactment varies according to the case.

The funerary meal which was offered after the funeral in the deceased's house usually for close relatives and friends and the priest is called '*πορθιάτικο*'²³ in the area, a word that probably draws its etymology from the word '*πόρτα*' (door), both as an actual offering at the door and a farewell at a symbolic door-passage to the underworld. Mortuary meals-feasts function as "a particularly important arena for memorialising and forgetting through food, viewed in some instances as a context that creates a space of temporary memorialisation, after which the person can be (at least publicly) forgotten" (Holtzman 2006: 372). Although many Melanesian ethnographies suggest that food used in the mortuary rituals is associated with the ephemeral and forgetting (Battaglia 1992; Sutton 2001), in Greece (and in our case), continuity and remembrance are central in mortuary feasting through food sharing, in the sense of remembering the dead, reasserting the community and continuity.

Accordingly, food manipulation in death rituals consolidates and reinforces bodily memory versus oblivion. In this sense, in these memorials the ever-present image of the dead person and his/her new status- in-the-making relate to the shaping of posthumous fame and establishing of one's good name. Thus, the mnemonic representation of the dead is re-structured to fit the image of a valued, generous person, through especially food offerings and –at times– lavishness and extravagance (cf.

²³ Pitykakis mentions that the word *πορθιάτικο* was used for the food offerings at the exit of the cemetery (1983: 782).

Sutton, 2001). The same is valid for the mourning family and its perceived status in the community: a new identity for the deceased as well as for the members of the bereaved family is constructed. As Kenna puts it,

The implication here is that what is offered at memorial services should not only impress the recipients with the status of the mourners but cajole and even almost bribe them into speaking the words of the prayer which will release the soul from one of its sins. [...], the sweets and liqueurs provided for memorial services make statements about a family's view of itself in the community. But they also relate to the family's view of their degree of obligation to the dead person, a recognition of the legitimate claims of the dead over the living. (Kenna, 1991: 106)

In relation to the above, Dubisch talks about the meaning of mortuary rituals for community identity as expressing a framework of relationships that are conveyed or contested (1989: 197), whilst Hayden (2009) finds in funeral feasts a display of power not only for social signaling but also for creating “socioeconomic and political alliances” or “advantageous relationships.” Sutton (2001: 41) relates abundance in food offering in mortuary rituals to the preservation of the “one's good name” after one's death.

In Upper Merabello, offerings in the memory of the dead aim not only at soothing the soul or ensuring the good reputation for the person after death. They aim also at fortifying the good name of the whole family, expressing family solidarity within a context of competition between families and their statuses. Moreover, bonds within the community are shown since material offerings (e.g. food and money) function as a type of reciprocity and redistribution of wealth. In this sense, public display of power or status in funerary rituals could account for the observed change.



Pict. 14. Photograph from a memorial posted in the Fb page of the Funerary Office

Further, there is the issue of pressure by the community (“what people will say”): social pressure enforces keeping the cycle of memorials and offerings on Soul's Days or the regular and frequent visits to the cemetery for lighting the candle and taking care of the grave (cf. Hirschon 1983). This includes further the wearing of mourning clothes at least for one year for close relatives, as we have seen. If people, especially women, fail to conform to the expectations of others, they become object of gossip.

Similarly, Danforth observes for Potamia:

The performance of death rituals, in addition to being the fulfillment of a social obligation, is also an opportunity for the public expression of family solidarity. There is a general

desire for these rites to be performed in an elaborate and impressive manner in order to uphold a family's reputation. On the other hand, if the performance of these rites is not judged appropriate and is found wanting in some respect, the lack of family solidarity is exposed and the family's reputation suffers accordingly. (Danforth, 1982: 125)

Accordingly, Hirschon suggests:

Social pressure promotes conformity in many of the observances, and in the context of the competitive relationships of families in this locality considerable sums of money are paid to make increasingly elaborate arrangements for funerals, memorial services, tombstones and the customary offerings to participants after the services (coffee, brandy, *kólliva*). Expenditure on the grave can be considerable as tombstones become more imposing [...] Every visit to the cemetery is also a scrutiny of the state of other graves; people notice the condition, and comment accordingly. (Hirschon, 1983: 119)

Within acts of charity for the soul's forgiveness, we might as well mention the giving out of the deceased's clothes a few days after death, which is performed until today. Female relatives gather at the house to collect the dead's clothes and, after washing them, they give them away, acting for the soul's salvation²⁴. Such offerings are also donations (mainly of money) in the memory of the dead that are announced inside the church after the funerary service and the speeches in memoriam or after the memorials²⁵.



Pict. 15. Lowering the coffin with the dead to the grave using ropes (1990's).

Moreover, acknowledgement of this procedure that ensures remembrance and perpetuation of one's name and good reputation drives local migrants in their final wish to be buried back at "their fathers land." Part of it of course is nostalgia since tombs are viewed as the "last residence" of the individual. An old informant from Neapolis, resident of Athens, expressed the wish to be buried in his father's grave, as from there he would have a view of the valley of Merabello and of his beloved town.

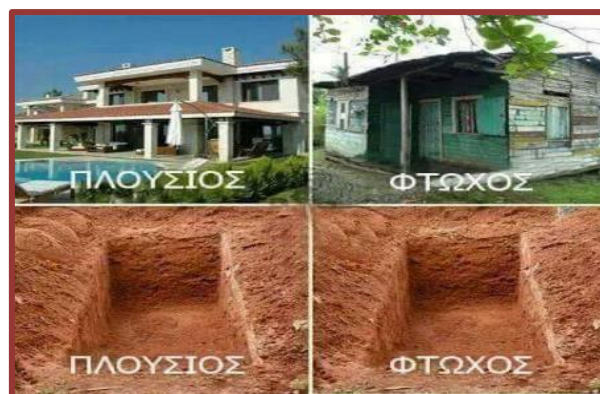
²⁴ In case of a contagious illness, they burn them or throw them away. Lioudaki (1939) mentions that they wash the clothes so that the soul of the dead "becomes lighter" and then they give them to the poor so that the soul is recompensed (*jia na to vrei I psihi tou*).

²⁵ Those donations are usually for the Church and the charity of the Bishopric "Home of the Poor" as well as to other local organisations.

This might have been the reason why, an old family friend of his, built his grave long before dying²⁶. This provisioning for the “future and last residence” is seen also in the planning for the new extension of the local cemetery in Neapolis, where residents buy a piece of land/site and some of them even build a grave for personal or family use.

Proper offering means extravagance in the same way as appropriate expression of grief through mourning. Laments were verses either created on the spot by women or chosen and adapted by an already existing repertoire (cf. Alexiou, 2002; Caraveli-Chaves, 1980; Lioudaki, 1939). The proper performance of the ritual lamenting was subjected to public criticism especially in the rural areas of Upper Merabello. However, extreme expression of grief was and still is considered inappropriate by the bourgeoisie and educated elite of the area, inhabiting Neapolis. It is further viewed as sign of backwardness. According to Caraveli-Chaves (1980), lamentation is often seen with contempt by the male world. Relevantly, an old male informant narrated to me, in a reprimanding way, an instance of a widow weeping and telling the mourner in verses: “Mourn him for me well and I’ll give you a mound of broad beans. Mourn him a lot and I’ll also give you a heap of lentils” (“Κλάψε μού τονε καλά, κουμουλάρι τα κουκιά. Κλάψε μού τονε πολύ κουμουλάρι τσ’ η φακή”).

This is related to a widespread belief in equality before death which is also phrased in ecclesiastic texts, such as the Funeral Service²⁷. Death is seen as a common fate for all, from which nobody can escape and where material things are of no use (cf. Danforth 1982; Bennett 1994). Emphasising the virtue of donating or criticising accumulation of wealth and property or lavishness and display of status in everyday discussions are such expressions: “where we will all end, we cannot take with us all those material things” or “he earned a piece of mud”. The issue is often raised on Facebook (see pict. 16).



Pict. 16. Picture from a funerary director’s Fb account on the belief in the egalitarian character of death and instigating a discussion on this theme (the rich on the left and the poor on the right).

²⁶ See also Dubisch (1989) and Bennett (1994).

²⁷ Some such quotes form the Funeral Service: “All things are weaker than shadow, all more illusive than dreams”, “Vanity are all the works and quests of man, and they have no being after death has come; our wealth is with us no longer” or “Where is now our affection for earthly things? Where is now the alluring pomp of transient questing? Where is now our gold, and our silver? Where is now the surging crowd of domestics, and their busy cries? All is dust, all is ashes, all is shadow.” Source for the English translation: <https://www.goarch.org/el/-/funeral-service>.

Despite this, the socio-cultural reality in Upper Merabello involves coexistence of those beliefs with the display of power which takes a new form depending on the circumstances, as we previously saw. Excessive offering, an old practice in the area, or participation of many priests and/or the bishop are such instances. Lioudaki (1939) mentions that this happens in the case of wealthy and important families, while for poor people only the priest of the parish participates. Indicative is the following couplet:

*Ο πλούσιος έχει την τιμή, α ζη κι ανέν ποθάνη,
μα ο κακομοίρης ο φτωχός μουδ' ήταν μουδ' εφάνη*
(The wealthy has the honour, whether alive or dead,
whilst the misfortunate, poor man, is like never existed).
Lioudaki (1939: 422).

As follows, the public display of power or subjection to authority through mortuary rituals is not a novelty in Upper Merabello. It was and still is present in the mourning for the deceased, in the ceremony (expensive coffin, number of priests, church ornamentation with flowers and so on), in the material offerings to the dead (*kolliva*, flowers, wreaths) and even in the building, renovation or caring for the grave. The issue of lavishness has always been a prerequisite. Accordingly, the old expression “he turned them to *kolliva*” (“τα ’καμε κόλλυβα”) is used to denote overspending and waste of money or other resources. In this sense, there is an ambivalence and contradiction between beliefs and their realising: belief on the basic equality of all human beings at the advent of death and disapproval by the community of wealth accumulation or display are not consistent with individual enactment and community ritual behaviour that tend towards excessive spending and display of status and power.



Pict. 17. Wreaths for a funeral outside the church – photo from the Fb page of a funerary office

Moreover, “public” funerals and memorials, of distinguished people with contribution to the community, differ from the others and usually involve the presence of powerful people and representatives of the authorities (religious, military and political at local, peripheral or national level) and many public speeches in memoriam. I may mention here the annual ‘public’ memorial established

in honour of the late Roussos Koundouros, distinguished lawyer and influential politician, executed by the Germans in 29/8/1944, only some days before their retreat from Crete (see pict. 18).



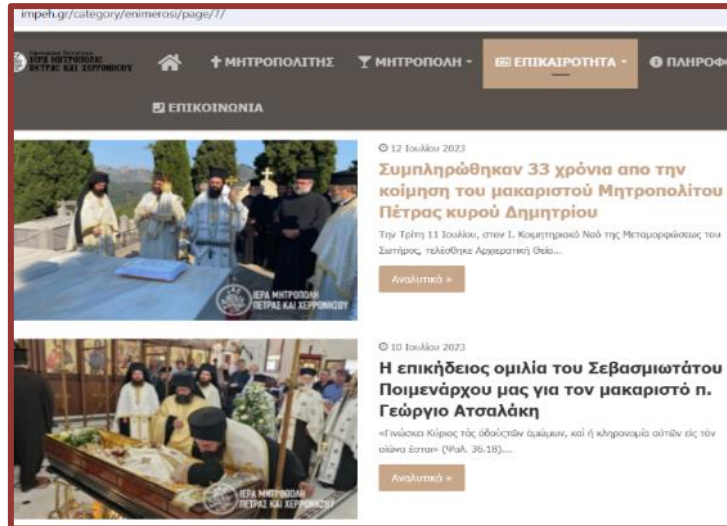
Pict. 18. Photos from the annual public memorial of 2007 in honour of the late Roussos Koundouros in front of the statue in Neapolis. On the left the religious ceremony performed by the late Bishop Nektarios and on the right the late George Kokolakis delivering the public speech in memoriam at the end of the religious ceremony.

The priests' funerals (especially of those that die while they are in service) follow a diverse ceremonial procedure²⁸. Additionally, the Bishops' funerals, as people remember, incite sentiments of collective grief which is publicly expressed: the corpse is lying in the church for the congregation to pay their respects, while there is organised a formal procession that passes from the main streets of Neapolis. The last years, snapshots or videos from the related ceremonies become publicised on the YouTube channel, the Facebook page and the site of the Bishopric. Their memorials also are open to the public.



Pict. 19. The funerary procession of the late Bishop Demetrius (1990). Photo posted on the Fb page of the owner of the funerary office that undertook the ceremony.

²⁸ See Lioudaki's (1939) account for the now forgotten customs of "angels' dance" or of priests being buried seated on their chair.



Pict. 20. From the Bishopric's website (impeh.gr): the above article is about the annual commemoration of late Bishop Demetrius and the underneath is for the funeral of a priest.



Pict. 21. From the Fb page of the Bishopric of Petra and Herronissos: the photo of the Cathedral and a recent post for the annual commemoration of the late Bishop Nektarios with his photo.

As Piña-Cabral and Feijó noticed for the death rituals of Minho (Portugal), within the local context of power relations, through offerings in funerals status was underlined. Maintaining that “ideology enters at least partially in conflict with the material state of affairs” (1983: 31), they further indicate how sense of community coexists with (and somehow covers) social inequalities (Piña-Cabral, 1986; Piña-Cabral & Feijó, 1983).

Sixteenth century French Catholics used to give out 'ostentatious "doles" to the needy' during funerals (Davis, 1977: 94). We encounter here a similar situation. 'Doles' were given as an expression of a sense of 'community', yet they were 'ostentatious', which meant that they reinforced the superiority of the donors. Similarly, the bereaved in the Alto Minho utilize the rites of community and equality attached to burials as means of stressing prestige. This is important in order to understand the local attitude to funerals and wakes-they reveal social differentiation through the expression of community. The two tendencies are interlinked. (Piña-Cabral 1986: 226)

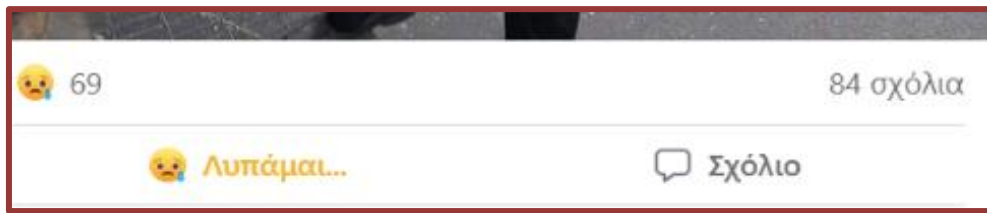
Dubisch (1989) examined material markers of death in relation to hidden symbolic and socio-cultural meanings. Change in the material aspects of mortuary rituals was seen as reflecting increasing

commodification and changes in conceptualisations of death, bearing important consequences for both the individual and the society. In this line of thought, through the involvement of funerary offices, burials, memorials and cemeteries became ‘commodified’ and death related practices instances for display. The modern emphasis on the material aspects of death rituals in contrast to the past simplicity and emphasis on behavioural elements (such as laments and wearing black) parallels to the move towards consumer economy and commodification. In this sense, ambivalence between explicit display of social differences in the material markers (such as graves) versus community values of equality in death, implies that this egalitarianism serves rather for masking social inequalities, while egalitarianism in death conceptualisation and practices retreats in favour of hierarchical differentiation (Dubisch, 1989).

These examples represent an emerging conflict between two views of death in Greek communities, one of which sees death as an opportunity for material display in the form of conspicuous consumption and the other which regards it as an occasion for the reaffirmation of egalitarian communal values. They suggest that Greek mortuary practices are moving away from the almost stark simplicity and acknowledged transitoriness of life which have characterized death ritual in the past, at least in rural areas, and toward an elaboration and proliferation of the material components of death ritual (Dubisch, 1989: 191).

Accordingly, ritual behaviour reflecting egalitarianism in death, is not uniform and homogeneous throughout Greece (and even in Southern Europe) as Bennett (1994) suggests: whilst for example in Lehonía equality in death is suggested and actualised in ritual and even in material signs such as material offerings for honouring the dead and cemeteries, this is not the case for other Greek areas, such as Nisiot practices narrated by Kenna (1991) or the rituals in Potamia described by Danforth (1982) and the display in the burial monuments of the cemeteries as exhibited by Dubisch (1989).

In this framework and keeping in mind that often Facebook becomes an arena for public influence (the number of friends, followers, responses to posts and so on), the commemorative procedure in Facebook and the number of people commemorating or participating in grief by simply clicking a reaction icon indication sorrow, using emojis or icons or writing comments and text messages could be linked to a process of public display of influence and, thus, power. So, public display of power and expression of authority as a core theme remain, however the way and the means are slowly changing and evolving. In this case we observe ‘powerful knowledge’ (Fischer, 2006) that makes people adapt to change by linking old principles and practices to new ones. “Powerful knowledge” is cultural knowledge in pragmatic terms “creating and enabling the management and exploitation of the multiple possibilities that emerge from interacting cultural agents and their knowledge of cultural domains” (Fischer, 2008: 4). Its’ role, as he declares is “to produce the best fit of our conceptual outcome to circumstances as they are” (2006: 331). In this sense, change occurs to powerful knowledge and not the symbolic order, with the presupposition that we view the symbol systems as “the effective drivers for how people relate to, adapt to and modify the external relations within which they are embedded” (Fischer, 2006: 337).



Pict. 22. Responding to a death's announcement using Facebook reaction icons (69) and comments (84).

The involvement of the funerary offices is by some perceived as being linked to the augmentation of spending and lavishness during ceremonies. Over-spending is interpreted on one hand as a gesture to the deceased (for the soul's forgiveness, soothing and serenity) and on the other as demonstration and display of wealth and status (or even its restructuring) of the deceased and their family. At times there is such an extravagance that reminds the lavishness of a wedding ceremony, as a female informant noticed. However, burials and memorials, especially after 2011, changed again –as it was brought forward– and became more moderate regarding luxury due to the economic crisis that reduced considerably excessive spending and recently due to the pandemic.

Additionally, the pandemic prohibitions directed people to use other alternatives for offering support to the family and expressing grief and condolences, mainly through the social media, Facebook in particular. The presence in social media intensified for individuals as happened with funeral offices and other socio-cultural or religious entities (e.g. the local museum, authorities and the church). Grieving individuals may announce their loss and they usually change their picture in their Facebook account with a black ribbon at least for the forty days. This initiates and announces publicly the bereavement period just like (and in parallel) people start wearing mourning clothes indicating their loss in their everyday life. This change in the picture, can be further interpreted as indicating the ambiguous social identity of mourning individuals and their transition to a new status and identity. After this announcement, their friends post their condolences (writing “Warm condolences”/“Θερμά συλλυπητήρια”) and/or consoling messages on their wall (e.g. “courage”/“κουράγιο” or “may you live long and remember him”/ “να ζήσετε, να τον θυμάστε”). If the deceased has a Facebook page, friends and relatives post their mournful messages also on his/her wall.



Pict. 23. On the left, a black ribbon replacing owner's photograph for indicating bereavement status. On the right a black candle posted for wishing “Bon voyage” and “Good Heaven” to the deceased.

Sometimes, friends and family members post texts in memoriam praising the deceased, remembering and narrating stories and their shared experiences. They may also post videos or photographs from past happy moments. This practice is related to a local (but also broader belief in Greece) that the deceased communicates with the living, especially in dreams, and that he/she may listen and participate in instances of private and even social nature, such as for example in the consolation meal. The apparition of a dead person in dreams is usually interpreted by individuals as an important message. A female informant stressed that whenever she dreamt of her grandmother, she got grave news. People who dream of a dead person close to them usually explain it as a message from him/her insinuating that they have not fulfilled their duty for the sake of the soul, so they go to the cemetery to light the candle, offer flowers or take care of the grave (cf. Danforth, 1982). According to Danforth, “social relationships between the living and the dead are maintained through dreams” (ibid: 135). Being remembered, in this way, the deceased is satisfied and in peace with the living. Moreover, in Facebook conversations with and/or for the deceased this belief in the continuing bonds is represented.

In this respect, many people may add comments to the conversation thread or remind instances or qualities of the person they grieve. Some others may post messages in verses (couplets) which is characteristic of the traditional laments addressing directly (in second person) the dead, often appraising him/her or saying how much they love and miss them. They, usually, express the belief that death is a crossing, and that life continues somewhere else, where one can meet with the other deceased members of the family or dear friends, and even convey messages to them, thus retaining a degree of sociality. This is more intense when a death is unexpected, and it involves young people. For example:

“Bon voyage my dear and when you come across/ my mother give her my greetings.”
(Καλό ταξίδι μάθια μου και όντε απαντήξεις τη μάνα μου να μου τη χαιρετήξεις).

Bon voyage my x, go meet our father and talk to him again.
(Καλό ταξίδι σου x. Άμε να συναντήσεις τον πατέρα μας, να του ζαναμιλήσεις).

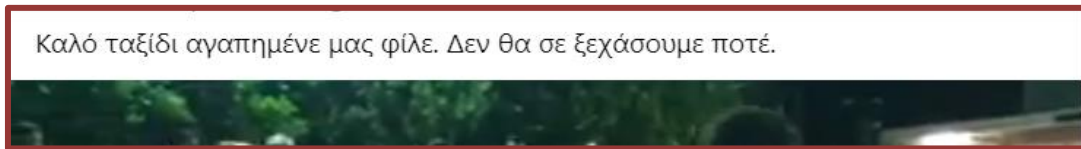
Personal feelings, thoughts and grief are also expressed in verses:

“By the time the clock’s hand takes full turn, people’s joy may become a lament.”
(Ωσπου να πάρει τη στροφή ο δείκτης στο ρολόι, μπορεί τ’ ανθρώπου η χαρά να γίνει μοιρολόι).



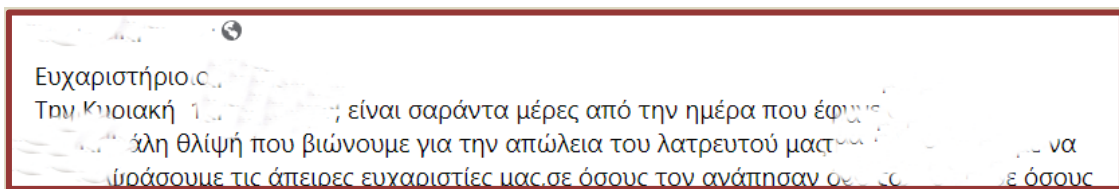
Pict. 24. Responding to a death’s announcement writing messages and posting emojis.

The belief to death as being a change of status, a kind of voyage is evident while wishing to the deceased on their Facebook account addressing in second person singular²⁹ “Bon voyage my dear” or to their family members, writing on the bereaved family member’s page “Bon voyage to him/her” in third person singular or simply “bon voyage” (“καλό ταξίδι”), “farewell” (“στο καλό”) “smooth crossing” (“καλά περάματα”). The modern wish “Good Heaven” (“Καλό Παράδεισο”), which is commonly used all over Greece, is used in some cases and probably insinuates bon voyage to Paradise.



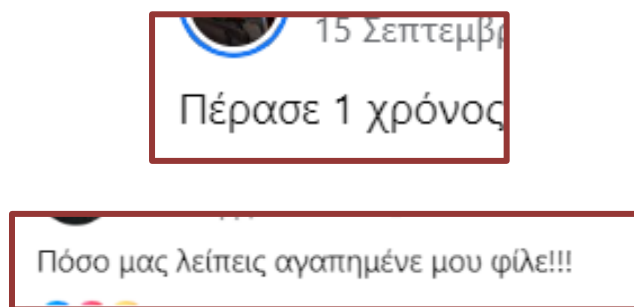
Pict. 25. Wishing “Bon voyage” on a friend’s Fb account, posting also a photo from a happy instant.

The bereaved family members may further (after the mourning period of forty days) post a thank-you note or a message addressing to all friends in Fb expressing their gratitude to people sharing their grief.



Pict. 26. A thank-you note by a family of a deceased on Fb.

Moreover, the deceased is remembered on the memorials, especially the forty days and the annual as well as in their birthdays, probably because of Facebook’s reminding of birthdays. Texts usually commence by saying that “one year has passed since the death of our beloved...” or “one year is completed from the death of my beloved...”



Pict. 27. Commemorating the first year on the deceased’s Fb account.

Writing on social media sometimes also facilitates expression of grief and is considered especially healing. Wishing through Facebook may replace in some instances wishing in person, in the case of those

²⁹ For example, writing on the deceased’s account “Bon voyage my friend” or on the bereaved family member’s page “Bon voyage to him/her.”

who cannot attend the ceremony either because of physical distance or for a serious reason (e.g. illness). This wishing has a further meaning as a local public statement of excuse within the context of the socio-cultural obligation of participation in the ceremony/ies under the pressure by the community.

Καλό ταξίδι Καλό παράδεισο : λίγα λουλούδια για σένα γιατί είμαι μακριά ...

Pict. 28. Posting for excusing for not wishing farewell in person.

In the past, wishing from a distance was usually done through telegrams. However, people participate in person in the ceremonies (funerals and commemorations), which is considered the proper way for paying condolences and commemorate, even if some may have already or in parallel expressed their grief in Facebook. Facebook is only subsidiary in this respect and does not substitute the face-to-face interaction.

This could be considered as an initial and elementary stage in the sense of the interaction framework of PolySocial Reality (Applin & Fischer 2011b). In this respect, there is the potential for the expansion of social networks and the quick diffusion of information through diverse channels towards diverse directions (especially if we consider the Facebook accounts of funerary offices or funeral directors). In this way, new technologies through social media may permit adaptation of the customary practices and further initiate change. However, a danger stemming from extension of networking would be individuation which poses barriers to effective communication and cooperation (Applin & Fischer 2012a).

Accordingly, participation in grief through Facebook depends on what Madianou and Miller (2011, 2013) –as we have already mentioned– find as pre-conditions for ‘polymedia’: access and availability, affordability, and media literacy. So, the use of Facebook is limited mainly in the cases of the older generation (with no or low media literacy), of people who live in remote areas and have inadequate access to internet, of illiterate people or those who cannot afford the cost of the equipment and services. Moreover, as we have already mentioned, there is an ambiguity in local people’s attitude towards the use of technology: they both fear and desire innovation. Mostly, older people are hesitant to use new technologies and utilise the social media³⁰. They also feel that their “customs and traditions” are endangered by the “intrusion” of modern technologies in their lives (cf. Kokolaki, 2011, 2017). So, in keeping pace with customary actions, local people may delineate a symbolic marker of their collective identity against mordenisation.

In addition, considering the dichotomy of the ‘official’ religion and worship and the folk-popular ones (c.f. Dubisch, 1991, 1995), the first are imposed within and by ecclesiastic (and male-centred) circles, while the latter are related to the secular environments and mainly performed by women. In this, one major factor for the preservation of formal ritual action is the presence of the Church authority (by

³⁰ For old people’s reluctance to go online see also Walter et al. 2012.

the Bishopric which is the head of the local religious authority), imposing conformity to the religious rules and traditions. Thus, conformity with religious symbolism, keeps formal religious rituals unchanged as well as secular beliefs and principles fairly stable.

Finally, the issue of changes I have observed through time might also be viewed in the light of Fischer's theory about change of "powerful knowledge". This is related to a rather agentic viewing of culture, as capabilities and resources people use to confront various situations, critical to defining and building the surrounding world, being an "ideational technology" (Fischer, 2008). It is culture that provides people with the ability to adapt and develop: "People embedded in cultural processes demonstrate remarkable powers of creation, transformation, stability and regulation. Culture gives agents the power to hyper-adapt" (ibid). People may use symbolic knowledge in a dynamic and transformational manner, in order to meet new material needs. In this sense cultural systems not only help people to adjust and maintain their status in their environment, but they also enable human invention leading to change and adaptation. And adaptation as well is a type of cultural change.

In fact, people are resourceful, finding ways to adapt to the new situations. For example, as far as mortuary rituals are concerned, the obvious change results from much more luxury and showing off than what is considered appropriate. Although this might be criticised, it is accepted in practice and in fact enacted by the same people that criticise it. In this respect, new technologies provide people with yet more options and resources, a repertoire from which people may choose, as we saw happening within the pandemic, with people using online tools to express and communicate their grief. Death rituals (those falling into the category of informal/folk practices) were not "properly" performed as far as the community's participation was concerned because of the prohibitions and the protective measures necessary. However, through the extensive use of new media a new kind of re-socialisation of death was achieved: "The innovation of interactive social media is that grief is re-emerging as a communal activity, within existing social networks" (Walter et al., 2012: 290).

This is, of course, an indication that the procedure related to folk/popular enactments changes in some respect: although underlying principles and rules have not changed, the folk ritual enactment in private and in public varies according to the case. Within the framework of adaptive agency this could be seen as adaptive strategies of the local people while processing their broader socio-cultural framework, responding to new circumstances and driving the dynamics of cultural change.

Epilogue

Anthropological and ethnographic research in Greece as well as folk studies focused on mortuary and funerary rituals mainly in Greek rural communities (cf. Dubisch, 1989). Interest has been mainly on ritual practices and the latent symbolisms (cf. Danforth, 1982; Psychogiou, 2008), lamenting and the female role in mourning (cf. Alexiou, 2002; Caraveli, 1980, 1986; Seremetakis, 1990, 1991; Psychogiou, 2008), graves and graveyards (cf. Bennett, 1994; Dubisch, 1989; Koumarianou, 2008).

Moreover, the issues of lineage, inheritance and distribution of property (cf. Danforth, 1982; Kenna, 1976, 1991) and changes in material aspects of rituals and their socio-cultural references (cf. Bennett, 1994; Dubisch, 1989; Kenna, 1991) were also examined. As it is shown in those last studies, death practices are “open to change” (Bennett, 1994). However, the online aspect of death related practices such as announcing, lamenting, mourning, memorialising is not amply addressed.

Against this background, I attempted to contribute to an ethnography about change in cultural practices under the new technologies impact, focusing on death related practices in online/offline contexts of sociality in traditional societies (of rural character or of those developing urban characteristics) of Greece. Followingly, I examined onsite practices and their changing course and how they are related to online reference to death and memorialising in a Greek rural area. Is there a contrast, a mingling or rather an ambiguity? Are the two spheres subsidising one another? May technological innovation contribute to reimagining the deceased, re-organising our relations to them, and rethinking about death in the same way that rituals enacted in person also aim and contribute to this respect?

Ritual and religious ceremonies are important elements of traditional life. They change slowly and they preserve to a great degree their previous form. Rituals are social acts or collective phenomena and serve purposes fixed and profoundly rooted in collective life, comprising the notion of structured action, of coherence through time and space and at the same time providing the opportunity for the observation of the communication system under study (Rappaport, 1974). To quote Geertz (1973: 412-453), rituals “talk about” important cultural themes. They are stories people tell themselves about themselves. Geertz (ibid) has called ritual performances “metasocial commentaries”, “texts within texts” which can be read or interpreted by both the people who perform them and outside observers.

In a place like the Upper Merabello where traditional practices still play an important role, where the religious sentiment is central in socio-cultural contexts and where face-to-face interactions, especially for the older, are a way of life, what I have delineated is an ambiguous situation, characteristic of a course towards change where, although there is an augmented presence and interaction in the digital world, the on-ground participation is a necessity and precondition for the function of the community (both the physical and the virtual one).

Social and religious institutions continue to shape people’s responses to death and long-established practices endure and retain their central role and importance in the community life. Beliefs shaped within this framework (belonging both to the sphere of official religion and the “popular” one as well as the social framework) continue to influence the enactment of specific rituals and the expression of grief.

However, state intervention and governmental institutions, for regulating this field, impose an often-rigid legislative framework aiming not only to define and impose a health, hygiene and safety agenda but often to touch on both the social and the private-emotional context. In the western world mostly, funerary offices (the so-called death industry) operate because of and within this regulative

framework. Moreover, services provided in this context (by funerary offices and digital application providers) ranging from the face-to-face interactions to the online tools, influence people's response to death (cf. Arnold, 2018).

Accordingly, in Greek rural periphery changes in material aspects were inevitable, because of state enforcement rules about public hygiene that made obligatory the involvement of funeral directors in handling the corpse and in burial and exhumation procedures. The care for the cemetery also is entrusted on the municipalities. Those rules, of course, have much stricter conformance in big cities, like in Athens, where everything is performed in accordance with the rules of the cemetery and the municipality it belongs. I find highly relevant also the recent precaution measures, related both to the handling of the dead corpse as well as to prohibitions of open funerals related to the Covid-19 pandemic. Most important in this respect proved to be the dynamics and potentialities of new digital technologies through a multiplicity of channels (polymedia) that offered mediated and unmediated/spontaneous participation in grief.

Although at the pragmatic level social actors (as individuals or collectivities) set goals and employ strategies that direct their actions (offline and online) and activate all their available resources, in depth the power of social action/performance lies on its symbolic grounds: the underlying structure of culture and how this is represented and acted out in rituals and other practices. People may use this symbolic knowledge in a dynamic manner, to meet emerging needs. In the area under consideration, there are general structures in ritual processes that look stable in as much as they are related to religious beliefs and function in this respect. Nonetheless, the individual enactments of those practices and knowledge of the structures and components of the system significantly vary.

As far as online and offline-onsite contexts are concerned, the case of Upper Merabello suggests that they are complementary, rather than distancing or fusing. People that use online environments in death related practices, do not substitute or mix offline with the online: they replicate or complement face-to-face/offline interaction in a way that rather reinforces and extends the offline ritual behaviour. Accordingly, Miller (2011: 169) suggested for Facebook that it “provides an additional space for personal expression” in Trinidad and further that the Internet is not “monolithic or placeless” (Miller & Slater, 2000: 1), but rather what its users think or make with it in a particular place of the “real world” (Miller, 2011; Miller & Slater, 2000). Boelstoff also assumed that:

The virtual and the actual are not blurring, nor are they pulling apart from one another. Such spatial metaphors of proximity and movement radically mischaracterize the semiotic and material interchanges that forge both the virtual and the actual (Boelstoff, 2012: 56-57).

Technology embedded in cultural processes, and in our case the digital sphere, as providing more options and motivating people to make further choices, in turn results to innovative practices and change. The digital sphere provides an additional space of sociality, non-institutionalised, informal and ambiguous –standing between the private and the public– (unlike churches and cemeteries) where

people may interact paying condolences, expressing grief, thoughts and share experiences. As an informant remarked, this resembles the neighbourhood space and practices, an intermediate space between the public and the private. Nonetheless, technological advances happening fast will also fast overcome the social web and will soon oblige us to extend our research and examine further ramifications.

Bibliography

- Alexander, J.C. (2004). Cultural Pragmatics: Social Performance between Ritual and Strategy. *Sociological Theory*, 22(4), 527-573.
- Alexiou, M. (2002). *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition*. 2nd ed. (rev. By D. Yiatromanolakis & P. Roilos). Lanham, Boulder, Oxford, New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC.
- Andersson, Y. (2019). Blogs and the Art of Dying: Blogging With, and About, Severe Cancer in Late Modern Swedish Society. *OMEGA - Journal of Death and Dying*, 79(4), 394–413.
- Applin, S. A. and Fischer, M. D. (2011a). A Cultural Perspective on Mixed, Dual and Blended Reality. In *IUI-Workshop on Location Awareness for Mixed and Dual Reality (LAMDa '11)*. Available at: <https://www.dfki.e/LAMDa/2011/accepted/ACulturalPerspective.pdf>
- Applin, S. A. and Fischer, M. D. (2011b). Pervasive Computing in Time and Space: The Culture and Context of 'Place' Integration. In *Seventh International Conference on Intelligent Environments, Nottingham, UK, 2011*, (pp. 285-293). Available at <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/abstract/document/6063398>
- Applin, S. A. and Fischer, M. D. (2012a) Applied agency: Resolving multiplexed communication in automobiles. In *Adjunct Proceedings of the 4th International Conference on Automotive User Interfaces and Interactive Vehicular Applications (AutomotiveUI '12), October 17–19, 2012, Portsmouth, NH, USA* (pp. 159–163). Available at: <http://www.auto-ui.org/12/docs/AutomotiveUI-2012-Adjunct-Proceedings.pdf>
- Applin, S. A. and Fischer, M. D. (2012b). 'PolySocial Reality: A Conceptual Model for Expanding User Capabilities Beyond Mixed, Dual and Blended Reality'. Available at: https://posr.org/w/images/8/87/Applin_Fischer_PolySocialRealityProspectsforExtendingUserExperiencesBeyondMixedDualandBlendedReality_LAMDa_2012a.pdf
- Applin, S. A., Fischer, M. D. & Walker, K (2012). Visualising PolySocial Reality (Revised). Available at: <https://jitsociology.wordpress.com/2012/12/03/visualising-polysocial-reality-revised/>
- Ariès, P. (1974). The Reversal of Death: Changes in Attitudes Toward Death in Western Societies. *American Quarterly*, 26(5), 536- 560.
- Ariès, P. (1981). *The hour of our death*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Arnold, M., Gibbs, M., Kohn, T., Meese, J., Nansen, B. (2018). *Death and Digital Media*. London: Routledge.
- Battaglia, D., 1992, "The Body in the Gift: Memory and Forgetting in Sabarl Mortuary Exchange," *American Ethnologist*, 19, 1, 3-18.

- Bennett, D. O. (1994). *Bury Me in Second Class: Contested Symbols in a Greek Cemetery*. *Anthropological Quarterly*, 67(3), 122-134.
- Benveniste, R. (1999). Μνήμη και Ιστοριογραφία. In R. Benveniste & Th.Paradellis (eds) *Διαδρομές και Τόποι της Μνήμης: Ιστορικές και Ανθρωπολογικές Προσεγγίσεις*. Athens: Alexandria, pp. 11-26. [In Greek]
- Bloch, M. & Parry, J. (1982). Introduction: Death and the Regeneration of Life. In M. Bloch & J. Parry (eds.) *Death and the Regeneration of Life*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-44.
- Boelstoff, T (2012) Rethinking Digital Anthropology. In H.A. Horst and D. Miller (eds) *Digital Anthropology*. London: Berg, pp. 39-60.
- Boyd, D. (2010). Social Network Sites as Networked Publics: Affordances, Dynamics, and Implications. In Z. Papacharissi (ed.), *Networked Self: Identity, Community, and Culture on Social Network Sites*. New York: Routledge, pp. 39-58.
- Boyd, D.M., and Ellison, N.B. (2007), Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13, 210-230.
- Broadbent, S. (2012) Approaches to Personal Communication. In H.A. Horst and D. Miller (eds) *Digital Anthropology*. London: Berg, pp. 127-145.
- Brubaker, J.R., & Hayes, G.R. (2011). "We will never forget you [online]": an empirical investigation of postmortem MySpace comments. In *Proceedings of the ACM 2011 conference on Computer supported cooperative work - CSCW '11*. New York: ACM Press, pp. 123–132.
- Caraveli, A. (1985). The Symbolic Village: Community Born in Performance. *The Journal of American Folklore*, 98, No389, 259-286.
- Caraveli, A. (1986). The Bitter Wounding: The Lament as Social Protest in Rural Greece. In J. Dubisch (ed) *Gender and Power in Rural Greece*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 169-192.
- Caraveli-Chaves, A. (1980). Bridge between Worlds: The Greek Women's Lament as Communicative Event. *The Journal of American Folklore*, 93, No 368, 129-157.
- Carmack, H. J., & Degroot, J. M. (2014) Exploiting loss? Ethical considerations, boundaries, and opportunities for the study of death and grief online. *OMEGA: Journal of Death and Dying*, 68 (4), 315–35.
- Castells, M. (2001). *The internet galaxy: Reflections on the internet, business and society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Castells, M. (2010). *The Rise of the Network Society*. 2nd ed. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Connerton, P. (1989). *How Societies Remember*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Conrad, P. (1992). Medicalization and social control. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 18, 209–232.
- Danforth, L. (1982). *The Death Rituals of Rural Greece*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Davies, J. (1993). War Memorials. In D. Clark (ed.) *The Sociology of Death: theory, culture, practice*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, pp. 112-128.

- deVries, B., & Rutherford, J. (2004). Memorializing loved ones on the world wide web. *OMEGA: Journal of Death and Dying*, 49(1), 5-26.
- Douglas, M., (2001). *Purity and Danger: An analysis of concepts of pollution and taboo*. London: Routledge.
- Dubisch, J. (1983). Greek Women: Sacred or Profane. *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, 1, 185-202.
- Dubisch, J. (1989). Death and Social Change in Greece. *Anthropological Quarterly*, 62(4), 189-200.
- Dubisch, J. (1991). Gender, Kinship and Religion: 'Reconstructing' the Anthropology of Greece. In P. Loizos & E. Papataxiarchis, (eds), *Gender and Kinship in Modern Greece*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 29-46.
- Dubisch, J. (1995). *In a Different Place. Pilgrimage, Gender, and Politics at a Greek Island Shrine*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Falconer, K., Sachsenweger, M., Gibson, K., & Norman, H. (2011). Grieving in the Internet Age. *New Zealand Journal of Psychology*, 40(3), 79-88.
- Fischer, M.D. (2006). The ideation and instantiation of arranging marriage within an urban community in Pakistan, 1982-2000. *Contemporary South Asia*, 15(3), 325-339.
- Fischer, M.D. (2008). Cultural Dynamics: formal descriptions of cultural processes. *Structure and Dynamics*, 3(2). Available at <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/557126nz>
- Fischer, M.D., Lyon, S., Zeitlyn, D. (2017). Online Environments and the Future of Social Science Research. In N.G. Fielding, R.M. Lee & G. Blank (eds), *The Sage Handbook of Online Research Methods* 2nd ed. Los Angeles: Sage, pp. 611-627.
- Foot, K., Warnick, B. and Schneider, S.M. (2005). Web-Based Memorializing After September 11: Toward a Conceptual Framework. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 11: 72-96.
- Giaxoglou, K. (2019). Sharing Small Stories of Life and Death Online: Death-writing of the Moment. *European Journal of Life Writing*, VIII, 118-142.
- Glaser, B.G., & Strauss, A.L. (1965). *Awareness of Dying*. London: Routledge.
- Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Giddens, A. (2009). *Sociology*. 6th edition. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Gire, J. (2014). How Death Imitates Life: Cultural Influences on Conceptions of Death and Dying. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, 6(2).
- Goldschmidt, K. (2013). Thanatechnology: Eternal Digital Life After Death. *Journal of Pediatric Nursing*, 28(3), 302-304.
- Harris, O. (1982). The Dead and Devils Among the Bolivian Laymi. In M. Bloch & J. Parry (eds.) *Death and the Regeneration of Life*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 45-73.
- Hayden, B. (2009). Funerals As Feasts: Why Are They So Important? *Cambridge Archaeological Journal*, 19(1), 29-52.

- Hertz, R. (1960). *Death and The Right Hand* (trans. R. & C. Needham). London: Cohen and West.
- Hine, C. (2015) *Ethnography for the Internet: Embedded, Embodied and Everyday*. Oxford: Berg.
- Hine, C. (2017) Ethnographies of Online Communities and Social Media: Modes, Varieties, Affordances. In N.G.Fielding, R.M. Lee & G. Blank (eds) *The Sage Handbook of Online Research Methods* 2nd ed. Los Angeles: Sage, pp. 401-415.
- Hirschon, R. B. (1983). Women, the Aged and Religious Activity: Oppositions and Complementarity in an Urban Locality. *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, 1(1), 113-129.
- Holtzman, J. D. (2006). Food and Memory. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 35, 361–78.
- Horst, H. A. & Miller, D. (2013). *Digital Anthropology*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Hutchings, T. (2012). Wiring Death: Dying, Grieving and Remembering on the Internet. In D. Davies & C. Park (Eds.), *Emotion, Identity and Death: Mortality Across Disciplines*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, pp. 43–58.
- Irwin, M. (2018). Mourning 2.0. Continuing Bonds Between the Living and the Dead on Facebook Continuing Bonds in Cyberspace. In D. Klass & E.M. Steffen, *Continuing Bonds in Bereavement*. New York: Routledge, pp. 318-329.
- Kasket, E. (2012). Continuing bonds in the age of social networking: Facebook as a modern-day medium. *Bereavement Care*, 31(2), 62-69.
- Kenna, M. E. (1976). Houses, fields, and graves: Property and ritual obligation on a Greek island. *Ethnology* 15(1): 21-34.
- Kenna, M.E. (1991). The power of the dead: Changes in the construction and care of graves and family vaults on a small Greek island. *Journal of Mediterranean Studies* 1(1): 101-119.
- Kokolaki, M. (2011). Continuity and change: traditional diet in a modern Cretan town. PhD Thesis. Canterbury: University of Kent.
- Kokolaki, M. (2013). Culinary knowledge: Polysemy and the poetics of metaphor constructing the everyday experience in a Cretan town. *Ethnologia-Online*, 4, 1-33. Available at: <https://societyforethnology.gr/el/ethnologyonline>
- Kokolaki, M. (2017). Fasting and purity: choice, ambiguity and the negotiation of the past in a Cretan town. *Ethnologia online*, 8, 1-33. Available at: <https://societyforethnology.gr/el/ethnologyonline>
- Kokolaki, M. (2018). *Εξυφαίνοντας την παράδοση. Η παραδοσιακή υφαντική ως ποιητική των γυναικών στο Επάνω Μεραμπέλλο*. Athens: Kalligrafos. [In Greek].
- Kokolaki, M. (2021). Η επίγευση του παρελθόντος. Νεωτερικότητα και επαναδιαπραγμάτευση της παράδοσης μέσα από την τοπική-παραδοσιακή διατροφική γνώση: η περίπτωση του Επάνω Μεραμπέλλου. In Ε. Αλεξιάκης, Μ. Θανοπούλου, Α. Οικονόμου (eds), *Πολιτισμικές και κοινωνικές διαστάσεις του περιβάλλοντος. ΕΛΕΝΗΣ ΚΟΒΑΝΗ ΑΝΤΙΧΑΡΙΣΜΑ*. Athens: Greek Society for Ethnology, pp. 169-198. [In Greek].
- Koumariou, M. (2008). *Το φαντασιακό του θανάτου στη σύγχρονη Ελλάδα. Μνημεία και νεκροί*. Athens: Dodoni. [In Greek].

- Leach, E. (1976). *Culture and Communication: The Logic by which Symbols are Connected*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Leach, E. (1961). *Rethinking Anthropology*. London: The Athlone Press- University of London.
- Loukatos, D. S. (1977) *Εισαγωγή στην Ελληνική Λαογραφία*. Athens: *Morfotiko Idrima Ethnikis Trapezis*. [In Greek].
- Lessa, W. & Vogt, E. Z. (1965). Death, Ghosts, and Ancestor Worship: Introduction. In W. Lessa & E. Z. Vogt (eds.) *Reader in Comparative Religion: An Anthropological Approach*. New York: Harper & Row, pp. 466-467.
- Littlewood, J. (1993). The Denial of Death and Rites of Passage in Contemporary Societies. In D. Clark (ed.) *The Sociology of Death: theory, culture, practice*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, pp. 69-84.
- Lioudaki, M. (1939). Η τελευταία στην Κρήτη. *Επετηρίς της Εταιρείας Κρητικών Σπουδών*, 2, 403-427. [In Greek].
- Madianou, M., & Miller, D. (2011). *Migration and New Media: Transnational Families and Polymedia*. London: Routledge.
- Madianou, M., & Miller, D. (2013). Polymedia: Towards a new theory of digital media in interpersonal communication. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 16(2), 169-187.
- Malinowski, B. (1948). *Magic, Science and Religion and Other Essays*. Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press.
- Mellor, P. (1993). Death in High Modernity: the contemporary presence and absence of death. In D. Clark (ed.) *The Sociology of Death: theory, culture, practice*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, pp. 11-30.
- Mellor, P. A., & Shilling, C. (1993). Modernity, Self-Identity and the Sequestration of Death. *Sociology*, 27(3), 411-431.
- Meraklis, M. G. 1984. *Ελληνική Λαογραφία. Κοινωνική Συγκρότηση*. Athens: Odiseas. [In Greek].
- Metcalf, P., & Huntington, R. (1991). *Celebrations of death: the anthropology of mortuary ritual* 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Miller, D. & Slater, D. (2000). *The Internet, an Ethnographic Approach*. New York: New York University Press.
- Miller, D. (2011). *Tales from Facebook*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Miller, D. (2012). Social Networking Sites. In H.A. Horst and D. Miller (eds) *Digital Anthropology*. London: Berg, pp. 146-161.
- Miller, D. (2018). Digital Anthropology. In F. Stein, S. Lazar, M. Candea, H. Diemberger, J. Robbins, A. Sanchez & R. Stasch (eds), *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Anthropology*, pp. 1-16.
- Morse, T. & Birnhack, M. (2020). Digital Remains: the Users' Perspectives. In M. Savin-Baden & V. Mason-Robbie (eds), *Digital Afterlife Death Matters in a Digital Age*. Boca Raton: CRC Press, pp. 107-126.
- Moss, M. (2004). Grief on the Web. *OMEGA - Journal of Death and Dying*, 49(1), 77-81.

- Nicolescu, R. (2016). *Social Media in Southeast Italy. Crafting Ideals*. UCL Press. (Ebook) Available at: <https://www.uclpress.co.uk/products/83092>.
- Opler, M.E. (1936). An Interpretation of Ambivalence of Two American Indian Tribes. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 7(1), 82-116.
- Piña Cabral, J. de & Feijó, R. (1983). Conflicting Attitudes to Death in Modern Portugal: The Question of Cemeteries. *JASO*, 14, 17-43.
- Piña Cabral, Joao de (1986). *Sons of Adam, daughters of Eve. The Peasant worldview of the Alto Minho*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Pitykakis, M.I. (1983). *Το Γλωσσικό Ιδίωμα της Ανατολικής Κρήτης*, vol. A (A-N) & B (Μ-Ω). Neapolis-Crete: P.L.E.A.M.
- Psychogiou, E. (2008). 'Μαυρηγή' και Ελένη. Τελετουργίες θανάτου και αναγέννησης. Χθόνια μυθολογία, νεκρικά δρώμενα και μοιρολόγια στη σύγχρονη Ελλάδα. Athens: Academy of Athens. Available at: <http://www.kentrolaografias.gr/sites/default/files/mavrigi.pdf>
- Rappaport, R. (1974). Obvious Aspects of Ritual. *The Cambridge Journal of Anthropology*, 2(1), 3-69.
- Rappaport, R.A. (1979). *Ecology, Meaning and Religion*. Richmond: North Atlantic Books.
- Robben, A.C.G.M. (2004). Death and Anthropology: An Introduction. In A.C.G.M. Robben (ed.), *Death, Mourning and Burial. A Cross-Cultural Reader*. Malden: Blackwell Publishing, pp. 1-16.
- Roberts, P. (2004a). The Living and the Dead: Community in the Virtual Cemetery. *OMEGA: Journal of Death and Dying*, 49(1), 57-76.
- Roberts, P. (2004b). Here Today and Cyberspace Tomorrow. *Generations: Journal of the American Society on Aging*, 28 (2), 41-46.
- Roberts, P. (2006). From Myspace to our space: the functions of web memorials in bereavement. *The Forum*, 32 (3).
- Roberts, P. (2012). '2 people like this': Mourning according to format. *Bereavement Care*, 31(2), 55-61.
- Roberts, P., & Vidal, L. (2000). Perpetual care in cyberspace: A portrait of Web memorials. *OMEGA: Journal of Death and Dying*, 40(4), 521-545.
- Savin-Baden, M. & Mason-Robbie, V. (eds) (2020). *Digital Afterlife Death Matters in a Digital Age*. Boca Raton: CRC Press
- Silver, C. & Bulloch, S.L. (2017). CAQDAS at a Crossroads: Affordances of Technology in an Online Environment. In N.G. Fielding, R.M.Lee & G. Black (eds), *The SAGE Handbook of Online Research Methods*. London: Sage, pp.470-485.
- Sofka, C. J. (1997). Social support 'internetworks,' caskets for sale, and more: Thanatology and the information superhighway. *Death Studies*, 21(6), 553-574.
- Sofka, C. (2020). The Transition from Life to the Digital Afterlife. Thanatechnology and its Impact on Grief. In M. Savin-Baden & V. Mason-Robbie (eds), *Digital Afterlife Death Matters in a Digital Age*. Boca Raton: CRC Press, pp. 57-74.

- Spyridakis, G. K. (1975). *Ελληνική Λαογραφία. Λαϊκός Πολιτισμός των Νεωτέρων Ελλήνων*, vol. Γ. Athens [In Greek].
- Sutton, D. E. (2001). *Remembrance of Repasts: an Anthropology of Food and Memory*. Oxford: Berg.
- Turner, V. (1967). *The Forest of Symbols*, Cornell University Press, New York.
- Tyma, A.W., Herrmann, A. F., & Herbig, A. (2015). Introduction: The Beginnings: #WeNeedaWord. In A. Herbig, A.F. Herrmann, & A.W. Tyma (eds), *Beyond new media: Discourse and critique in a polymediated age*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, pp. ix-xxiv.
- van Gennep, A. (1960). *The Rites of Passage*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Veale, K. (2004). Online Memorialisation: The Web as a Collective Memorial Landscape for Remembering the Dead. *Fibreculture* 3. Available at: <https://fibreculturejournal.org/fcj-014-online-memorialisation-the-web-as-a-collective-memorial-landscape-for-remembering-the-dead/>
- Walter, T. (2015). New mourners, old mourners: Online memorial culture as a chapter in the history of mourning. *New Review of Hypermedia and Multimedia*, 21(2), 10–24.
- Walter, T., Hourizi, R., Moncur, W., & Pitsillides, S. (2012). Does the Internet Change How We Die and Mourn? Overview and Analysis. *OMEGA*, 64(4), 275–302.
- Walter, T., Littlewood, J., & Pickering, M. (1995). Death in the news: The public invigilation of private emotion. *Sociology*, 29(4), 579–596.
- Williams, A. L., & Merten, M. J. (2009). Adolescents' online social networking following the death of a peer. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 24(1), 67–90.

Manuscripts from the Collection of the Folklore Department of the Philosophical School of Athens University

Ms. No 1075, Kyriakaki, G., 1970, Vrahassi.

Ms. No 3267, Chavaki, E., 1978, Choumeriako

Short CV

Maria G. Kokolaki holds a B.A. in Philology from the Philosophical School of Athens, a M.A. in Social Anthropology and a PhD in Anthropology from the University of Kent at Canterbury, UK. She also attended the postgraduate specialisation programme in Greek Folklore at the Philosophical School of the Athens University. She was an Honorary Research Associate (2011-2014) at the School of Anthropology and Conservation of the University of Kent. She has worked as an educator in secondary schools. She has also worked for seven years at the Institute of Educational Policy (2011-2017). She is since 2014 affiliated as external research associate with the Centre of Social Anthropology and Computing (CSAC) of HRAF Advanced Research Centres (EU). Since 2020 she has been working as Laboratory Teaching Staff in the Faculty of Primary Education of the Athens University. She is the writer of the book *Weaving tradition. Traditional weaving as female poetics in Upper Merabello Crete*.



Σύντομο Βιογραφικό

Η **Μαρία Γ. Κοκολάκη** είναι πτυχιούχος του Τμήματος Φιλολογίας της Φιλοσοφικής Σχολής του Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών. Ολοκλήρωσε τις μεταπτυχιακές της σπουδές στην Κοινωνική Ανθρωπολογία στο Πανεπιστήμιο του Κεντ, όπου εκπόνησε και τη διδακτορική της διατριβή στην Ανθρωπολογία. Έχει, επίσης, παρακολουθήσει μεταπτυχιακές σπουδές στη Λαογραφία. Μετά την ολοκλήρωση του διδακτορικού της, ορίστηκε Honorary Research Associate στη Σχολή Ανθρωπολογίας του Πανεπιστημίου του Κεντ (2011-2014). Έχει διδάξει ως αναπληρώτρια και μόνιμη εκπαιδευτικός σε σχολεία δευτεροβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης. Υπηρέτησε με απόσπαση στο Ινστιτούτο Εκπαιδευτικής Πολιτικής από το 2011 ως το 2017. Από το 2014 είναι εξωτερική συνεργάτιδα του Κέντρου Κοινωνικής Ανθρωπολογίας και Υπολογιστών (CSAC) των ερευνητικών κέντρων «HRAF Advanced Research Centres (EU)». Από το 2020 είναι ΕΔΙΠ στο Παιδαγωγικό Τμήμα Δημοτικής Εκπαίδευσης του ΕΚΠΑ. Είναι συγγραφέας του βιβλίου *Εξυφαίνοντας την Παράδοση. Η παραδοσιακή υφαντική ως ποιητική των γυναικών στο Επάνω Μεραμπέλλο*.

