

GLOBAL DIGITAL DEATH AND GLOCAL DYING: THEORETICAL CHALLENGES AND POSSIBLE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

ADELA TOPLEAN
University of Bucharest (Romania)
adela.toplean@litere.unibuc.ro

Abstract: This paper discusses the possibilities of using theories of glocalisation for understanding national differences in death ways, in times when global digital technologies play a growing role in how individuals and societies respond to severe crises. How people approach death is influenced by personal needs and values, unfolding within a thick framework of significance. Romania is a revealing example: what it is locally relevant is not unproblematically linked to a global pattern. After exploring the literature, we identify and discuss three key-directions of research that may be of help in further debates: 1. glocalisation of lived death practices and meanings; 2. glocalisation of death studies agendas; 3. the theoretical relevance of glocalism for understanding fundamental human experiences (we suggest a social phenomenological approach).

Keywords: death studies, glocal studies, digital technologies, global consciousness, Romania.

INTRODUCTION

This paper explores the possibilities of using theories of glocalism for understanding national differences in death ways, in times when digital technologies play a growing role in how individuals and societies respond to severe crises. We identify three key-directions of research that can be helpful in cross-national comparisons. We thus hope to open up new ways of looking at certain theoretical, methodological, epistemological and practical aspects of death in various cultural spaces: *a)* glocalisation of lived death practices and meanings; *b)* glocalisation of death studies agendas; *c)* the (possibly) enlightening theoretical relevance of glocalism for understanding fundamental human experiences.

ISSN 2283-7949
GLOCALISM: JOURNAL OF CULTURE, POLITICS AND INNOVATION
2023, 1, DOI: 10.54103/gjcp.2023.1.22342



Some rights reserved

Our discussion may help to answer questions like the following ones: where does global and local meet when it comes to a particular death system?¹ How to approach change in death ways, theoretically? How to interpret resistance to change? Is it an inherently one-way road from local to global? From traditional offline death to modern digital death? Can we look at the digital death and recognise a glocal phenomenon?

CONTEXT

Beyond myriads of local political and cultural structures and practices there is one constantly rising network society. Information floats freely and so are the individual and collective meanings of life and death (Jacobsen 2021; Lagerkvist 2019). Most binary oppositions – the cornerstones of our traditional way of thinking about the world – have been challenged by the growth of global dynamics and global problems (Bauman 1991, 2000; Beck 1992; McPherson 2019; Pyszczynski, Lockett, Greenberg, Solomon 2021; Solomon, Greenberg, Pyszczynski 2015; Weintrobe 2012). Actual boundaries, symbolic boundaries and conceptual boundaries are incessantly relativised, transgressed, transcended: inclusion/exclusion, individual/communal, sacred/profane, centre/periphery, local/global, just to mention a few of the oppositions that lose their power and constantly shift their cultural, political, spiritual and symbolical meaning (Bauman 1991, 2000; Castells 2012; Epstein 2012; Howarth 2000; Jay 1970; Maffesoli 1996; Vieru 2021; Wexler 2000). And yet, new polarisations and new dilemmas appear nationally and globally: one either/or is disappearing only to return in more either/or's. In the age of growing interconnectedness (Chayko 2002, 2018; Couldry 2012; Robertson, Buhari-Gulmez 2016), applying new rules to traditional contexts and traditional rules to new contexts is what we constantly and spontaneously do in our life and research, without making deliberate attempts to assess, define and conceptualise what we are doing.

We know, intuitively, that there is a permanent intertwining between what is locally relevant and what is globally pressing. We also know that glocalism does happen in theory (Bauman

1998b, 2011, 2013; Gobo 2011; Inglis, Robertson 2011; Robertson 1994, 1995, 2003a, 2003b, 2013; Roudometof 2013, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c, 2016a, 2016b, 2018, 2019a, 2019b; Roudometof, Dessi 2022; Schuerkens 2004; Sedda 2014). And yet, the process of glocalisation does not always actually happen as experience, although, in theory, it happens continuously (Dessi, Sedda 2020: 2). Indeed, because of too many unpredictable and unspecified local responses with little comprehensible causes, it is difficult to detect how global or glocal a norm or a practice can be. When a certain norm is relocated, the re-significations are not uniform or systematic and not even guaranteed. New norms, although institutionally legitimised, can just as well remain alien, unassimilated and discordant with the actual values of those individuals and communities who were targeted by a particular normative measure².

Death studies in general and, in particular, cross-national researches on contemporary death ways can benefit greatly from addressing this multifaceted challenge that has a conceptual side, a methodological side and, last but not least, a practical side. The rest of the paper describes and analyses this challenge suggesting that there are at least three new directions for future research: 1. glocalisation of lived (“everyday”) death practices and meanings, 2. glocalisation of methodologies in (Western) death studies agendas, 3. glocalism as a concept and its theoretical relevance for understanding fundamental human experiences.

FROM GLOBAL STUDIES TO GLOCAL STUDIES

Globalisation and globality as an academic theme has become popular and truly unavoidable after the 80s (Bauman 1998a, 1998b; Castells 1996, 1997, 1998; Hannerz 1996; Hawkin 2004; Levitt 1983; Norris, Inglehart 2009; Pieterse 2009, 2013; Ray 2007; Ritzer 1993, 2003a, 2003b, 2004, 2007, 2011; Robertson 1983, 1992a, 1992b, 2001; Roudometof 1994, 2014; Scholte 2000; Steger, James 2019). Globalisation was generally seen as a process of structuration and as a consequence of modernity (Giddens 1990; Robertson 1992a, 1992b, 2001)³.



Roland Robertson (1992a, 1992b, 1994) mostly known as a sociologist of religion, was among the first scholars to approach, simultaneously, the problematic of localising the global and globalising the local, preserving both homogeneity and heterogeneity as fundamental traits of one and the same phenomenon. He has decisively shifted the accents, so that, after the 90s, a reductionistic understanding of global and local was gradually abandoned making room for other robust (although critical) re-framings of the local-global debates (see, for instance, more critical approaches Garrett 1992; Ray 2007; Radhakrishnan 2010; Ritzer 2003a, 2003b; Scholte 2000; Schuerkens 2004). Not only the global and the local do not exclude each other, but when global forces meet local variables, a new process may appear: glocalisation (Robertson 1992b, 1995).

In the 1990s, the concept was still very new, but the idea was not. According to Robertson (1992b, 1995) and to his prolific former student, Victor Roudometof (2015a, 2015b, 2015c, 2016), the Japanese from Sony Corporation might have been the first to use the term “global localization” in business and journalistic circles, already in the 80s. During the same years, an alternative scholarly origin was proposed, probably emerged in ecology research. However, a proper theory of glocalism did not come about until 2015 (Roudometof 2015c). After decades of dedicated works, the Cypriot sociologist Victor Roudometof has become, in our opinion, the most original and knowledgeable voice in the field of glocal studies: “the notion of glocality is meant to transcend the binary opposition between the global and the local and to provide an accurate linguistic representation of their blending in real life” (Roudometof 2016: 130).

In Roudometof’s view, glocalism is expected to have analytic autonomy, that is, 1. not to overlap with certain sophisticated definitions of globalisation; indeed, realisation of the global locally may just as well define a self-limiting process of globalisation (Roudometof 2016 suggests Khondker 2004; Khondker 2005; see also Scholte 2000); and 2. to be defined in its own terms, without resorting to former theories of globalisation or diffusion theories (Roudometof 2015c: 8). What Roudometof proposes below is a new conceptual metaphor meant to change



one's theoretical mindset (about both glocalism as globalisation and glocalism as being subsumed to globalisation):

First, the wave-like properties can be absorbed and amplified by the local and then reflected back onto the world stage. That process of reflection is rather accurately described by world society theorists – and in many respects it is the very mechanism through which institutional isomorphism comes into existence. Second, it is possible for a wave to pass through the local and to be refracted by it. And that is precisely what happens in some instances: glocalisation is globalisation refracted through the local. (...) interpretation of glocalisation – one that explicitly allows its analytical autonomy from globalisation. The local is not annihilated or absorbed or destroyed by globalisation but, rather, operates symbiotically with globalisation and shapes the *telos* or end state or result (Roudometof 2015c: 9).

Roudometof (1999, 2010, 2013, 2014) uses examples from Christian traditions to explain why the time factor (historical dimension) plays an important role in the process of glocalisation, while, on the contrary, globalisation relies on the space factor and, thus, on synchronicity and simultaneity (Roudometof 2015c). Also, the long-term pre-modern globalisation needs to be taken into account, Roudometof suggests. He sees the three Christian churches (Eastern Church, Catholic Church, Protestant Church) as unique particularisations of Christianity (Roudometof 1999, 2010, 2013, 2014) emerging from long and intricate historical and cultural processes. They *are* glocal phenomena in their own right, having uniquely complicated cultural histories, forging a unique sense of nationhood that influence or/and operate alongside global religious trends: “the ‘rise of the West’ and the emergence of Western modernity itself occur within a far more encompassing world-historical globalisation” (Roudometof 2013: 228). However, “globality (...) is not by itself sufficient to capture the complexity of social relations” (Roudometof 2015c: 10). And this is why, he suggests, we need to consider multiple glocalisations: “also, if globalisation and glocalisation are analytically autonomous from each other, that in turn raises the question of the local as possessing similar analytical autonomy” (Roudometof 2015c: 13).

Considering everything, Roudometof thinks we do not need the modernisation and secularisation theories to explain,

for example, why Orthodox Christians are more likely than Lutheran Christians to be traditionalists. He recommends we should refrain from looking at what is happening in a specific place in terms of its convergence or divergence from the Western case. The glocal experience (inherent time delays, innumerable national and individual filters) breaks both synchronicity and simultaneity (doing things at the same time, but spatially separated). That is why globalisation cannot explain, by itself, any “global” event: a myriad of glocal experiences are constantly taking shape and, in their turn, influencing (projecting or resisting) global trends, thus, limiting and twisting synchronous comparisons. Connected individuals do compare, in real time, their own state with the state of others (Roudometof 2015c: 9) but they immediately reformulate everything according to their personal, cultural and national filters. According to Roudometof, glocalism is “a specific point of view” and even “a world-view” (Roudometof 2015c: 13) aiming to bring flexible solutions for both researchers and policy makers.

We find Roudometof’s conclusion useful for researchers in comparative death studies and, indeed, crucial for reflecting on technologically mediated death and dying. Is digitally mediated death a glocal phenomenon? Although it may seem so, there is no simple answer to this question. Surprisingly, the most part of everyday digital communication happens without the users’ conscious will. Most internet users know very little about their everyday digital practices and favourite gadgets. As the media scholar Marshall McLuhan (1962; 1964/1994) guessed a long time ago, there is a great degree of dumbness, blindness and deafness in relation to technology⁴. In the last decade, the very idea of sociability and daily interaction has changed and become more complex and diversified since digital communities are constructed, shaped and enforced with the help of the algorithms (Maly 2018; Wellman, Haythornthwaite 2002). The problem of agency in the relationships between humans (dead or alive) and machines has thus become irreducibly sophisticated (Obhi, Hall 2011; Savin-Baden 2019; Savin-Baden, Mason-Robbie 2020). Today’s digital proliferation has led, among other things, to a lack of meaningful, finely tuned interplay between the involved participants (Logan 2019; Verbeek 2015).

While we generally agree with Roudometof's refraction argument (every space has its own refractive index which, in principle, can be detected), we argue that there is not always a glocal meaning wherever there is a global impact of sorts. For instance, a local change towards more digitalisation depends on the very consistency of the medium where it is propagated, but there are no transparent or obvious ways of re-distributing meanings between local and global, public and private, offline and online. This is especially true in mediated life and death matters. The problem of localising/globalising fundamental existential meanings will be addressed in the last section of this paper⁵.

DEATH STUDIES AND GLOCALISM

Various conceptualisations of glocalism have been used in a great variety of fields. We will provide only a few titles in the fields that are relevant to death studies researchers: urban studies, European studies, education, sports, music and literary criticism, political communication and mass communication (Dowd, Janssen 2011; Luhmann 2000; Moran 2009; Thornton 2000) religion (Beckford 2003; Beyer 1994; Beyer, Beaman 2007; Robertson, Garrett 1991, 2007; Roudometof 1999, 2010, 2013, 2014); last but not least, Jean-Luc Marret's challenging study (2008) on Al-Qaeda as glocal organisation with focus on an inextricable mix of traditional and imported practices and on combined low-tech with high-tech technologies, exposing once again the difficulty of analysing and understanding the co-existence of traditional roots and "international solidarities" (Marret 2008: 543).

In death studies, to our knowledge, the concept of glocalism has not been developed. Tony Walter, perhaps one of the most prolific and relevant contemporary sociologists of death, used, in passing, the term in a paper from 2012, *Why Different Countries Manage Death Differently*, but he did not assess the conceptual qualities of the term and its value for death studies. As we will show below, problematising glocal death may offer a new way of looking at certain theoretical, methodological,

epistemological and practical aspects of mediated and unmediated death in various national spaces.

There is, of course, no common pace at which people, nations or entire regions move toward common death meanings and practices. However, as a result of a growing digital landscape (the dying, the grieving and the dead remaining engaged for an indefinite period of time in socio-technical relationships), the local sociocultural factors seem less important than a decade ago. For this reason, how and why certain local death ways remain unaffected while others shift to new digital trends in certain cultural spaces pose serious (and, perhaps, only partially solvable) methodological problems.

In our opinion, the all-embracing technical phenomenon (Chayko 2002, 2018; Ellul 1964⁶; Dovey et al. 2009) has made some of the digital changes in our death ways very obvious, yet impossible to address and analyse as they often bypass the users' awareness (Dovey et al 2009, Gotlib 2022; Han 2017; Logan 2019, Stark 2016; Zuboff 2019). We see this as being a serious methodological and epistemic obstacle in researching glocal forms of digital death.

Furthermore, we should not forget that death is universal, but death studies are not (Doka et al. 2015). We know very well that, when it comes to death-related theoretical and practical knowledge, breaking out of *local inertia* has never been easy (Ariès 1981). In life-and-death situations, attitudes and practices come from individual inner needs and unfold themselves within a wide and thick framework of significance. Indeed, no one of these shift easily, no matter the (global) pressures. When it comes to value-laden ideas about human condition – the idea of permanence, of destiny, ways of grieving and disposal – identifying supposed antagonisms between global norms and local realities may be just as problematic as identifying supposed re-fraction/glocal processes.

What we have mentioned previously about researching how local death practices accommodate new trends is made twice more difficult if the theoretical frameworks and methodologies that cover local realities are not locally generated or creatively adapted to local contexts. For addressing glocal death, one needs glocally-sensitive methodologies. Giampietro Gobo

(2011) pertinently explored the possibility of glocalising methods in cross-national social research. Just as Gobo noted the dominance of Western research methods in non-Western contexts, we also note that Western death studies, with their conceptual models, academic, social, institutional and personal priorities do not always open up a conceptual and practical horizon for assessing how new death ways are actually embraced in other cultural spaces.

Romania (as a cultural space) is significantly different from the cultural spaces that made death studies possible and, indeed, academically relevant. We will very briefly introduce this problematic in the last section of this paper. We mention again Walter's insightful observation: national context in which death ways operate is, indeed, omnipresent, and yet never circumscribed (2012; 2020). Simply put, we do not know to what extent and in what ways the local shapes a particular death trend.

We know, on the other hand, that even across more homogenous Western spaces with almost similar intellectual history, death research agendas vary greatly (Borgstrom, Ellis 2017; Cann, Troyer 2017). Cann and Troyer recently provided a very detailed account of the differences between British and American research agendas: a focus on psychological and psychiatric effects of death and dying on one side of the Atlantic, a focus on socio-anthropological consequences of death and dying on the other side of the Atlantic. However, it was not their purpose to analyse in social and cultural terms what this difference in research agendas actually mean⁷.

Moreover, within each (Western) cultural space, we have significant variations in mortuary practices and religious rites (Davies 2002). In 2005, Walter made a theoretically solid attempt to describe and explain such variations across modern West. He used modernisation theory (mentioning "a global demand for more freedom and individuality", Walter 2005: 187) and recognised the two-stage process through which modernisation has generated specific local institutional and cultural responses: in the mid XIXth century through rationalisation and, later on, in XXth century, through individualisation. It is unclear whether it would have been more appropriate to look at mortuary practices as autonomous cultural refractions (for multiple

glocalisations, see Beyer 2007; Roudometof 2013; Roudometof, Haller 2012) rather than tracking the progressing spread of certain values, norms and institutional priorities across the whole modern West and call it simply after its old name: modernisation paradigm.

Our own book (written under 2006 and 2007, but published a decade later, in 2016) proposed an empirically informed cross-cultural examination of death-related beliefs and practices in Romania and Sweden. The main concern was to find out whether the respective national churches (Romanian Orthodox Church and the Church of Sweden) retained some of their traditional symbolic impact on more recent death conceptions, beliefs and attitudes. With the secularisation thesis in mind, we were hoping to show how a Western and a non-Western church, in spite of being culturally different, have maintained their institutional roles in managing death practices, but have lost, each in its own specific ways, their symbolic local efficiency. Changing the methodological and epistemological focus from secularisation to towards a more historically and culturally sensitive analysis of the intertwining between a worldwide Christian tradition and local particularism, would have, perhaps, brought out a whole different range of causes and interpretative trajectories for modern death, more tightly linked with local national identities.

Speaking about causes, Walter's already mentioned paper from 2012, *Why Different Countries Manage Death Differently*, set out a very useful overview of the sources of national variations, also indicating, at that moment, a lack of research on how the local factors regulate the ways in which individuals and local institutions actually engage with more global death trends: "(...) in social science research the national context in which deathways operate is everywhere, and yet nowhere; implicitly assumed, yet rarely analysed" (Walter 2012: 125).

In his very recent book *Death in the modern world* (2020), Walter reflects further on the role of the nation in shaping death systems. The concept of "path dependency" is particularly interesting to us because it offers a promising way of looking at



glocal phenomena (by recognizing the importance of local historical development in understanding current modern death practices):

(...) the concept of path dependency: how a group, in this case a nation, starts doing or thinking about something sets up a pattern of enduring behaviour and thought. Even if globalisation (Chapter 14) to some extent undermines the nation state, national ways of doing things continue for generations, as do national institutions and national memory. A sense of history is therefore important if we are to understand why a nation does things the way it does (Walter 2020: 179).

Walter's recent book is perhaps the most valuable sociological reading on how modernity has influenced death, while acknowledging the importance of local (historical, institutional, environmental, juridical) factors. The book is formed (in fact, neatly organised) around a couple of main "key factors" (Walter 2020: ix) (for example risk, nation, globalisation) that have shaped today's death in rather predictable ways. However, Walter gives equal importance to the limitations of these predictions (and the rapid evolution of technology is just one of them):

modernity's consequences for how death and dying are managed and experienced (medicalisation, rationalisation, commodification) are largely predictable. But how societies – their cultures, laws, and institutions – respond to these consequences and how they operationalise them is not predictable. (...) Nor can we predict if one global mega-disaster will change everything. In other words, however much we understand contemporary trends, death's future is not predictable. But it is likely to be multiple – death's futures (Walter 2020: 261, 262).

In summary, it is more or less tacitly assumed that what it is locally relevant is not unproblematically or clearly linked to a global pattern. As shown above, we still know very little about the actual tensions between global and local in contemporary death ways irreparably marked by technology and recent global crises.

While there is some other relevant comparative work on death practices and attitudes across modern Western and non-



Western countries and cultures (Braun, Nichols 1997; Cann 2013; Canning, Szmigin 2010; Cecil 1996; Davis 1992; Davies 2002, 2008; Eisenbruch 1984; Goss, Klass 2005; Guddy, Poppi 1994; Garces-Foley 2004; Howarth 2007; Hunter, Ammann 2016; Jackson 1976; Jonker 1996; Jupp 2008; Kalish 1980; Kearn, Rinaldi 1983; Kellehear 1997, 2020; Klass 2005, 2014; Laungani 1996; Laungani et al. 1997; Matsunami 1998; Pine 1969; Rakoff, Selin 2019; Refslund-Christensen, Gotved 2015; Reimers 1999; Rosenblatt, Walsh, Douglas 1976; Rusu 2020a, 2020b; Vovelle 1983, Walter 1993, 1999, 2005, 2010; see also the Introduction of *Encyclopaedia of cremation* Davies, Mates 2002), most of the studies describe and analyse differences and similarities in religious and civil mourning, funerary and disposal practices by emphasising well-known global patterns (the modernisation process with its institutional, cultural, spiritual and symbolic consequences), universal human needs or distinctive cultural patterns. They did not approach the very interdependence between the global and the local which is itself a two-fold problem: one concerned with everyday practices and meanings, the other one concerned with methodological and epistemological decisions.

An example in passing is this (for other examples see Goss, Klass, 2005; Rakoff, Selling, 2019): Western models of grief and non-Western actual ways of grieving are very different in content and objectives. Not only in his major works (Klass, Silverman, Nickman 1996), but also in other essays⁸, Dennis Klass convincingly showed the ways in which Western models and narratives of grief can be challenged by alternative non-Western narratives. We suggest we could recognise in continuing bonds paradigm⁹ a global phenomenon in its own right:

When I began to study Japanese ancestor rituals, one of the first questions that came up was how continuing bonds in cultures like traditional Japan, in which dependence is a dominant cultural value was, were different from continuing bonds in cultures like 20th century North America, where autonomy is a dominant cultural value (Klass 1996). Our present cultural narrative fosters bonds that can be both similar and very different from bonds based in other cultural narratives. It is easier to clarify both the similarities and differences, when we focus on both the living and the dead (Klass 2014: 2).

In the section below, we will provide some less systematic suggestions for transcending the opposition between global and local death ways.

DE/RE-LOCALISING DEATH: FURTHER REFLECTIONS AND A BRIEF PROPOSAL

In 2018, during our Romanian postdoctoral research (Toplean 2018), we have identified many ambiguous aspects of local death that have been inadequately or irrelevantly theorised precisely because local research (sociologies of death and religion, political sociology, history of ideologies etc.) follows too closely Western research trends and priorities, thus failing to identify and analyse local problems as they emerge in local dynamics (Rotar, Bodrean 2009; Rotar 2013, 2015, 2021; Rusu 2020c). We need not only more adequate methods and better-fitted concepts, but also more locally relevant research topics.

Especially in cross-national research projects, we should be constantly aware of the danger of looking for unified meanings of death where they do not exist. Death is primarily local and qualitative methodologies could, indeed, provide insights into various aspects of peoples' own thick experiences, but we should keep in mind that the "the idea of the local", "the idea of the global" and "the idea of digitalisation" have strong local meanings of their own, outside the academic circles and research trends. As far as we are concerned, this further complicates an already complicated (and academically underexposed) problem: post-communist Romania is a striking example of symbolic ambivalence and institutional confusion, more culturally hybrid and less spiritually homogenous than usually reflected in international literature (Banac, Verdery 1995; Bănică 2014; Bănică, Vintilă 2017; Bejan 2012; Leuştean 2014; Pantazi 2013; Makrides, Roudometof 2010; Moller 2005; Mureşan 2010; Necula 2014; Patapieviçi 2019; Popescu 1995a; Popescu 1995b; Preda 2011; Stan, Turcescu 2007; Stahl 2013; Stahl, Venbrux 2011; Toplean 2016a, 2016b, 2018; Verdery 1995, 1996, 1999; Vlăsceanu, Hâncean 2014). In a country were

nearly every citizen uses “double-talk” and is constantly suspected of having hidden (political) agendas (Kligman 1998), simplistic empiricism is not of much help in researching how profound and “messy” life-and-death situations are reflected on various digital platforms (Toplean 2021).

Finding an adequate methodological approach for obtaining credible evidence and, hence, theoretically sound analyses of how local death ways are reflected in digital media is thus a complex endeavour. As our current project on digital death unfolds (see “Funding” and “Acknowledgements”), it is not obvious that we need more empirical and locally rooted thanatological knowledge or, on the contrary, more systematical (but inherently more globally normative) approaches.

To give yet another (European) example: investigating culturally and religiously motivated violence in European contexts asks for a careful examination of local specificity but, at the same time, for wider explanatory civilisational frameworks. Johanna Sumiala, Anu Harju and Emilia Palonen (2023) have looked into the case of Turku attacks from August 2017 by investigating the construction of post-terror discourse on Twitter. It was for the first time in modern Finnish history, the authors noted, that religious motivation was officially offered as an explanation for a terror attack. Under threatening, concrete circumstances and in the aftermath of a tight debate on the “refugee crisis” of 2015, the local response revealed a sense of religious belonging with populist undertones. In a highly secularised North, in times of crisis, Christianity as a cultural heritage was invoked in contrast to an actively religious Islam. Through hashtags, the Islam was framed as a threat (Sumiala, Harju, Palonen 2023: 2870; see also Appadurai 2006); through tweets and retweets, the structural and cultural incompatibility between “us” Christians and “them” Muslims was politically articulated (Sumiala, Harju, Palonen 2023: 2875). Barrie Axford sees populism (with its many strains) as a particular vernacular type of local-global interaction where negotiation and flexibility in responding to global change is consciously rejected (Axford 2021: 124, 125). While glocal accommodation takes place imaginatively and naturally (Appadurai 1996; 2000), often “<behind the backs> of the agents” (Axford 2021: 127), populism is



explicitly defensive, actively and strategically constructed through social and political discourse infused with outrage and “heavier cultural baggage” (Axford 2021: 77) conveniently carried out through digital media. Such “geographies of anger” (Appadurai 2006) have underlying causes that are difficult to address and are linked in less obvious ways to individuals’ and communities’ sense of existential danger (Pyszczynski, Kesebir, Lockett 2019; Inglehart 1977). It is thus once more exposed the multi-layered nature of local engagements with global threats that goes deep in our cultural belief systems as well as in our imagination and religious past.

What we venture to suggest is that a well-adjusted and pertinently situated exploration of digitally mediated death should emphasise, on the one hand, what is locally resisted, contested and rejected in terms of both technology and death trends, and, on the other hand, what is indeed relevant, recurrent and constantly reinforced globally. For example, most digital transformations of death attitudes and practices contain obvious or veiled religious elements. The human need to secure an eternal life is not expected to change and, as it is often stressed, our involvement with technologies is itself deeply spiritual (Stenger 1991; Wertheim 1999).

Where do we start? When it comes to deeply disturbing existential matters, we suggest, both the anxious resistance and the imaginative cultural accommodation to global pressures start in the everydayness of our lives. We thus propose we start from everyday experiences of death and dying, that is, from problem of local current meanings of death and everyday conduct in the proximity of death. Drawing on Alfred Schütz’ social phenomenology (1967/1970; 1976), we argue for a need for symbolic local sustainability, that is, for meaningful intersubjective experiences related to death, unfolded and deepened through local experience, in time¹⁰. This link between digital technologies, the transformation of time (Castells 2009) and death anxiety will be addressed extensively in an upcoming paper.

To return to our argument, phenomenologically speaking, one can efficiently react to a crisis when there are already dominant meanings and practices at hand that have been intersub-

jectively approved and called into play immediately and spontaneously (see also Schuerkens 2004, but mostly Schütz, Luckmann 1974). The everyday world of what Schütz's calls "natural attitude" is the world where one meets the other locals. Although human beings may choose to travel into other realms, the only self-evident and inevitable world is "the paramount reality" (Schütz, Luckmann 1974: 3).

The digital realm exposes the internet users to countless "alien" death ways (Walter, Hourizi, Moncur, Pitsillides 2012). While the users' death knowledge obviously expands, their immediate know-how may actually decrease. The lifeworld is, in certain ways, left behind or, at least, overshadowed. A return to the "home-base", that is, to the paramount reality, may be found difficult and, for grieving internet users, even distressful. In a digital realm, as some scholars and psychotherapists show, the need to communicate often turns into a compulsive activity hardly discernible from everyday ritualisations (Frankel 2013; Hartman 2011; 2012). Moreover, the narrative dimension of the online stories "is losing meaning on a massive scale" (Han 2017: 35) as everything we see and read online is inevitably processed, scattered, fragmented and "rhetoricised".

Johnathan Friedman (1994; 1997) pointed out that global norms do not automatically lead to global meanings. Global meanings are conditioned by what he calls a global consciousness. Global consciousness is not about how good local people are at emulating a global trend, instead, global consciousness is formed and informed from within, where personal meanings are shaped, where certain values are internalised and cease to be felt as external pressures. We suggest glocal death implies not only imaginative, but also efficient personal adjustments to new/global norms under deeply disruptive conditions.

Elliott and Lemert (2006) bring a useful distinction between diffuse globalisation and thick globalisation. Thick globalisation is intensely reflected in intimate emotional experiences like erotic and traumatic experiences, death, suffering or illness. Thick globalisation can indeed be related to global consciousness. However, one's awareness of global consciousness implies, as suggested, individual processes. There may be a direct link between globalisation and individualisation (see also Beck

2000a, 2000b; Beck, Beck-Gernsheim 2002) which is not to say that individualisation theories are more plausible than massification theories, but that passive uniformisation and active individualisation are constantly eroding, escaping and reshaping each other. In the mid-90s, Michel Maffesoli wrote about the intricate, paradoxical blend of collective effervescence and active subjectivity in the Western society. Today, in times of “networked individualism” (Wellman et al. 2003) this tendency is even more evident:

A certain consecutive uniformity, flowing from the globalization and homogenization of customs and even thoughts, can occur simultaneously with a growing emphasis on individual values which are granted an intense new meaning by some. Thus, we are witness to an ever-increasing penetration of the mass media, uniformity in our dress, the victory of the fast food outlet; and at the same time we can also see the development of local communication (private radio, cable TV), the rise of individual fashions, local produce and cuisine, so that it would sometimes seem that we are in the process of reappropriating our existence (Maffesoli 1996: 41).

We live in a world that is attentive to individual narratives and suspicious of overarching narratives. After Lyotard (1979/1984), this has become a commonplace. In the digital age, death and dying personal narratives are improvisational, open and often highly dramatic: a particular personal journey, a particular mediated story of a particular suffering woman or man needing urgent surgery abroad has to be immediately dissociated from the general online “noise”. There are many individuals who, very consciously, make their unique dying voice or grieving voice heard transculturally through the internet (Christensen, Sandvik 2014; Miah, Rich 2008; Sumiala 2013; Sumiala 2021; Walter et al. 2012). It is not uncommon that these voices are used or enhanced politically and organisationally by NGOs and the media. Such singular voices are, indeed, heard. However, they are not heard as dramatic singular voices narrating a life story, but as politically problematic, civic voices. Unquestionably, they have a mobilising potential, and they may even become globally normative (Holst-Warhaft 2000; Kearl, Rinaldi 1983): once they are heard, it is ethically imperative to

act. They do not need to penetrate the global consciousness because they are the global consciousness. In truth, globalisation saves individual lives. But there is a price for this: individual lives often become loaded with civic purpose and political ambition. This is, we believe, an example of failed process of globalisation: all local constraints are thus bypassed or removed. When a Romanian dying person needs a lifesaving surgery abroad, he or she will tell her story on social media vilifying local constraints and local corrupted institutional arrangements. The good global citizen deplores the local situation and, through digital communication, he or she feels involved in a total stranger's personal problem. She cannot bring her soup, but she donates online money for her surgery. This is not an interpersonal situation, but a (mediated) civic one: a dramatic biography that went global efficiently fights with local corrupt death systems. Another paper should be written for showing why the involvement of digital media in medical tourism and life-saving campaigns saves individual lives, but keeps problems (local death systems) in place.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Schütz (1970) calls the paramount reality “the home-base”. Although this is not the place to develop the subject, it must be mentioned something that it is relevant for a phenomenological approach of glocalism: “home” is where everything is organised in a way that seems meaningful to you. “Home” is where even deviations from routine life are mastered in a certain way (1970: 297). When death strikes, you have your proven way to deal with chaos because you and the ones you know through daily contact rely on certain attitudes and behaviours within a common communication medium.

We also learn from Schütz's former student, Thomas Luckman, that a subjective system of relevance is a constitutive element of one's personal identity (Luckman 1963/2023: 46). Therefore, we suggest, in grave matters of life and death, a glocal process penetrates individual consciousness and takes adequate and formative subjective expressions. Glocalism does not happen

just because a new cultural practice is brought “home” and adapted to familiar terms. There are more conditions to be met. These conditions should secure the continuity of sense-making, that is, the intelligibility and the consistency of the lifeworld. When we go through a tragedy, we depend greatly on stable human bonds, on mutual presence and reciprocal intelligibility. We dread being dislocated or “falling between”. What we embrace something new, we want it to be worthy of trust and validated through mutual sharing. Thus, when global solutions are offered in times of distress, the world around us should not lose neither its axiological specificity nor its immediate functionality. At both individual and community level, successful glocalism involves (1) a sense of order or adequacy and (2) a sense of time and space: knowing what resources are close (that is, immediately reachable) and what resources are out of reach symbolically/spiritually and spatially/practically, so that we can go on having valuable pursuits and feasible, time-efficient decisions.

We are aware that the topic of glocalisation of death meanings, practices and methodologies is too big a challenge to be addressed by only surveying and briefly analysing the literature. Therefore, this panoramic essay is just a preliminary attempt to open up the dialogue and invite to further reflection. We have identified three directions of research that, although of considerable generality, can be exploited in future studies either by us or by other researchers: 1. glocalisation of lived death practices and meanings; 2. glocalisation of death studies agendas; 3. the uncertain (but possibly edifying) theoretical relevance of glocalism for understanding fundamental human experiences.

FUNDING

This work is supported by DiDe European consortium *Digital Death: Transforming History, Rituals and Afterlife* financed by EU-CHANSE and UEFISCDI (code Co-fund-Chance-DiDe Contract No. 320/2022 Subprogram 3.2-Horizon 2020).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply indebted to the members of the DiDe consortium, Johanna Sumiala (consortium leader, University of Helsinki), Dorthe Refslund-Christensen (PI, Aarhus University), and, last but not least, Douglas J. Davies (PI, Durham University) for challenging, invaluable conversations. I am also very grateful to Valentina Marinescu (Faculty of Sociology, University of Bucharest) and to Andrei Vieru (the author of *Elogiul frontierelor* [In Praise of Boundaries]) for feedback and support.

NOTES

¹ Robert Kastenbaum defined the death system as “the interpersonal, sociophysical and symbolic network, through which an individual’s relationship to mortality is mediated by his or her society” (Kastenbaum 1977/2018: 105). His framework did not lose its relevance over the years. Kastenbaum’s first attempt to define and analyse the “death system” was in a paper written for *Omega*, in 1972: “socio physical network by which we mediate and express our relationship to mortality” (Kastenbaum 1972: 310).

² When facing major world crises, the local resistance dissolves. For example, during the Covid pandemic, the global restrictions led to the collapse of funerary rites and burial practices all over the world. Romanian dead were buried in plastic bags. Saying goodbye to the dying over Facetime or WhatsApp has become a common (global) practice. In a private conversation, the media sociologist Valentina Marinescu (University of Bucharest) shared her perspective on the uniformisation of death practices during the pandemic. She believes there has been an irreversible symbolic loss that may show the direction of further changes and compressions in death practices and meanings.

³ I agree with R. Robertson when he notes that modernisation and globalisation do not overlap (Robertson 2001).

⁴ McLuhan’s extension thesis and anti-content thesis have pointed to this idea.

⁵ We should also mention that glocalism was sometimes approached as an essentially negative experience and/or a theoretical and methodological abnormality. At least three major scholars - Bauman (1998b; Bauman 2013), Ritzer (1993, 2004) and Thornton (2000) have pointed to the weaknesses of the glocalism theories and to the socio-political and economical disadvantages of glocalisation.

⁶ Jacques Ellul was among the first social thinkers to realise the importance of globalisation and communication technologies and study them from a technological perspective (a theological anthropology derived from French Protestantism). We believe that reading his works with a 21st century eye, could bring new theoretical insights in understanding of the current technical takeover (as people cease to make good and conscious use of various digital technologies).

⁷ We venture to say, in a sociocultural logic, that the dominant – be it practical or theoretical - approach of death in a certain space is connected in innumerable and complex ways with religious mentalities, or, more broadly, spiritual and existential beliefs and values (Davies 2002). Therefore, “a religiously-tinged rhetoric” in the United States (Berger, Davie, Fokas 2008: 11) – among other cultural, historical and institutional factors – have made a “help” paradigm (spiritual counselling, psychological/psychiatric guidance) seem more appropriate than intellectual approaches of death. This, however, remains to be explored in a separate paper.

⁸ The psychologist Dennis Klass has published extended versions of his studies with the following comment: “academia.edu allows for papers like this one, longer than

a journal article but shorter than can be published as a stand-alone piece.” (<https://independent.academia.edu/DennisKlass>).

⁹ In grief theory, the concept of “continuing bond” was decisively introduced in 1996 by Dennis Klass, Phyllis Silverman and Steven Nickman stressing the importance of relativising the grief canon and remain connected with the departed ones for as long as one sees fit. Today, it is widely accepted in the Western bereavement care as a dominant paradigm (Klass, Silverman, Nickman 1996).

¹⁰ If digital death is, in phenomenological terms, about permanent presence (instant intersubjective realisation) entertaining such views of death may be perceived as “unacceptable” or “risky”.

REFERENCES

- A. Appadurai (2000), *Grassroots Globalization and the Research Imagination*, in “*Public Culture*”, 12, 1, pp. 1-19.
- A. Appadurai (2006), *Fear of Small Numbers: An Essay on the Geography of Anger* (New York: Columbia University Press).
- P. Ariès (1981), *The hour of our death* (London: Allen Lane).
- B. Axford (2021), *Populism Versus the New Globalization* (London: Sage).
- I. Banac, K. Verdery (eds.) (1995), *National Character and National Ideology in Interwar Eastern Europe* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press).
- Z. Bauman (1991), *Modernity and Ambivalence* (Cambridge: Polity Press).
- Z. Bauman (1998a), *Globalisation. The Human Consequences* (Cambridge: Polity Press).
- Z. Bauman (1998b), *On Glocalization: or Globalization for some, Localization for some Others*, in “*Thesis Eleven*”, 54, pp. 37-49.
- Z. Bauman (2000), *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press).
- Z. Bauman (2013), *Glocalization and hybridity*, in “*Glocalism*”, 1, pp. 1-5.
- M. Bănică (2014), *Nevoia de miracol. Fenomenul pelerinajelor în România contemporană* [The Need for Miracles. The Pilgrimage Phenomenon in Contemporary Romania] (Iași: Polirom).
- M. Bănică, V. Mihăilescu (2017), *Secularizarea, un decalaj religios al societății noastre?* [Secularization, a religious gap in our society?], in: V. Mihăilescu (ed.), *De ce este România altfel?* [Why is Romania different?] (Iași: Polirom), pp. 126-164.
- U. Beck (1992), *Risk society* (London: Sage).
- U. Beck (2000a), *The Cosmopolitan Perspective: Sociology of the Second Age of Modernity*, in “*British Journal of Sociology*”, 51, 1, pp. 79-105.
- U. Beck (2000b) *What Is Globalization?* (Cambridge: Polity Press).
- U. Beck, E. Beck-Gernsheim E (2002), *Individualization* (London: Sage).
- G. Bejan (2012, April 18), *De ce scade încrederea Românilor în Biserică?* [Why Is the Romanians’ Trust in the Church Going Down?] in “*România Liberă*”, <http://www.romanalibera.ro/opinii/editorial/de-ce-scade-increderea-romanilor-in-biserica-261025.html> (accessed 9 November 2022).
- P. Berger, G. Davie, E. Folks (2008), *Religious America, Secular Europe? A Theme and Variations* (London, New York: Routledge).
- K. Braun, R. Nichols (1997), *Death and Dying in Four Asian American Cultures: A Descriptive Study*, in “*Death Studies*”, 21, 4, pp. 327-360.
- C.K. Cann (2013), *Tombstone technology: deathscapes in Asia, the UK and the US*, in C. Maciel, V.C. Pereira (eds), *Digital Legacy and Interaction* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger), pp. 101-113.
- L. Canning, I. Szmigin (2010), *Death and disposal: The universal, environmental dilemma*, in “*Journal of Marketing Management*”, 26, 11-12, pp. 1129-1142.



- M. Castells (1996-1998/2010), *The information age: Economy, society and culture*, 3 vol. (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell).
- M. Castells (2012), *Networks of Outrage and Hope: Social Movements in the Internet Age* (Cambridge: Polity Press).
- A. Cecil (ed.) (1996), *Anthropology of Pregnancy Loss. Comparative Studies in Miscarriage, Stillbirth and Neo-natal Death* (London: Routledge).
- M. Chayko (2002), *How we form social bonds and communities in the digital age* (New York: SUNY Press).
- M. Chayko (2018), *Super Connected: The Internet, Digital Media, and Techno-Social Life* (London: Sage).
- N. Couldry (2012), *Media, Society, World: Social Theory and Digital Media Practice* (Cambridge: Polity Press).
- D. J. Davies (2002), *Death, Ritual and Belief: The Rhetoric of Funerary Rites* (London, New York: Continuum).
- D.J. Davies (2008), *The Theology of Death* (London, New York: T&T Clark).
- W. Davis (1992), *Japanese religion and society: Paradigms of structure and change* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press).
- U. Dessi, F. Sedda (eds.) (2020), *Glocalization and everyday life: Constraints and incentives – Editorial*, in “Glocalism. Journal of Culture, Politics and Innovation”, 3, pp. 1-13.
- K. Doka, R.A. Neimeyer, M. Vallerger, J. Wittkowski (2015), *Publication Trends in Thanatology. An Analysis of Leading Journals*, in “Death Studies”, 39 (8), pp. 453-462.
- J. Dovey, S. Giddings, I. Grant, M. Lister, K. Kelly (2003/2009), *New Media: A Critical Introduction* (London, New York: Routledge).
- T.J. Dowd, S. Janssen (2011), *Globalization and Diversity in Cultural Fields: Comparative Perspectives on Television, Music, and Literature*, in “American Behavioral Scientist”, 55, 5, pp. 519-524.
- M. Eisenbruch (1984), *Cross-Cultural Aspects of Bereavement*, in “Culture, Medicine & Psychiatry”, 8, 3, pp. 283-309.
- A. Elliott, C. Lemert (2006), *The New Individualism: The Emotional Costs of Globalization* (London: Routledge).
- J. Ellul (1964), *The Technological Society* (New York, NY: Vintage Books).
- M. Epstein (2012), *The Transformative Humanities. A Manifesto* (New York, NY: Bloomsbury).
- R. Frankel (2013), *Digital Melancholy*, in “Jung Journal: Culture & Psyche”, 7, 4, pp. 9-20.
- J. Friedman (1994), *Cultural Identity and Global Process* (London: Sage).
- J. Friedman (1997), *Global System, Globalization and the Parameters of Modernity*, in S.M. Lash, R. Robertson (eds.), *Global Modernities* (London: Sage), pp. 69-91.
- K. Garces-Foley (ed.) (2004), *Death and religion in a changing world* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe).
- W.R. Garrett (1992), *Thinking Religion in the Global Circumstance: A Critique of Roland Robertson’s Globalization Theory*, in “Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion”, 31, 3, pp. 297-303.
- A. Giddens (1990), *The Consequences of Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press).
- G. Gobo (2011), *Glocalizing methodology? The encounter between local methodologies*, in “International Journal of Social Research Methodology”, 14, 6, pp. 417-437.
- J. Goody, C. Poppi (1994), *Flowers and Bones: Approaches to the Dead in Anglo and Italian Cemeteries*, in “Comparative Studies in Society & History”, 36, pp. 146-75.
- R. Goss, D. Klass (2005), *Dead but not lost: Grief Narratives in Religious Traditions* (Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press).
- A. Gotlib (2022), *Biotechnology, Identity, and the Other*, in S. Vallor (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Technology* (New York: Oxford University Press), pp. 273-299.
- J.-S. Guy (2009), *What is Global and What is Local? A Theoretical Discussion Around Globalization*, in “Parsons Journal for Information Mapping”, 1, 2, pp. 1-16.



- B.-C. Han (2017), *In the Swarm: Digital Prospects* (London, Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press).
- U. Hannerz (1996), *Transnational Connections: Culture, People, Places* (London, New York: Routledge).
- S. Hartman (2011), *Reality 2.0: When loss is lost*, in "Psychoanalytic Dialogues: The International Journal of Relational Perspectives", 21, pp. 468-482.
- S. Hartman (2012), *Cybermourning: Grief in flux, from object loss to collective immortality*, in "Psychoanalytic Inquiry", 32, pp. 454-467.
- D.J. Hawkin (ed.) (2004), *The Twenty-First Century Confronts Its Gods – Globalisation, Technology, and War* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press).
- G. Holst-Warhaft (2000), *The Cue for Passion: Grief and its Political Use* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press).
- G. Howarth (2000), *Dismantling the boundaries between life and death*, in "Mortality", 5, 2, pp. 127-138.
- G. Howarth (2007), *Death and Dying: A Sociological Introduction* (Cambridge: Polity Press).
- A. Hunter, E.S. Ammann (2016), *End-of-life Care and Rituals in Contexts of Post-migration Diversity in Europe: An Introduction*, in "Journal of Intercultural Studies", 37, 2, pp. 95-102.
- R. Inglehart (1977), *Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles among Western Publics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP).
- D. Inglis, R. Robertson (2011), *From Cosmos to Globe: Relating Cosmopolitanism, Globalization and Globality*, in M. Rovisco, M. Nowicka (eds.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Cosmopolitanism* (Farnham: Ashgate), pp. 295-311.
- M.H. Jacobsen (ed.) (2020), *The Age of Spectacular Death* (London: Routledge).
- G. Jonker (1996), *The knives edge: Muslim burial in the diaspora*, in "Mortality", 1, 1, pp. 27-43.
- P.C. Jupp (2008), *Catholic and Protestant attitudes to cremation: Isolating the religious factor in the development of cremation in modern Western Europe*, in M. Rotar, M. Sozzi (eds.), *Proceedings of the Dying and Death in 18th–21st Centuries Europe, International Conference* (Cluj Napoca: Accent).
- R. Kalish (ed.) (1980), *Death and dying: Views from many cultures* (London: Routledge).
- R. Kastenbaum (1972), *On the future of death: Some images and options*, in "Omega Journal of Death and Dying", 3, pp. 307-318.
- R. Kastenbaum (1977/2018), *Death, society, and human experience* (New York, NY: Routledge).
- M.C. Kearl, A. Rinaldi (1983), *The political uses of the dead as symbols in contemporary civil religions*, in "Social Forces", 61, pp. 693-708.
- A. Kellehear (ed.) (1997), *Death, Dying and Loss in the 21st Century*, special issue of "Health Sociology Review: Policy, Promotion, Equity and Practice", 16, 5 (Sydney, Amsterdam, Palo Alto: eContent Management Pty Ltd).
- A. Kellehear (2020), *Visitors at the End of Life* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press).
- H.H. Khondker (2004), *Glocalization as globalization: evolution of a sociological concept*, in "Bangladesh e-Journal of Sociology", 1, 2, pp. 1-9.
- H.H. Khondker (2005), *Globalisation to glocalization: a conceptual exploration*, in "Intellectual Discourse", 13, 2, pp. 181-99.
- D. Klass, P.R. Silverman, S.L. Nickman (1996), *Continuing Bonds: New understandings of grief* (Bristol, PA: Taylor & Francis).
- D. Klass (2005), *Changing the Rules about Continuing Bonds: Grief and Legitimizing Narratives in Maoist China, Arabic Islam, Early Buddhism, First Millennial Western Christianity, and Ancient Israel*, in "academia.edu", <https://independent.academia.edu/DennisKlass> (accessed 1 November 2022).



- D. Klass (2014), *Focusing on the Dead in Continuing Bonds: A cross-cultural study of the family dead, the hostile dead, and the political dead*, in "academia.edu", <https://independent.academia.edu/DennisKlass> (accessed 1 November 2022).
- G. Kligman (1998), *The politics of duplicity: Controlling reproduction in Ceaușescu's Romania* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press).
- A. Lagerkvist (ed.) (2019), *Digital Existence. Ontology, Ethics and Transcendence in Digital Culture* (Routledge: London).
- P. Laungani (1996), *Death and bereavement in India and England: A comparative analysis*, in "Mortality", 1, pp. 191-212.
- P. Laungani, C.M. Parkes, W. Young (eds.) (1997), *Death and bereavement across cultures* (London: Routledge).
- L. Leustean (2014), *A Romanian Religious Revolution: The Orthodox Church and the 2014 Presidential Election*, in "Transatlantic Academy", <http://www.transatlanticacademy.org/node> (accessed 9 November 2022).
- T. Levitt (1983), The globalization of markets, in "Harvard Business Review", 61, 3, pp. 92-102.
- R.K. Logan (2019), *Understanding Humans: The Extensions of Digital Media*, in "Information", 10, 10, p. 304.
- N. Luhmann (2000), *The Reality of the Mass Media* (Stanford: Stanford University Press).
- T. Luckmann (1963/2003), *The Invisible Religion: The Problem of Religion in Modern Society* (London and New York: Routledge).
- J.-F. Lyotard (1979/1984), *The Postmodern Condition* (Manchester: Manchester UP).
- M. Maffesoli (1996), *The Time of the Tribes. The Decline of Individualism in Mass Society*, trans. Don Smith (London: Sage).
- I. Maly (2018), *Populism as a mediatized communicative relation: The Birth of algorithmic populism*, in "Tilburg Papers in Culture Studies", no. 213.
- J.-L. Marret (2008), *Al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb: A "Glocal" Organization*, in "Studies in Conflict & Terrorism", 31, 6, pp. 541-552.
- L. Mates (2002), *Romania*, in D.J. Davies, L. Mates (eds), *Encyclopaedia of cremation* (London: Ashgate), pp. 363-365.
- K. Matsunami (1998), *International handbook of funeral customs* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press).
- M. McLuhan (1962), *The Gutenberg Galaxy: the Making of Typographic Man* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press).
- M. McLuhan (1964/1994), *Understanding Media. The Extensions of Man* (London, New York, NY: The MIT Press).
- A. Miah, E. Rich (2008), *The Medicalization of Cyberspace* (London: Routledge).
- D. Moller (2005), *Credem în Dumnezeu? [Do We Believe in God?]*, in "Readers Digest Romania", <http://www.erd.ro/credemindumnezeu.9>
- R. P. Mureșan (2010), *Tradiții și inovații referitoare la cultul morților* [Tradition and innovation in the cult of the dead], in "Buletinul Centrului pentru Dialog și Știință", 1-2, pp. 52-69.
- N. Stenger (1991), *Mind is a Leaking Rainbow*, in M. Benedikt (ed.), *Cyberspace: First Steps* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press), pp. 49-59.
- N.D. Necula (2014), *Tradiție și înnoire în slujirea liturgică* [Tradition and novelty in and renewal in liturgical act], 2 vol. (București: Trinitas).
- P. Norris, R. Inglehart (2009), *Cosmopolitan Communications: Cultural Diversity in a Globalized World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- S. Obhi, P. Hall (2011), *Sense of agency in joint action: Influence of human and computer co-actors*, in "Experimental Brain Research", 211, 3-4, pp. 663-670.
- R. Pantazi (2013, February 14), *Încrederea în Biserica Ortodoxă Română este la cel mai scăzut nivel din ultimii 4 ani – Sondaj CCSB* [Romanians' trust in the Orthodox Church has reached the lowest level the last 4 years - Survey CCSB], in "HotNews",



- <http://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-esential-14226636-increderea-biserica-ortodoxa-romana-este-cel-mai-scazut-nivel-din-ultimii-4-ani-sondaj-ccsb-care-sunt-explicatiile.htm>.
- H.-R. Patapievici (2019), *Partea nevăzută decide totul* [The Unseen Side Decides Everything] (București: Humanitas).
- J.N. Pieterse (2009), *Globalization and culture: Global melange* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield).
- J.N. Pieterse (2013), *What is global studies?*, in "Globalizations", 10, 4, pp. 1-16.
- V.R. Pine (1969), *Comparative funeral practices*, in "Practical Anthropology", March-April, pp. 49-62.
- T.M. Popescu (1995a), *Ce reprezintă azi Biserica Ortodoxă?* [What Represents Today the Orthodox Church?], in "Studii Teologice" [Theological Studies], 47, 4-6, pp. 3-25.
- T.M. Popescu (1995b), *Vitalitatea Bisericii Ortodoxe* [The Vitality of the Orthodox Church], in "Studii Teologice" [Theological Studies], 47, 1-3, pp. 3-41.
- R. Preda (2011), *Ortodoxia și democrația postcomunistă. Cazul românesc* [Orthodoxy and post-communist democracy. The Romanian case], in C. Ungureanu (ed.), *Religia în democrație. O dilemă a modernității* [Religion in Democracy: A Dilemma of Modernity] (Iași: Polirom), pp. 326-356.
- T. Pyszczynski, P. Kesebir, M. Lockett (2019), *A Terror Management Theory Perspective on Human Motivation*, in R.M. Ryan (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Human Motivation* (Oxford: Oxford UP), pp. 67-89.
- T. Pyszczynski, M. Lockett, J. Greenberg, S. Solomon (2021), *Terror management theory and the Covid-19 pandemic*, in "Journal of Humanistic Psychology", 61, 2, pp. 173-189.
- S. Radhakrishnan (2010), *Limiting theory: rethinking approaches to cultures of globalization*, in B.S. Turner (ed.), *Routledge International Handbook of Globalization* (London: Routledge), pp. 23-41.
- R.M. Rakoff, H. Selin (eds.) (2019), *Death Across Cultures. Death and Dying in Non-Western Cultures* (Cham: Springer Nature).
- L. Ray (2007), *Globalization and Everyday Life* (London and New York: Routledge).
- D. Refslund-Christensen, K. Sandvik (eds.) (2014), *Mediating and Remediating Death* (London: Routledge).
- D. Refslund-Christensen, S. Gotved (2015), *Online Memorial Culture: An Introduction*, in "New Review of Hypermedia and Multimedia", 21, 1-2, pp. 1-9.
- E. Reimers (1999), *Death and identity: Graves and funerals as cultural communication*, in "Mortality", 4, 2, pp. 147-166.
- G. Ritzer (1993), *The McDonaldization of society* (London: Sage).
- G. Ritzer (2003a), *Islands of the Living Dead: The Social Geography of McDonaldization*, in "American Behavioral Scientist", 47, 2, pp. 119-136.
- G. Ritzer G (2003b), *Rethinking Globalization: Glocalization/Globalization and Something/Nothing*, in "Sociological Theory", 21, 3, pp. 193-209.
- G. Ritzer (2004), *The Globalization of Nothing* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press).
- G. Ritzer (2007), *Introduction*, in G. Ritzer (ed.), *The Blackwell Companion to Globalization* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell), pp. 1-14.
- G. Ritzer (2011), *Globalization: The Essentials* (Oxford: Wiley/Blackwell).
- R. Robertson (1983), *Interpreting globality*, in "World Realities and International Studies Today" (Glenside, PA: Pennsylvania Council on International Education), pp. 7-20.
- R. Robertson (1992a), *Civilization and the civilizing process: Elias, globalization and the analytic synthesis*, in M. Featherstone (ed.), *Cultural Theory and Cultural Change* (London: Sage), pp. 211-227.
- R. Robertson (1992b), *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture* (London: Sage).
- R. Robertson (1994), *Globalisation or glocalization?* in "Journal of International Communication", 1, 1, pp. 33-52.
- R. Robertson (1995), *Glocalization: Time-space and homogeneity-heterogeneity*, in M. Featherstone, S. Lash, R. Robertson (eds.), *Global modernities* (London: Sage), pp. 25-54.



- R. Robertson (2001), *Globalisation Theory 2000+: Major Problematics*, in G. Ritzer, B. Smart (eds.), *Handbook of Social Theory* (London: Sage), pp. 458-471.
- R. Robertson (2003a), *Rethinking Americanization*, in U. Beck, N. Sznajder, R. Winter (eds.) *Global America? The Cultural Consequences of Globalization* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press), pp. 257-264.
- R. Robertson (2003b), *Values and Globalization: Communitarianism and Globality*, in R. Robertson, K.E. White (eds.), *Globalization: Critical Concepts in Sociology*, Vol. 4 (London: Routledge), pp. 69-84.
- R. Robertson (2013), *Situating glocalization: A relatively autobiographical intervention*, in G.S. Drori, M.A. Höllerer, P. Walgenbach (eds.), *Global themes and local variations in organization and management: Perspectives on glocalization* (New York: Routledge), pp. 25-36.
- R. Robertson, G. Buhari-Gulmez (2016), *Global Culture. Consciousness and Connectivity* (London-New York: Routledge).
- P. C. Rosenblatt, P. Walsh, D. A. Jackson (1976), *Grief and Mourning in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (New Haven: HRAF Press).
- M. Rotar, C. Bodrean (2009), *Point of No Return: Proposal for a Romanian Cremation Association*, in M. Rotar, T. Rosu, H. Frisby (eds.) *Dying and Death in 18th to 21st Centuries Europe* (Alba Iulia: Accent).
- M. Rotar (2013), *History of modern cremation in Romania* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing).
- M. Rotar (2015), *Attitudes towards cremation in contemporary Romania*, in "Mortality", 20, 2, pp. 145-162.
- M. Rotar (2021), *On civil funerals in contemporary Romania*, in "Mortality", 26, 2, pp. 131-143.
- V. Roudometof (1994), *Globalization or modernity?* in "Comparative Civilizations Review", 31, 2, pp. 18-45.
- V. Roudometof (1999), *Nationalism, Globalization, Eastern Orthodoxy: Untinking the "Clash of Civilizations"*, in *Southeastern Europe*, in "European Journal of Social Theory", 2, 2, pp. 233-47.
- V. Roudometof (2013), *The Glocalization of Eastern Orthodox Christianity*, in "European Journal of Social Theory", 16, 2, pp. 226-245.
- V. Roudometof (2014), *Globalization and Orthodox Christianity: The Transformations of a Religious Tradition* (London: Routledge).
- V. Roudometof (2015a), *Mapping the glocal turn: Literature streams, scholarship clusters and debates*, in "Glocalism: Journal of Culture, Politics, and Innovation", 3, pp. 1-21.
- V. Roudometof (2015b), *The Glocal and Global Studies*, in "Globalizations", 12, 5, pp. 774-787.
- V. Roudometof (2015c), *Theorising glocalization: Three interpretation*, in "European Journal of Social Theory", 19, 3, pp. 1-18.
- V. Roudometof (2016), *Glocalization: A Critical Introduction* (London: Routledge).
- V. Roudometof (2018), *Glocal Religions: An Introduction*, in "Religions", 9, 10, p. 294.
- V. Roudometof (2019a), *Recovering the local: From glocalization to localization*, in "Current Sociology", 67, 6, pp. 801-817.
- V. Roudometof (2019b), *Cosmopolitanism, glocalization and youth cultures*, in "Youth and Globalization", 1, 1, pp. 19-39.
- V. Roudometof, U. Dessì (eds.) (2022), *Handbook of Culture and Glocalization* (Northampton MA: Edward Elgar Publishing).
- V. Roudometof, W. Haller (2012), *Cosmopolitan Trends across World Regions: Discerning a European Exceptionalism*, in R. Robertson, A. Krossa (eds.) *European Cosmopolitanism in Question* (Houndmills and New York: Palgrave Macmillan), pp. 126-150.
- V. Roudometof, V.N. Makrides (2010), *Orthodox Christianity in 21st Century Greece the role of religion in Culture, ethnicity and Politics* (Farham: Ashgate).



- M.S. Rusu (2020a), *Nations in black: charting the national thanatopolitics of mourning across European countries*, in "European Societies", 22, 1, pp. 122-148.
- M.S. Rusu (2020b), *States of mourning: A quantitative analysis of national mournings across European countries*, in "Death studies", 44, 2, pp. 117-129.
- M.S. Rusu (2020c), *The privatization of death: The emergence of private cemeteries in Romania's postsocialist deathscape*, in "Southeast European and Black Sea Studies", 20, 4, pp. 571-591.
- M.S. Rusu (2020d) *The politics of mourning in post-communist Romania: unraveling the thanatopolitics of grievable deaths*, in "Mortality", 25, 3, pp. 313-331.
- M. Savin-Baden (2019), *Postdigital afterlife?*, in "Postdigital Science and Education", 1, pp. 303-306.
- M. Savin-Baden, V. Mason-Robbie (eds.) (2020), *Digital Afterlife* (New York: Taylor and Francis).
- J.A. Scholte (2000), *Globalization: A critical introduction* (London: Palgrave Macmillan).
- U. Schuerkens (2004), *Social transformations between global forces and local life-worlds: Introduction*, in U. Schuerkens (ed.), *Global forces and local life-worlds* (London: Sage), pp. 1-13.
- A. Schütz (1967/1970), *On Phenomenology and Social Relations. Selected Writings* (Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press).
- A. Schütz (1976), *Don Quixote and the Problem of Reality*, in A. Brodersen (ed.), *Collected Papers II. Phaenomenologica*, vol. 15 (Dordrecht: Springer).
- A. Schütz, T. Luckmann (1974), *The Structures of the Life-World*, Volume 1 (London: Heinemann).
- F. Sedda (2014), *Forms of the World. Roots, Histories, and Horizons of the Glocal*, in R. Robertson (ed.), *European Glocalization in Global Context* (London: Palgrave Macmillan), pp. 35-61.
- S. Solomon, J. Greenberg, T. Pyszczynski (2015), *The worm at the core* (New York, NY: Penguin).
- I. Stahl (2013), *Getting in touch with the saints in contemporary Romania*, in "Balkanskaya kartina mira sub specie pyati chelovecheskih shuvstv. Balkanskie chteniya", 12, pp. 99-109.
- I. Stahl, E. Venbrux (2011), *Ritual Multiplication: on Lived Religion in Bucharest*, in *Jaarboek voor liturgieonderzoek* (Groningen: Instituut voor Christelijk Cultureel Erfgoed), pp. 139-167.
- L. Stan, L. Turcescu (2010), *Religie și politică în România postcomunistă* [Religion and Politics in post-communist Romania] (București: Curtea Veche).
- L. Stark (2016), *The Emotional Context of Information Privacy*, in "The Information Society", 32, 1, pp. 14-27.
- M.B. Steger, P. James (2019), *Globalization Matters: Engaging the Global in Unsettled Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- J. Sumiala (2013), *Media and Ritual: Death, Community and everyday life* (London: Routledge).
- J. Sumiala (2021), *Mediated Death* (Cambridge: Polity Press).
- J. Sumiala, A. Harju, E. Palonen (2023), *Islam as the Folk Devil: Hashtag Publics and the Fabrication of Civilizationism in a Post-Terror Populist Moment*, in "International Journal of Communication", 17, pp. 2864-2882.
- W.H. Thornton (2000), *Mapping the "Glocal" Village: The Political Limits of "Glocalization"*, in "Continuum", 14, 1, pp. 79-89.
- A. Toplean (2016a) *Moartea modernă între poetică și tanatologie. Repere suedeze, accente românești* [Modern Death between Poetics and Thanatology. Swedish landmarks and Romanian Accents] (București: Editura Universității București).
- A. Toplean (2016b), *To Resist or To Embrace Social Death?*, in T. Walter, J. Kralova (eds.), *Social Death: Questioning the life-death boundary* (London: Routledge), pp. 296-309.



- A. Toplean (2018), *The Impact of Secularization and Spiritualization on Death Meanings and Practices, Among Contemporary Romanians*, in I. Vainovski-Mihai (ed.), *New Europe College Stefan Odobleja Program 2016-2017* (București: New Europe College Press), pp. 275-306.
- A. Toplean (2021), *Understanding Moral Solidarity: Theoretical Directions for Future Debates on Romanian Civic Commitment*, in "Journal of Urban Anthropology", 17, 11, pp. 145-168.
- S. Turkle (1995), *Life on the Screen. Identity in the Age of the Internet* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster).
- USDepartment of State, "Romania – International Religious Freedom Report 2005", <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2005/51575.htm>, accessed 8 November 2022.
- P.P. Verbeek (2015), *Cover story: Beyond Interaction: a short introduction to mediation theory*, in "Interactions", 22, 3, pp. 26-31.
- K. Verdery (1995), *Faith, hope, and caritas in the land of the pyramids: Romania, 1990 to 1994*, in "Comparative Studies in Society and History", 37, pp. 625-669.
- K. Verdery (1996), *What was Socialism, and what comes next?* (New Jersey, Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- K. Verdery (1999), *The political lives of dead bodies: Reburial and postsocialist change* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press).
- A. Vieru (2021), *Elogiul frontierelor [In Praise of Boundaries]* (București: Humanitas).
- L. Vlăsceanu, M. G. Hâncean (2014), *Modernitatea românească [Romanian Modernity]* (București: Paralela 45).
- M. Vovelle (1983), *La mort et l'occident de 1300 à nos jours* (Paris: Gallimard).
- T. Walter (1993), *Dust not ashes: The American preference for burial*, in "Landscape", 32, pp. 42-48.
- T. Walter (1999), *On Bereavement: The culture of grief* (Buckingham: Open University Press).
- T. Walter (2005), *Three ways to arrange a funeral: Mortuary variation in the modern West*, in "Mortality", 10, 3, pp. 173-192.
- T. Walter (2010), *Grief and culture*, in "Bereavement Care", 29, pp. 5-9.
- T. Walter (2012), *Why Different Countries Manage Death Differently?*, in "British Journal of Sociology", 63, 1, pp. 123-145.
- T. Walter (2020), *Death in the modern world* (London: Sage).
- T. Walter, R. Hourizi, W. Moncur, S. Pitsillides (2011-2012), *Does the internet change how we die and mourn?*, in "Omega", 64, 4, pp. 275-302.
- S. Weintrobe (ed.) (2012), *Engaging with Climate Change* (London: Routledge).
- M. Wertheim (1999), *The Pearly Gates of Cyberspace. A History of Space from Dante to the Internet* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company).
- B. Wellman, C. Haythornthwaite (eds.) (2002), *The Internet in Everyday Life* (Oxford: Blackwell).
- B. Wellman, A. Quan-Hasse, W. Chen, H. Hampton, I. Dias de Isla, K. Miyata (2003), *The social affordances of the internet for networked individualism*, in "Journal of Computer Mediated Communication", 8, 3, <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol8/issue3/wellman.html>.
- Ph. Wexler (2000), *The Mystical Society. An Emerging Social Vision* (Boulders, CO: Westview Press).

